

# MGCCC ALUMNI & FOUNDATION

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



## FROM THE DESK OF DR. MARY S. GRAHAM APRIL 2024

### Foundation Highlights

- Annual Scholarship Gala
- In Memoriam
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- Spring Reception
- MGCCC Update
- Athletics Rankings

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*Dear Gulf Coast Alumni and Valued Donors,*

*I am excited to share with you the incredible success of our Annual Scholarship Gala and 50th Anniversary celebration of the MGCCC Foundation, which was held on Saturday, March 9, 2024 at the Beau Rivage Resort & Casino in Biloxi. Thanks to your remarkable generosity, the Foundation raised an astounding \$2 million for the Gala this year! This achievement is truly remarkable and will create meaningful opportunities for many deserving MGCCC students. We extend our deepest gratitude for your dedication and commitment to our MGCCC students, Gulf Coast community, and beyond. We hope to see all of you at next year's Annual Scholarship Gala!*

*As we gear up for the pinnacle of our academic year, graduation day, on Thursday, May 9, 2024, at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum, we are filled with excitement. It's a joyous occasion to witness our hardworking and deserving students walk across the stage to accept their diplomas. To the parents, friends, and families who support our students, thank you for seeing them through this milestone. We are excited to celebrate with you all at graduation!*

*With sincere appreciation,*

Mary S. Graham, President





# ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP GALA

**Celebrating 50 years of impact! Our 2024 Annual Scholarship Gala raised \$2 Million for MGCCC Foundation scholarships, empowering MGCCC students.**



## OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

MGCCC star students from Phi Theta Kappa, Student Government Association, Honors College, and more joined us for an unforgettable evening!



## DIAMOND AWARD

The Lowe's Foundation was selected as our 2024 Diamond Award recipient! Their impactful generosity and enduring vision have transformed the Gulf Coast, fostering resilience and community for generations to come.



## SILENT AUCTION

Our annual scholarship gala's exclusive silent auction was a hit! With over 100 items donated from Gulf Coast businesses and partners, we raised \$10,000 for scholarships!



## JAZZ BAND

Unlock potential with our Jazz Band Scholarship! Your donation will strike the perfect chord for one talented student's musical journey. Every gift counts!







# Honoring Earl Denson Gautier

In memory of Earl Denson Gautier, a titan in both professional and personal realms, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College (MGCCC) pays tribute to his remarkable legacy. Earl's journey began at MGCCC, where he showcased exemplary leadership as Sophomore Class President and excelled academically as an Honorary Fraternity Officer for Phi Theta Kappa. It was during his time at MGCCC that he met Frances Elmira Miles, his lifelong partner.

While pursuing his education, Earl's industrious spirit led him to employment at Ingalls Shipbuilding, where he made significant contributions to ship design and construction. Graduating with honors from what was then Perkinston Junior College, now MGCCC, marked a significant milestone in his academic journey.

Earl's dedication extended to national service as a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army, 3rd Armored Division, earning recognition for his valor and leadership during his military tour in Europe. His exemplary efforts earned him a Certificate of Merit, recognizing his outstanding contributions at an early age. Earl's commitment to service continued in the U.S. Army Reserves until he received honorable discharge.

Retiring as Director of Engineering and Planning from Ingalls Shipbuilding after nearly 39 years on April 1st, 1994, Earl's dedication to education and community led him to serve on the MGCCC Board of Trustees for five years. To Earl and Frances, we extend our deepest gratitude for their tireless advocacy and steadfast commitment to the betterment of our community.

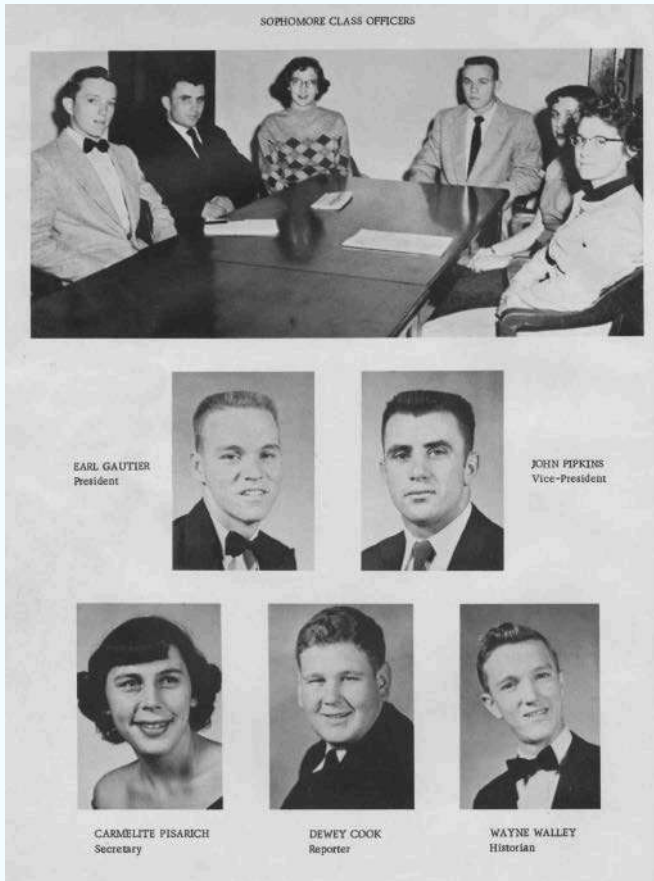
As we mourn the loss of Earl Denson Gautier's passing, we find comfort in the enduring inspiration he leaves behind for future MGCCC students. The MGCCC family honors Earl's memory and extends heartfelt condolences to his loved ones, knowing his legacy will continue to illuminate paths for generations to come.

Memorial Donations:

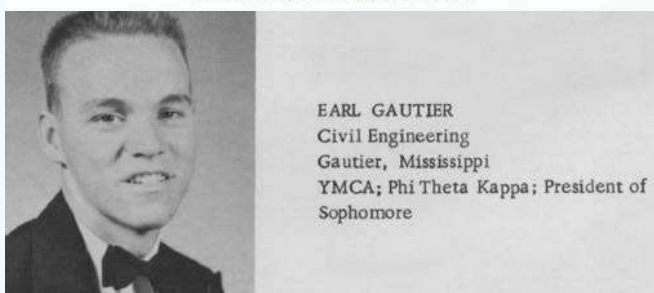
Tribute Name: Earl Denson Gautier

Donate:

[mgccc.edu/memorial-donations](http://mgccc.edu/memorial-donations)



Perkinston Jr. College 1953-1954



# Dr. Willis H. Lott Scholarship for Excellence

Congratulations to, Kirsten Willis, our 2023-2024 scholarship recipient for the Dr. Willis H. Lott Scholarship for Excellence!

Recipients of this scholarship must be full-time students, show proven leadership, and achieve a 3.5 GPA or higher. Kirsten has an area of interest in Business Administration at MGCCC, and she has achieved the President's List for the Fall and Spring semesters this year. Kirsten has shown grit and dedication through working two jobs while being a member of the Reflections Team and a member of Phi Theta Kappa. After college, Kirsten plans to possibly open a day-care or own a dance studio. The goals Kirsten has set for herself will be achievable thanks to the Willis H. Lott Scholarship for Excellence!

Foundation Scholarships:  
Paige Cannon  
[paige.cannon@mgccc.edu](mailto:paige.cannon@mgccc.edu)  
[mgccc.edu/alumni/foundation-scholarships](https://mgccc.edu/alumni/foundation-scholarships)



## Giving Back to Gulf Coast!

You have the opportunity to invest in the lives of Gulf Coast students and positively impact the communities within the MGCCC district (Jackson, Harrison, George, and Stone counties).

Investing in Gulf Coast means providing students with greater access to an education and empowering students and employees to achieve greatness.

MGCCC Foundation Scholarship Donations:  
[mgccc.edu/mgccc-foundation](https://mgccc.edu/mgccc-foundation)





## 2024 INSTRUCTORS OF THE YEAR & L.N. DANZTLER DIFFERENCE MAKERS

### MGCCC INSTRUCTORS OF THE YEAR



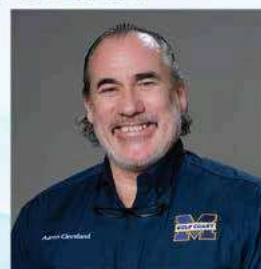
**LESLIE LYONS, MSN, RN**  
BRYANT CENTER



**SANDRA L. PETERSON**  
HARRISON COUNTY CAMPUS



**KATHERINE JELLUM**  
PERKINSTON CAMPUS



**AARON R. CLEVELAND**  
JACKSON COUNTY CAMPUS

### MGCCC L.N. DANTZLER DIFFERENCE MAKERS



**DEBORAH MURPHY**  
COMMUNITY CAMPUS



**CLARENCE SLEDGE**  
GEORGE COUNTY CENTER



**XANDRA GARNER**  
HARRISON COUNTY CAMPUS



**LEANN IBARRA**  
JACKSON COUNTY CAMPUS

The Instructors of the Year and Difference Makers represent the very essence of excellence in education and service. Through their tireless efforts and commitment to student success, they have not only elevated the quality of teaching and learning at Gulf Coast but have also served as role models and mentors to countless individuals. Their passion, enthusiasm, and compassion are truly inspiring, and their impact resonates far beyond the confines of our campuses and centers.



# 2023 MGCCC ACHIEVEMENTS



PHI THETA KAPPA  
HONOR SOCIETY

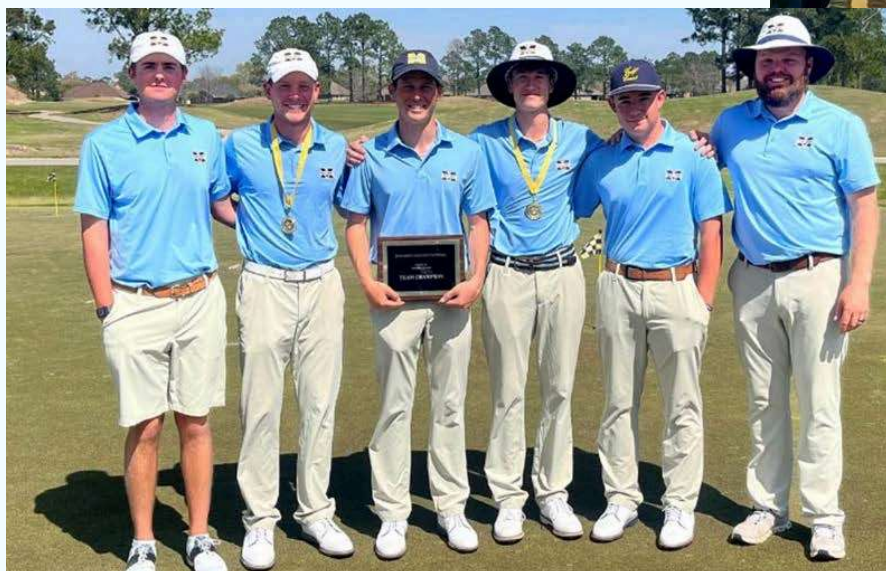
**MGCCC students  
received  
\$3.5 million in  
transfer scholarships**





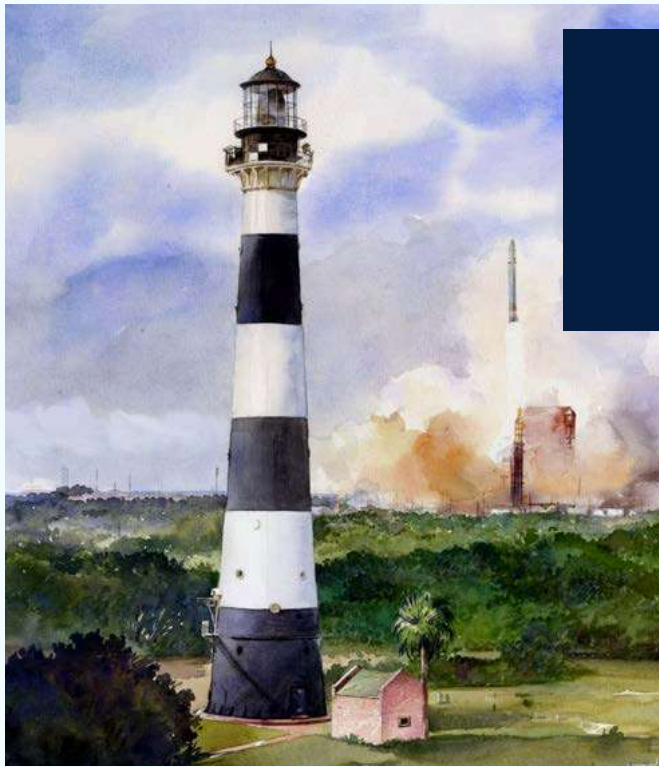
# Gulf Coast Athletics Rankings

- Women's Basketball: MACCC and NJCAA Region 23 champs, competed in the NJCAA Division I Women's Basketball Championship
- Men's Basketball: NJCAA Region 23 runners-up
- Golf: MACCC champs, ranked 1st nationally in the Bushnell Golfweek NJCAA Division II Coaches Poll and Scoreboard by Clippd computer rankings
- Women's Tennis: MACCC and NJCAA Region 23 runners-up, ranked 12th nationally, will compete in NJCAA Division I Women's Tennis Championship on May 4-8 in Tyler, Texas
- Men's Tennis: MACCC runners-up, ranked 13th nationally, competing in NJCAA Region 23 Championship this week in Ellisville, MS
- Baseball: Tied for 6th in MACCC standings
- Softball: 6th in MACCC standings



MGCCC Athletics:  
[mgcccbulldogs.com](http://mgcccbulldogs.com)





# Celebrating Love, Legacy, and Lifelong Connections

Hely Saul González is a model of dedication, leadership, and excellence. These qualities are evident throughout his career that includes working as a project manager, contracting officer, and general engineer for the U.S. Space Force in Cape Canaveral, FL. As an MGCCC alum, González not only received a solid educational foundation but also found lifelong connections and laid the groundwork for his remarkable journey.

Graduating with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Construction Management from MGCCC's Jefferson Davis Campus in 1995, González embarked on a path marked by unyielding commitment to service and continuous pursuit of knowledge. His time at MGCCC was not just about academic achievements; it laid the cornerstone of lasting relationships and family bonds, as he met his wife, Angela Christine, during his tenure at the college. Angela graduated from MGCCC as a practical nurse. After 30 years of marriage, the couple has five children. Their daughter Amber is also an alumna of the college.

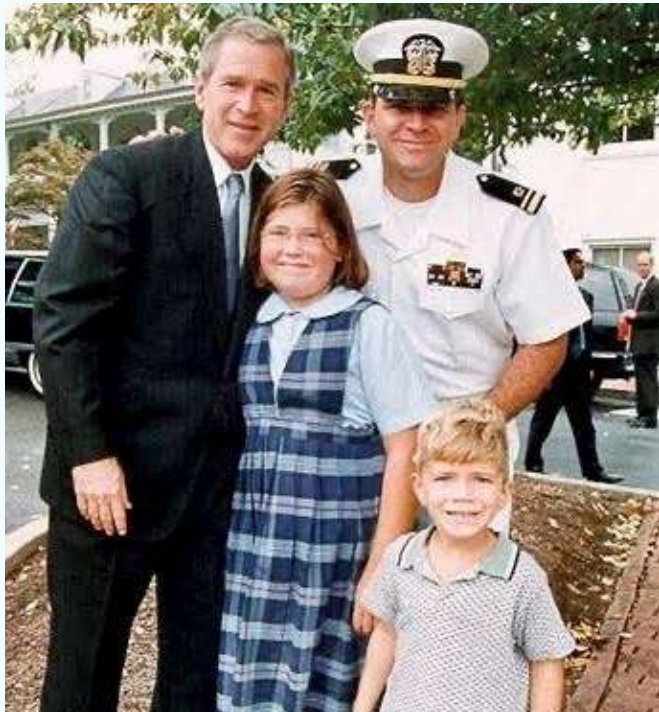
González says that MGCCC has continued to play an important role in their lives. "MGCCC means everything to our family," he said. "It served as our foundation and guaranteed our future successes."

Joining the U.S. Navy Seabees prior to college, he began a distinguished military career that spanned two decades. Rising through the ranks, he exhibited unparalleled dedication and expertise, earning numerous accolades, including the U.S. Army De Fleury Medal and the Seabee Combat Warfare Officer designation.

After his honorable discharge from the military, he transitioned seamlessly into civilian life, blending his extensive military experience with his academic background. Armed with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of Mississippi and a Crummer School of Business, Executive master's degree in business administration from Rollins College, he ventured into project management and engineering.

His extensive list of skills, including Defense Acquisition Improvement Act certifications in various fields, underscores his dedication to professional development and mastery of his craft. His proficiency in cultural resources management, risk management, and program/project management reflects his commitment to excellence in every facet of his career.

Beyond his professional achievements, González remains deeply connected to his alma mater, recognizing the role MGCCC played in shaping his life's trajectory. His commitment to giving back to the community and fostering educational opportunities for future generations exemplifies his enduring gratitude towards MGCCC.



Join the Alumni Association!  
Tharessa Williams  
Alumni & Event Coordinator  
[tharessa.williams@mgccc.edu](mailto:tharessa.williams@mgccc.edu)

Written By: Kathy McAdams





# Celebrating Success: 5th Annual In The Blue Athletics Event

The 5th Annual In the Blue athletics event held at the Hospitality Resort Management Center on February 2, 2024, was a testament to collaboration and excellence. We honored our Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2023 and our esteemed 2024 In the Blue award recipient, celebrating their remarkable contributions to our athletic legacy.

This event was made possible through a partnership between the athletics department, the alumni association, and the foundation, highlighting the collective effort to support our athletic programs.

Throughout the evening, we recognized the outstanding achievements of coaches, student-athletes, and supporters that make Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College the top community college in the country! MGCCC Alumnus, Isaac Brown, our guest speaker, shared inspiring insights, adding depth to the celebration.

We extend our sincere thanks to our sponsors and supporters whose generosity ensures the continued success of our college and its athletic endeavors. The 5th annual In the Blue athletics event was a resounding success, underscoring our commitment to excellence and collaboration.

Pictured Left to Right: Dr. Ladd Taylor (Perk Campus, Vice President), Stacie Davis (Women's Basketball), Gary Bourgeois (Tennis), Aubrey Matthews (Football), Lloyd E. Seymour, Jr. (Football), Kevin & Teresa Taylor (accepting for In the Blue Recipient, Dr. James Holmes), Dr. Mary S. Graham (President of MGCCC), Ashlee Nodhturft-Scott (Softball), Tee McCovey (Men's Basketball), Brice Wilkinson (Golf), Danny Anderson (Bulldog Hall of Honor), Joey Butler (Baseball), Steven Campbell (Dean of Athletics)







MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# ALUMNI HALL OF FAME 2024

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS!**

NOMINATIONS DUE BY JUNE 12, 2024  
[MGCCC.EDU/HALLOFFAME](http://MGCCC.EDU/HALLOFFAME)

SAVE THE DATE!  
HOMECOMING 2024 • OCTOBER 26

## Nominate an Outstanding Alum!

Take a moment to nominate a  
deserving Gulf Coast Alum at  
[mgccc.edu/halloffame](http://mgccc.edu/halloffame)!

For more information, contact  
Tharessa Williams  
601.928.6344  
[tharessa.williams@mgccc.edu](mailto:tharessa.williams@mgccc.edu).

## Tell Me Something Good! Alumni Spotlight

Are you an MGCCC Alum? Have you  
started a new job, recently married, or do  
you have other exciting news?

“Tell Me Something Good” for a chance to  
be featured on the Alumni/Foundation  
Facebook page.

Submit your good news to:

[alumni@mgccc.edu](mailto:alumni@mgccc.edu)

Facebook: [facebook.com/mgccc alumni](https://facebook.com/mgccc alumni)







## IMPORTANT DATES & UPCOMING EVENTS

**NOW OPEN ..... Alumni Hall of Fame Nominations**

Vote Today: [mgccc.edu/halloffame](http://mgccc.edu/halloffame)

**NOW OPEN ..... Rock the Registration: Summer & Fall**

Open April 1 - Spring & Summer

Register Today: [mgccc.edu/registration](http://mgccc.edu/registration)

**NOW OPEN ..... Foundation Scholarship Applications**

Apply Today: [mgccc.edu/alumni/foundation-scholarships](http://mgccc.edu/alumni/foundation-scholarships)

**MAY 8-9 ..... MGCCC Graduations**

Adult Education Graduation : May 8 at 7 p.m.

Nursing and Health Sciences Pinning & Recognition Ceremony : May 9 at 9 a.m.

College-Wide Commencement : May 9 at 2:30 p.m.

Watch Live: [mgccc.edu/graduation](http://mgccc.edu/graduation)



# YOUR ALUMNI & FOUNDATION TEAM



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