

## From the President

*Dr. Warren Nichols*

### Students Keep Coming

College of the Mainland's campus is filled to capacity, and more students are on the way.

The college's fall enrollment reached an all-time high for credit students — 4,705—and a comprehensive enrollment of nearly 6,000.

It is COM's fourth semester of enrollment increase over the last two years.

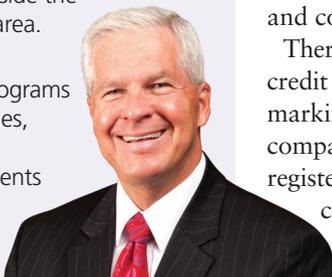
And the students keep coming.

Already COM is turning students away—students who are requesting admission to critically needed programs such as nursing and process technology. Given the number of applications, rising population trends and workforce demands, COM could feasibly reach 9,000 students in a few short years.

Those are students who live in the community and, generally, will work here, providing future skilled workers for our hospitals, petrochemical plants, schools, police and businesses.

Of the students on campus this semester, 1,302 are from Texas City, 957 from Dickinson, 872 from League City, 543 from Santa Fe, 455 from La Marque, 447 from Friendswood, 250 from Hitchcock and more than a thousand from communities outside the college's service area.

The college's five largest degree programs are General Studies, General Studies Pre-Nursing (students



*Continued on page 8.*

## Voters to decide \$162.5 million bond referendum on Nov. 6



Registered voters living within the College of the Mainland taxing district are eligible to vote in COM's \$162.5 million bond referendum Tuesday, Nov. 6.

The taxing district encompasses the Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe and Texas City school districts.

Early voting will be held Monday, Oct. 22 through Saturday, Oct. 27, from 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.; Sunday, Oct. 28,

from 1-6 p.m.; and Oct. 29-Nov. 2 from 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

A bond referendum was called to provide funds to build three new buildings on campus, totaling more than 310,000 square feet of classroom, lab and office space for the college's growing enrollment and additional instructional programs.

*Continued on page 2*

## Enrollment reaches all-time high as fall semester begins

Student enrollment for College of the Mainland this fall is the largest in school history with 5,918 students registered for credit courses and continuing education.

There are 4,705 students enrolled in credit courses, including dual credit, marking an eight percent increase compared to Fall 2017, while 1,239 registered for continuing education classes. The fall semester enrollment also shows a



17 percent increase in dual credit students—area high school students who earn simultaneous credit for

*Continued on page 7*

## Voters to decide Bond Referendum *Continued from page 1*

Pending approval by voters, the bond funds will be used for new construction and renovations, additions and extensive infrastructure upgrades to bring COM's main campus up to 21st Century standards.

If approved, the 2018 bond referendum is expected to cost an average of \$11.80 per month, or 39 cents per day, on a home valued at \$120,809, including exemptions.

The school tax payment on a homestead will not increase for citizens 65 years or older with a homestead exemption as a result of an approved bond election.

COM Board of Trustees called for the referendum on June 25 following the recommendation of a Citizens Advisory Committee which studied regional workforce needs, growing population and the condition of the aging facilities.

"We are confident the communities COM serves are supportive of higher education and will approve this bond proposal," said Kyle Dickson, board chair. "We owe it to the parents and businesses of our great communities, but most importantly, we owe it to students to provide them with state-of-the-art facilities and relevant programs that will benefit them as they enter the workforce or transfer to a four-year institution."

COM, now 52 years old, is at capacity and unable to offer any new programs.

"The college has done its due diligence in determining the utmost needs of the students and the communities we serve," said Dr. Warren Nichols, COM president. "This bond proposal will enable COM to provide a learning environment with updated and modern amenities."

For details about the referendum, including how to vote early and find polling locations, visit [www.Compass2025.com](http://www.Compass2025.com).

## Major Bond Projects at a Glance



### NEW STEAM/ALLIED HEALTH BUILDING 160,000 square feet

- Expand Nursing Program
- New Civil Engineering Program
- New Chemical Engineering Program
- New Electrical Engineering Program
- New Mechanical Engineering Program
- New Surgical Tech Program
- New Imaging Tech Program
- New Dental Hygienist Program
- New Physical Therapy Assistant Program
- New Communications Program with A/V Lab
- Relocate programs from League City facility to main campus: Pharmacy Tech, Nursing Assistant, Medical Assistant and Medical Coding
- Expand Cyber Security Networking Labs
- Additional Labs and Classroom for Expanded Programs



### NEW INDUSTRIAL CAREERS BUILDING 90,000 square feet

- Expand Process Technology Program
- New Instrumentation and Electrical Program
- Relocate Gulf Coast Safety Institute, OSH and HVAC Program
- Campus Data Center

- Educational Technology Suite
- Study/Collaboration Areas
- Office Suites for Programs
- Adjunct Suite for Ten



### NEW STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER 60,000 square feet

- Consolidate Student Services
  - Admissions
  - Financial Aid and Business Office
  - Help Center and Student Success
  - College Connections
  - Veterans Center
  - Testing Services
  - Student Engagement
  - Dean of Students and President's Office

### FINE ARTS BUILDING RENOVATIONS

- Expand Existing Scene Shop
- Addition of Scenic Storage Area, Green Room, Dressing Rooms
- Academic Theatre Classroom

## WHO CAN VOTE?

Registered voters living within Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe and Texas City school districts

**Early Voting: Oct. 22 to Nov. 2**

**Election Day: Nov. 6**

Learn more at [www.Compass2025.com](http://www.Compass2025.com).

## First Floor of Newly Renovated Student Center to be Named after Trustee Bennie Matthews

COM's Board of Trustees plans to dedicate the first floor of the renovated Student Center on campus after long-time trustee Bennie Matthews.

Board Chairman Kyle Dickson made the announcement during the monthly board meeting in September. While not voting on the issue, Dickson said the measure—which is expected to be unanimously approved—would be on the meeting agenda in October.

The first floor of the two-story building that overlooks the lake on campus will be known as the Bennie Matthews Commons.

Matthews, who has served on the COM Board of Trustees since first elected in 1983, was surprised by the announcement and was greeted by family and friends. During her tenure on the COM board, she has served as chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and currently heads up the human resources committee.

A graduate of Samuel Huston College, now called Huston-Tillotson College in Austin, Matthews studied science and mathematics. She became a member of the local branch of the NAACP where she was a charter member and first secretary of the Texas Youth Division. She graduated with honors and began a long and rewarding journey as an educator and community worker.

As a National Science Foundation



Trustee Bennie Matthews reacts upon learning of the honor.

awardee and Shell Merit Fellow, she studied at New Mexico Highlands and Stanford universities. She received a Master of Science in chemistry, physics and mathematics. She also took advanced math and science courses at Lake Forest College, The University of Texas and Northern Illinois University as a National Science awardee.

Matthews taught school for 42 years in La Grange and La Marque.

“I think we all can agree that COM is a leader in education and the college owes much of that to Mrs. Matthews’ own leadership,” Dickson said. “As such, as chairman of this board, I recommend, and I am sure my fellow board members will concur, that it is appropriate to recognize Trustee Bennie Matthews by naming the first floor of the newly renovated Student Center as the Bennie Matthews Commons.”

The student center currently is being renovated and is expected to be completed by year’s end. The dedication in honor of Matthews is expected take place in early 2019.

## COM hosts CERT Academy for Galveston County Emergency Responders

COM hosted the Galveston County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) academy in September and October. Some 30 response team members participated in classes each Friday, Sept. 28 through Oct. 19.

Course topics included CERT organization, fire safety and utility

controls, cribbing, disaster medical operations, patient assessment, triage, terrorism, disaster psychology, radio operations and much more.

COM’s Emergency Management Coordinator Patricia McIntosh hosted the CERT Academy in the college’s technical-vocational building.

## The Torch

NEWS FROM COLLEGE OF THE MAINLAND

Vol. 3, No. 1, October 2018

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The Torch, named for College of the Mainland’s distinctive logo, reflects the college’s commitment to providing outstanding, relevant higher education. This commitment is represented by a double flame, depicting the enlightenment of the human mind and spirit through education. The emblem, a torch, signifies tradition, heritage, and the eternal value the college places upon education.

The Torch is published quarterly to residents of its service area: Dickinson, Hitchcock, La Marque, Texas City and Santa Fe.

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## COM celebrates opening of new Conference Center on Oct. 22

COM officials extend an invitation to residents and guests to tour its modern, new 560-seat conference center from 2-4 p.m. Monday, Oct. 22.

The center was built in space once occupied by a larger-than-Olympic-sized pool inside the campus' landmark Physical Education building.

Funds for the new center were included in the college's \$16.2 million maintenance tax note. Renovations to the PE building began in August 2017.

The pool, long out of service, has been converted into a multipurpose facility that can seat 560 people in



a lecture-style configuration, or 350 people around tables. The room can operate as one large room or be easily divided into three meeting rooms.

Additional building enhancements include a reception area, new restrooms, a food prep room, furniture storage, a conference room

and an exterior drop-off lane with canopies and terrace seating.

Modernization of the facility also included upgrading the existing locker and shower rooms, as well as the fitness center rooms around the existing gym.

"The conference center is important to COM and the community," said President Dr. Warren Nichols. "For many years the college has not had a space large enough to hold all its employees or to host functions for the community. This facility allows us to do just that."

Tours of the facility will follow a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony.

## Sparky Koerner's Jazz Express honored by the Galveston Art League

COM Fine Arts Division Chairman Sparky Koerner and his instrumental group Jazz Express were recognized along with three other local performing groups by the Galveston Art League at the

bass, drums, trumpet and flugelhorn.

Performing at the Galveston Art League Gala were Koerner on trumpet, Ed Hooven on guitar, Steve Montgomery on bass and Bobby Adams on drums.

plays at various church worship services.

"In addition, I have been principle trumpet with the Galveston Symphony since 1980. I also perform as a solo trumpet player at weddings and do a monthly solo performance at a senior care center in League City."

Besides jazz, Jazz Express plays Dixieland, Big Band Swing, Cool, Bebop, Latin and even Broadway Show tunes.

"Our repertoire mostly comes from what is called the 'American Song Book,'" Koerner adds. "These are songs composed by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Hoagy Carmichael, Richard Rogers, and Irving Berlin, but also includes jazz composers such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Chet Baker and others.

"We enjoy bringing jazz music to the people."

Learn more about Sparky Koerner and Jazz Express [www.sparkysjazzexpress.com](http://www.sparkysjazzexpress.com).



104th Evening of Art & Music held Saturday, Oct. 6, at the San Luis Hotel in Galveston.

Other groups honored included the Galveston College Community Choral, the Galveston Heritage Chorale and the Galveston Symphony Orchestra.

Jazz Express has performed at the event the past four years.

Founded by Koerner in 1980, Jazz Express includes guitar or piano,

"Bobby and Steve were two of the first musicians I met when I moved here," Koerner said. "We have continued to perform together for more than 30 years."

Koerner is well known to music lovers throughout the region, and plays with several other groups.

"I play at the Tremont House with Trio Du Jour at least two or three times a month, and perform 15-20 times a year with Jazz Sunday, which

## Trustees approve \$35.9m operating budget amid record enrollment

COM's Board of Trustees approved a \$35.9 million operating budget for the 2018-2019 academic school year which began Sept. 1.

"We pledge to remain diligent by reviewing and evaluating all expenses in order to be good stewards of our taxing district funds," President Dr. Warren Nichols said. The college, he said, continues to focus on student success, employee fulfillment and exemplary facilities.

The proposed budget, which includes a three percent cost of living

increase for all employees, is based on anticipated revenues of \$36.8 million, mostly from property taxes, tuition and state appropriations.

The college experienced the largest student credit enrollment—more than 4,700—when fall semester classes began on Aug. 27.

The budget approved by the Board of Trustees accounts for:

- Additional adjunct professors to meet an increased student enrollment
- Additional academic advisors to support Guided Pathways
- Additional student tutoring staff
- New full-time positions in Allied Health and Nursing
- Required training for industrial instructors
- Distance learning needs with an instructional designer
- Anticipated discrepancies in pay following a compensation study

The board of trustees also set an effective tax rate of .212 per \$100 valuation, below last year's .216 per \$100 valuation.

## All About COM



Kerry Kloesel

**Kerry Kloesel**, administrative assistant for 15 full-time faculty members, 30 adjuncts and about 140 course sections per semester, is COM's Employee of the Month for October.

COM's **Multicultural Team** led activities to celebrate Puerto Rico during Hispanic Heritage

Month, Sept. 15-Oct. 15. Activities culminated with authentic Puerto Rican food and music during the lunch hour Oct. 2 on campus.

**COMPeers**, an organization of college employees, raised funds in September and October for a variety of community service projects. Its annual Golden Ladle Chili Cook Off and Bake Sale is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 30, with public tasting between noon and 1 p.m. and awards presented at 1:15 p.m. Tickets are \$6 and include a chili tasting cup and a bottle of water. In September, COMPeers raised more than \$1,000 for scholarships.

Three College of the Mainland employees were recently named



From left: Matthew Busby, Sheena Abernathy, Sean Skipworth

to the inaugural *Galveston Daily News* "40 Under 40" list: **Sheena Abernathy**, **Matthew Busby** and **Sean Skipworth**. Abernathy is an associate professor of biology. Busby is an advancement officer for the COM Foundation. Skipworth is an associate professor of government. The newspaper released its list of distinguished individuals in July.



For the tenth year in a row, the kitchen at the **COM Lab School** earned a Gold Ribbon Award from the Galveston County Health District. **Lisa Woitena**, kitchen manager for the COM Lab School, was recognized by COM's Board of Trustees at a recent meeting. The distinction was given to the top five percent of establishments based on criteria in categories that included restaurants, bars, convenience stores, schools and mobile units.

From left: Dr. Warren Nichols, COM President; COM Trustees Alan Waters, Rosalie Kettler, Melissa Skipworth, Don Gartman; Ronnie Schultz and Marty Entringer with the Galveston County Health District; Woitena and COM Trustees Bennie Matthews and Rachel Delgado.

# COM Foundation *Building Tomorrows* Gala honors distinguished alumni

COM Foundation honored three alumni as 2018 Distinguished Alumni at its “Building Tomorrows” Gala on Sept. 27.

The three—Tanya Elise Baker, William McGarvey and Michael Navarro—were recognized for outstanding contributions to COM and the community through their professional and personal excellence.

Baker, a communications specialist for the Center on Disability and Development at Texas A&M University, credits her graphic design degree from COM in 2005 for where she is today.

“COM helped my career in so many ways. I was able to select a career in graphic design. Who knew you could get paid to do something you enjoy doing,” said Baker, who also published a children’s book.

For McGarvey, COM was the right choice for him in 1975 because “I had neither the maturity, money nor

grades to make it at any other college.”

McGarvey went on to earn an economics degree from the University of Texas at Austin, a master’s in math from the University of Houston and a doctorate in computer information from Nova Southeastern University.

McGarvey worked at IBM for more than 20 years where he developed code modifications to NASA’s mission control systems to support the military’s use of the space shuttle. He was inducted into IBM’s Golden Circle, an award reserved for the company’s highest performing employees, in 1997.

Navarro credits COM professors for being instrumental in helping



From left: William McGarvey, Michael Navarro and Tanya Elise Baker

him realize the career path he wanted to pursue and for referring him to his first full-time job. Like Baker, he also received a COM degree in graphic design in 2005. Navarro is director of business operations for Logical Innovations and also owns Manticore Media, LLC, a graphics arts and digital media production company.

The 2018 Gala raised \$77,817 for student scholarships.

## Focal Point

from the COM Foundation Executive Director Mary Ann Amelang



In fiscal year 2017-18, the COM Foundation helped more students than ever in our 52-year history!

A record 368 COM students received scholarships. Along with the ongoing emergency aid and Harvey disaster relief program, 476 students were assisted by the Foundation with more than \$327,000 awarded this past year. We have increased scholarship awards from 87 in 2013-14 to 299 this past year, and we are on track to do even more in 2018-19.

The Foundation provided \$76,985 in disaster relief to students and employees and \$3,015 in “Random Acts of Kindness” funds for car repairs, books and other

needs that were critical in keeping students in college.

COM Foundation is blessed to have a fantastic Board of Directors who believe in our mission. They love to hear student stories such as Olaolauwa Samuel Falodun’s who lived in Texas City, but now calls San Marcos his home.



Olaolauwa Samuel Falodun

Falodun transferred to Texas State this fall after he graduated from COM with an Associate of Arts in Business. He is seeking a bachelor’s degree in finance. Samuel is from Nigeria and moved to the US with his family when he was 14, just in time to start high school.

He was financially unstable and without a car when he began classes at COM. In fact, this spurred his decision to come to COM, since it was close by and accessible to him. He says his time at COM and receiving his Foundation scholarship has made going to Texas State a reality.

“All I can say is ‘thank you.’ The scholarship meant a lot to me. I’m excited to see where life takes me...I’ll always keep pushing forward!”

With student success the number one priority of the college and the Foundation, we urge everyone to take advantage of early voting starting on Oct. 22. It is the hope of COM Foundation that more students can be served by College of the Mainland with safe and modern facilities, and that we will provide the means so that all of them can follow their dreams.

# COM Pharmacy Tech program is tops in Texas

The Pharmacy Technician program at College of the Mainland has been ranked No. 1 in Texas by the Pharmacy Technician Guide.

After evaluating 51 schools which offer a pharmacy tech program, COM came out on top due to tuition cost, graduation rate and

the student-to-faculty ratio, among others. Nationally, COM is ranked No. 20.

“Colleges that have made it to our list are not only known in the state but also in the nation for consistently nurturing the academic and career goals of pharmacy technician students with a successful outcome,” the Pharmacy Technician Guide reported on its website.

In its finding, the Pharmacy Technician Guide says, “COM has stayed ahead in its initiative of helping low income community students and students of color achieve in their academic goals. Its graduates with technical degrees are also known to have earned the highest starting salaries in the state.”

COM program instructors, who bring professional experience as pharmacy technicians or pharmacists, provide Pharmacy Tech students individual assistance. Students also participate in hands-

on labs, classes and internships to learn the skills needed to launch a rewarding career. On average, students spend 160 hours in internships at a community pharmacy and a hospital pharmacy. Internships provide valuable work experience and often lead to job opportunities.

COM offers an Associate of Applied Science in Pharmacy Technology and a certificate in Pharmacy Technology. After completing the certificate program in a year, students are prepared to take the national Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam. Certificate graduates may enter the workforce immediately or continue for a second year to obtain an Associate in Applied Science in Pharmacy Technology for greater career opportunities.

The COM program is accredited by the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists.



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## Record Enrollment *Continued from page 1*

college and high school.

“More and more students are finding it convenient and affordable to attend College of the Mainland whether to secure an associate degree and transfer to a four-year institution or to obtain a certificate and enter the workforce,” said President Dr. Warren Nichols. “These options are what make community colleges like COM desirable.”

Of the credit students enrolled at COM this fall, 65 percent are in-district students and 33 percent come from outside COM’s taxing district and therefore pay a higher tuition rate, according to COM’s Planning, Effectiveness, Analytics/Assessment and Research data.

COM’s taxing district includes the Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe and Texas City school districts.

When broken down by ethnicity,

the credit student population consists of 47 percent white, 31 percent Hispanic, 16 percent black and six percent other. The number of Hispanic students rose 15 percent from last year. Females make up 59 percent of all credit students enrolled.

Data also shows the average age of the COM credit student is 23 with 40 percent of the student population between the ages of 18 and 24.

Other data shows that 3,575 credit students attend COM on a part-time basis and 1,130 are full-time. The top five declared majors include general studies (which includes most dual credit students), general studies-pre-nursing, process technology (PTEC), business and nursing.

Although about 500 students are declared as pre-nursing majors, the nursing program at COM does not have the capacity to admit all



students. The process technology program also does not have the capacity to enroll all interested students.

The enrollment numbers for credit students were determined after the last day to drop a course without creating an academic record. Continuing education enrollment figures are preliminary, as the reporting period is quarterly and runs from Sept. 1 through Nov. 30.

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## From the President *Continued from page 1*

who are taking academic courses to prepare for entrance to the Nursing program), process technology, business and nursing.

General Studies account for 37 percent of all majors. Nearly 70 percent of dual credit students are general studies majors.

General Studies Pre-Nursing majors have increased substantially in recent years, now reaching nearly 500 students. COM currently does not have the capacity to admit all these students into the nursing program.

COM's highest goal is the success of

our students. It is our responsibility to provide students the instruction they need for future careers, and provide the space, resources and quality learning environment to help them achieve their educational goals.

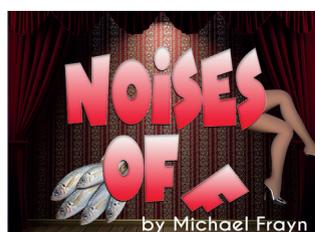
We have taken bold steps to deliver on our promises. Already we have undertaken to renovate aging buildings and modernize labs. And, we have adopted a forward-thinking Academic Master Plan that will provide the new programs business and industry leaders say will be needed if our region is to provide relevant, well-paying jobs and be competitive in years to come.

To house those new programs, the bond referendum we are placing before voters on Nov. 6 provides for three major new buildings totaling more than 300,000 square feet of instructional and office space.

This is a critical moment in COM's 52-year history. Additional programs are needed. More students are on the way. With your help, College of the Mainland will be ready to receive them.



Dr. Warren Nichols  
President



### **NOISES OFF** Nov. 1 - 18

By Michael Frayn  
Directed by COM  
Theatre Artistic  
Director, H. Russ  
Brown

A fond look at the follies of theatre folk, whose susceptibility to out-of-control egos, memory loss, and passionate affairs turn every performance into a high-risk adventure. This ridiculously chaotic play-within-a-play captures a touring theatre troupe's production of *Nothing On* in three stages: the flubbed lines and missed cues of the final dress rehearsal, and the mounting frictions set into motion on opening night – all leading to a hilariously disastrous closing performance. Brimming with slapstick comedy, *Noises Off* is a delightful backstage farce, complete with slamming doors, falling trousers, and — of course — flying sardines!



### **YOU'RE A GOOD MAN CHARLIE**

**BROWN**  
Jan. 24 – Feb. 10  
Charles Schulz's beloved comic comes to life in this classic musical. The joyful innocence of the Peanuts gang wins the day in this crowd-pleasing classic!



### **BORN YESTERDAY** Mar. 28 – Apr. 14

Personal and political oppression is exposed and outwitted in the intellectual rebirth of the iconic "dumb blonde" Billie Dawn.



### **THE GLASS MENAGERIE** May 16 – June 2

Williams' intensely personal and brilliantly tender masterpiece exposes the complexity of our memories, and the ways in which we can never truly escape them.



### **THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE** July 11 – 28

It's 1922, and small-town girl Millie Dillmount has just arrived in New York City, ready to make her dreams come true. Winner of the 2002 Tony Award for Best Musical, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is a hilarious, high-spirited musical romp through the roaring '20s!

Ticket Prices: "A" GEN - \$20 "B" GEN - \$15 "C" GEN - \$10  
Show Times: Thu.–Sat. 8 p.m. Sundays 2:30 p.m.

**For Reservations** Call the Box Office at 888-258-8859, ext. 8345 or 409-933-8345 or purchase tickets online at [www.com.edu/theatre](http://www.com.edu/theatre).