



President's Report

2025-2026 ANNUAL COLLEGE REVIEW



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from the president

As we reflect on another successful year at Copenhague-Lincoln Community College, I feel a deep sense of pride in all that we have accomplished together. From record-setting student success and enrollment growth to academic and athletic achievements, Co-Lin continues to build on its strong foundation while looking confidently toward the future.

This year, we welcomed more than 3,000 students to Co-Lin—the highest enrollment in many years. This growth is a direct reflection of the dedication of our faculty and staff and their commitment to helping our students reach their goals.

Our academic divisions and career-technical programs continue to prepare students for success, whether they are entering the workforce or continuing their education at a university. This year, we added a new LPN-to-RN program, saw increased enrollment in many career-technical programs, and continued to expand opportunities to serve business and industry throughout our seven-county district through workforce training initiatives. Our adult education program also continues to grow, helping students successfully earn their high school equivalency diploma and pursue new opportunities.

Our students continued to excel beyond the classroom as well. Co-Lin Athletics added a new varsity sport, women's volleyball, which will play its inaugural season in the fall of 2026. The Lady Wolves softball team captured its third consecutive MACCC Conference Championship and the NJCAA Region 23 Championship. Our tennis programs also enjoyed historic seasons at the national level. These accomplishments, along with the achievements of our other athletic programs, continue to bring pride and recognition to Co-Lin.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on expanding opportunities for our students, strengthening our academic and workforce programs, enhancing our facilities, and continuing to grow enrollment. I am grateful to our Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, students, donors, alumni, and community partners whose continued support makes all of this possible. May God continue to bless Copenhague-Lincoln Community College.

Dewayne Middleton

President's Cabinet



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Projects Manager

The PACK is Growing!

“The continued success of our college is a direct reflection of the people who make up the Co-Lin family,” said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton.

Co-Lin celebrated a major milestone as enrollment for the Fall 2025 semester surpassed 3,000 students for the first time since 2019. Fall enrollment totaled 3,018 students enrolled across the college’s three campuses.

Enrollment at Co-Lin has been steadily increasing since the spring of 2023, marking a period of consistent growth. College leaders attribute this success to the dedication of Co-Lin’s students, the commitment of faculty and staff, and the support and vision of the administrative team and Board of Trustees.

“The continued success of our college is a direct reflection of

the people who make up the Co-Lin family,” said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “We are proud of our students, grateful to our faculty and staff, and thankful for the leadership and support of our Board of Trustees. Most importantly, we are honored by each student who has chosen Co-Lin as the place to further their education.”

Known as The Place To Be, Co-Lin serves students across south-west and central Mississippi by offering academic, career-technical, workforce, and adult education programs with a vibrant student life experience.





Bower Foundation funds state-of-the-art equipment to enhance student training

Thanks to a \$316,000 grant from the Bower Foundation, the college enhanced its Medical Radiologic Technology (MRT) and Respiratory Care Technology programs with new equipment that provides students with hands-on experience using technology found in today's healthcare facilities.

The MRT Program purchased a Fuji Persona C Mobile Fluoroscopy System and a Samsung GM85 Digital Mobile X-ray System. The Fuji Persona C is a mobile C-arm system that provides real-time X-ray imaging during medical procedures, while the Samsung GM85 is a portable digital X-ray system used to capture diagnostic images in clinical settings. Co-Lin is currently the only radiologic technology program in Mississippi to provide students with training on a Fuji flat-panel C-arm system or a Samsung GM85.

"These additions represent a significant investment in the education and future success of our students," said Co-Lin radiography program director Kelly Fenwick. "Providing access to advanced imaging technology allows our students to develop confidence and

competency before their clinical rotations. By training on equipment that mirrors what they will encounter in the workforce, our graduates are better prepared to meet the expectations of their future employers."

"These additions represent a significant investment in the education and future success of our students," said Co-Lin radiography program director Kelly Fenwick.

The Respiratory Care Technology Program added a Puritan Bennett™ 980 Series Ventilator to its training equipment. The ventilator provides mechanical respiratory support for patients who require assistance breathing and is designed for neonatal, pediatric and adult patients.

The addition of the ventilator gives respiratory care students hands-on experience with equipment used in critical-care environments, further preparing them for clinical rotations and careers in respiratory care.

The new equipment reflects Co-Lin's ongoing commitment to providing students with access to advanced technology and exceptional educational opportunities. Through investments such as these, Co-Lin continues to prepare graduates with the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to enter today's healthcare workforce.



\$18 million FEMA grant for safe room



The college has been awarded a major Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant to construct a new, large-scale safe room facility. The \$16,294,746 grant will be used for Phase II of construction on a nearly 35,000-square-foot standalone, multipurpose safe room on the Wesson Campus. An additional \$175,000 administrative grant was awarded for the project, bringing the total FEMA investment in the project to just over \$18 million, which includes a nearly \$1.6 million planning and design grant awarded in 2024.

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“We’ve been through enough severe storms in Mississippi to understand the value of safe rooms. I’m pleased with these FEMA hazard mitigation grants to create more safe spaces in our state,” said U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith, who serves on the Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee that has jurisdiction over FEMA.

Co-Lin’s new multi-use facility will accommodate more than 2,000 occupants. In addition to serving as a safe room

for the community, the facility will include a gymnasium to house the college’s basketball and volleyball programs.

“The safety of our students, employees, and community is always a top priority for Co-Lin,” said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “This project will provide a secure shelter during severe weather while also creating a first-class facility for our student-athletes and campus community. We are especially grateful to U.S. Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith for her continued leadership and strong support of Co-Lin, the community college system, and the people of Mississippi. Her commitment to strengthening our institutions and investing in projects like this makes a meaningful difference for our students and communities. We also extend our sincere appreciation to FEMA and our federal delegation for supporting a project that will serve our college and the surrounding community for generations. In addition, we greatly appreciate the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for its assistance and support in helping make this important project a reality.”



Ellis Hall renovation to add 64 new beds to campus housing

Renovations on Josie G. Ellis Hall are well-underway, marking a major investment in campus housing and the overall student experience.

The approximately \$6 million project will provide a complete overhaul of Ellis Hall, located behind the Ewing Administration Building, adding space for 64 students to Co-Lin’s campus housing options.

The project is designed to modernize the 10,000-square-foot, two-story building constructed in 1939 while expanding residential capacity to better serve current and future students.

Each room will have two beds and a private bathroom. An apartment for the residence life advisor will be located on each floor. Renovations will also include converting the building from exterior-entry access to interior-entry access, enhancing security and safety for students.

College officials say the Ellis Hall renovation reflects Co-Lin’s continued commitment to improving campus facilities and creating a welcoming, modern environment for students.

“Campus housing plays a vital role in student success and engagement,” said President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “The renovation of Ellis Hall allows us to expand our housing capacity while providing updated, high-quality living spaces that meet the needs of today’s students.”

Major Design Studio Architects in Columbus is serving as the architect for the project, with Paul Jackson & Son of Brookhaven selected as the contractor.



SIMPSON COUNTY CENTER

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Years of Service

The Simpson County Center celebrated 20 years of serving students and communities in Simpson County and beyond! From Hurricane Katrina to the 2008 recession, from classrooms packed with students to COVID-era virtual assignments and the expansion of the campus footprint, the Simpson County Center has seen a lot in its first twenty years! Many business partners, elected officials, alumni, retirees, donors, and Co-Lin supporters joined in on the special celebration held in August of 2025.



Co-Lin expands nursing opportunities in Simpson County with new LPN-to-RN program

The college launched a new Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to Registered Nurse (RN) Accelerated Track Program at the college's Simpson County Center that welcomed the first class in the summer of 2026.

"The launch of the LPN-to-RN program at the Simpson County Center reflects our continued commitment to addressing the critical healthcare needs of our district," President Dr. Dewayne Middleton stated. "We are proud to offer a pathway that empowers working nurses to advance their education and careers while staying rooted in their local communities. This program is more than an academic opportunity; it's an investment in the future of healthcare in Simpson County and beyond."

The new program offers a streamlined pathway for current LPNs—who have at least one year of nursing experience—to earn a Registered Nurse credential in just three semesters. Graduates will then be eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN® licensure exam.

"I am beyond excited about this new addition to our campus

offerings," said Dr. Anika Floyd, Vice President of Co-Lin's Simpson County Center. "We are planting seeds of hope, stability, and strength that will benefit families for generations to come. This program is more than a degree- it is a door to greater purpose, service, and impact by allowing working LPNs to further their careers and deepen their calling to serve."



Nursing Accreditation

Co-Lin's Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) and Practical Nursing programs have both received full accreditation, reaffirming the quality and effectiveness of the college's nursing education programs.

The ADN and Practical Nursing programs prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and hands-on experience needed to enter the nursing profession and provide quality patient care. Receiving full accreditation demonstrates that both programs meet established standards for nursing education and reflects the dedication of Co-Lin's nursing faculty to providing students with a strong foundation for successful careers in healthcare.

"Maintaining accreditation for both our Associate Degree Nursing and Practical Nursing programs is a tremendous accomplishment," said Dr. Dewayne Middleton, Co-Lin president. "This recognition reflects the hard work of our faculty, staff, and students and our continued commitment to providing high-quality nursing education. We are proud to prepare skilled healthcare professionals who will serve communities throughout Mississippi and beyond."



Co-Lin receives Federal Grant



Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton received a ceremonial check in the amount of \$225,000 from District 2 Representative Bennie G. Thompson as part of the 2025–2026 Community Project Special Appropriations.

The federal funding will support facility improvements and community revitalization initiatives at the college, strengthening infrastructure and expanding opportunities for students and residents throughout the region.

Dr. Middleton expressed appreciation for the federal support, noting that the funds will play a critical role in advancing campus improvements and community-focused projects designed to foster economic development and educational excellence.

"We are so appreciative of the continued support of our legislators on both the state and federal level," said Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. "As our college continues to grow, we rely on funding opportunities such as this to continue to enhance the college experience for Co-Lin students."



2025 Great College to Work For

Co-Lin is one of the best colleges in the nation to work for, according to the Great Colleges to Work For® program.

The results were released in a special insert of The Chronicle of Higher Education and were based on a survey of nearly 200 colleges and universities across the nation. In all, 76 of those institutions achieved “Great College to Work For” recognition for specific best practices and policies.

Co-Lin won honors in six categories:

- Job Satisfaction & Support
- Mission & Pride
- Compensation & Benefits
- Professional Development
- Confidence in Senior Leadership
- Faculty & Staff Well-being

In addition to selection in these six categories, the college also earned special distinction as an Honor Roll institution. The Honor Roll designation is awarded to the top 10 four-year

colleges and top 4 two-year colleges in each size group that are recognized in the greatest number of categories. This is Co-Lin’s seventh time being recognized as a Great College to Work For, and the third time with Honor Roll distinction.



“This recognition reflects the incredible people who make up the Co-Lin family,” said President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to serving students, supporting one another, and carrying out our mission day in and day out. To be named not only a Great College to Work For, but also to earn Honor Roll distinction, is evidence of the pride, purpose, and teamwork that defines Co-Lin.”

Out of the 15 community colleges in Mississippi, Co-Lin was one of only two community colleges who achieved Great College to Work For status.



Wolf Hollow upgrades

The back nine holes at Wolf Hollow Golf Course have undergone renovations to improve the playing surfaces and overall course conditions. The project included removing the existing turf from the greens, reshaping and softening contours, adding clean sand to each green surface, before the greens were replanted with Tifdwarf Bermuda grass sprigs. New concrete cart paths were also added through select areas of the course. With the back nine renovations now complete, work will soon begin on the front nine holes and cart paths.

New Artificial Intelligence lab

The college’s Natchez Campus is expanding its commitment to workforce education and innovation with the opening of a new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Lab during the Fall 2026 semester. The lab is part of a larger initiative made possible through AccelerateMS’s Mississippi Artificial Intelligence Talent Accelerator Program (MAI-TAP), which is designed to equip students with foundational AI knowledge and practical skills that complement their technical education.

The AI Lab will support instruction across multiple career-technical programs, giving students opportunities to explore how artificial intelligence is being used in their respective fields. Students will learn how AI can improve productivity, solve problems, analyze data, enhance decision-making and support innovation in real-world workplace settings.

Rather than replacing traditional technical education, the lab will strengthen it by helping students understand how emerging technologies can be applied across a variety of industries, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, transportation, information technology, business and the skilled trades. Students will have access to industry-relevant technology and software as they develop foundational AI competencies alongside the technical skills required in their chosen professions.

“Artificial intelligence is no longer a technology of the future—it is part of the workforce today,” said Dr. Dewayne Middleton. “Our responsibility is to ensure



that our students graduate prepared for the careers they are entering. This new AI Lab will give our students the foundational knowledge and skills they need to adapt and succeed as technology continues to evolve. We are grateful to AccelerateMS for investing in initiatives like MAI-TAP that position Mississippi students and employers for long-term success.”

“Career and Technical Education has always been about preparing students with the skills employers need,” said Tiffany Woods, Natchez Campus Director of Career-Technical Education. “As industries continue to adopt artificial intelligence, it is important that our students understand how to use these tools responsibly and effectively within their professions. This lab will give students an opportunity to see how AI can enhance their work while continuing to build the technical skills that make them successful.”



*the place
to be!*



Hall of Fame Inductees



The college inducted ten outstanding students to the college's 2025-2026 Hall of Fame; six from the Wesson Campus, three from the Natchez Campus, and one from the Simpson County Center. The Hall of Fame is the most prestigious award given to a student and is voted on by students, faculty, and staff members. Only college sophomores are eligible for the honor and basis for selection includes fineness of character, superior scholarship, worthy leadership, and contribution to the betterment of Co-Lin.

Inductees from the Wesson Campus included Ellie Barrentine of Crystal Springs, Conner Cunningham of Brookhaven, Chrishuna Funches of Silver Creek, Dracy McNair of Meadville, Benson Schexnaydre of McCall Creek, and Olivia Vaughn of Union Church.

Barrentine was a member of Phi Theta Kappa, Mu Alpha Theta, Alpha Omega Science Club, Trailblazers, and the Baptist Student Union. A Co-Lin Presidential Scholar, she was selected to Who's Who. Barrentine also served as Captain of the Co-Lin Cheerleading squad.

A Co-Lin Presidential Scholar, **Cunningham** was se-

lected to Who's Who and served as President of the Eta Omega Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and Vice President of the Trailblazers. He was a member of the Alpha Omega

Science Club, Honors College, Future Business Leaders of America, Mu Alpha Theta, Council of Presidents, and the Baptist Student Union.

Funches was a member of the Trailblazers, Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Omega Science Club, and Mu Alpha Theta. She was selected to Who's Who and was a Co-Lin Foundation scholarship recipient. She served as an officer for Sigma Kappa Delta, Student Government Association, and Vice President of the Co-Lin Student Nurses' Organization.

McNair was selected to Who's Who and was a member of Phi Theta Kappa, the Alpha Omega Science Club, Mu Alpha Theta, Chess Club, and the Blue Wave Show Band percussion section. He earned a place on the President's List with a 4.0 GPA.

Schexnaydre served as Treasurer of Mu Alpha Theta, Public Affairs Officer for Co-Lin C.A.R.E.S and was selected to Who's Who. He was a member of the Alpha Omega

Science Club, Phi Theta Kappa, Future Business Leaders of America, Honors College, Baptist Student Union, Trailblazers, Chess Club, and Wolf Pack Strong. He was elected by his peers as a Campus Favorite. In addition, Schexnaydre is a six-time Mississippi Chess Champion and U.S. Chess Master.

Vaughn served as President of Mu Alpha Theta, President of the Trailblazers, Vice President of the Student Government Association, and Treasurer of Co-Lin C.A.R.E.S. She was a member of the Alpha Omega Science Club, Wolf Pack Strong, Council of Presidents, Phi Theta Kappa, Honors College, Future Business Leaders of America, and the Blue Wave Show Band. She was selected as a Campus Favorite and to Who's Who.

Inductees from the Natchez Campus included Christian Harris, Carrie Russell, and Christopher Spencer, all of Natchez.

Harris was selected to the Phi Theta Kappa All-Mississippi Academic Team and received the prestigious Golden Key Award for Phi Theta Kappa. He was named to Who's Who and earned a placed on the President's List with a 4.0 GPA. Harris served as President of the Alpha Alpha Zeta chapter of Phi Theta Kappa.

Russell was selected to Who's Who and earned a placed on the President's List with a 4.0 GPA. She was elected by her peers as sophomore Campus Favorite and served as President of the Student Government Association. Russell was also selected as a William Winter Scholar for the Natchez Literary and Cinema Celebration.

Spencer was a member of the Alpha Alpha Zeta chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and earned a placed on the President's List with a 4.0 GPA and was selected to Who's Who. He served as President of the Trailblazers and was elected by his peers as Mr. Co-Lin Natchez Campus.

Inducted into the Simpson County Center Hall of Fame was Ariana Gaspar.

Gaspar served as President of the Student Government Association and President of Phi Theta Kappa. She was a member of the Trailblazers, Alpha Omega Bible Club, and Mu Alpha Theta. She was a Co-Lin Foundation scholarship recipient and was elected as a homecoming maid. Gaspar was selected to Who's Who and was elected by her peers as Miss Co-Lin for the Simpson County Center.





From left, fourth alternate Kinsley Smith, first alternate Brianna Brown, Most Beautiful Maggie Runnels, second alternate Avery Sellers, and third alternate Ryleigh Rushing.

Maggie Runnels crowned 2025 Most Beautiful

Co-Lin's annual Trillium Beauty Pageant saw 19 young women competing for the title of Co-Lin's Most Beautiful. Maggie Runnels of Wesson was crowned the 2025 Most Beautiful with first alternate Brianna Brown of Hazlehurst, second alternate Avery Sellers of Wesson, third alternate Ryleigh Rushing of Meadville, and fourth alternate Kinsley Smith of Brookhaven.

A biology major, Runnels was a member of the Eta Omega Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, Sigma Kappa Delta English honor society, and the Co-Lin Colettes. She was also a Taylor Presidential Scholar, the highest scholarship offered at the college. She is a graduate of Wesson Attendance Center and is the daughter of Todd and Amy Runnels.

Brown was a member of Mu Alpha

Theta, Wolf Pack Strong, Sigma Kappa Delta, and the Co-Lin CARES Club. She served as President of the Student Government Association, Vice President of the Trailblazers, Chief Marketing Officer for Future Business Leaders of America, and regional vice president for Phi Theta Kappa.

Sellers was a member of the Alpha Omega Science Club, Mu Alpha Theta, Trailblazers, and the Baptist Student Union.

Rushing was a member of Phi Theta Kappa, Sigma Kappa Delta, Mu Alpha Theta, the Co-Lin CARES Club, and the Trailblazers. She was also in the Baptist Student Union and a Co-Lin Colettes dancer.

Smith was a member of the Co-Lin Cheerleading Squad and the Trailblazers.





Mr. & Miss Co-Lin Wesson Campus

Co-Lin sophomores Tyler Leggett of Wesson and Rebekah Girault of Hazlehurst were elected as Mr. and Miss Copiah-Lincoln Community College by their peers on the college's Wesson Campus.

During his time at Co-Lin, Leggett majored in Cybersecurity and was inducted into the Eta Omega Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and selected to Who's Who at Co-Lin. Leggett served as a Trailblazer and was named to the Honors List. A Foundation scholarship recipient, Leggett was also active in the Baptist Student Union.

Girault majored in business and was a two-year member of the Co-Lin Cheerleading squad. She was an active participant at the Baptist Student Union and was named second alternate in the 2024 Co-Lin Trillium Beauty Pageant.



Mr. & Miss Co-Lin Simpson County Center

Sophomores Manavmeet Walia and Ariana Gaspar were elected by their peers to represent the Simpson County Center. Walia majored in accounting and served as Vice President of Phi Theta Kappa. He was selected to Who's Who and was a member of Mu Alpha Theta. Gaspar served as President of Student Government Association and Phi Theta Kappa. She was a member of the Trailblazers, Mu Alpha Theta, and the Alpha Omega Bible Club. Gaspar was elected as a homecoming maid and named to Who's Who at Co-Lin.

Mr. & Miss Co-Lin Natchez Campus

Sophomores Christopher Spencer and Lakhiya Dunbar were elected to represent the Natchez Campus as Mr. and Miss Co-Lin Natchez. Spencer was a member of the Alpha Alpha Zeta Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and earned a place on the President's List with a 4.0 GPA. He was also selected to Who's Who and served as President of the Trailblazers. Dunbar was selected to Who's Who at Co-Lin and earned a place on the Honors List. She graduated from Co-Lin's welding program.





From left, Ariana Gaspar, Arijeanette McDonald, Brianna Brown, Jamesha Chandler, Queen Reagan Fortenberry, Lilly Channell, Kelis Daniels, Kahdreuna Jones, and Amber Wilson.

Homecoming Court

Reagan Fortenberry of Brookhaven was elected by the student body as 2025 Homecoming Queen. A pre-nursing major, she was a member of the Lady Wolves Soccer team and selected to Who's Who at Co-Lin. She was a member of the Trailblazers, Mu Alpha Theta, Phi Theta Kappa, Alpha Omega Science Club, and Sigma Kappa Delta. During her freshman year, she was a homecoming maid and earned a place on the President's List honor roll.



Mississippi's No. 1 Chess Player is a Co-Lin Wolf

Sophomore Benson Schexnaydre of McCall Creek is making Mississippi chess history. Already the highest-rated player in the state, he claimed the Mississippi Chess Championship title for the sixth year in a row in 2025. In 2024, he earned his U.S. Chess Master title—becoming the first Mississippian since at least the 1980s to achieve the designation and the only homegrown player in the state to ever reach master status.

Schexnaydre's chess journey began in 2015 at Franklin County Chess in Meadville, a program that received national attention when it was featured on 60 Minutes in 2017. Funded by the late Wade Creekmore, the center has made a name for itself in the world of chess. Today, Schexnaydre serves as an assistant coach at the center working with second through 12th grade students—an experience he says is rooted in the generosity that shaped him.

"So many of the successes and personal growth I've experienced would not have happened without what he [Creekmore] did for me," he said. "Because of chess, I developed a hunger to learn more. I expanded my knowledge in academics, became healthier, traveled across the United States creating unforgettable memories, and grew into a better person—one who now understands the impact we can have on others and hopes to do so in my own way."

Chess has taken him across the country, with tournaments in California, Niagara Falls, Washington, D.C., Michigan, and Philadelphia, among others. Schexnaydre

also brought his expertise to the national stage when he served as a guest panelist at MINDSETS: The New York Chess in Education Conference, a sold-out event hosted by the National Scholastic Chess Foundation and the Kasparov Chess Foundation in New York City. The conference examined the role of chess in education, touching on curriculum, policy, and the benefits of learning through failure and play.

At Co-Lin, Schexnaydre was a Presidential Scholar and biomedical engineering major who was deeply involved on campus. He served as Treasurer of Mu Alpha Theta, Public Affairs Officer for Co-Lin C.A.R.E.S., and as a student recruiter with the Trailblazers. He was also active in the Chess Club, Alpha Omega Science Club, Future Business Leaders of America, Wolf Pack Strong, Phi Theta Kappa, and the Baptist Student Union.

He was named to Who's Who at Co-Lin and selected as a Campus Favorite by his peers. He earned a place on the President's List every semester, maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA. At the conclusion of the academic year, Schexnaydre was inducted into the college's Hall of Fame, the highest honor given to a student.

After Co-Lin, Schexnaydre plans to pursue an engineering degree at Mississippi State University and later attend medical school, with an interest in pediatrics. Reflecting on his time at Co-Lin, he keeps his message simple—"If I could do it all over again, I wouldn't change a single thing."

Choir Performs in New York City



Twenty-four members of the Co-Lin Choir traveled to New York City over Memorial Day weekend for the opportunity of a lifetime, performing a world premiere at the historic Carnegie Hall. The performance was the culmination of a two-year journey that began in 2024 when Co-Lin Director of Choral Activities Dr. Bobby Helms was invited to conduct at Carnegie Hall. Wanting to bring something original to the stage, Helms partnered with North Carolina composer Sherry Blevins to create *To Truly Love*, an original composition.

The Co-Lin Concert Choir joined three other ensembles, the Mississippi Boys Choir, Presbyterian Christian School Choir of Hattiesburg and First Baptist Church Choir of Tyler, Texas, for the concert. In addition to performing at Carnegie Hall, students had the opportunity to experience New York City, including a Broadway performance of *Death Becomes Her* and time exploring the city. For many choir members, the trip marked their first visit to New York City and their first opportunity to perform on a major stage.

The trip provided students with an unforgettable opportunity to represent Co-Lin on one of the world's most renowned stages while sharing their talent through the world premiere of *To Truly Love*.



FBLA students shine on national stage in Las Vegas

Students from Co-Lin's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter earned national recognition at the FBLA Collegiate National Leadership Conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada, with six of the college's ten competitors placing among the top ten in the nation in their respective events.

Several Co-Lin students finished as the highest-ranked community college competitors in the country, competing against students from colleges and universities nationwide.

Thomas Baker of Brookhaven earned a sixth-place national finish in Foundations of Economics while Olivia Vaughn of Union Church placed seventh nationally in Project Management. They were the highest-ranked community college students in their event.

The team of Baker and Vaughn also placed eighth nationally in Business Presentation.

The team of Anna McKenzie of Smithdale, Clay Boyd of Bogue Chitto, and Jarvis Walker of Crystal Springs earned a seventh-place national finish in the Hospitality Management Case Competition. Additionally, Ethan Coleman of Meadville placed seventh nationally in Impromptu Speaking.

"Our students represented Co-Lin exceptionally well on the national stage," said Dr. Richard Baker, Vice President of Business Affairs and FBLA co-advisor. "To have multiple students finish as the highest-ranked community college competitors in the nation speaks volumes about their dedication, preparation, and talent. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments."

The FBLA Collegiate National Leadership Conference brings together some of the nation's top business students to compete in a variety of business, management, communication, and leadership events.

MSU Presidential Partnership Scholar



Conner Cunningham of Brookhaven was named a Mississippi State University (MSU) Presidential Partnership Scholarship recipient. The Presidential Partnership Scholarship will cover the cost of full-time tuition at MSU for two years, totaling over \$20,000. This scholarship is only for community college transfer students who are members of Phi Theta Kappa and have showcased academic excellence and leadership on campus. Recipients are nominated by the president at their community college and selected by the MSU Scholarship Committee.

“Co-Lin has given me the opportunities, foundation, and confidence needed to succeed at the next level,” said Cunningham. “Earning the Presidential Partnership Scholarship to Mississippi State University is an incredible honor, and I’m excited to pursue my mechanical engineering degree and continue chasing my goals. Co-Lin truly is The Place To Be.”

During his time at Co-Lin, Cunningham was highly involved in campus life. He served as President of the Eta Omega Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, and Vice President of the Trailblazers. He was a member of Mu Alpha Theta, Future Business Leaders of America, Alpha Omega Science Club, Council of Presidents,

and the Baptist Student Union.

Additionally, he maintained a 4.0 GPA and earned a place on the President’s List each semester. He was selected to Who’s Who at Co-Lin.

Sprayberry earns Disney Internship



Ashlyn Sprayberry of Harrisville was accepted into the Disney College Program at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Sprayberry, a recent Culinary Arts Technology graduate, began her paid internship in June.

Following the internship, Sprayberry hopes to continue working with Disney in a full-time role.

“I am so excited to start this new journey at Disney,” said Sprayberry. “I hope to stay at Disney for a few years and work full-time in one of the many Disney restaurants.”

Sprayberry said her experience at Co-Lin helped prepare her for the opportunity while also allowing her to

build lasting friendships and become involved on campus.

“My time in the Culinary Arts program has been great, and I have had so much fun meeting new friends,” she said. “I also loved playing my clarinet in the Blue Wave Show Band.”

Culinary Arts program director Abby Rials said Sprayberry is her fourth student over the past few years to be accepted into the Disney College Program.

“Ashlyn is an excellent student, and I have truly enjoyed having her in the program over the past two years,” said Rials. “I can’t wait to see where this opportunity takes her.”



Bishop named MLT student of the year

Co-Lin Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) student Whitney Bishop of Florence was named MLT Student of the Year at the annual American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science–Mississippi (ASCLS-MS) and Louisiana Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (LSCLS) Bi-State Meeting.

This statewide honor highlights her strong academic performance, leadership, and commitment to the laboratory science profession.

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science–Mississippi and Louisiana Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Bi-State Meeting brings together laboratory professionals, educators, and students for professional development, continuing education, and statewide recognition of outstanding achievements in the field.



Mu Alpha Theta national scholarship winners

Sophomores Benson Schexnaydre of McCall Creek and Olivia Vaughn of Union Church each won a \$4,000 scholarship awarded by the national mathematics honor society, Mu Alpha Theta. Only three community college students in the nation were selected for the prestigious scholarship to be used at the university of their choosing.

Eddie Britt, Mu Alpha Theta chapter advisor and mathematics/computer science division chair, had high praise for two of his top students.

“Benson is a dedicated and hardworking pre-engineering/pre-med major and a passionate chess player. He brings the same strategic mindset and discipline to his academic pursuits and campus life,” said Britt. “Benson demonstrates a strong commitment to service through his involvement with Operation Christmas Child, campus trash pickups, and his overall dedication to the Co-Lin community. His academic excellence, leadership, and genuine care for others make him a standout representative of Mu Alpha Theta’s values.”

“As former President of Mu Alpha Theta, Olivia demonstrated exceptional leadership, dedication, academic excellence, and a passion for promoting mathematics and STEM among her peers,” said Britt. “Her strong work ethic and commitment to excellence have distinguished her as an outstanding student and a role model within the Mu Alpha Theta community.”

Yarborough earns top MLT honors



During the annual American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science–Mississippi and Louisiana Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Bi-State Meeting, Medical Laboratory Technology Program Director Paula Yarborough of Bogue Chitto was selected as Member of the Year. She also received the Omicron Sigma Award for Service, a recognition presented to members who demonstrate exceptional dedication to advancing clinical laboratory science through volunteer service, professional involvement, and contributions to the field.

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science–Mississippi and Louisiana Society for Clinical Laboratory Science Bi-State Meeting brings together laboratory professionals, educators, and students for professional development, continuing education, and statewide recognition of outstanding achievements in the field.



Esch receives NISOD Excellence Award



Wesson Campus Diesel Equipment Technology Program Coordinator and Instructor Steven Esch received the 2026 NISOD Excellence Award. NISOD's Excellence Awards recognize men and women each year who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment and contribution to their students and colleagues. In 1989, in connection with a University of Texas at Austin national study of teaching excellence, NISOD hosted its first ceremony honoring NISOD Excellence Award recipients. The response to that ceremony was so positive that NISOD began what has become the largest and most inspiring gathering that recognizes the contributions and achievements of community and technical college faculty, administrators, and staff.

Esch has served in this role at the college since 2011.

Associate Vice President of Business Affairs



After 22 years of dedicated service to the college, Kina Leggett has been promoted to Associate Vice President of Business Affairs. During her career at Co-Lin, she has served in a variety of positions, including Bookstore Assistant, Credit Union Manager, Data Entry Clerk, Business Office Clerk, Accounts Receivables Manager, Business Manager/Senior Accountant, and Comptroller. Her extensive background and hands-on understanding of the college's financial operations have made her an invaluable member of the Business Affairs team.

"Kina has demonstrated integrity and leadership throughout her many years at Co-Lin," said President Dr. Dewayne Middleton. "Her deep understanding of our financial operations and her commitment to serving students and employees make her an outstanding fit for this role. We are proud of her accomplishments and look forward to the positive impact she will continue to make as Associate Vice President of Business Affairs."

A proud Co-Lin alumna, Leggett holds a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's degree in business administration. She is a graduate of the Mississippi Community College Leadership Academy (MCCLA) and the Community College Business Officers (CCBO) Leadership Academy. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for CCBO.

"I am beyond excited for Kina on her promotion to Associate Vice President," said Dr. Richard Baker, Vice President of Business Affairs. "She is the model of dedication and pursues excellence in everything she does. She is an incredible asset to the college, and Co-

Lin is a better institution because of her."

Leggett is married to Avery Leggett Sr., and they have four children: Shabriana, Avery Jr., Tyler, and Taylor. She is also the mother-in-law of Sha'Kera and the proud grandmother of Greyson Avery and Novi Claire. She attends Home Seeker's Bible Church.

Special Recognitions



HUMANITIES INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR

Jackie Mardis, Natchez Campus Psychology Instructor, was honored as the 2026 Humanities Council Instructor of the Year. Her presentation, “Home to Homeroom: How Parenting Styles Shape Student Behavior,” was given as part of the award ceremony.



LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Allison Dann, Coordinator of Housing and Student Life, completed the 2025-2026 Mississippi Community College Leadership Academy. The year-long program focuses on networking and community college leadership development.



PTK FACULTY SCHOLAR

Dr. Megan Winborne, Science Division Chair and Instructor, was named the 2025 Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Scholar. The annual award was presented by the Eta Omega Chapter officers during the Wesson Campus back-to-school meeting.



POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Dr. Anika Floyd, Vice President of the Simpson County Center, completed the Mississippi Policy Fellowship Program, a year-long program focused on leadership, advocacy, and state and federal policy.



TECHNOLOGIST OF THE YEAR

Kelly Fenwick, Medical Radiologic Technology Program Director, was named the 2025 Technologist of the Year at the 83rd annual Mississippi Society of Radiologic Technologists Conference.



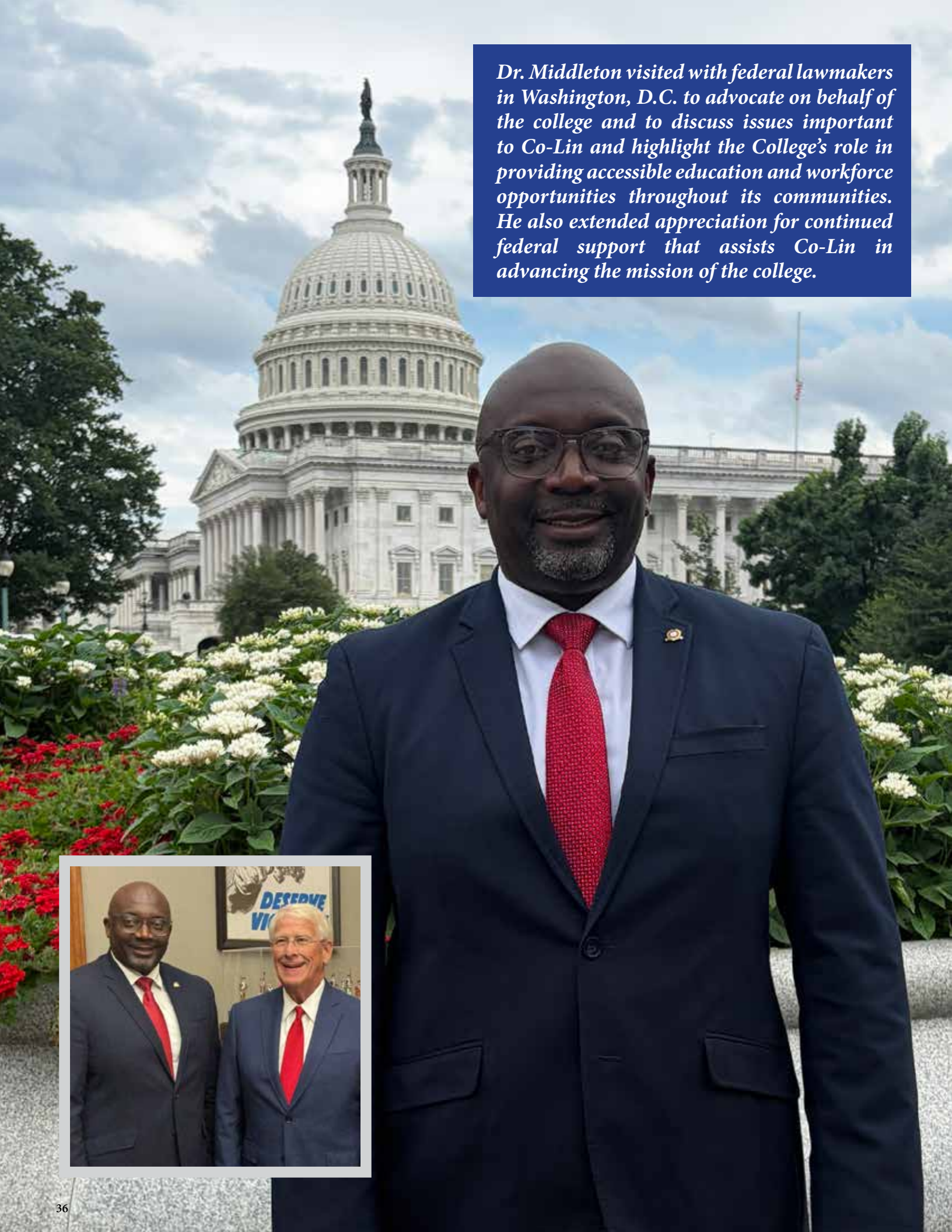
EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Margaret Britt (center), Computer Science Instructor, was name Educator of the Year by the Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce.



MCCB LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Kelly Fenwick, Medical Radiologic Technology Program Director, completed the Mississippi Community College Board Leadership Academy.



Dr. Middleton visited with federal lawmakers in Washington, D.C. to advocate on behalf of the college and to discuss issues important to Co-Lin and highlight the College's role in providing accessible education and workforce opportunities throughout its communities. He also extended appreciation for continued federal support that assists Co-Lin in advancing the mission of the college.



Children's Advocacy Partnership



Co-Lin continues to build on its partnership with the Southwest Mississippi Children's Advocacy Center. As part of the ongoing partnership, two Co-Lin students, Lilliana Baker and Shakira Tillman (left), completed paid internships with the Center, gaining valuable hands-on experience while supporting its mission to serve children and families. Co-Lin also continues to recognize Child Abuse Prevention Month each April by hosting a Pinwheel Garden, representing children served by the Center. 638 children were served by the Southwest Mississippi Children's Advocacy Center over the past year, highlighting the meaningful impact of this continued partnership.



William Carey Partnership



Members of Co-Lin's leadership team met with William Carey University's administrative team to discuss future plans to increase transfer opportunities and scholarships for students.

Upward Bound Program



Co-Lin's Upward Bound programs help prepare high school students for success beyond graduation by providing academic support, college preparation and opportunities to experience campus life. The programs, located on the Wesson Campus and at the Simpson County Center, serve students from low-income families and those who may be the first in their families to attend college. Upward Bound is funded by the U.S. Department of Education through the federal TRIO programs.

Through tutoring, college entrance exam preparation, career exploration, financial aid guidance and academic advising, Upward Bound gives students the tools and confidence to pursue higher education. Participants also benefit from academic enrichment activities, personal development opportunities and an on-campus residential experience that introduces them to college life. Together, Co-Lin's two Upward Bound programs serve 120 students from eight area high schools, helping create a pathway from high school to college and encouraging students to pursue and complete postsecondary education.



Future Wolves

Co-Lin is proud to be a place where our communities come together, with opportunities for children and families throughout the year. From summer camps to community events like Trunk-or-Treat, our campuses stay active and welcoming for families across the district. These experiences allow kids to discover all that the college has to offer and prepares them to be a Co-Lin Wolf along the way!





Winners Wear Blue

The Co-Lin Lady Wolves Softball team delivered another historic season, finishing with a 50-7 overall record while capturing its third consecutive MACCC Championship, the NJCAA Region 23 Championship, and finished fifth in the nation.

The Lady Wolves clinched the conference title by sweeping Holmes Community College on the final day of the regular season and earning the No. 1 seed in the Region 23 Tournament.

Co-Lin continued its dominance in post-season play, defeating Southwest, Northwest, and Southwest once again to secure a fourth straight appearance in the Region 23 Championship game and a fourth consecutive berth in the NJCAA Division II National Tournament. The Lady Wolves hosted and claimed the Region 23 Championship in dramatic fashion, as the No. 4 Lady Wolves and No. 5 Wildcats needed extra innings to decide the game where the Lady Wolves earned a 3-2 walk off victory in nine innings.

The defending national champion Co-Lin Softball team began their title defense at the NJCAA Division II National Tournament by facing off against Parkland. The Lady Wolves dominated the game with an 8-0 walk off win. Next was a winner's bracket game against St. John's River State College where the Lady Wolves dominated the Vikings for a 10-2 victory. The

Lady Wolves next game against Murray State in the winner's bracket took over two days to play due to a lengthy weather delay and the Lady Aggies beat the Lady Wolves 21-16, sending the team to the loser's bracket. The Lady Wolves then played Jones in an elimination game with the Bobcats winning 5-3, ending the season at fifth in the nation.

Co-Lin concluded its outstanding season with record-breaking numbers in single-season home runs and run-rule victories.

Among their many post-season accolades, the Lady Wolves finished the year with a 3.80 team GPA, the highest among all softball programs in the MACCC. Brellie Phillips of Conehatta was named MACCC Player of the Year, NJCAA All-American, NFCA All-American, and CSC Academic All-American. Morgan Chisolm of Madison was named NJCAA All-American, while Ayari VanBlaircom of Daphne, Alabama was named NJCAA All-American and NFCA All-American. Addison Lindley of Madison was

named NFCA All-American and CSC Academic All-American. Additionally, Head Coach Meleah Howard won Gulf District A Coach of the Year.



Freshman Annie Poole of Brookhaven (left) and sophomore Emilie Williams of Summit received the prestigious NFCA/Rawlings Gold Glove Award, the first time in school history with two recipients in the same season.





Wolf Pack claims South Division



Boswell



Mitchell



Chambers

Under first-year head coach Micah Davis, Co-Lin Football ended the season 8-2 overall and as South Division Co-Champions after hosting the MACCC Semifinals with a Top-5 matchup against Northwest on Saturday, November 8. The No. 4 Rangers outlasted the No. 5 Wolves, 28-27.

The 2025 Wolves had 14 players earn post-season honors including three All-Americans.

Martavious Boswell, Kamron Pittman, Jarmaine Mitchell, Lonnie Smith, Rakeem Davis, Doug Nelson, and Archie Chambers all earned All-MACCC First Team Honors while Ty Jones, Jermarj Bell, Edarius Green, Jakolby Jones, Trenton Rocker, and Tre Webb earned All-MACCC Second Team honors with Jaylen Pettway and Ty Jones taking Honorable Mention. Boswell, Mitchell, Davis, Nelson, and Chambers also earned Region 23 honors.

Martavious Boswell, a native of Fort Worth, Texas, had a season for the record books for the Wolves as he became just one of three players in program history to eclipse the 1000-yard rushing mark. Boswell had 1,109 yards on 130 rushes with 13 touchdowns averaging 110.9 yards per game and 8.5 yards per carry and was top three in both the MACCC and the NJCAA in those categories. He was named MACCC South Division Offensive Player of the Year, Region 23 Player of the Year, and NJCAA Second Team All-American.

Jarmaine Mitchell, a native of Lutchter, Louisiana, was the left tackle anchor for the Wolves offensive line. That unit led an offense that averaged 410.9 yards per game, 227.8 rushing and 183.1 passing, along with 32.5 points per game. Mitchell was named NJCAA First Team All-American and NJCAA All-Region 23 honors.

Archie Chambers, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, made the most of his one season with the Wolves playing in all ten games as a linebacker. He led the team in tackles totaling 68 with 4.5 tackles for loss along with one forced fumble, two interceptions, and two pass breakups. Chambers was named NJCAA Honorable Mention All-American and earned NJCAA All-Region 23 honors.



Women's Volleyball added to Athletics

The college announced the addition of women's volleyball as a varsity sport beginning in the Fall 2026 semester.



The new program adds new athletic opportunities for female student-athletes and further enhance the college's commitment to providing a well-rounded student experience.

"We are excited to add women's volleyball to our athletic programs at Co-Lin," said Bryan Nobile, Co-Lin Athletic Director. "This is a chance to grow women's athletics, compete at a high level, and add another exciting program for our fans and community to rally behind."

The volleyball program will compete in the Mississippi Association of Community Colleges Conference (MACCC) and the National

Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). With volleyball being one of the fastest-growing sports in Mississippi and across the country, Co-Lin officials believe the addition will attract talented student-athletes from across the college district and beyond.

Co-Lin President Dr. Dewayne Middleton said the decision reflects the college's mission to support students both in the classroom and through extracurricular opportunities.

"This is an exciting step for our athletic program and our entire college family," said Dr. Middleton. "We look forward to welcoming our first volleyball team in Fall 2026 and can't wait to see them represent the Wolf Pack."

Anna Nelson was tapped as the first head coach in program history. Nelson, a native of West Memphis, Arkansas, brings coaching and playing experience from multiple levels of volleyball from club all the way to Division I in the NCAA.



Tennis programs make history



It was a record-breaking year for Co-Lin's men's and women's tennis programs. The Lady Wolves boasted a historic season with the best finish in program history, placing third at the NJCAA National Championship in Sumter, South Carolina. The team also finished as runner-up in the MACCC and Region 23 Tournament. At the national tournament, the doubles pairing of Ruri Takeuchi of Japan and Ella Thompson of Brookhaven, MS made it to the finals of the No. 1 singles and No. 6 singles flights both earning national finalist and runner-up honors. Both Takeuchi and Thompson were named NJCAA Second Team All-Americans. Coach Brenda Smith was named Region III Women's Assistant Coach of the Year.

The men's team wrapped up the year with a fifth-place finish at the DII National Championship in Plano, Texas. The Wolves were also third overall in the MACCC and finished fourth in the Region 23 Tournament. Sophomore Nikoloz Gurgenidze of Georgia was named MACCC Singles Champion, MACCC Player of the Year, and Region III Sophomore of the Year. Nick Tozer of Australia was named Second Team All-American after his performance at the national tournament where he finished as a national finalist in No. 2 singles.



Seidemann earns bid to NJCAA Nationals



After finishing as a Region 23 medalist at the Gulf South District Tournament, sophomore golfer Max Seidemann of Germany earned a bid to the NJCAA National tournament held in Plymouth, Indiana where he represented Co-Lin well. Seidemann signed to continue his golf career at William Carey University.



Athletic Highlights

The Wolves Baseball team concluded the season in the NJCAA Region 23 tournament, finishing ranked No. 24 in the nation under new Head Coach Kyle Flessner. Wes White of Flowood was named NJCAA and ABCA All-American. Fourteen players signed to continue their baseball careers at the next level.



The Lady Wolves basketball team advanced to the Region 23 Quarterfinals for the first time since the 2021-22 season.

Under first year head coach JT Coward, the men's soccer team secured their fourth straight appearance in the NJCAA Gulf South District playoffs.





Wolves on the Move!

Recruitment at Co-Lin is a college-wide effort that happens year-round and extends far beyond traditional recruiting events. While our college recruiters actively connect with prospective students, our faculty, staff and Trailblazers work together to share the Co-Lin story. Our employees attend high school football games throughout our seven-county district, participate in college fairs and recruiting events, and build relationships with students, families, schools and communities. This outreach happens alongside daily campus tours and visits, ensuring Co-Lin is consistently present and accessible to prospective students and families.





Co-Lin Foundation celebrates two-million-dollar milestone



The Co-Lin Foundation received more than \$2 million in donations during the 2025-2026 fiscal year for the first time in its history.

The new milestone comes after the Foundation reached \$1 million in funds raised for the first time two years ago.

“Reaching one million in giving for the first time was an incredible achievement for us,” said Angela Furr, who has served as executive director of the Foundation since 2018. “Doubling that total in just two years is a testament to the generosity of our donors and the dedication of our Foundation staff, board members, and our whole team at Co-Lin. We are grateful to everyone who has helped make this milestone possible.”

This past year’s giving has assisted in unprecedented sup-

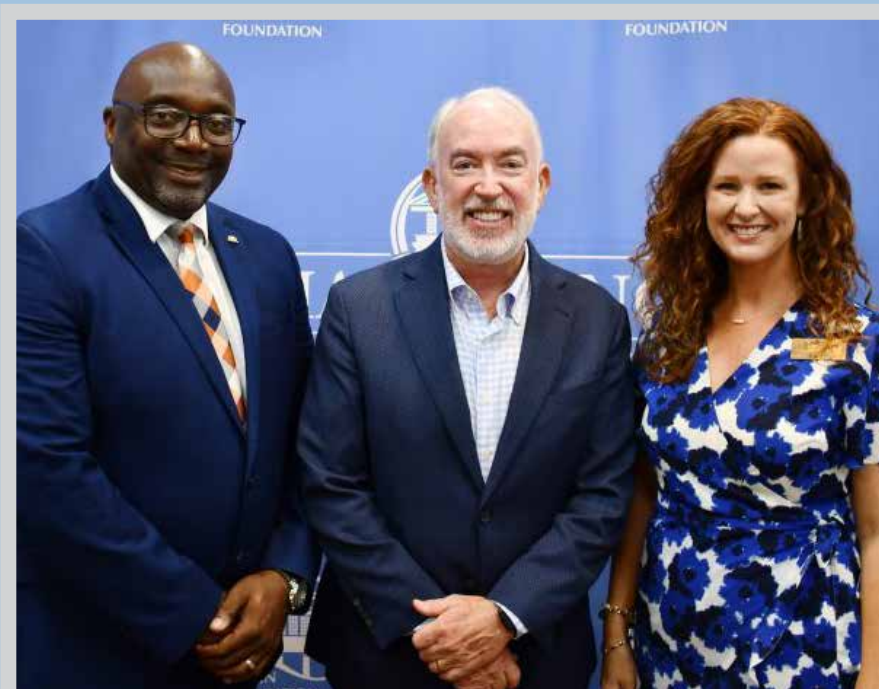
port for the college. During the year ending June 30, the Foundation awarded more than half a million dollars in scholarships to students and faculty, more than \$450,000 designated to athletics and another \$500,000 in other direct support of the college. Furr said she looks forward to seeing the Foundation provide even more support to the college in the coming years.

Gifts to the Foundation help make it possible for the college to continue creating new programs, providing scholarships to students, and making improvements to its campuses. State funding and tuition revenue does not cover all the costs associated with running the college, and the Foundation helps bridge those gaps, said Co-Lin president Dr. Dwayne Middleton.

“The Foundation and the generosity of our donors continue to play an essential role in the success of our college,” said Middleton. “Their support helps us respond to the evolving needs of our students and programs by providing scholarships, instructional support for both academic and career-tech programs and enhancing our technology and campus facilities. With their help, we can provide more opportunities and resources for our students and continue making Co-Lin The Place To Be.”



**SHOW YOUR
SUPPORT**
Donate Now!



Lightsey CARES Fund

Retired instructors Jim and Martha Lightsey donated a generous gift to establish the Lightsey CARES Fund. This fund will help support the student organization Co-Lin CARES, which stands for Child Advocacy Response and Education for Students. On hand for the presentation were (from left) Jim and Martha Lightsey, CARES Public Relations Chair Benson Schexnaydre, CARES Treasurer Olivia Vaughn, Foundation Executive Director Angela Furr and CARES Faculty Advisor Keith Stovall.

IMPACT Scholarship

Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, 20 outstanding students and their most impactful teachers were recognized at the Impact Scholarship reception. More than 140 students submitted essays detailing the impact their teachers had on their lives. The top 20 essay writers received a \$1,000 scholarship. Additionally, thanks to support from the Co-Lin Foundation Board and two corporate sponsors, Franklin Ready Mix and Bank of Brookhaven, the Foundation was also able to award each teacher a \$250 prize.

Bank of Brookhaven

The Bank of Brookhaven Scholarship was one of many new scholarships endowed with the Foundation over the year. The Bank of Brookhaven scholarship was established to benefit a graduate of Brookhaven School District, Lincoln County School District, or Brookhaven Academy.

“Over the years, the bank has tried to be a great corporate citizen, giving back not only by financially sponsoring events, but also through service to area churches and schools,” said Shannon Aker, bank president and Co-Lin Foundation board member. “I believe Co-Lin is a great option for students and a quality education.”

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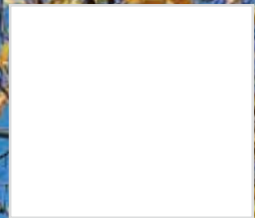
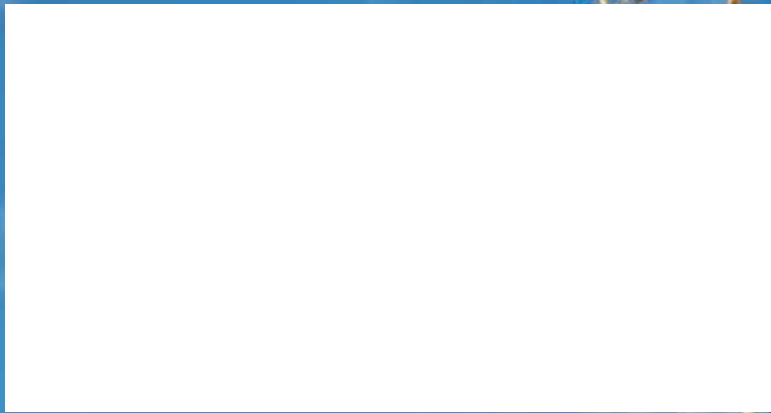


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