

The background image shows a construction site at Mount Pleasant High School. In the foreground, there is a large area of wet concrete being poured, with several construction workers in safety gear (hard hats, high-visibility vests) working on it. One worker is using a shovel. In the background, the brick building of Mount Pleasant High School is visible, with the words "MOUNT PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL" on its wall. The sky is clear and blue.

# Tigertalk

## Construction takes over at high school

Scoop  
on new  
teachers

In school  
vs. remote  
learning

Volume 46

Issue 1

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From left are Banegas, Poudel, Lara, Hubbs and Grundy.

## Student Council names officers

Student Council has selected its officers for the 2020-2021 school year,

The new officers are President Leslie Lara, Vice President Sashi Poudel, Secretary Taylor Hubbs, Treasurer Rossy Banegas, and Special Projects Chairperson Madison Grundy.

Student Council operates a number of community service projects during the year including recycling at the high school and Red Ribbon Week aimed at promoting drug awareness.

Student Council Advisor is Amanda Pinckard.

## Tigertalk

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Workers are busy getting concrete poured as construction at the high school is underway.

# **Under Construction:**

## ***Campus renovations underway; students adapt to changes***

By ANGEL ACUNA  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

The construction site has affected students a lot as they travel from one side of campus to the next.

Most years, students would be able to head anywhere on campus, but this year we cannot because of remodeling..

It is not what students planned for but they have adjusted to it. Students enter through one set of doors and exit through another. There are also just two set of stairs in the main building.

While half of the current main building is un-



Workers pour a slab in front of the high school.

See Construction, Pg. 4

*Tigertalk Pg. 3*



# **Construction from Page 3**

der construction, it is just one of many changes.

We now have another campus/building called the West Campus. It is quite far from the main campus. It also has portable buildings for classrooms. It is a different experience from past years.

The West Campus also includes a former church that has been turned into classrooms. The campus itself is quite nice.

The construction will be a long process. Most of us that are in high school right now will already be graduated when construction is done. Hopefully everything goes as planned.

Progress is starting to come along on the campus. The first of three concrete slabs for new buildings has been poured in front of the existing high school.

One of the buildings will house art, library, counselors and various classrooms. Another building will house the administration, and a third building will be home to culinary and cosmetology which will allow those programs to also serve the community.

Steel beams should be going up for the new additions in the near future.

Director of Facilities Van Bowen said that the current main building under renovation should be done and ready to move in this December.

Then the other half of the building will begin renovation which will result in English, Biology and Lifeskills classes being relocated.

Ongoing construction also includes additional classrooms for band and theater and new foyer for the gymnasium.

Space has also been cleared for a new Tiger Doll/Dance Building. The current Tiger Doll building will be the new home for cheerleaders.

Renovations in the future include the History Building which will then house Law Enforcement, Forensics and Health Science.

The current CTE Building and Cosmetology/Art Building will also undergo renovation resulting in a whole new look for the campus.



**Portable buildings house some classrooms.**



**A former church is being used for classrooms.**



**Dirt work is being done all over campus.**







# New staff join high school

By FAITH HAMPTON  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

More than 15 new staff members have joined the high school this year in a variety of capacities. Below is a description of the new personnel.

**Lisa Anderson** is the new biology teacher this year.

She attended A&M Commerce earning her degree in Interdisciplinary Studies Science and now lives here with her two sons, Dylan (17) and Joshua (16).

Before this year, she taught for a total of eight years at various schools.

"I graduated from MPHS in 1997 so it's like coming home for me. Nothing better than being surrounded by good people who want to accomplish great things!" says Anderson.

Before teaching she also had the chance to live in Las Vegas as a graphic designer for two years.

"I never imagined myself as a Science teacher when I was in high school. I didn't hate science in school but it wasn't exactly my favorite thing either. Later in life I decided to go back to school for something completely different," Anderson said.

"Chemistry was a prerequisite and even though I was dreading the class I found out by the end of the course that I liked chemistry and was pretty dang good at it. It was right then that I decided to change my major and become a science teacher," Anderson said.

"Just know that life has a funny way of changing and you just might find out that you enjoy things you never thought you would. I said all that to say even though you don't like a certain subject, give your teacher a try. You



Anderson

never know what a positive and open mind can lead to. It might just surprise you!"

**Randy Ballard** is the new teacher for Geometry, Algebra II and UIL Number Sense. Ballard and his wife Roxanne have twins sons Rance and Chance and another son Chad.

"I like the staff and being a Tiger," Ballard said on what he likes about the school.

He attended Paris Junior College earning his associates in science and proceeded to go to East Texas State University (Texas A&M-Commerce now) where he earned his Bachelors of Science degree.

Ballard had taught previously at MPHS. His teaching experience includes North Lamar (4 years), Mount Pleasant (12 years), Chisum (10 years) and Nixon-Smiley (8 years) for a grand total of 34 years in the education field.

While at Chisum, he was head of the UIL Calculator team, which went on to be state champions. His twin sons Rance and Chance were seniors with the top scores on the team.

**Brian Bass** is the new band director for grades 6-12.



Ballard



Bass

He graduated from the University of Louisiana-Monroe and is now lives with his wife, Magan Bass, and their child, Gemma Bass.

Before coming to Mount Pleasant, Bass spent 5 years teaching at both Neville High School and Ouachita Parish High School in Louisiana.

Bass is excited about this coming school year. His favorite things about MPHS are the atmosphere and the welcoming and friendly nature of the staff.

**Araceli Mireles-Camarillo**

See New Staff, Pg. 7

# New Staff from Page 6

is the new Bilingual Education Aide.

Although originally from California, Mireles-Camarillo graduated in Tulsa, Okla. and is currently living in Pittsburg. She now lives with her husband, three children and five dogs. All of her children attend different schools at the moment.

This year will be her first year in the school district and she is very excited to be here. Her favorite thing about MPHS so far is the community. Prior to coming here, Mireles-Camarillo worked in the medical field for a total of 18 years.

**Cody Christenberry** is the new English 4 teacher as well as varsity assistant girls basketball and track coach. He attended East Texas Baptist University obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Kinesiology. He and his wife Kristin have four children – Kason (1st grade), Belle (2nd grade), Konnor and Zoey (9th grade).

Before coming to Mount Pleasant, he spent 17 years teaching and coaching in Forney, Rockwall, Gilmer and Rains. Although he hasn't been here long, Christenberry is excited for the rest of this school year.

"Everyone is very supportive and looks to help each other out. I have also enjoyed working with our athletes this summer. They want to get better, and put in the work. I have noticed this same thing with students these first few days of school as well," Christenberry said.

**Judy Coffey** is the new high school varsity and junior varsity tennis coach. She also teaches history at the junior high.

Coffey graduated from the University of Texas at Ar-



Mireles-Camarillo



Christenberry



Coffey



Edwards

lington earning a degree in Physical Education with a minor in History.

After graduating, she became a flight attendant for American Airlines and worked in this profession for 14 years. Then, after realizing her passion for coaching, Coffey coached varsity tennis at MPHS for 6 years before taking a break to support her daughter and open a business called 3rd St Nutrition that has now been open downtown for 8 years.

"I came back to Mount Pleasant where the kids are great, faculty is fun and nice to work with and the admin-

istration is totally behind you," Coffey said.

Coffey is married to her high school sweetheart and they have now been married for 36 years.

They have 2 kids, Tucker (28) and Annie (19). Her daughter was part of the Mount Vernon state championship basketball team.

**Trinity Edwards** is the new Health Practicum I and Anatomy teacher. She earned her associates degree in nursing at Murray State College and a Bachelor's Degree in Science at UTA.

See New Staff, Pg. 8



# New Staff from Page 7

This will be Edward's first year teaching high school and she is looking forward to it.

"The district truly cares about their students," she said.

**Trenton Gardner** is the new Assistant Athletic Trainer and teacher for Sports Medicine I and II as well as Athletic Training.

He attended Abilene Christian University, graduating in 2018 with his Bachelors in Science of Kinesiology: Athletic Training and again in 2020 with his Masters in Athletic Training. He now lives with his wife, Martha Gardner, who he married this past December and their Catahoula dog named Brazos. His wife teaches at the junior high as a teacher's aide for SPED Life Skills.

This year will be Gardner's first year in this profession. Prior to coming here, however, he worked a variety of jobs including commercial construction, ranch hand, and retail worker at both Academy and Tractor Supply. He also was an Outreach Athletic Trainer and covered Roby High School.

"I am very excited to be in a school district that cares for their employees and their students. I am very much looking forward to this year and my future at MPHS," Gardner said.

**Brandon Gholston** is the new Special Education Teacher as well as co-teacher for English I and II.

In the fall of 2018, Gholston graduated from Texas A&M University Commerce with his Master's degree. This will be his second year working in education.

Gholston is excited to be here for this coming school year. "I like how helpful the



Gardner



Gholston



Gomez

people are here," he says.

**Christian Gomez** is the new Color Guard Director this year.

All of his family is here in Mount Pleasant. He currently has 3 nieces, ages 8, 6 and 1 as well as a 7-year old nephew. Gomez also has four cousins that attend MPHS.

He went to school at Tyler Junior College as well as NTCC. Before coming to MPHS, Gomez spent 8 years designing and teaching color guard groups at Redwater and Pleasant Grove, Henderson State University and North Lamar HS. He has



Hansen

performed across 36 states in total doing color guard.

**Bruce Hansen** is the new Aviation teacher for grades 9-12. He attended Letourneau University earning his bachelor's degree in science Aviation Technology.

Hansen and his wife have four children and two grandchildren. Two out of the four children work and live in Mount Pleasant.

Hansen has worked in aviation for over 30 years both as a pilot and in maintenance. He taught at an international school and was flight instructor at LeTourneau for

See New Staff, Pg. 9



# New Staff from Page 8

a couple years. Hansen has been able to fly to some of the most remote parts of the world. The friends made, experiences and memories are things he will always remember.

"I was privileged to be able to fly and live in some of the most remote parts of the world," Hansen said. "The experiences I had and the different friends I made from different cultures was truly an experience to remember."

After recently moving from Papua New Guinea where he and his family did mission work, Mount Pleasant was a big change.

"I like the small town feel where everyone is friendly and it is easy to get to know people," Hansen said.

**Cudahy Harmon** is a new assistant principal at the high school.

He graduated from Louisiana Tech University and is married to his wife, Stefen Harmon who currently works at PE Wallace teaching dance. They have a newborn baby named Londyn Brielle Harmon.

Becoming a father to the most beautiful baby girl ever is hands down the most interesting event in my life," Harmon said. "Well.....marrying my wife of course lol."

This year will mark Harmon's 10th year in his profession. Prior to this year, he worked for Beckville, Pittsburgh and Mount Pleasant.

The thing he likes best about MPHS is "being treated and accepted as family". He calls the school "a very family oriented place. GO TIGERS!!!"

**Christi Lowry** is the new teacher for floral design as well as Principles of Agriculture. She attended Texas



**Harmon**



**McDaniel**

A&M Texarkana and got a degree in General Studies (History).

She has been married to her husband Brad Lowry for 16 years and they have three children. Kinley is 13 and in 8th grade at MPJH. She is a cheerleader, dancer, and barrel racer. Brandon is 11 and in 5th grade. He like to play baseball and golf. Karli is 8 years old and is a 3rd grader at Annie Sims. She also barrel races.

Before coming to the high school, Lowry taught at Harts Bluff, Vivian Fowler and Annie Sims. She has taught



**Lowry**

both 1st and 3rd grades.

Although she took two years off before moving to Fowler to stay home with her family, Lowry has been teaching for a total of 13 years.

"I love the department I work for and the people I work with every day," Lowry said. "They have welcomed me with open arms and made the transition to the high school smooth and easy."

Lowry was born in Memphis, lived in Charlotte, N.C. for six year before moving to Dallas.

"I was a dancer growing up and had the opportunity to dance during the Dallas Summer Musicals in the cast of Cinderella," she said.

**Tyler McDaniel** is the new teacher for Freshmen World Geography. He attended Southern Arkansas University earning his Bachelors of Science in Education. He has three younger siblings and is not currently married.

This year will be his fifth as a teacher. Before joining MPHS, McDaniel taught 6th grade World Geography at DeKalb ISD.

"Even though it is a bigger

See New Staff, Pg. 10

*Pg. 9 Tigertalk*

## New Staff from Page 9

school, everyone makes you feel welcome, and someone is always willing to help you if you are in need," McDaniel says.

**Adriana Ortiz** is the new 9th grade Environmental Systems as well as new assistant coach for volleyball and soccer.

She attended Tyler Junior College on a soccer scholarship and ended up transferring to A&M Commerce University.

While there she earned her degree in Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Ortiz has two brothers, two dogs and parents that she loves very much. She will be getting married May 1 of 2021.

Prior to coming to Mount Pleasant, she taught for a total of 6 years at Sulphur Springs Middle School. She worked for two years as a receptionist, one year as an attendance clerk and three years as a paraprofessional.

When asked what she liked best about being at MPHS so far, Ortiz said, "The faculty that have helped me out



**Ortiz**

tremendously as a first-time teacher and of course the students."

**Elizabeth Robbins** is the new Career transitional teacher in the Career Training Center this year.

She attended the College of Biblical Studies with degrees in Counseling and Special Education. She and her husband, Jeff Robbins, have been married for 26 years now. They have 3 children as well as 3 grandchildren.

Prior to coming to Mount Pleasant, Robbins worked



**Robbins**

for 12 years at a Private Christian school in Houston. She moved here in 2012 and began working as a life skills teacher at the Junior High here at MPISD.

This will be her 4th year in our school district.

Robbins says the best thing about the high school is her students.

"They are the best, I also like the people that I work with in the Special Ed Department. Lots of laughs and helping each other out," she said.

## **Cosmetology teacher appointed to board**

Cosmetology teacher Aleshia Rivera has been appointed Presiding Officer of the Cosmetology Advisory Board with the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR).

The TDLR provides oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans and ensures they are served by qualified professionals. The chair of the Advisory Board on Cosmetology is appointed by the Chair of the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation.

The Advisory Board Chair is responsible for conducting board meetings and keeping members on topic during the meeting. The Chair also appoints members of any working groups that are needed.

Rivera has served on the Cosmetology Advisory Board for 6 years and has taught Cosmetology classes at MPHS for 16 years. Her students overwhelmingly pass their licensure exams at the end of the school year and go on to work in and own their own salons, both locally and across the state.



**Rivera**



# MPHS Cosmetology elects new officers

The Cosmetology program has chosen its officers for the new school year. New officers are Senior President Bre Asia Hargrave, Senior Vice President Ericka Galicia, Junior President Ebelin Castaneda and Junior Vice President Ariana Vazquez.

Cosmetology is a highly selective, two-year, state licensed 1000-hour program involving the study of hair, skin, nails and their related care. Students study and practice in a salon lab setting using mannequins, classmates, and the general public as clientele for skill development. The program emphasizes advanced training and techniques in cosmetology in addition to preparing students to take the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation Cosmetology Exam their senior year. Students that pass the state board exam are professional licensed cosmetologists in the state of Texas and can begin working in the industry immediately after high school graduation.. Cosmetology Instructor is Aleshia Rivera.



Top row from left are Senior President Bre Asia Hargrave and Senior Vice President Ericka Galicia. Bottom row from left are Junior President Ebelin Castaneda and Junior Vice President Ariana Vazquez.

# Choir students earn All-Region honors

Six choir students have earned places in the Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA) All-Region Choir. Seniors Migel Guerrero (6th chair first tenor) and Jordi Bello (8th chair first tenor), juniors Abril Ramirez (3rd chair first soprano) and Emyly Lopez (9th chair second alto), and freshmen Jacori Johnson (7th chair first tenor) and Hope Powell (8th chair second alto) earned this prestigious placement. This is the third year in a row for Guerrero and Ramirez to be selected.

To earn a place in the choir, each singer had to sing three selections that were scored by a panel of judges utiliz-



ing an online platform, a change from prior years due to COVID-19.

"I am very proud of each of these singers," said MPHS Choir Director, Nancy Vines. "They have diligently prepared not only during class but also on their own time."

The students who have been selected for the All-Region Choir have advanced to Pre-Area auditions on Dec. 1st, which is the next level of competition. The annual All-Region Clinic and Concert will not be held this year due to COVID-19 concerns.



Lopez, third from left, is pictured with Captains Anna Claire Wall, Jakayla Sanders and Chazlea Morris.

# **Lopez takes over as cheer coach**

By **KIMBERLEY GALVAN**  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Former junior high cheer coach Karissa Lopez has taken over as the new cheerleader coach.

Lopez answered a few questions about her new position and the cheer season.

**What motivates you to coach cheerleading?**

I love cheerleading and the good and bad that comes with it. I was lucky enough to coach a lot of these squad members in Junior High so coming back to join them this year is a dream come true. I am so blessed to have the squad that I have for my first year at this level.

**2. What is the most rewarding part of coaching cheer?**

The most rewarding part of coaching cheer is seeing all the work your squad has put into a sport they love and watching it all come together. When you love your teammates,

good things are going to happen, and the love this squad has for each other is beyond what I expected.

**3. How do you promote a positive energy with your team during positive and negative situations?**

We have had so many positive things happen this year that it makes it easy for me to bring positive energy. When there is something that may bring us down, I try to look at the glass half full instead of half empty. I hope that I am instilling that in this squad.

**4. What are you and the team most excited about this year?**

We have so much to be excited for this year, however I am most excited about competition season. This year we are focusing on a “game day” atmosphere and bringing the competition aspect of cheer to our sidelines. We are also excited to show our student body and community all this year’s talent.



# Thurman picked high school DAR Good Citizen by chapter

Senior Taryn Thurman, daughter of Tris and Stephanie Thurman, was recently selected as the MPHS Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Good Citizen.

The Martha Laird Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution sponsors the DAR Good Citizen program in our area. This contest is designed to honor an outstanding young person in a high school's senior class who demonstrates the four qualities of a DAR Good Citizen: Dependability, Service, Leadership, and Patriotism.

Thurman has held numerous leadership roles in campus organizations. She is currently Co-Captain of the Debate team, Vice-President of the National Honor Society, President of the Interact Club, and Captain of the MPHS Colorguard. During her junior year, she was Vice-President of the Debate team and Interact Club, and Lieutenant of Colorguard.

As a sophomore she was Debate Team Secretary, Interact Club Historian, and Colorguard Squad Leader.

In addition to leadership, service to the community is another important characteristic that good citizens possess. Thurman participated in Cosmo Scholars as a peer tutor, promoted and assisted in a campus recycling program, and provided materials and helped build props for the Goin' Gold Band shows. She has also spent time volunteering with Titus County Cares and Safe-T Women's Shelter, raising money with her local church to donate wells to disadvantaged communities across the globe, and helping with the Adopt-a-Highway program.

Thurman was a national qualifier for FBLA competition, a two-year state qualifier in UIL Cross-Examination Debate and was selected as the State Top Speaker in 2019, and she placed first with her team at the UIL Regional Spelling competition. She was also



Thurman with her award.

honored with acceptance into the Congressional Student Leadership Program and participated for two years.

She has also received Academic Blanket Awards for AP English III and AP Music Theory.

Being selected as the MPHS Good Citizen provides Thurman the opportunity to participate in the scholarship portion of the program at the local Chapter level.

Each contest entry will be evaluated by independent, non-DAR judges and the winning entry will advance through the state and national levels of judging.

# Face-to-face or remote?

## Students have two options for learning

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Many things have had to change due to COVID19 restrictions. Whether it be wearing a mask everywhere or having to sanitize one's hands every hour. For students, they were given the option to choose between face-to-face learning and online remote learning.

For those who decided to return to school, it became evident that things were not going to be as they used to be.

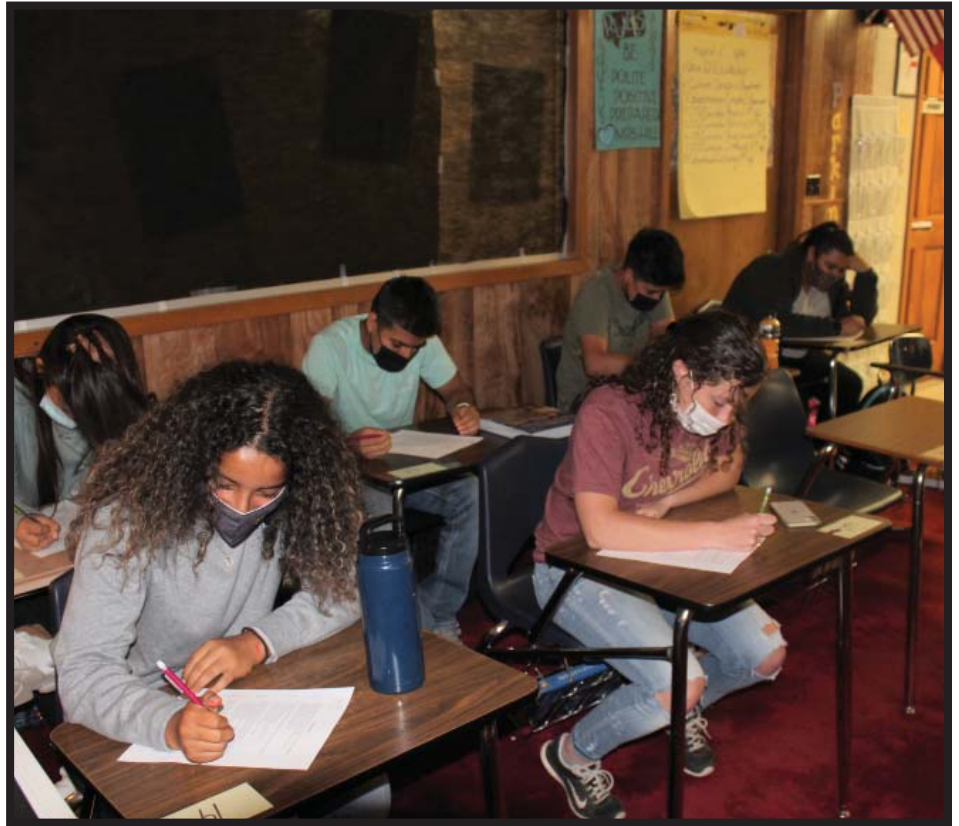
The student body was not used to wearing a mask 8 hours a day and having to be cautious of those around them. There are sanitation stations scattered around the campus and remembering to use the stations has been a challenge for the students.

Masks have been an uncomfortable addition to the students as after hours of usage they can leave ears feeling sore. While many face this problem, it should be acknowledged that masks are required to be worn during the day to prevent further spread of the virus.

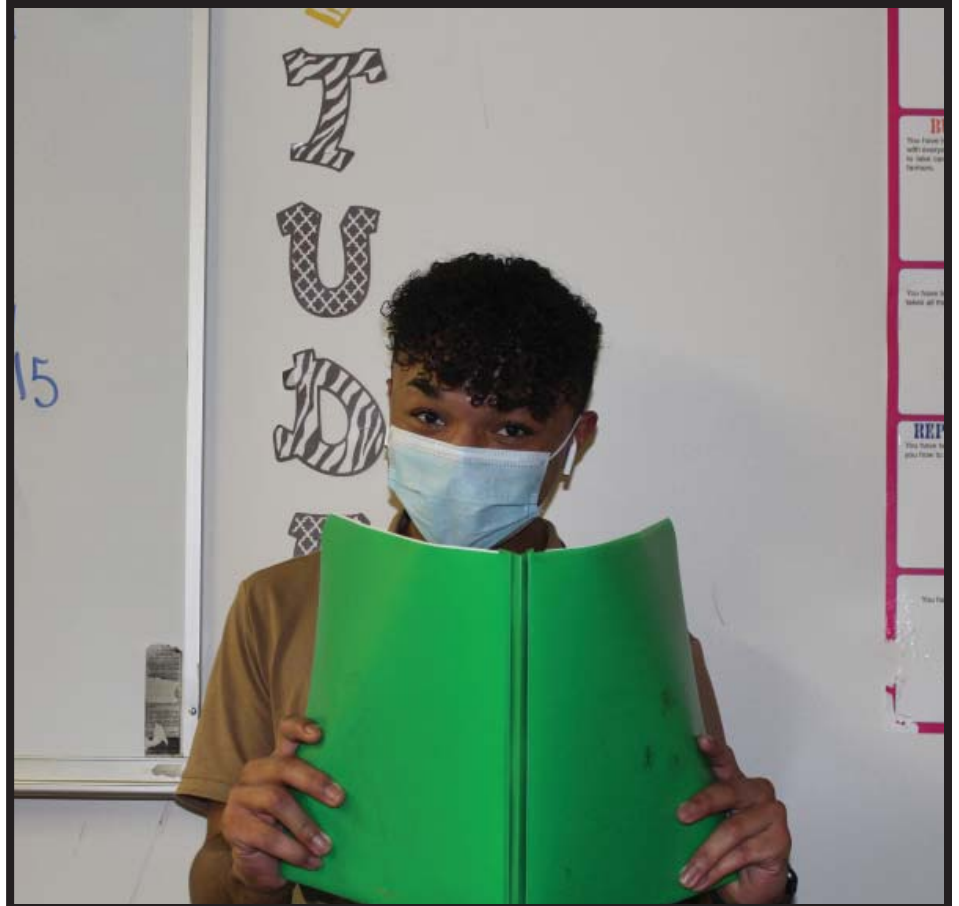
"I think the only setback for me has been the fact that my glasses fog up due to the masks and it prevents me from seeing," junior Jenny Flores

See Learning, Pg. 15

*Pg. 14 Tigertalk*



Students wear their masks in face-to-face learning.



Gaven Fife is busy doing his work.



# **Learners from Page 14**

said.

This year, the high school has added the church as a new portion of the school to be transformed into additional classrooms.

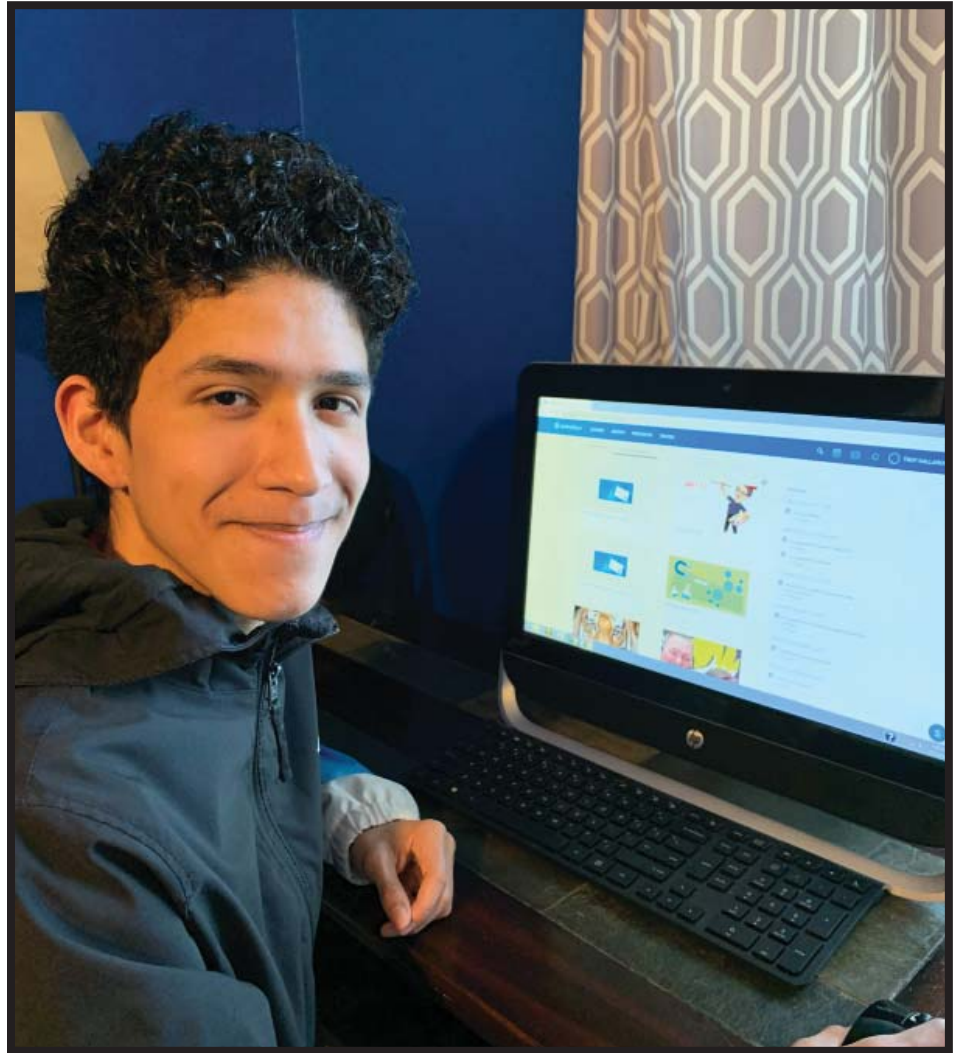
Portable buildings have also been set up next to the church to prevent the main building from crowding up. There are paths the students take to safely reach the church and portable building that also encourage social distancing.

The students are given the same sanitation stations that are seen throughout the main campus.

One of the biggest changes for face to face learners is testing. This year, the school is allowing students to take all tests online.

This is to offer an equal testing environment for both online and at campus learners.

Teachers have had to change their usual test into ones that are online friendly and provide an equal chance to both face to face and at home learners.



**Troy Gallardo is doing remote learning.**

MPHS has been diligently working to prevent the spread of the virus and protect their students.

While many things have

changed, the students have been trying to not let things stop them from enjoying another successful year of high school.

## **Student shares thoughts on remote learning**

**By JOSE RODRIGUEZ  
Tigertalk Staff Writer**

Personally I believe staying at home has me more motivated with doing school work.

I find being a remote learner working better for me as I can work at my own pace and do not have to worry about being disrupted when switching classes as at home.

I can switch between different assignments after I feel like I really have digested the material of the day.

I also feel more motivated because the atmosphere is way more relaxed, I don't feel like there's competition to try to be better than anyone.

What motivates me even more is the fact that as

soon as I finish my assignments for the day I can do as I wish instead of school where even if I'm finished with everything I still have to be there until a certain time.

I have also been sleeping better at night since I manage my time better doing remote learning, the stress I felt has greatly decreased.



Baker Peterson looks to throw the ball.



Miller McCrumby makes a great catch.

# Tigers begin district play this week

By MIGUEL ARELLANO  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

After a long wait, football one of America's past times, is back for the Tigers. Normally they would start their season in August, but due to COVID-19 their first game was in September.

The Tigers (2-1) are set to open district action Friday against Texas High.

With a new fresh start from last year, we asked receiver Miller McCrumby how will football be different from last year.

"Football will be different for many reasons, one; COVID has us changing the way we do some stuff but this year we have more experience all throughout the team compared to last year," McCrumby said. "The rookie mistakes we made last year to earn a 5-5 record have been cleared up and we are looking better."

The Tigers are off to a 2-1 start with wins over Wylie East and Sherman. Motivation plays a big part in getting the team pumped.

"The stuff that motivates us varies players to players a list of things would be: music, our coaches, our teammates, the fans, band, etc..., McCrumby said."

All the students have heard that you should show some school spirit in games.

"School spirit is extremely crucial because it turns us up seeing that we have the whole support of our school and that they and that they appreciate us to show spirit," McCrumby said.

School spirit can really help change the tides of the game. COVID has done so much to this community and most of it is just terrible.

McCrumbly said COVID has had an impact on the team but won't determine how well they play.

"COVID will not affect our play one bit, the only thing it does is require us to practice social distancing, wear our mask, and affect how much cleaning the coaches do to ensure we have our season," McCrumby said.

McCrumbly said the team has high expectations and that this year could be a really good season.

"If we execute the plays and strategies that Coach Pinckard and our wonderful coaching staff have designed then the possibilities are endless for this team," McCrumby said.

"This is only my second year on varsity and this year just has a different feeling. We have improved tremendously from last year and we can't wait to show everyone our hard work we've been putting in."



# Volleyball is battling back from COVID-19, quarantine

By MIGUEL ARELLANO  
Tigertalk Staff writer

Volleyball may have had an interesting start, but they hopes those trials will make them better in the end.

Their season was delayed at first by the UIL who pushed it back due to COVID-19 concerns. Then just as the season gets going, one of the players is diagnosed with COVID-19 and results in the team being quarantined for two weeks.

“COVID-19 has affected us in many ways. We can’t have as many games as we used to and we started the preseason with only 4 games,” Ashlynn Brooks said.

“We usually have about 15+ tournament games before we start district.”

These obstacles should only make them stronger and closer as a team.

“I’ve always loved playing the sport, and making bonds with my teammates” Jaycee Woods said.

Brooks said “I’ve played volleyball since I’ve been in junior high. I love the sport, the drive, and the energy to it. Its fun and I enjoy it.”

Both Brooks and Woods said that winning district games and making the play-offs is definitely the goal of the team.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, school spirit has looked a bit different this year. Woods said the “gym will be less crowded and less supporters due to COVID.”

Brooks said she has learned a lot through this year.

“We are hardworking ladies and we are willing to fight for anything. If it had to be one thing that I could say I learned this year it would be don’t take life or anything for granted, and enjoy it while it last, cause it doesn’t last forever,” Brooks said.

Woods said the team has put a lot of work in because they never know if COVID-19 will delay their season again.

“We have been working hard daily and giving our all because we never know when our last game will be because Corona could end it sooner than expected,” Woods said.



Lady Tigers stand for the National Anthem.



Ashlynn Brooks serves the volleyball.



# Cross Country gears up for district

The boys and girls cross country teams will be hoping for a great showing on Monday as they host the district meet.

The boys have had a very successful season and should be one of the teams to beat at district.

Senior Gill Landaverde has high hopes for the team and himself.

“Well, I want everyone on my team to succeed,” Landaverde said. “I really want to beat my fastest time and make it to state.”

Landaverde said he gets motivated to run from the people who have posted faster times than him.

“I think about the people who beat me in a race ...that makes me run,” Landaverde said.

He said running every-day has allowed him to push himself to run faster.

He said the greatest advice he could give to other runners is “to keep your head up and don’t give up.”

Both teams hope a good showing on Monday results in a trip to regionals.



Front row from left are Jonathan Sandate, Christopher Escobar, Gio Calderon and Juan Retana. Back row from left are Coach Jesus Garcia, Sair Ramirez, Juan Gonzalez, Gill Landaverde, Gilbert Landaverde, Daniel Robles, Jr. Martinez and Coach Bryan Trickey.



From left are Coach Jesus Garcia, Buendy Fraire, Jennifer Soto, Abby Retana, Isabel Gonzales, Breanna Gonzalez and Coach Bryan Trickey.



Landaverde hopes for another district title.



Fraire runs by a competitor at the MP Meet.





Grand Champion Sarah Godfrey



Reserve Grand Champion Codi Dennis

## Floral students dominate at Fair

The Titus County Fair looks completely different in 2020. There are no carnival rides, no photography exhibitions, and no delicious fair food to enjoy, but some of the FFA competitions have been allowed to continue with a few rule changes to keep participants safe.

A new contest, Floral Design, kicked off this year and Mount Pleasant High School students took top honors.

Sarah Godfrey, a junior and three-year member of the MPHS FFA, created the Grand Champion floral arrangement. Codi Dennis, also a junior and a three-year FFA member, designed the Reserve Grand Champion piece. Placing in the top ten were Draia Fernandez (4th place), Candice Perez

(7th place), and McKinna Wooten (8th place). Also contributing arrangements were Jasmine Landaverde, Virginia Olvera, and Linzy Walker.

Participating students from area schools were given one hour to create an asymmet-

rical floral arrangement in the presence of the judges. The competition was hosted at the Titus County Extension Office. MPISD Floral Design classes are taught by Susie Hearron and Christi Lowry.



Floral Design participants



Kayla Mata performs the flute during the halftime show.

# Band's halftime show will look different this football season

By ODALYS ADAME  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, this year has been looking a little different for everyone. Many groups and organizations have had to prepare for football season differently and the Goin' Gold Band is no exception.

Usually, every summer the band prepares for their big show by having band camp in which the band gets their music and learns the chart for the show.

However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the band decided to not have a big show but rather opt for smaller performances in order to maintain a safe environment for the students and directors.

While not having a show might seem discouraging, the band has not paid much mind to it as now they have the opportunity to bring more power into the stand music.

In previous years, most of the work and time is put into learning the show and marching, but this year the band has started to add more stand tunes into their musical repertoire.

"It's been really fun to work on playing songs we've always wanted to play

during the game. We don't have a show like usual but we do play more modern songs on the field that we think the audience would enjoy," Leslie Mayo, junior trombone player, says.

Regardless of the circumstances, the band is preparing to be more aggressive and loud in the stands and bringing a shorter yet entertaining and safe halftime show to make up for COVID-19 restrictions.

Similarly, the colorguard has also had to change things up a bit. Typically, guard would work with the Goin' Gold Band and they would prepare a show based off a selected theme. However, this year guard has had to take the proper precautions to ensure their members safety. In place of a show, the guard will be performing a flag and dance routine while the band plays.

"Due to COVID, the band and color guard aren't competing in the fall season. The students are also not performing a regular halftime show with props or themes. [However], the color guard has been working on a lot of technique and preparing for the halftime perfor-

See Band, Pg. 21



## **Band from Page 20**



**Joshlyn Paloblanco is one the lieutenants for the colorguard this year.**

mances, which is not a full production as it has been every year,” Cristian Gomez, new color guard director, said.

There might not be the usual show but color guard has not stopped working on their skills and are still making the best out of the situation.

Lieutenant and senior Joshlyn Paloblanco, says that she still looks forward to “performing and still being able to have fun and enjoy my senior year.”

As always, the audience should look forward to another amazing year with the band and colorguard.



**Victor Diaz gets ready to perform during the halftime show.**



# FFA students win big at County Fair

While much of the Titus County Fair was cancelled in 2020, COVID-19 did not keep the Mount Pleasant ISD FFA students from competing and showing their animals and ag mechanics projects.

Most of the students had been raising and working with their animals and creating their projects for months, so they, along with their instructors, were grateful for the opportunity to present all they had worked on and learned during the pandemic.

In the end, MPISD students brought home four Grand Champion banners, three reserve Grand Champion banners, one showmanship banner, and a host of other placements and awards.

MPHS junior Cade Woods won Grand Champion Broiler.

MPJH eighth-grader Kinley Lowry won Grand Champion Rabbit with MPHS freshman Genevieve Rubio earning Reserve Grand Champion Rabbit and Senior Showmanship in the Rabbit Division.

Wallace Middle School sixth-grader Bowdrie Priefert won Grand Champion Hog and his brother, Tucker Priefert, a third-grader at E.C. Brice Elementary, won Reserve Grand Champion Hog.

MPHS junior Sarah Godfrey took home the Grand Champion banner for her floral arrangement while junior Codi Dennis won Reserve Grand Champion in Floral Design.

MPHS junior Emma Aston won second place in her division with her fire pit for the Ag Mechanics Contest.

"Many of our students

See FFA, Pg. 23



Genevieve Rubio won Grand Champion Rabbit.



Cade Woods took Grand Champion for broilers.





Emma Aston was the Ag Mechanics grand champion with her fire pit.

## **FFA from Page 22**

made the sale with their project or animal which is a huge accomplishment,” said Blake Rice, MPHS Ag Science Coordinator.

“The students have had these projects for months juggling school, a pandemic, and caring for something other than themselves. Our FFA students put in many hours of preparation from grooming and feeding their animals to training them to walk and set up perfectly. Ag Mechanics students worked in the shop in August when school started and put forth effort when the temperature was almost unbearable,” Rice said.

“I enjoyed seeing our students work and build a skill they can keep with them after school and hopefully into a career one day. The effort put in by the other Ag teachers were key in our successful endeavor during the Titus County Fair. There were many late nights, early mornings and hours of practice in between.”

MPISD Ag instructors include Susie Hearron, Meagan Raine, Christi Lowry, Slatyr Hunnicutt, and Blake Rice.



Hope Vaught



McKinna Wooten and Mr. Rice with her rabbit.





Front row from left are Taryn Thurman, Isabella Greco, Connelly Cowan and Coach Cody Morris. Back row from left are Ryan Sharp, Anthony Orellana, Taylor Hubbs and Reid Pinckard.

## Debate members do well in online tournaments

The MPHS Speech and Debate tournament season looks a little different this year. While many 5A activities are just getting started and others are still waiting to start due to COVID-19, speech and debate officials worked all spring and summer transitioning to an online platform so their students could continue competing on time.

The team has already competed in four tournaments with several members placing among the top entries.

In the Plano/Clark Swing on Aug. 28 and 29, senior Reid Pinckard placed 3rd out of a pool of 44 in Lincoln Douglas Debate, defeating competitors from Southlake Carroll, Coppell, Plano, Lindale and the Greenhill School. Junior Connelly Cowan placed 3rd in International Extemporaneous Speaking with senior Isabella Greco being named a semifinalist on the Domestic side.

In the Southlake Carroll Dragon Faire on Sept. 4-5, the team of Cowan and senior Taryn Thurman placed 2nd in the Varsity CX division. Cowan was 2nd in speaker points, separated by only 0.6 from the Top Speaker, and Thurman was 3rd in speaker points, only 0.3 back from Cowan. They defeated teams from Highland Park, Coppell, Aubrey, and Hallsville to reach the final round. Their only loss came to The Greenhill School, a private school in Dallas.

In Lincoln Douglas Debate, Pinckard was a quarterfinalist, placing 7th in a pool of 44, and was 5th in speaker points. Sophomore Anthony Orellana was an octofinalist, placing 10th in his first-ever appearance in LD.

Since travel is currently not an issue, the weekend of Sept. 11-12 saw the team competing in two different tournaments.

On Sept. 11 in the A&M Consolidated meet, senior Ryan Sharp took 2nd in Domestic Extemp and earned his first bid to the National Individual Events Tournament of Champions (NIETOC). Competitors earning two bids are qualified to compete in the prestigious national tournament in the spring. Cowan placed 4th in International Extemp.

On Sept. 12 the team competed in the La-Vernia TFA Bear Brawl. Cowan placed 2nd in International Extemp and is now one point away from qualifying for the Texas Forensics Association State Tournament in that event. The team of Sharp and junior Taylor Hubbs placed 3rd in CX Debate earning points toward their state qualification. Orellana was a quarterfinalist in Lincoln Douglas debate. He was in the top 8 out of 32 competitors and tied for Top Speaker honors in only his second appearance in that event.

"We started off the year challenging ourselves," said Speech and Debate coach Cody Morris. "We signed up to go against some of the top programs in the state and came away with some great results. It really is amazing to be part of such an incredible program. These students have displayed resiliency and determination to not let factors outside of their control derail their goals. They worked all summer to prepare for this season and it is quickly showing up in the results. I am very proud these students and excited to see what is to come."



# NHS selects 2020-2021 officers

The high school chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) has selected its officers for the 2020-2021 school year.

Leading NHS are President Reid Pinckard, Vice-President Taryn Thurman, Secretary Isabella Greco, Treasurer Faith Logan, Parliamentarian Nicholas Segovia, and Historian Patricia Roque.

According to MPHS NHS Advisor, David Clark, the NHS leadership team drives the development of the projects for the year.

“This year is different, obviously,” said Clark. “They have decided to look for more virtual, online community involvement opportunities. Two projects we will continue from previous years will be our fall food drive for needy students and their families as well as our spring pet supply drive to support our local humane society.”

The MPHS National Honor Society plans to induct its new members on



From left are Logan, Segovia, Roque, Greco, Pinckard and Thurman.

Nov. 2 if the local health situation will allow it.

## NTHS names new officers

The high school chapter of the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) has chosen its officers for the 2020-2021 school year. Leading NTHS will be President Faith Logan, Vice President Patricia Roque, Secretary Valeria Moreno, Treasurer Nataly Morales, Reporter Alicia Bello, and Officer at Large Ruben Carreon.

The National Technical Honor Society is made up of high achieving students in a Career and Technical program of study. Students must maintain an excellent grade point average, complete community service activities, and are active members of their schools and communities. NTHS Chapter advisor is Donna Davis.



Clockwise from bottom are Logan, Moreno, Bello, Carreon, Morales and Roque.

# 20 Questions with Mrs. Ayers

By ANGEL ACUNA  
Tigertalk Staff Writer

In each issue of the Tigertalk, the newspaper staff features a different teacher. This issue spotlights Angie Ayers, who teaches Health Science.

## 1. Who are your family members?

Husband of 28 years -- Jessie, son -- Nic (graduating from Louisiana Tech in November), daughter Averie --- (sophomore at NTCC)

## 2. Where did you grow up and go to high school?

I spent most of my time in Northeast Texas and San Antonio.

I lived in New York and New Jersey for a couple of years while I was in junior high. I graduated from Gilmer High.

## 3. What college did you attend and what was your major?

I received my ADN (nursing) from NTCC and my BSN (nursing) from University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL) while I was living there.

## 4. What other career would you be doing if you were not teaching?

I would do something in forensics.

## 5. What makes your life better?

Life is better with faith, family, and traveling.

## 6. Do you like any sports, if so high school, college, professional?

Yes, softball (of course), tennis, volleyball, & football. I enjoy all levels but right now college is my favorite, especially NTCC (Let's go, Ave!)

## 7. What is the best gift you have received?

A necklace my grandmother gave me.

## 8. What is something you



Ayers is one of the health science teachers at the high school.

## have learned in the last year?

How to juggle. (Now all of my immediate family members know now)

## 9. What is your favorite memory as a child?

Traveling around the country with my dad in his big rig.

## 10. What is the best dish you have ever prepared?

Chocolate Forte Pie.

## 11. What is a big purchase you have made and was it worth it?

A timeshare. NO! Don't do it.

## 12. What is your dream vacation?

Greece

## 13. What is the weirdest thing you have seen at school?

Someone walking down the hall with a bowl of cereal, pouring milk in it.

## 14. What movie do you wish you were a part of?

I can't decide between The Fugitive, Shawshanks Redemption, or The Green Mile (my favorites)

## 15. What accomplishment are you most proud of?

Learning how to save lives

## 16. What are your hobbies?

Shows/movies that involve forensics, traveling, watching sports, reading (anything medical)

## 17. If you had to pick a new name for yourself, what name would you pick?

Katherine

## 18. What is your favorite Disney movie?

Toy Story

## 19. What is the most ridiculous fact you know?

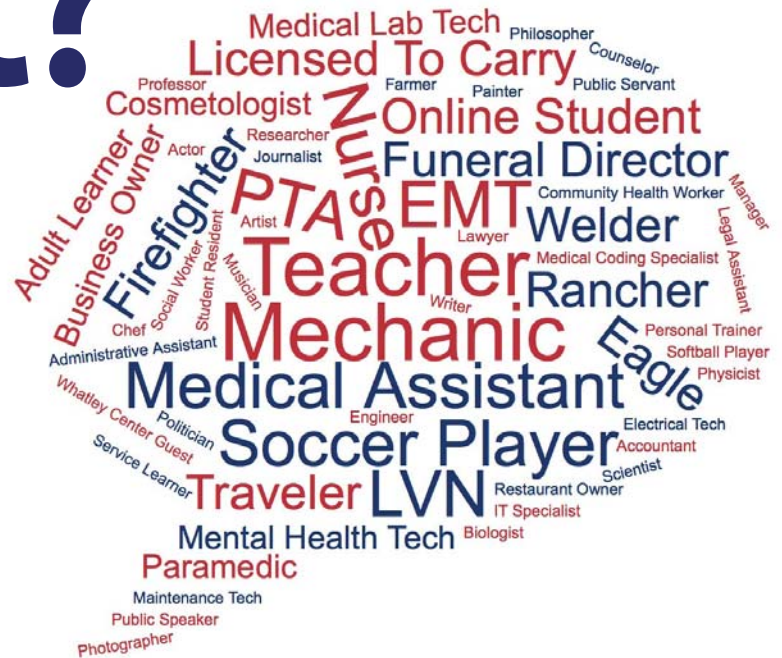
Your nose and ears look bigger the older you get

## 20. What do you like most about teaching?

Seeing the students' enthusiasm when they learn something that excites them.



# WHAT WILL YOU BE AT NTCC?



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# Tiger Roar

If you could have any kind of mask, what would it be?

Tiger Roar page by Tigertalk Staff Writer Faith Hampton



"Iron Man"  
-- Antonio Hernandez



"Mouth"  
-- Ashlynn Brooks



"Trump"  
-- Astin Ledbetter



"Flower"  
--- Azalia Guzman



"Soviet Union"  
-- Caleb Ruiz



"Captain America"  
-- Jashari Inostros



"Bucces"  
-- Karen Trejo



"Stars"  
-- Lily Burrows



"Dinosaur"  
--- Maira Rocha



"Dallas Cowboys"  
--- Natalie Montoya



"Steve Harvey"  
--- Tairelle Chong



"Bedazzled"  
--- Zaushalynn Lee