

Renovation, construction across district provide additional learning spaces and opportunities for students

Two new learning facilities will provide greater educational access for students across Collin County,

while a series of renovations (see sidebar) will update older campuses and centers. The projected \$234.7 million expansion and renovation efforts are components of the district's master and strategic plans. Many of the new projects reflect discussions with local ISDs, local municipalities, and the business community about ways to better serve a fast-growing population with changing workforce needs.

"The college regularly meets with local community and business leaders to discuss ways that we can be better partners, providing opportunities to our students and planning to meet the future needs of our service area together," said Dr. Neil Matkin, Collin College district president.

Dr. Bill King, executive vice president for the college, emphasized the reason for coordination as a way to ensure that these groups have a voice in the future of the college. "These discussions help us align our goals for a better future for residents and, most importantly, our students," said Dr. King.



Dr. Bill King

With a target opening of Spring 2027, the first major new construction project Collin has planned is a 120,000-square-foot, three-story, \$70 million health sciences building at the Frisco Campus. About 90,000 square feet will be initially built out with the remaining 30,000 square feet held as shell space for future programs.

Similar in size to the Cary A. Israel Health Sciences Center at the McKinney Campus, the new facility will provide additional space for established health science programs, including LVN-to-RN Nursing, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Physical Therapy Assistant, and others, while also creating learning spaces for new imaging and

diagnostics programs that will serve a growing healthcare sector in Collin County.

"The allied health and nursing shortage is very critical, and discussions with area hospitals have reinforced that fact," said Dr. Abe Johnson, Collin College senior vice president of campus operations. "This facility will help meet the need for qualified technicians and professionals at our local hospitals."



Dr. Abe Johnson

Dr. Diana Hopes, provost of the Frisco and Celina campuses, believes the new facility will be a boon for students and local healthcare providers.

"It will expand and complement the allied health and nursing programs offered at the McKinney Campus," Dr. Hopes said. "The new programs will open up even more opportunities for students seeking healthcare careers."



Dr. Diana Hopes

An additional project underway is a planned career and technology education (CTE) building at the Wylie Campus. While that project is still early in planning, it is expected to be between 50,000-60,000 square feet with a cost of \$45 million. The CTE building will offer learning spaces for the Welding, HVAC, and Veterinary Technology programs and other programs to be named later.

"We look forward to an expansion of workforce programs and classes in the southeast part of Collin County," said Dr. Mary McRae, provost of the Wylie and Farmersville campuses. "We have a great relationship and collaboration with the community. This new building and these programs will open the door even further to meeting its workforce needs."



Dr. Mary McRae

The building will be constructed to allow for later expansion, if needed.

PLANNED RENOVATIONS



PLANO CAMPUS

- New health science labs to support allied health programs
- Updated science labs and classroom spaces
- Roof replacement
- Theatre renovation to improve guest experience
- Updated student services areas
- Updated food service and preparation areas



COLLIN HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

- Additional office space
- Improved security
- Relocation of the Grants Management Office and Small Business Development Center



COURTYARD CENTER

- Information Technology offices
- Specialized Continuing Education classrooms and labs
- District Police Department offices and dispatch center
- Cosmetology, Medical Massage, and Esthetician programs



- Upgraded safety and security



Collin College's Third Annual Leadership Policy Summit hosted industry, business, and community leaders



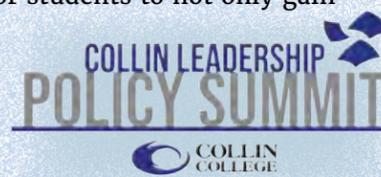
Pictured from left to right: Collin College District President Dr. Neil Matkin, University of North Texas President Dr. Harrison Keller, and Commissioner of Education for the Texas Education Agency Mike Morath.

Area leaders convened for the third annual Collin Leadership Policy Summit.

More than 300 people attended the event which was held recently at Collin College's Frisco Campus. The half-day summit explored regional topics of interest and included discussions about upcoming policy changes and opportunities.

"The Collin Leadership Policy Summit is a great forum to discuss key issues and learn how we can best serve our communities," said District President Dr. Neil Matkin. "We are proud to host this event which brings local, regional, and statewide leaders together under one roof to collaborate and discuss policy solutions."

The featured speakers of the keynote address "Building a Stronger Workforce" included the Commissioner of Education for the Texas Education Agency Mike Morath and the University of North Texas President Dr. Harrison Keller. This discussion, moderated by Dr. Matkin, focused on the importance of fostering talent, enhancing skill development, and providing opportunities for students to not only gain an education but also to be fully equipped



continued on page 7



Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Collin College experiences epic inaugural cohort

Imagine walking into a conference room that seats 120 people and seeing students and parents packed in wall-to-wall, waiting in anticipation to hear about a new engineering program that will place participants into a top-tier university while attending a community college just miles from home. That was the scene during the Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Collin College's orientation this past summer at the Collin College Technical Campus located in Allen.

Ninety-six students enrolled in the academy in Fall 2024, making it the largest inaugural cohort in the academy program's history.

Students in the academy can pursue engineering degrees while co-enrolled at Texas A&M University and Collin College. Students save money during their first two years by taking Texas A&M engineering courses at Collin College before transitioning to Texas A&M.

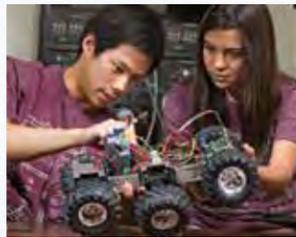


Jamie Mills

"Texas A&M realized that they were turning away qualified students from their College of Engineering due to capacity issues," said Collin College Dean of Academic Partnerships Jamie Mills. "They created these engineering academies at community colleges to ensure qualified students would have a better opportunity to enroll in the program. The first two academies opened at Blinn College-Brenham and Houston Community College in 2015, and they now have 10 academies, with Collin College being the most recent to launch its first cohort in Fall 2024."

Once students are accepted into the academy, they will:

- Experience Texas A&M engineering courses taught by Texas A&M professors at Collin College.
- Join a community of Engineering Academy peers.
- Participate in student activities and organizations at both institutions.
- And so much more



Evelyn Yezak, an engineering student interested in aerospace engineering, shared her experience as part of the academy's inaugural cohort at Collin College.

"There are many benefits to attending Collin College that relate to me," Yezak said. "I live close to Collin College, so some of the benefits are not having to drive three hours to Texas A&M and not having to cut back on costs because of housing." Also, I have been taking classes at Collin College for a bit, so it's nice to see that smooth transition from Collin classes to Texas A&M. I get the feeling of being a part of the big university but without the shock factor of being dropped in and left on my own."

Texas A&M professor LaTasha Starr elaborated more on the importance of the students maintaining a "safety net" – a supportive environment – as they transition from community college to a university.

"The Texas A&M Academy at Collin College is an opportunity to continue the strong legacy of Texas A&M with a safety net of a nearby family, neighborhood, or community, which is what community college is all about," Starr said. "Our goal is to provide a university experience without stripping away the community at the onset. We're keeping the net in place and allowing students to be held and helped as they continue their journey."

To learn more information and to apply for the Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Collin College, visit www.collin.edu/tamuengineering.

For information about Collin College, visit www.collin.edu.



LaTasha Starr, a Texas A&M University Engineering Academy professor, sees the academy as an opportunity to "bring the university to the community" and create a supportive environment for students preparing for university life.



Dedication and a heart for the community: Trustee leads with taxpayers in mind

When Collin College Board of Trustees Secretary Jim Orr reflects on Collin County's growth, he recalls what it looked like when he moved to the area.

"The Tollway ended at a stop light at Frankford Road, Frisco was just starting to be a suburb, Prosper was a spot on the map, and Celina barely existed," Orr said.

Orr's career began in telecommunications with Northern Telecom in Richardson and has flourished to include senior roles in large, multinational companies as well as multiple startup operations. He worked in global business development in the consumer and enterprise electronics industry for more than 30 years and has extensive experience with board-level management. In 2015, he was looking for a way to be engaged with the community, and he believed that same kind of experience needed to be brought to the college's Board.

"A passion for education and the community is critical but isn't all that is needed," Orr said. "The Board-level position



Jim Orr
Collin College Board of
Trustees Secretary

is really supposed to be about knowing how to help protect the taxpayers and work with the college to meet strategic goals."

Orr was elected to the Board of Trustees in May 2015 and re-elected in May 2021. He serves on the Organization, Education, and Policy Committee and on the Collin College Foundation Board.

According to Orr, the college offers a range of programs to help the entire breadth of the county, including courses that transfer to universities, bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, and certificates that provide students with the skills they need to get into the workforce quickly.

Orr takes great satisfaction in the college's quality faculty and staff and the positive comments he receives from the community.

"You rarely hear a bad word about Collin," Orr said. "For me, the biggest source of pride is that I can talk about Collin College, and there's a good understanding of the value to the community."

Orr noted that the college's reputation is solid because its fundamental operations are sound.

"In terms of debt, financial or operational risks, the college is extremely well-positioned to follow, and then lead, the direction that the population will go," Orr said. "In terms

of what we carry on the books, our financial ratings, and our credit ratings, we are very well set to meet whichever demand comes at us over the next 20-30 years."

Orr is excited about what the future holds for the county and the college.

"The next 30 years, if you look at the projections in terms of population, are just awe inspiring," Orr said. "The future includes growth and density. We must stay ahead of it in terms of providing services and facilities to meet that growth pattern. We need to ensure that the quality of education is upheld during times of rapid technology changes."

For those who want to make a positive impact, Orr adds that there is always an occasion to serve at Collin College.

"If you have an opportunity to give back to the community and you have the skill set, think about us," Orr said.

"For me, the biggest source of pride is that I can talk about Collin College, and there's a good understanding of the value to the community."

Jim Orr

Fostering Success helps former foster students reach their goals

Jordan'a Jordan wants to make a difference in people's lives, so she is completing her prerequisites on a path to earn a nursing degree.

"I know what it's like to face challenges, and that understanding strengthens my commitment to a career where I can support and advocate for those in need," Jordan said. "My experiences drive me to make a difference in others' lives through nursing."

Jordan is one of 100-160 students who come to Collin College each year after involvement with the foster care system in Texas. While the state of Texas offers tuition waivers to adopted and foster youths who have aged out of the foster care system, these students often come to college without a strong support network.

That support can be vital for college students navigating a new system, so the college's Fostering Success program works to fill that void. Volunteer committee members provide assistance with registration and financial aid, general guidance, and direction on seeking other support services. A small group of Fostering Success committee members positioned at multiple Collin College campuses reach out to the students regularly so that they know someone cares about their educational goals.

The support given by Fostering Success can take many forms.

Fostering Success committee member Tanya Schildknecht, an advisor with disability services, said that the students can face financial instability, mental health

challenges, lack family support, and may have difficulty tracking down education records.

"There are so many challenges that many of us take for granted," Schildknecht said. "Something as simple as navigating the application process can be challenging without support."

Susan Karlsen, the college's foster care liaison and a financial aid advisor, noted that the students she works with have often missed a considerable amount of time in school because of state-mandated meetings with case workers, advocates, doctors, family members, and others.

"They are disadvantaged in that way because they get pulled out of school constantly, and it's nothing that they can help," Karlsen said.

Karlsen works with local high schools to identify students who might come to Collin College and to educate high school counselors about the tuition waiver benefits available to students aging out of foster care.

However, the tuition waiver is only one component of success for these students. Only about 3% of students nationwide who use tuition waivers similar to Texas' complete their degree. Transportation, housing, utilities, educational materials, and other necessities can place additional burdens on these students who have little support from family to help defray the expenses.

So, Fostering Success works with partners such as International Student Foundation and Foster Love, nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping students meet needs that the tuition waiver does not cover, allowing them to focus on earning their educations.

The Fostering Success Excellence Fund, offered through the Collin College Foundation, can also help cover non-tuition costs when



Jordan'a Jordan (left) is one of more than 100 former foster students who work with Susan Karlsen (right) and Fostering Success volunteers each year.

students meet specific requirements. Supported by community donors, the fund helps pick up where the waivers leave off.

No matter how it happens, Fostering Success committee members like Karlsen want to see more students with these special circumstances reach their dreams of a college education.

When Jordan graduates from Collin College, she plans to pay her success forward.

"The Fostering Success program has been such a wonderful support for me in so many ways," Jordan said. "The program has given me the confidence and resources I need to keep moving forward with a sense of hope and purpose."

Learn more about the Fostering Success program at www.collin.edu/financialaid/fostercarerresources.html.

Learn more about the Fostering Success Excellence Fund by contacting the Collin College Foundation at 972.599.3145.



Tanya Schildknecht

Collin College Academic Alliance adds new Texas State University teacher preparation degrees

The Collin College Academic Alliance is expanding to include new Texas State University (TXST) teacher preparation degrees. Beginning in the Fall 2025 semester, in partnership with local school districts, TXST will offer a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Education.

Texas State University President Dr. Kelly Dampousse said TXST is a premier teacher preparation program that has certified and placed more teachers than any other university in Texas.

"Texas State University is proud to provide additional degrees through the Collin College Academic Alliance to help aspiring teachers reach their dreams," Dr. Dampousse said. "We are committed to preparing the highest-quality teachers who are ready on day one to provide teaching excellence to PK-12 students in Texas. We achieve this goal through our faculty's extensive experience in PK-12 schools, our vibrant network of school district partners, and our strengths as a public research university and a Hispanic-Serving Institution."

For the B.S. in Education, undergraduate candidates will be able to transfer relevant courses from Collin College, take TXST courses at Collin College, and become certified teachers in one of the following areas:

- Bachelor of Science Major in Education – Early Childhood to Grade Six Education with English as a Second Language Endorsement (EC-6/ESL) - OR -
- Bachelor of Science Major in Education – Special Education for Early Childhood through Grade 12

In addition, instructional aides working in PK-12 classrooms will be able to earn a B.S. in Education with one of the certifications in a unique pathway designed specifically for them. This applied program will accommodate aides' working schedules through a hybrid combination of

on-campus and online class meetings and will integrate their experiences as classroom aides into the course. Instructional aides who are classroom-based can apply to one of the following pathways:

- Bachelor of Science Major in Education – Applied EC-6/ESL for Instructional Aides - OR -
- Bachelor of Science Major in Education – Applied Special Education (EC-12) for Instructional Aides

Students will be able to transfer general education and relevant courses taken at Collin College for these degrees, and TXST instructors and advisors will be based at Collin College to support these future teachers.

"Paving the way for student success is a top priority at Collin College," said Collin College District President Dr. Neil Matkin. "We are thrilled to expand our partnership with Texas State University. Offering these degrees locally will widen the education pipeline, allowing more individuals to make a significant impact on our communities through the teaching profession."

All four options can be completed within 120 credit hours and do not require additional post-degree courses or field work. Candidates will complete student teaching through the teacher residency model, which partners closely with local school districts and has been identified by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification as the highest-quality teacher preparation option.

For more information about the Collin College Academic Alliance, visit www.collin.edu/academics/alliance.



Collin College celebrates

40th Anniversary

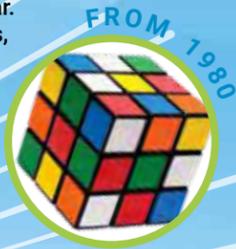
DECADE 1985

Dr. Toni Jenkins Retired Administrator

Before Collin College grew to 11 campuses and centers, Dr. Toni Jenkins remembers being part of a small group that worked out of area office buildings. One of the first employees hired at Collin College, Dr. Jenkins was involved in all aspects of early campus planning, including creating the first districtwide schedule by hand and selling textbooks from the trunk of her car.

Jenkins has fond memories of the college's early beginnings, but her most cherished ones were formed during the "transformational" opening of the Technical Campus in 2020.

"We added so many new programs," she said. "It was such a great experience to meet with industry professionals and then translate that to programs that would train and prepare students for high-demand careers."



Dr. Toni Jenkins

Glenda Morris Alumna and Retiree

Glenda Morris had the unique distinction of being both a Collin College student and an employee.

Morris not only served the college for 35 years, but she was also a graduate of Collin College's 1985 inaugural class. Morris, one of Collin's 13 graduates, was delighted to walk down memory lane and share her Collin College story.

"After only completing one year of college, I married and started my family at a young age," Morris said. "I had the opportunity to take college courses part time in McKinney at Grayson College. Collin did not exist during this time."

In 1985, Morris was employed at Collin College and realized how close she was to accumulating enough credit hours to complete her associate degree. With the encouragement and support of her coworkers, she completed those credit hours and obtained her degree.

Graduating from Collin College became a family affair. Morris' son, Bryan Cook, and her husband, James David Morris, both graduated from the college. Glenda Morris says she stayed at the college as an employee for so many years because she "loved it." "My time at Collin was very satisfying," Glenda said.



Glenda Morris

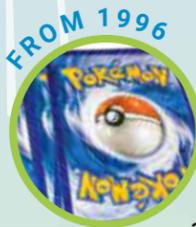
DECADE 1995

Nicholas Palmer, J.D. Executive Assistant City Attorney

Nicholas Palmer is responsible for overseeing the appellate legal practice for the city of Dallas, but he feels fortunate to still be in touch with Collin College professors who impacted his life two decades ago.

"The biggest benefit of Collin College for me was my relationships with my professors. Collin College offers smaller classes than large universities, and those classes afford more personal interaction between students and professors. The critical thinking skills I used at Collin College also solidified my desire to pursue a career in law."

After earning an associate of arts degree from Collin College, Palmer transferred to the University of North Texas where he graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice degree. He earned his juris doctorate from The Pennsylvania State University.



Jennie LeClaire Community Volunteer and Retired Entrepreneur

Jennie LeClaire's journey exemplifies how education can spark a lifetime of impact. As a proud alumna of Collin College, LeClaire credits her time here with giving her the foundation to thrive academically and personally.

"My college education not only provided me knowledge but also information on how to obtain the necessary resources to help me grow in school and throughout my career," LeClaire said.

After completing her associate degree at Collin, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Marketing from the University of North Texas and a Master of Science from The University of Texas at Dallas, launching a successful career in business marketing, technology, and consulting.

LeClaire's passion for learning and achievement has influenced her family as well. Two of her children have followed in her footsteps, earning business degrees and running successful businesses of their own.

Now retired, LeClaire dedicates her days to serving her community. She volunteers as a chaplain at her local church, offering spiritual guidance and support, and spends time helping at community centers. For LeClaire, the skills and confidence she developed at Collin College have fueled her passion for giving back, embodying the spirit of service she hopes to inspire in others.



Nicholas Palmer, J.D.



Jennie LeClaire

DECADE 1985

Collin County voters approve founding of Collin College April 6, 1985



First commencement May 1987

The first associate degrees were conferred at a McKinney Campus (Central Park) commencement.

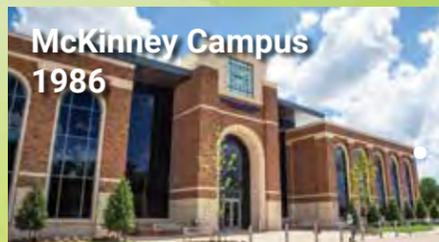


DECADE 1995

First district website launched April 1995



Students vote for Collin Cougar mascot September 2004



McKinney Campus
1986



Plano Campus
1988



Frisco Campus
1995



Collin Higher Education
Center 2010

Dual Credit

Save time and money! Students can earn high school credit AND college credit through dual credit classes.
Learn more: www.collin.edu/express/dualcredit/

of student, alumni, and community success

DECADE 2005

Partnering with area hospitals Spring 2006

Collin College hosted the first Health and Safety Fair at the McKinney Campus, offering community members, students, faculty, and staff a variety of health screenings and presentations from experts on topics ranging from cardiac health to sports injuries.

Collin College academic mace created May 2007



DECADE 2015

Collin College receives approval to offer bachelor's degrees Summer 2019

Collin College received approval on July 2, 2019, from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Cybersecurity. Classes began in Spring 2020.

Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Collin College ribbon cutting ceremony Feb. 14, 2024

Collin College and Texas A&M University launched this academy with a record-breaking 96 students in the Fall 2024 inaugural class. Students can save up to \$40,000. Learn more at www.collin.edu/tamuengineering.

Collin College Academic Alliance ribbon cutting ceremony and open house Aug. 12, 2024

Collin College partnered with Texas State University and The University of Texas at Dallas. Classes will begin Fall 2025. Area residents can earn an associate degree, seamlessly earn a bachelor's degree, and save thousands of dollars. Learn more at www.collin.edu/academics/alliance.



Katharine Noddin



Dr. Carlos Carrión



Dr. Mary McRae



Pat McAuliff

DECADE 2005

Katharine Noddin Software Engineering Manager

Katharine Noddin is modeling an experience she had decades ago at Collin College. After working for a boss whose focus was developing employees, she was inspired to go into management and discovered her passion for molding future leaders.

"I found a sweet spot mentoring the next generation. Today, I get to spearhead fostering a healthy culture at my company, and it is one of the most rewarding aspects of my career. The biggest thing that resonates with me when I think of Collin College is that it was the first place where I felt like someone truly believed in me – that someone was Dr. Greg Sherman. It's the people who believe in you that help you keep going and make monumental influences in your life. It only takes one act of kindness to make a legendary trajectory change in a person's path to excellence. Folks need a space to feel safe and take risks that may fail to come up with truly innovative solutions. Mistakes, after all, are just beautiful pit stops on the path to something truly magical and awe inspiring."

After earning an associate of science degree from Collin College, Noddin graduated from The University of Texas at Dallas where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering.

Dr. Carlos Carrión Dentist and Professor

Dr. Carlos Carrión has come full circle since he first took classes at Collin College. In addition to practicing dentistry, he will soon be teaching at Houston Community College – Coleman College for Health Sciences.

"I am paying back what Collin College gave me," said Dr. Carrión. "Without Collin, I wouldn't be here. Collin College was my ticket to dental school. This college gave me the flexibility to work full time and take prerequisites. Some people tell you not to take prerequisites at a community college. However, I have been to graduate school twice, and I can easily spot a piece-of-cake class. This is really a top-notch institution. It is up to par with any four-year university. The professors here know what they are talking about. My education at Collin was excellent."

Dr. Carrión held several degrees before attending Collin College, including a Bachelor of Science in Electronic Systems Engineering from Monterrey Institute of Technology; a Master of Science in Computer Science from Texas A&M University-Kingsville; and a Master of Science in Applied Mathematics from Southern Methodist University. After completing prerequisites at Collin College, Dr. Carrión was admitted to and graduated from the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Dental School.



DECADE 2015

Dr. Mary McRae Wylie and Farmersville Campus Provost

Dr. Mary McRae has not only witnessed Collin College's explosive growth over the last 40 years, but she has also had a hand in it. Dr. McRae has held various roles throughout her lengthy tenure at the college – including provost at the McKinney, Plano, and now Wylie and Farmersville Campuses.

She said she loves that Collin is a dynamic institution that is always growing and evolving to meet the community's needs.

"It's been a joy to be on the journey," said Dr. McRae. "I love that we have expanded into parts of the county that we hadn't reached before. I love that we can make a difference in all parts of the county now."

Pat McAuliff Fire Science Program Director

For 38 years, Pat McAuliff has focused his efforts on delivering quality training and education to the firefighters who serve our communities.

"Early on, Collin created an environment where new ideas were welcomed," he said.

Among McAuliff's favorite memories is his involvement in the opening of the Public Safety Training Center.

"Collin's growth has been tremendous," he said. "We have grown in every direction – campus locations, employees, and program offerings – but we have remained constant in our vision for student success."



Workforce program profile: Respiratory Care

Collin College's Respiratory Care program isn't just about academics. It is about preparing students to be compassionate caregivers in the medical field. In the program, students can work with patients of all ages and be employed in various healthcare settings before or after graduation.

The program prepares students with the knowledge and skills needed to be registered respiratory therapists (RRTs). Students spend extensive hours in clinical rotations to gain real-world experience under the guidance of industry professionals.

Program director Julie Boganwright emphasized the critical role respiratory therapists play in healthcare. "When people think of the medical field, they tend to think of only doctors and nurses, but there are plenty more allied health fields out there where a student might be a better fit," she said.

Boganwright also addressed the country's growing need for respiratory therapists and the program's efforts to fill those holes.

"There is a big need ... we work with our local hospitals and clinical affiliates to create more student positions so they can work while attending school," she said. "We try to increase awareness in the community so we have a higher applicant pool, and we can accept more students into the program."

Kelsey Burkhart, a program graduate who is now a physician assistant and has spent many years as a respiratory therapist, reflects on her journey at Collin. She claims she was very fortunate to go to school and apply for an externship at Children's Health in Dallas while in her last year at Collin.

"I couldn't be more grateful to have the opportunity to work while finishing school, which Collin set all of that up for me," Burkhart said. "It was very nice to gain some experience before graduating. I was also very fortunate to have transitioned into a full-time position after graduation, so I had my employment already set up for me."

The Respiratory Care program at Collin College has many accolades and credentials, including receiving the Distinguished Registered Respiratory Therapist Credentialing Success Award for 12 straight years.

The program at Collin College aims to meet the growing need by producing highly skilled graduates who are ready to take on the challenges of this dynamic profession. Whether addressing respiratory crises in critical care units or educating patients on better lung health, these professionals are essential in improving the quality of life for countless individuals.

To learn more about the Respiratory Care program at Collin, visit www.collin.edu/rcp/.

Respiratory Care students practice treatment techniques under the guidance of their professor, honing skills vital for patient care.



Julie Boganwright



Summer camp offers college experience for kids

Wylie parent Mary Ann Olson was unaware of any camp like College for Kids. Finding the right summer camp can be challenging for parents, but she said she was blown away by the College for Kids concept, schedule, and affordability.

"My kids have always talked about going to college," she said. "It gave [Olson's daughter] the opportunity to experience it in real life, on an actual college campus right here in our community."

Collin College held its first College for Kids summer camp in 2024. The youth enrichment program invited kids entering grades 6-8 to participate in project-based inquiry and exploration courses, discover new talents, make new friends, and develop the knowledge and skills to begin thinking and planning for college success. The camp was offered at the Wylie and Plano campuses.

The half-day program gave kids a glimpse of college life – they were able to curate their schedules to fit their interests and could choose from a wide variety of courses such as traditional animation, art, theatre, DNA exploration, and American Sign Language.



Collin College held its first College for Kids summer camp in 2024. The youth enrichment program was offered at the Wylie and Plano campuses.

"My favorite was animal anatomy," Wylie camper Ricky Nebinger Jr. said. "We studied lungs, hearts, and diseases of animals. There were some live horses that we studied, and we drew all the organs and parts of the horse."

Parents were encouraged to participate as well. Every morning, they could sit in on the College 101 session, which provided general information about the college including degrees and certifications offered, dual credit, paying for college, and career opportunities.

"That to me separates this from other summer camps because it not only prepares the students but also their families and their parents for college and careers," said Dr. Gwendolyn Weatherford, camp director for the Wylie Campus.

At the end of the two-week camp, campers celebrated with a graduation ceremony at their respective campus. Ricky said speaking at the ceremony was his favorite camp moment. In his speech, he reflected on the friends he made, all the things he learned, and he credited College for Kids with sparking his interest in attending Collin someday.

Ricky said he is looking forward to returning next summer. Olson plans to re-enroll her daughter, and she wants to enroll her son when he is old enough.

"We looked at a lot of options for summer camp, but Collin's College for Kids provided a fun, hands-on learning environment that kept my kid engaged," Olson said.

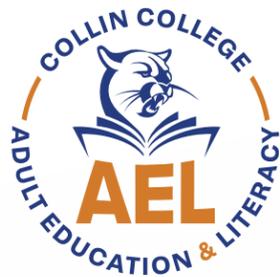
College for Kids is one of many summer camps offered at Collin College. Visit www.collin.edu/community/summercamps to see this year's full list.



Dr. Gwendolyn Weatherford



New degrees and programs at Collin College



Serving the Collin and Rockwall communities since 1985, Collin College is a constantly evolving institution. Enrolling more than 60,000 credit and continuing education students, it now offers certification programs in Esthetician, Medical Massage Therapy, Eyelash Extension Specialist,

Adult Education Literacy (AEL) and associate degree programs in Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology. It will soon offer a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Software Development*.

In 2024, Collin College was awarded more than \$2 million from the Texas Workforce Commission to expand adult education and literacy programs across Collin and Rockwall counties. The college's AEL program provides eligible adults with a free education that enables them to improve their basic skills in areas such as English as a second language, financial literacy, assists with job training or retraining to obtain employment, and offers continuing education to assist with their next level of completion—from a GED to a college degree.

"We are thrilled to offer such a variety of new programs which help serve more students and, ultimately, place more people in the workforce," said Natalie Greenwell, executive director of grants management. "The AEL pathway is particularly exciting for those who otherwise might not have the opportunity to advance their literacy skills, get their high school equivalency, or attend college."

Assessments to determine eligibility for the AEL program are scheduled at various locations across the college's service area. Visit

www.collin.edu/adult-education-literacy/ to get the latest information on eligibility, testing, and classes.

To learn more about the Esthetician, Medical Massage Therapy, and Eyelash Extension Specialist programs, visit <https://mylearning.collin.edu/>. Visit www.collin.edu to learn more about the associate degree programs in Political Science, Psychology, and Sociology and the new Bachelor of Applied Technology in Software Development.

*Pending approval from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)



Check with your high school counselor to register

Unlock your full potential with dual credit opportunities at Collin College!

High school students, don't miss out on the chance to earn college credits while still in school. Experience college-level courses taught by expert instructors, learn at state-of-the-art facilities, and gain invaluable skills — all before graduation.

Learn how you can **save time and money**, and **get a head start** on your college education. **Work with your high school counselor** to find out what steps to take and enroll **TODAY**.

Your college journey begins now!

To learn more about dual credit options at Collin College, visit www.collin.edu/infodualcredit.html.



Collin College's Third Annual Leadership Policy Summit

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to join the workforce upon the completion of their academic journey. The dialogue underscored the notion that investing in student preparedness for the workforce is something that can't only start in higher grade levels. In fact, it must start as early as elementary school.

"A key priority is building a foundation of reading and math," Morath said. "We have 5-year-olds entering kindergarten, and only 49% are ready for entry-level lessons. So, building a strong academic foundation on which students build the rest of their academic careers is priority."

Beyond K-12 education, Dr. Keller provided insight for higher education. He added that both community colleges and universities must provide opportunities that amplify workforce preparation through their programming.

"For example, it may be that (UNT) doesn't offer certain credentials, but then we do a partnership with Collin College; that's more direction (for the student). We stay attuned to those kind of opportunities ... leading to students landing good jobs and momentum into their early careers."

Academic partnerships have been a focal point for Collin College as well. This past year, the college expanded two affordable programs that offer more opportunities for students. The Texas A&M Engineering Academy gives students interested in engineering the chance to simultaneously enroll at Collin College and Texas A&M, allowing students to save money during the first two years before transitioning to Texas A&M.

The second program is the Collin College Academic Alliance, a partnership with Texas State University and The University of Texas at Dallas. Students can enroll at Collin College and choose from one of the exceptional universities to earn an associate degree while seamlessly earning a bachelor's degree, providing more money saving opportunities and access to a variety of programs.

Dynette Davis, Frisco ISD Board of Trustees President, speaks as a panelist at the Collin Leadership Policy Summit.



Another overall focus of this year's event revolved around the growing county and its healthcare needs. The panel discussion titled "Building a Stronger Healthcare Ecosystem" included panelists Dr. Wes Cunningham, associate deputy superintendent for Frisco ISD; Ryan Gebhart, president of Baylor Scott & White Center-Frisco at PGA Parkway; Kevin Greene, vice president of Cook Children's Medical Center; Dr. Diana Hopes, provost of the Collin College Frisco and Celina campuses; and moderator Steve Love, CEO of Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council. The panelists touched on concerns ranging from the ongoing impacts of the global pandemic to the rising demand for skilled professionals — agreeing that stakeholders from various sectors must come together to forge innovative solutions.

Attendees had the opportunity to network and connect with local leaders, change makers, and experts from different backgrounds.

"This event provides a unique platform to connect with individuals who are a part of shaping our community's future," said Mary Jo Dean, director of community relations for Texas Health Plano, who attended the event. "It's always a pleasure to sit in on important conversations, not only to listen and learn, but to leave with meaningful takeaways and new relationships that positively impact our community."

To read summaries of each panel discussion, visit www.collin.edu/policysummit.



Brent Tourangeau, The University of Texas at Dallas Chief of Police, speaks to guests at the Collin Leadership Policy Summit.

Did you know? Fun Facts about COLLIN COLLEGE


COLLIN COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DISTRICT

A new logo was created by Advertising Arts student Rajesh Nidwannaya and approved by the Board of Trustees in January 1993. The college began using the name Collin College and created a new logo in 2007.



Mascot
 Citing the need for programs that increased student involvement, Collin College introduced intercollegiate athletics at the Plano Campus in 1988. The mascot at the time was The Express. The college announced its new mascot, Collin Cougar, in May 2004.

More than
60,000
students


Yellow Rose of Collin
With 297 volunteers, some wearing yellow roses, Sue Olivier and John Akin led the charge to gain the required 10,000 petition signatures to hold an election to establish a community college in Collin County.


Texas Bluebonnets
In Fall 2014, the Texas Bluebonnet was named Collin College's official flower. Founding Board Chair Dr. Bob Collins provided bluebonnet seeds from his property to seed the first planting at the original campus in McKinney.



Mace (2007)
Professor of Art Luke Sides and art student Jimmie Arledge took a limb from a fallen tree on the college's McKinney Campus and created the 43-inch, 15-pound academic mace with a bronze seal featuring the college's core values.

#1

RN-to-BSN community college in the U.S.



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Source: Research.com 2024 Best Nursing Degree Programs Ranking in America



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