

# the loop

A quarterly magazine from Lewisville Independent School District

**SUMMER 2022**



Celebrate!  
**THE CLASS OF '22**



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To show our appreciation, we invite local senior citizens (60+) to be a part of an exciting group, the Senior Ambassador Program.



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# Summer stories

**DEAR READERS,** Welcome to the last issue of The Loop for the 2021-22 school year. There aren't words to express my profound gratitude for everyone in our school communities who have made my first semester as Superintendent something I will never forget. I've had so many exciting opportunities to meet countless new faces and reconnect with familiar ones, and I couldn't be more confident in saying LISD is the greatest school district in the state of Texas, all because of the students, staff, families and community who call us home.

Summer is a time of rest and relaxation for most, but for many of us in the district the work and preparation continues as we look forward to a new school year. Before we do, I would like to reflect on where we've come from.

This year, we sent off more than 4,300 graduates into their post secondary careers, whether that means college, military, or straight into the workforce with the hundreds of career certifications earned through our incredible Career and Technical Education program. No matter their pathway, I'm confident these students are future ready.

In this summer issue you'll read about our nationally recognized theatre programs that continue to shine, a truly unique father and son duo who have led the Lewisville High School baseball program for close to 50 years and counting, and we catch up with an LISD alumna who is using her talents and gifts to spread joy through gorgeous works of art.

As we move forward from this school year into a new one, I am so excited to continue sharing stories about our district with you. The future is bright for our students and staff and I can't wait to highlight their accomplishments. I thank you for reading and hope you will stay tuned for what's to come for Lewisville ISD.

All my best,



**LORI RAPP, Ed.D.**

Superintendent of Schools  
Lewisville ISD





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Who is LEF? We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit, established in 1990, focused solely on supporting LISD students and teachers through designated programs such as classroom and campus grants, student scholarships, staff fellowships, employee awards, and special projects for which tax dollars are not available. Visit our website or follow us on social media to learn more!



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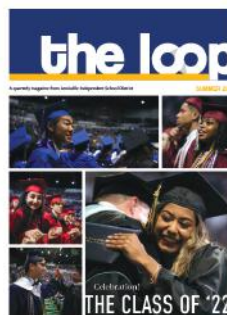
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# Taking center stage

LISD theatre students shine in the spotlight

By Delaney Sanders

**FOR YEARS, LISD HAS DEVELOPED** and maintained a tradition of excellence in theatre arts programming. With thriving programs across the district, students have the unique opportunity to receive exceptional theatre arts training in their very own classrooms.

LISD students have the opportunity to enroll in theatre starting in middle school. "Depending on which class the students are enrolled in; Theatre 1, Theatre 2, or Production class, we spend the year learning basic concepts such as the parts of the stage, basic blocking concepts and basic vocalization techniques," explained Lamar Middle School Director Kate Volenick. "Then they learn more advanced skills like script analysis, character objectives and more."

Middle school students also begin learning about the mental preparation and creativity that acting requires. "Innovation and growth mindset are two key skills that we develop in our classes," Hedrick Middle School Director Amanda Rojas said. "Something that we work on in theatre is not just seeing things for what they are, but what



TCHS students perform "The Old Man and The Old Moon," their award-winning one-act play. Credit: Shawn Walther.

they have the potential to be. As theatrical artists, we have to see the potential in everything."

Skills gained in entry level theatre classes at the middle or high school levels remain relevant for students regardless of their continuing pathways. At Creek Valley Middle School, Director Raye Ann Cox said her students gain "the confidence to speak in front of others and how to be good listeners. They get a chance to see how important working together is." Cox was with the district for over 18 years before retiring this spring. "Theatre arts has shaped my life by allowing me to work with some of the most awesome young people," she said of her career. "One of my favorite quotes is 'I don't dream of meeting my favorite actors, I taught mine.'"

For students who want to continue their theatre



Creek Valley Middle School performance. Credit: Creek Valley Middle School yearbook class.

arts education, LISD high schools offer entry level and advanced courses with additional specialized offerings. Each high school offers theatre classes to hone acting skills, study the conventions of theatre and analyze theatrical literature. They also offer courses in technical theatre, during which students learn the

'behind the scenes' elements and components of theatre productions. Students who enroll in technical theatre courses learn about lighting, set design and costuming, with courses taught by a dedicated technical theatre director.

"Through both the specialized theatre courses and large-scale plays and productions, LISD students are really gaining high-level access to a variety of advanced components of the discipline," said LISD Fine Arts Director Amanda Drinkwater. "This makes



*TCHS' production of "The Old Man and The Old Moon" earned them a fourth trip to state competition.*

LISD's theatre students stand out when applying for entry into university programs - their portfolios include advanced skills and significant performance experiences already."

Throughout the year, students across classes work together to produce and perform shows for their peers, parents and community members.

One of the most well-known production endeavors for high school theatre students is the UIL One-Act Play. Each high school prepares and performs their one-act play annually for competitive evaluation and

advancement opportunities. The one-act play is a condensed version of a full play, containing a single act which must be performed in under 40 minutes. This year, The Colony High School's performance of "The Old Man and The Old Moon" placed second in the UIL One-Act Play 5A State Competition. This was The Colony's fourth time to advance to the state level of competition since 2014.

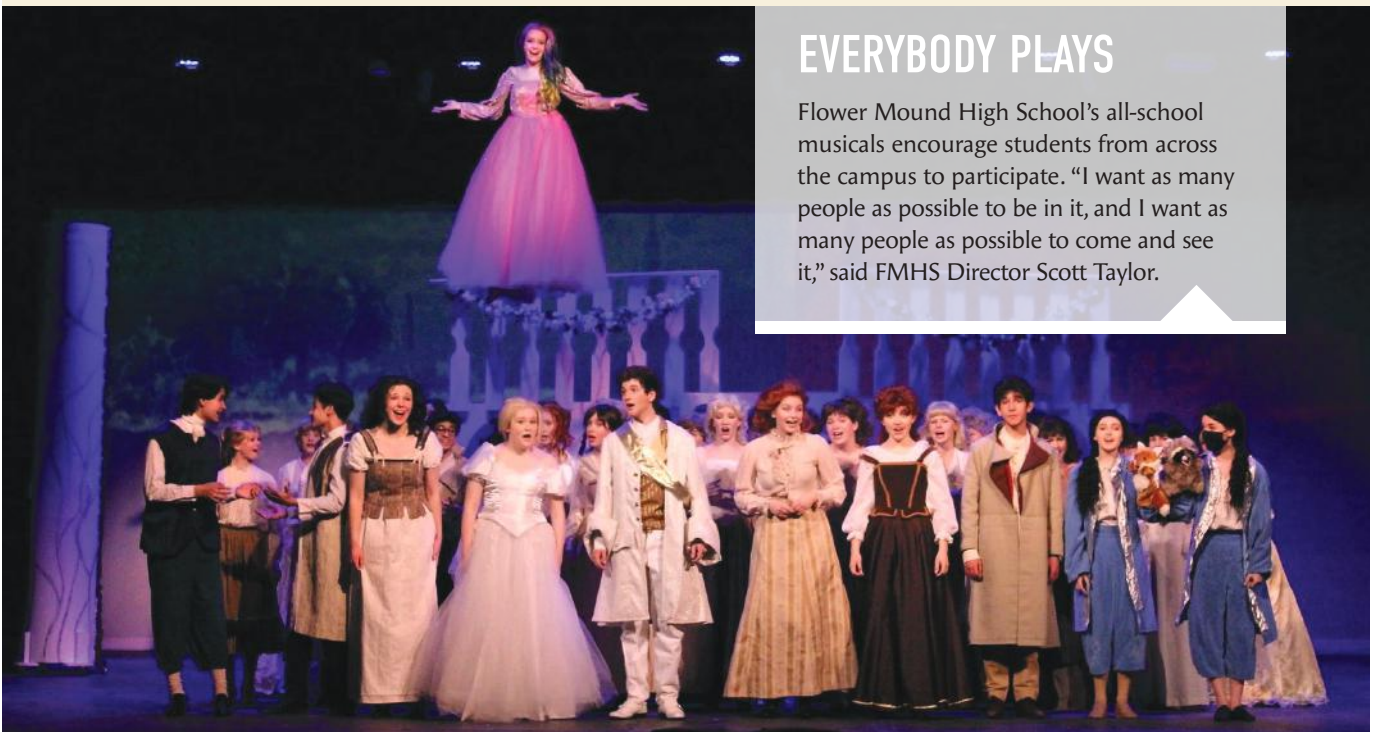
TCHS' one-act cast members spent months preparing for their competition season after directors Dwayne Craig, Ronda Craig and Brandon Smith selected the play over the summer. Students auditioned for the show in December, participated in weeks of table reads and even participated in a weekend masterclass to better connect with both their characters and each other. They balanced "The Old Man and The Old Moon" rehearsals with the other shows that the group performed concurrently.

"Our students live up to challenges," Ronda Craig said. "And if they're hit with a problem...that's when you see them come together and succeed." Succeed they did, with an impressive second place finish out of 254 schools who originally entered the competition.

High school theatre and choir directors collaborate annually to bring LISD's musical productions to the stage. Musicals often include student performers from additional performing arts organizations as well as the general campus population. At Flower Mound High School, "Cinderella" was this year's

## EVERYBODY PLAYS

Flower Mound High School's all-school musicals encourage students from across the campus to participate. "I want as many people as possible to be in it, and I want as many people as possible to come and see it," said FMHS Director Scott Taylor.





*Sophia Campbell plays Cinderella in the Flower Mound High School all-school musical. Credit: Atley Standiford*

## CENTER STAGE

show, an all-school musical that involved lengthy preparations...and even a flying actor.

FMHS is well known for their all-school musicals, where students from across campus are encouraged to audition to become a part of the production. "In choosing the show, one of the first things I say is that I want as many people as possible to be in it, and I want as many people as possible to come and see it," said FMHS Director Scott Taylor.

Because the musical is an extracurricular activity involving students with varying course schedules, rehearsals are held outside of school hours. The cast, crew and musicians work tirelessly to perfect every element before opening night. "We're a very dedicated bunch," said Sophia Campbell, Thespian Club President at FMHS, who was cast as Cinderella. "We're always finding time to develop our technique as best we can. It's a lot of work to prepare our singing, our dancing, our acting."

When the curtain came up, it was clear that their hard work paid off. "What made Cinderella special

was that there were so many different elements that came together," Sophia continued. "There was great music composition, a wonderful pit orchestra, the complex set design...and of course the flying too. There were just a lot of elements that came together that made it a really big deal, and I think a lot of us really enjoyed that."

When their weekend of performances ended, FMHS students described the feeling of accomplishment they shared, as well as a bit of sadness to end their time with the show. "That magic is just for that one instant, and you've made the most out of it," Mr. Taylor reminded them. "It becomes a memory now."

For Fine Arts Director Amanda Drinkwater, this magic created by students goes far beyond what audiences see on stage. "Performing gives our students an opportunity to express themselves," she said. "Engagement in the arts provides students a chance to embrace qualities that make them unique and to better recognize commonalities inherent to the human condition."

# 2022 Lewisville ISD Teachers of the Year



**Peggy Hill**

Rockbrook Elementary

*"My students do have potential, they do have a future. It looks different, but it's a beautiful future."*

Peggy Hill is a dedicated teacher who is passionate about the importance of special education and the key role it plays in the lives of the students she serves.

Peggy recognized in high school that she wanted to work with special needs students. This interest came from her own academic struggles in school that resulted in a counselor telling her that she was not "College Material".

Determined to prove herself to those who did not believe in her, she eventually enrolled at Texas Lutheran College. With a desire to teach always present in her mind, Peggy transferred to Southwest Texas State University where in 1990 she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education.

After graduating, Peggy worked as a third-grade teacher in Seguin ISD for three years before moving to Pennsylvania with her family. In Pennsylvania, she worked part-time as a pre-school teacher while raising her two daughters with her husband. Peggy and her family eventually moved back to Texas where in 2008 she returned to teaching at Rockbrook Elementary in Lewisville, Texas.

Peggy still teaches at Rockbrook, currently serving as a Functional Life Skills Teacher with students ranging in age from 3 to 11 years old. Her primary focus is to improve the quality of her student's lives and to help their parents see the unique potential that their child possesses.

Andy Sealy is in his nineteenth year as Director of Bands at Hebron High School in Carrollton, Texas. Mr. Sealy is a frequent adjudicator and clinician. He is a graduate of Texas Tech University with a Bachelor of Music Education degree with a teaching certification in Secondary Instrumental Music. He maintains professional affiliations with the American Bandmasters Association, Texas Music Educators Association, Texas Bandmasters Association, Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity, Texas Music Adjudicators Association, and the International Clarinet Association. Mr. Sealy served on the Executive Board of the Texas Music

Educators Association from 2014 to 2018 including terms as TMEA President in 2017-2018 and Band Division Chair (TMEA Vice-President) 2014-2016. Mr. Sealy was awarded the University Scholastic League Sponsor of Excellence Award in 2016.

The Hebron High School Marching Band was crowned the UIL Texas 6A State Marching Band Champion in the fall of 2021. Additionally, the Hebron High School Band marched in the 2022 Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, California. The Hebron Band was awarded the 2021 Exemplary High School Band award by the Texas Bandmasters Association.

Prior to his appointment to Hebron High School, Mr. Sealy served as Director of Bands at Randall High School in Amarillo for five years and as Director of Bands at Monterey High School in Lubbock for three years. Mr. Sealy began his teaching career in west Texas in Iraan and Monahans as a middle school head band director and assistant high school band director, choir director, and theater director.



**Andrew Sealy**

Hebron High School

*"The real trophies in our lives are those kids. Those are the things that are really important."*



# Like father, like son

By Ryan Cox

**Coach's dream job is following in his father's footsteps**

**WHEN MIKE CAMPBELL RETIRED** in 2021 after spending 47 years as the head baseball coach at Lewisville High School, district administration didn't have to look far for its new skipper.

Later that summer, Mike's son Stephen, then-head coach at Irving High School, was named the successor to the Fighting Farmer program his father led for nearly five decades. Stephen was coming home.

Stephen has always had Fighting Farmer blood in his veins. From bat boy to player, Stephen grew up on the field where his father spent his entire career. From playing catch together in the outfield, to looking up to the man he idolized by helping mow the grass and chalk the lines since he was eight years old, the job Stephen always wanted was his.

"It's always been on my mind to have this job," Stephen said. "It's been 15 years in the making as far as my career with all the jobs I've taken to eventually get here at Lewisville High School. It's my second home."

Although Stephen knows the LHS baseball program as good as anyone – well, everyone except his father – he admitted there might be an ounce of pressure taking over for the winningest coach in school history.

"There's a little bit of pressure," Stephen said with a chuckle. "I put pressure on myself because I'm a competitive person with him so I want to try and do better. I definitely put a lot of pressure on myself to out-achieve him in his career. It's going to be really hard to do."

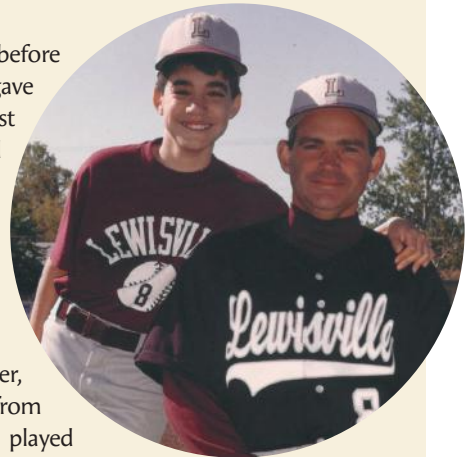
Before Stephen's hiring was announced, there was one phone call that needed to be made first. LHS Principal Jim Baker picked up the phone and called Mike to tell him the news he always dreamed of.

"Mr. Baker called me before he called Stephen and gave me the excuse that he lost Stephen's number and needed it to tell him he got the job," Mike said with a smile. "I knew since he was about 10 years old that he wanted my job. I was ecstatic."

Stephen, a catcher, played for his father from 1998-01 and later played collegiately at UT Tyler. Playing for his father was one of his favorite memories, even though Mike pushed Stephen as hard as anyone he ever coached. "It was fun and I enjoyed playing for him. He probably got after me more than the other guys because I had to play well being his son. I enjoyed it and it helped me become a better player. I loved it actually."

After college, Stephen began his trail of following in his father's footsteps and coaching baseball. He started at Lon Morris College and ventured to the Coastal Plain League in North Carolina before returning to his roots in Texas. Stephen landed a coaching job at Arbor Creek Middle School in Lewisville ISD and then moved to San Angelo for three years as an assistant. His first head coaching job was in Llano before moving back to the metroplex to take an assistant job at Frisco and most recently spent the last three seasons leading Irving's program.

"I coached at those places to get the experience and build my resume to have a chance at this job," Stephen said. "I didn't want it to be 'Oh, he's Coach





*Mike and Stephen Campbell at home plate at Mike Campbell Field.*

Campbell's kid and got the job.' I wanted it to be about how I did this on my own."

Having experience at 6A high school programs and the knowledge he learned from one of the state's winningest coaches, Stephen knew he was ready to take over his alma mater.

"There are some similarities between us," Stephen said when comparing his coaching style to his fathers. "You have to love the kids and make sure they know you love them too. Some things he taught me were making sure we stayed disciplined and that the basic fundamentals have to be taught at a young age. But the relationships come first. You want success for those kids so bad that you coach."

Some might look at Mike Campbell's win total to determine his success. After all, he retired as one of the winningest baseball coaches in the Dallas-Fort Worth area with an astounding 703 wins. But for Mike, it was the relationships, life lessons and

molding his players into men that meant the most to him during his career.

"The relationships mean more to me than any wins or losses," Mike said. "Wins and losses made a little difference to me, but nobody ever gave me a hard time about that because I feel like I treated people correctly and taught them life lessons."

Mike set the foundation for what a program should be and has set the standard for the true definition of a student-athlete by representing the school with class on and off the field. It's a core value that Stephen is proud to continue as head coach.

"Almost every kid in our program is a member of the Student Council, Circle of Friends, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes," Stephen said. "That's pretty special for a program. I believe we have the best character kids in the school and high academic student-athletes. It's fun to coach them and that's what we strive for our program to be."

Those relationships with players and coaches that Mike developed over his career were on display when Lewisville ISD approved the naming of Lewisville High School's baseball stadium to Mike Campbell Field during a pregame ribbon-cutting ceremony in April. Former players, fans, and community members gathered with a standing-room-only crowd to share their love and appreciation, and honor a man that dedicated his entire career to one school.

Even though Mike never looked to be in the spotlight, it was a dream of his late wife, Debbie, to have the field named after her husband of nearly 50 years. Debbie passed away on March 1, 2022 after an illness – just eight weeks prior to the field naming dedication for Mike.

"I've enjoyed the attention [from the field naming] and I never was an attention seeker, but I've enjoyed the naming of the field – which [Debbie] really wanted," Mike said while holding back tears. "I never thought it would happen."

"I'm sure as things change for me that I'll sit back and say, 'Hey, you know what, my career was pretty darn good.'"

Mike has leaned on his daughter, Lesley, and Stephen to navigate these new days ahead. Even Mike's former players continue to stay in touch with him after all these years. "As far as guys coming back to see us, they come from all over the place," Mike said. "At our visitation for my wife, four guys from my first team in 1975 showed up. Those relationships are special and mean a lot to me."

Now that he's retired, Mike still tries to stay

involved with Lewisville baseball, although he admits he doesn't want to get in the way of Stephen running the team. But even being retired after 47 years of coaching the game he loves, Mike still misses being on the field in uniform.

"I miss the everyday routine of coaching," Mike said. "Being in charge of something, Stephen still lets me come up and fiddle around on the field and that's great. Above all, I miss being around the kids every day. The kids keep you young."

It's been a whole new experience for Mike watching his son coach from the stands. After coaching all these years, including the four years Stephen played for him, Mike acknowledged he still gets a little nervous as a father in the bleachers – the same way he used to when Stephen was up to bat.

"I have to admit, every time [Stephen] came to the plate when he was playing, I said a little prayer for him," Mike joked. "That's nerve-racking, but you knew what he was going to do. He was a good player, even in college he was a good player."

Although they never got to coach together like he always envisioned and hoped, Mike got to experience the thrill of coaching against his son for the first time in his career. On April 2, 2019, Mike's Fighting Farmers hosted Stephen's Irving Tigers in a district matchup. The two head coaches met at home plate to exchange lineups and both told each other "Good luck" but also hugged and said "I love you." Little did Mike know that two years after handing over lineup cards, he'd be handing over his No. 8 LHS jersey to his son, which is now Stephen's game uniform.

As Stephen reflected on his first year as head coach of Lewisville High School, he sat in the press box overlooking Mike Campbell Field thinking about what his father's legacy means to him. It's hard to sum up 47 years into a sentence or two, but Stephen said there's one thing that's synonymous with his dad's career – the field.

"The field itself is his legacy and gift to the community," Stephen said. "The hard work and grit he poured into that field for 47 years is what he stands behind and how he lives his life."

As for Stephen's legacy, it's too early in his career to write. But he has the blueprint to follow and leave a lasting impact like his father did.

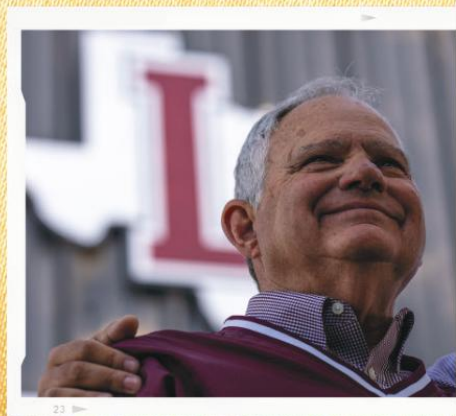
"I want us to be competitive every year and be leaders in the classroom and the community," Stephen said. "When opponents think of LHS, they think we have to play perfect to beat them, just like it was when Dad coached. That's my goal for this program."



*Former players, fans and community members gathered for the April ribbon-cutting ceremony when LISD named Lewisville High School's baseball stadium to honor a man who dedicated his entire career to one school.*

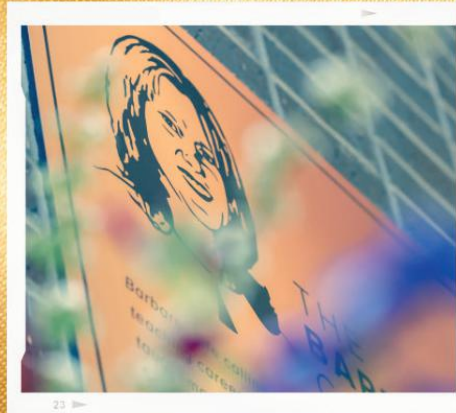
# LEGACY

*Lewisville ISD honors two former employees for their dedicated service to their school communities.*



## MIKE CAMPBELL FIELD

Mike Campbell | Longtime baseball head coach of Lewisville High School



## BARBARA HAMRIC COMMUNITY ROOM

Barbara Hamric | Former principal of Hedrick Middle School

# FUTURE READY



**Flower Mound High School**  
965 Graduates



**Hebron High School**  
898 Graduates



**Lewisville High School**  
1,155 Graduates



**Marcus High School**  
800 Graduates



**The Colony High School**  
509 Graduates

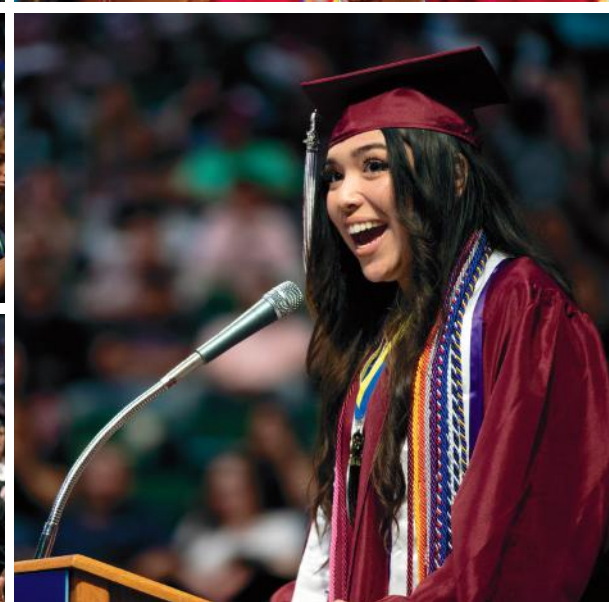
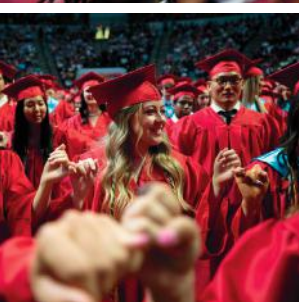
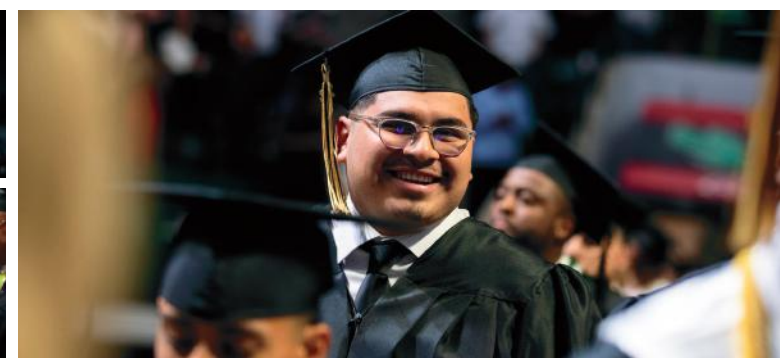


[lisd.net/Grads](http://lisd.net/Grads)

# *Congratulations,*

LEWISVILLE ISD CLASS OF 2022





Get to know our graduates: [LISD.net/Grads](https://LISD.net/Grads)



Members of the LISD Firefighter Program participating in live fire training in Denton, TX.

# Transformative education

CTE programs offer  
real-world learning

By Nick Gravois

*"All of our students enjoy thriving, productive lives in a future they create."*

**NOWHERE IS LEWISVILLE ISD'S** vision statement more illustrative than in the halls of the district's Technology, Exploration and Career Centers – better known as TECC-East and TECC-West. During the 2021-22 school year, 348 graduating seniors earned a total of 1,178 professional certifications that they will take with them into higher education, trade school, the military or the workforce.

Since the mid 1980s, LISD has offered technical and professional courses in some capacity to high school students. District career and technical education (CTE) opportunities expanded in 2010 when TECC-E (originally Career Center East) was opened, joining the Dale Jackson Career Center. In 2017, a bond package was passed to replace the aging Dale Jackson building with a new facility,

TECC-W, which opened in 2020.

Currently, students can pursue hands-on professional courses across dozens of fields at the career centers, and CTE opportunities have continued to expand on each of the LISD high school campuses as well. Jason Cooper, LISD's Executive Director of Career & Technical Education, has overseen this growth since arriving in the district in 2019.

"Now that we have two state-of-the-art career centers – as well as our offerings at our main high school campuses – we have not only increased in the number of certifications that we offer, but also the quality of the certifications that were not previously offered in the past."

Cooper, who has been involved in CTE education in DFW since 2010, added that both the number of students earning certifications and the amount of certifications available are growing.

“This year, we have added multiple new certifications, but the most notable that have been earned this year are the Certified Veterinary Assistant, NCCER Electrical, and NCCER HVAC certifications.”

Adrian Moreno, Director of TECC-E, echoes Cooper’s thoughts on the growth of LISD’s CTE offerings.

“Options have evolved as the needs of the workforce have evolved. Over the past 23 years, LISD has increased the opportunities for students and expanded the availability of those options. Not only have the options evolved and increased, how those programs are taught and the equipment used has evolved. LISD has been out front in regards to keeping up with the changes in technology and equipment for all of its CTE programs.”

In addition to the graduating seniors that earned certifications, over one dozen students graduated from the LISD Firefighter Program. The Firefighter Program prepares students for a career in firefighting, with graduating seniors eligible to take the Texas Commission on Fire Protection and the Texas Department of State Health Services EMT certification exams.

Beyond the programs offered at TECC-E and TECC-W, LISD also offers multiple opportunities for students to explore career fields through internship programs, the district’s annual Career Out event, the firefighter program and on-campus course offerings. During the 2021-22 school year, LISD high schools offered dozens of classes across a multitude of subjects ranging from fashion design and robotics to sports marketing and food science.

Justin Gilbreath, TECC-W Director, describes how valuable having access to CTE opportunities can be for students.

“It is an opportunity that I believe many students don’t fully understand how lucky they are to have in high school. Many of our community members and parents often state that they wish they would have had programs like we have at [in LISD] when they were in school. Part of the experience is the exploration piece. Students have the ability to determine if they are interested in a career through the experiences they have on campus.”

To say that LISD students have taken these experiences and ran with them would be an understatement.

In the previous year, over 80 LISD CTE students earned state or national achievements, including the TECC-E Rocketry Program that earned a place in the American Rocketry Challenge finals and TECC-W culinary students that won two state competitions in a three-week span, bringing in \$16,000 in scholarships.

After continuing to expand opportunities in



*LISD welding students earned 185 certifications during the 2021-22 school year.*



*Recent LISD graduate Liqing Hu received national attention for her dress design, created in her Fashion Design II course at LHS.*



*TCHS students take part in robotics job shadowing in partnership with AT&T’s Business Resource Group and Junior Achievement.*



*Dozens of LISD Auto Tech students earned Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications during the 2021-22 school year. Regulated by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence, the certification is the industry standard for auto service professionals.*

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the district and help generate so much success for students, Cooper is excited about the future.

"We are looking at careers that are evolving, including those being added, phased out, and trying to prepare our students for technology that we know is coming for careers that aren't even developed yet. We always work with our industry partners through our business advisory boards about what we can do to stay current (and ahead) of what is coming."

Part of that evolution includes an expansion of the current TECC-E campus as approved in the same 2017 bond package that authorized the construction of TECC-W. These improvements, planned to be completed within the next five years, will address the needs of rapidly changing career fields.

"As we look to expand the TECC East campus as part of the 2017 bond," said Moreno, "we must factor in creating learning spaces for programs we do not know we will need to teach. In the next five to ten years, we will be teaching and training students for careers that do not exist today."

Cooper, Gilbreath and Moreno agree that the biggest hurdles for CTE education involve addressing the ever changing job market and acknowledge the

importance of continuing to explore possible paths of interest whenever the opportunity arises.

"Plan early!" stressed Gilbreath. "Visit with home campus counselors about your interests in our programs. To complete a program of study is typically 3 or more semesters on our campus which is double blocked (two credits per class in an 18-week semester). This requires planning early to ensure all core credits are met for graduation to ensure there is adequate time for students to take classes."

The trio also expressed their passion for their work and the role that they play in making positive impacts in students' lives. By offering coursework as diverse as the interests of LISD students, they hope to set graduates up to create the best future for themselves.

As Cooper puts it: "Where will you be in 10 years? Whether you are a kindergartener or a high school senior, knowing where you are planning to be in 10 years helps you determine what steps you can take now to help achieve that goal."

Thanks to the work of LISD's CTE educators, hundreds of recent graduates, and thousands more in the coming years, are well on their way to achieving those goals.



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# Night moves

Sometimes the path to graduation begins at the end of the day

By Delaney Sanders



*The campus celebrates at the end of each 18-day term by having graduates walk down the halls in their caps and gowns.*

**ON ANY GIVEN DAY AT THE LEWISVILLE** Learning Center, a group of students gather together to further their education through LISD's Night High School program. Many of them have spent their day working a 9-5 job, attending school at another campus, caring for family members or raising their own. These students come with their own backgrounds, aspirations and challenges but they all have one thing in common—a commitment to completing their high school education.

The Night High School program, or NHS, aims to recover students who have dropped out, serve students at risk of not graduating or expedite the graduation of traditional students. They do so with condensed classes offered outside of typical school hours. Teachers and staff are dedicated to engaging students and providing a welcoming environment, as well as a seamless transition back into the classroom for students who need it.

Led by Associate Principal Jennifer Surgeson, the program meets students where they're at by providing several different course plans. Students can either choose to come to Night High School on a part-time or full-time basis, depending on their needs. "We typically serve part-time students," explained Surgeson. "They come to us to either catch up or accelerate. So they go to school all day at one of our five high schools, and then come here for a class." For full-time students, at least one class is taken in the evening. An accelerated program is also offered

for these students, allowing them to take classes during all three class times offered. "We have several students that are really ambitious that want to take as much as they can," she said.

The attendance for the program is based on minutes, and students must complete 90 minutes of class time each day for 18 days to receive a half credit for the subject they need. Because students arrive at the program with varying needs, different students graduate at the end of every 18-day term.

In many ways, classes at NHS mirror classes across LISD's other campuses. "We use direct instruction just like any other campus," said Surgeson. "We do project-based learning, hands-on work and work in groups." But when asked about the differences between Night High School and other campuses, she described the mindset of students in this program. "I think the teachers will tell you the difference in these students is their maturity. They're focused now and able to get stuff done, more ready to listen and take care of their business."

Students at NHS are anywhere from 16-23 years old, and have a variety of backgrounds. "We're able to serve students with medical issues, family hardships, homeless students and more," said Surgeson. "It's important to give this option to all students, whether it be recovered dropouts or current students. It just depends on their experiences and needs."

To reconnect with students who have previously dropped out of school, teachers at NHS spend

part of their workday planning outreach strategies. “Our teachers get a list of recovered drop-outs and start making cold calls,” Surgeson explained of their approach. They also distribute posters and postcards around the community—anything they can do to encourage students to enroll. “It gives you goosebumps just thinking about the difference we can make. Our big thing is every person here, doing this program, is because we want to see you succeed.”

Another tactic to guarantee this success is flexible classes for NHS students. Though there are on-campus requirements, NHS counselors use the LISD Virtual Learning Academy or Edgenuity as much as possible to give students additional schedule relief when they need it. For many students, children of their own or demanding jobs demand this flexibility in order to finish their high school education.

McKenna Roper, a former NHS student who graduated this spring, described the balance of motherhood and education. “School is my getaway,” she said. “It’s a big stress reliever to come here and leave all your worries at the door. To know people here care for you and want to take you under their wing. It’s very positive.”

Though students like Roper certainly face challenges being both a full-time Night High School student and full-time parent, the program has allowed

**“We know why they’re here, what their future hopes are, what scares them and what they’re looking forward to. It’s really a family.”**

— Teacher Valerie Haislet



*McKenna Roper smiles with her son at this year's Night High School graduation ceremony.*

them to reach their goals and set examples for the next generation. "I want to be able to tell my son 'I graduated and I hope you will too,'" Roper said of her experience.

Valerie Haislet, a social studies teacher at the program, admires the parents in the program while admitting she thinks of herself as a parent in her own right. "I say 'kids' when I refer to these students because I consider them my children, [even though] they're adults," she said. "They're coming in with families and jobs outside of this. It's not just 'let's finish this class and get a grade,'" she continued. "We know why they're here, what their future hopes are, what scares them and what they're looking forward to. It's really a family."

Haislet herself dropped out of high school, and knows the bravery it takes to return to the classroom. It makes her even more proud when she sees them walk across the graduation stage. "When we do the end of the year graduation there's no makeup, it's just crying," she joked. "It's the best day. It's happy tears. We know how hard it is to do, and I think at that moment when they walk across the stage they realize they did it. It was hard and they did it."

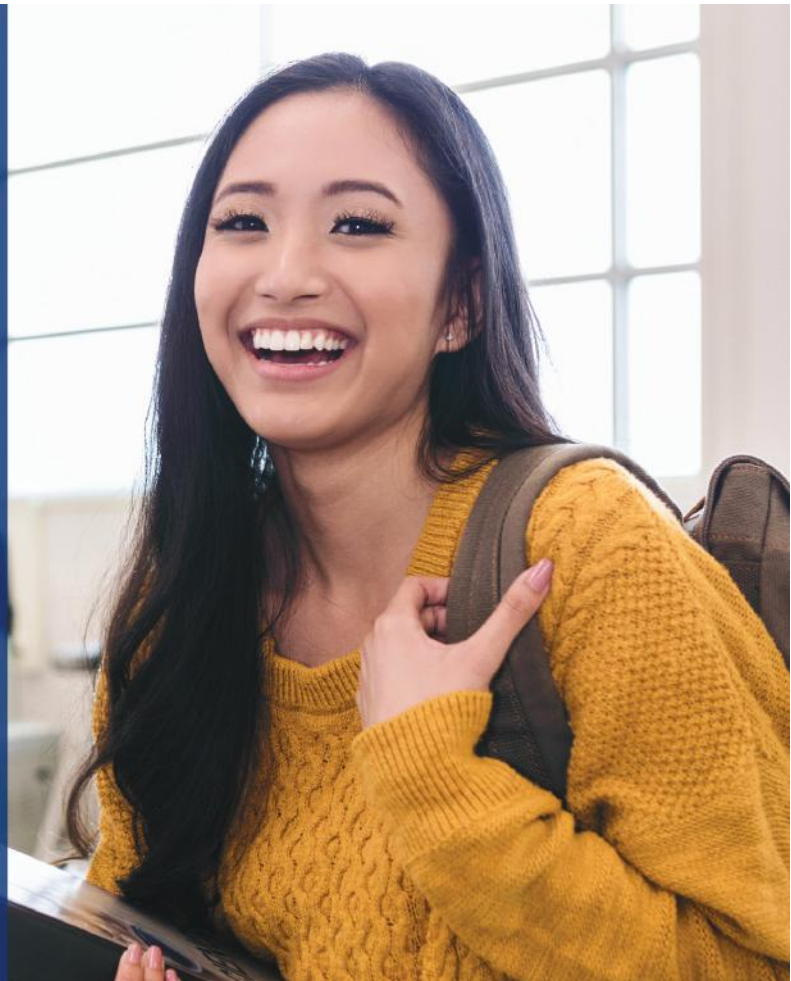
"It's amazing to see the students grow," Haislet concluded. "And to get to know them as people and human beings and not just students. They're why we're here. We're here for these particular students who need a second chance."

*Lewisville ISD Night High School welcomes students ages 16 to 23 who have dropped out of a Lewisville ISD school or who want to recover credits or graduate early. If you or someone you know would benefit from this program, call 469-948-7665.*



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| END NOTE |

# FMHS alum blooms into art world

| By Nick Gravois

**DRIVING UP TO ALLI KOCH'S** Richardson worksite felt like being transported into an old polaroid. The stark, white wall of the downtown building was contrasted by the sharp black lines of the artist's unfinished mural. Even the sky, while not uncharacteristic of an early May afternoon in Texas, was darkly overcast, painting the entire scene in a monochrome greyscale – save for a neon yellow ladder and Koch's silvery purple hair.

Alli Koch, a business owner, public speaker, mentor, podcast host and best-selling author (to name just a few of her ventures) is a colorful antithesis to the black and white artwork that has made her one of DFW's most sought-after talents. But the Flower Mound High School alumna remains firmly rooted in her artistic pursuits, hoping to inspire others' creativity to bloom, one work at a time.

After graduating from the University of North Texas with a marketing degree, the DFW-native decided to turn her life-long love of calligraphy and painting into a business. In 2014 Koch created Alli K Design, selling prints and offering custom services through her Instagram account. According to her, however, pursuing art professionally was not something she imagined early on.

"I always turned to art and doodling in my free time," she explained. "I grew up not wanting to be a 'starving artist,' so I saw art as a hobby or something



*Alli and Landon Koch in front of their soon-to-be-completed "BE YOU" mural in downtown Richardson.*

I would do when I retire. I definitely didn't think I could own my own business. I thought owning my own business meant needing a lot of capital or a storefront or a crazy idea to get onto Shark Tank."

She would soon learn that she could design her own success through hard work, creativity and a distinct visual style.

By 2016, Koch had moved Alli K Design into a dedicated studio space, was offering classes and mentoring services to aspiring artists and had begun working with local and national businesses on various branding and advertising projects.

In January of 2017, Koch announced that her first published book, *How to Draw Modern Florals*, was on the way. The step-by-step guide launched three months later to instant acclaim. Seeing such a positive response to the book was a watershed moment for Koch.

"I've doubted myself a lot throughout my career – honestly I sometimes still doubt myself. But the moment I published my first book and saw others learning and creating things that I was able to teach them was when it first hit me. That I'm someone who is not only creating things people love but making an impact on others."

And that impact has only continued to grow since the launch of her first book.

Immediately following the success of *Modern Florals*, Koch launched a podcast with her father. The show, which features Alli, her father Tony Bridwell, and occasionally special guests, follows the pair's longstanding tradition of weekly conversations over eight-count chick-n-minis and sweet tea at Chick-fil-a.

"My dad and I have had breakfast almost every Saturday since I was 13! The conversations we've had have shaped me into the person I am today and were too good to keep to myself. But also I wanted to remember the conversations forever and the podcast is the perfect time capsule."

Koch views the podcast as another important touchpoint for inspiring others, while still keeping her family in the forefront.

"I am a huge family person," stated Koch. "They are my number one fans and supporters. Being an entrepreneur is hard and a lot of times lonely. I quickly realized I can't do it alone and my family is the best support there is!"

Nowhere has that support been clearer than in her husband's recent decision to leave his corporate job to work full time for Alli K Design.

Landon Koch, also a Flower Mound High School alum, has been by Alli's side through every stage of her career.

"I was at a point in my life where the corporate grind wasn't worth it anymore, financially or mentally," he expressed. "Being the master of my own time was, and still is, my top priority and I saw my wife living that everyday. Our quality of life has improved dramatically and the change has been the best decision I've ever made – besides marrying Alli!"

"My husband and I are high school sweethearts," exclaimed Alli. "First and only loves! We met the summer going into high school and I was smitten from the start. We started dating freshman year and the rest is history! I love that we have so many inside jokes and memories dating all the way back to high school!"

Now, the couple work in tandem, laughing and planning each sketch and brush stroke together, as they were that cloudy day in Richardson. As it turns out, Alli's artistic journey was – in a way – coming full circle that afternoon.

While onlookers stood and appreciated the beauty of the work in progress, the painting held a much more personal meaning for Alli. It was a recreation of the first-ever mural she had painted professionally, done on the wall of her first studio that has since been painted over. Now, several years, eight books, dozens of murals across the United States and thousands of people impacted later, the message that Alli holds for herself and hopes to inspire in others remains the same.

"BE YOU."

*You can find Alli and her work online at [www.allikdesign.com](http://www.allikdesign.com) and connect with her on social media @allikdesign or by email at [hello@allikdesign.com](mailto:hello@allikdesign.com).*



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