



**Wharton County
Junior College**

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NEWS RELEASE

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THE ROYAL TREATMENT

Presidential Scholars Program offers students unique educational opportunity

From one-on-one meetings with the college president to educational trips out of state, the Wharton County Junior College Presidential Scholars Program is sure to be an opportunity unlike any other.

WCJC Academic Advisor Catherine Shoppa, coordinator of the new program, is hoping to reach students in a whole new way.

“They’re going to do things hardly anybody gets to do,” she said.

One such example is an all-expenses paid trip to Washington D.C. to see the sights, including Mount Vernon, George Washington’s famous plantation home. Other excursions include Houston Astros games, exhibits at the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston Symphony performances and a tour of Houston Baptist University.

Some of the trips – which are educational in focus – will be attended by WCJC President Betty McCrohan. Having a chance to spend time with the college’s president is another unique opportunity for the students participating in the Presidential Scholars Program. In addition to the trips, participants will have regular meetings with McCrohan in an attempt to develop better scholastic plans and goals.

McCrohan welcomes the chance to assist students with their future accomplishments.

“The Presidential Scholars Program is a singular experience aimed at helping students identify and achieve their educational goals while developing a greater sense of ownership in what Wharton County Junior College has to offer,” McCrohan said. “I am excited to have the opportunity to get to know these students in such a personal fashion.”

Group participants will serve as college ambassadors, essentially becoming the “face” of the college with the public. Shoppa said members will be expected to attend four to five college events each semester to serve as greeters or to participate in helping the occasion run more smoothly.

“We want them to become a more active part of the college community,” Shoppa said.

All WCJC students who have completed at least one semester of coursework at WCJC and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher are eligible to apply for the Presidential Scholars Program. The inaugural group will have between six to 10 selected participants.

“We’re hoping to reach students who might not otherwise have these types of opportunities,” Shoppa said. “We want to provide a way for students to further their cultural and educational outlook on life.”

Monthly meetings with special guest speakers will contribute to those goals. Speakers include Spain’s ambassador to China and the CEOs of several international corporations. Local leaders will also be included.

The point is to provide examples of what’s possible when coupling a passion for achievement with a solid work ethic. Being involved with the Presidential Scholars Program further helps students stay accountable for their classroom success, Shoppa said.

The program is underwritten in part by Houston philanthropist Stewart Morris Sr., with additional funding coming from the college’s most recent golf tournament.

Anyone who meets the criteria and is interested in submitting an application for consideration to the Presidential Scholars Program should visit the college’s website – www.wcjc.edu – or contact Shoppa at shoppac@wcjc.edu or by calling her at 979-532-6918. The application deadline is July 31.

Applicants must complete a six-page application that includes a one-page essay. Finalists may be interviewed by a committee comprised of WCJC faculty and staff.

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