Eight ECC students receive full-ride scholarships to NIU

A scholarship offered by Northern Illinois University (NIU) and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) Group Foundation has given eight Elgin Community College students an opportunity of a lifetime—to attend NIU tuition-free as they pursue majors in fields related to finance, applied math, and technology.

Students receiving the scholarship include (shown clockwise from top left) Alexis Gonzalez, of Elgin; Valentina Charria, of Elgin; Clarissa Barrera, of Carpentersville; Jesus Martinez, of Elgin; Magda Nicolas, of Elgin; and Demetrius Stanton, of Hanover Park. Not pictured are Diego Gonzalez and Sergio Pedroza, both of Elgin.

All eight NIU-CME Group Foundation Scholars graduated from ECC. They met the required 3.25 grade point average, demonstrated financial need, and represented traditionally underserved populations.

“We had an exceptional pool of applicants from Elgin Community College,” said Christy Cunningham, CME Scholar Program director from the NIU College of Business. “The interview team was highly impressed by their academic achievements and campus and community involvement. We strongly believe in each candidate’s potential for continued success here at NIU.”

The scholarships will cover tuition as well as room and board—a package valued at nearly $45,000 per student. Additionally, CME Group Foundation Scholars are entitled to special support services, including research experiences, networking opportunities, leadership development, business etiquette instruction, and personal branding workshops. Scholars will also be considered for summer internships at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, the world’s leading derivatives marketplace that brings together buyers and sellers who need to manage risk or want to profit by accepting risk.

The eight ECC students said the scholarship is an opportunity for them to pursue their academic goals, in addition to repaying their parents for the sacrifices they made to help them attain an education.

“For me to have this award, it shows that I have excelled in my studies and all of my hard work has paid off,” said Martinez.

New forklift course fills demand

A new forklift operator training course offered by Elgin Community College this fall is popular with students seeking to enhance their employability. The first two sessions were highly successful, leading organizers to plan a third session in November. The two-day, one-credit course is held at the Elgin Community College Center for Emergency Services, 815 Plank Road, Burlington.

ECC is the first institution in the area to offer this credit course, which is beneficial for truck drivers who may need to use a lift truck and for warehouse workers seeking to advance in their jobs. Each course section includes 14 hours of instruction and hands-on training—more than double compared to other area offerings. Students spend 11 hours in the classroom and three on the lift truck. All training follows guidelines set forth by OSHA and the American National Standards Institute for the safe operation of lift trucks.

For more information, contact Don Anderson, truck driving program director, at 847-214-7317 or doanderson@elgin.edu.
Update from the President and Chair

You may have heard that the unprecedented state of Illinois budget stalemate has finally come to an end, and you may be wondering what that means for Elgin Community College. Many stakeholders have asked whether the college will restore services and positions that were eliminated during the budget crisis. The short answer is no; at least not at this time. The college has been appropriated $4.8 million for this fiscal year; to date, ECC has received 35% of the base operating grant funds approved in the Illinois state budget. Approximately $3 million remains unpaid from last fiscal year. The college is cautiously optimistic about its fiscal future. But, the college cannot commit to spend what it has not yet received—and potentially may not receive in a timely manner.

As we have done since the budget crisis started back in 2015, we will continue to review and assess needs and expenditures to ensure that students and student services are not adversely impacted. We will also continue to operate in a fiscally responsible manner, taking into account the best interests of all our constituents, including taxpayers. We remain committed to our mission, and the proof is in this publication.

This past year our students experienced tremendous success, both inside and outside of the classroom. They earned first place awards in national academic competitions, scored a national runner-up title in men’s basketball, and won the men’s baseball regional championship.

A new semester has begun and we have welcomed 104 high school students to our campus, up from 38 students last year, as part of ECC’s Accelerate College Program which enrolls qualified high school juniors and seniors for dual college and high school credit.

We are also excited about our continuing partnerships with the Kane County Regional Office of Education and Northern Illinois University. On the front cover, we invite you to read about the eight ECC students who earned full-ride scholarships to NIU in partnership with the Chicago Mercantile Exchange Group Foundation, and how prepared they are for success after ECC.

Additionally, our new forklift certificate program is another example of how we are living our mission and meeting the demands of the workforce. These are the types of programs and students that make us proud—they should make you proud too. ECC is your community college.

Sincerely,

David Sam, PhD, JD, LLM
President

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Meyer, JD
Chair, Board of Trustees
A joint program between Elgin Community College and the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) at the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center (KCJJC) has been so successful that one student wanted to stay beyond a scheduled release date to finish. That was one of several stories Kane County Juvenile Court Judge Clint Hull and others shared during a meeting last July with various court, school, and elected officials.

“When they speak with me for the first time, their heads are down,” Hull said of the students who enter his courtroom. “When they see me again and tell me they graduated, they’re so proud.”

To date, 33 students have passed their dual-credit courses and have earned college credit. The program has allowed students to become more optimistic about their futures, given the skills they have learned in the classes.

“The students that we see often have people saying they can’t do it,” said Ivars Spalis, principal of the Kane County Juvenile Justice Center School in St. Charles. “We’re showing them that they can.”

ECC and ROE representatives met with Kane County Circuit Court judges and staff; State Sen. Jim Oberweis; and representatives from the offices of State Rep. Keith Wheeler and U.S. Rep. Randy Hultgren to discuss the progress of partnership and learn how the program impacts students residing in the center. In its summer 2016 debut, the program offered two dual-credit courses—College 101 and General Student Development 120. A third dual-credit course, Job Search Strategies, was added in spring 2017.

Students, whose identities will remain confidential, said the classes and discussions have given them more focus on what they want to do with their futures. One wants to be a lawyer, and another wants to run a farm.

“I like helping people,” said another student, who wants to become a firefighter. “To go into a fire and risk my life for another is a pretty big deal.”

Although all the program’s students passed their courses, Elizabeth Roeger, EdD, ECC dean of college transitions and partnerships, said the next step is to transition them to college. ECC is exploring options to support KCJJC students who reside within ECC’s district.
Agreement allows ECC students to earn NIU education degree at ECC

Starting in the fall of 2018, students at Elgin Community College will be able to earn a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Northern Illinois University without leaving the ECC campus.

Administrators at ECC and the NIU College of Education are preparing a 2+2 agreement that aligns ECC general education courses with coursework at NIU. Upon completion of an associate degree, ECC students can transfer to NIU’s main campus in DeKalb, or take upper-level NIU courses taught by NIU professors at ECC.

“NIU is the top transfer destination for our students, and this partnership was of particular interest to us,” said Sean Jensen, ECC director of transfer services. “It’s really beneficial for our students to have options; many of them prefer to stay local due to work or other responsibilities. This agreement makes earning a bachelor’s degree in elementary education more convenient. And the option remains for students who want to follow the more traditional path to NIU in DeKalb.”

Although the first group of ECC students will officially begin NIU’s program in fall 2018, the NIU College of Education will offer some transitional courses at ECC in spring 2018.

ECC offers numerous transfer services, partnerships, and programs. For more information, visit elgin.edu/universitytransfer or call Sean Jensen, director of transfer services, at 847-214-7195.

Center for Emergency Services expands programs, increases facility usage

Since opening in 2015, Elgin Community College’s Center for Emergency Services has trained the next generation of first responders. Current first responders have also made good use of the facilities at the 119.7-acre Burlington location for their continued professional training.

Last spring, the St. Charles Fire Department used the center’s 139,400-square-foot pond for rescue diving exercises—the first agency to do so. Additionally, John Fahy, senior director of academic programming and public safety training, said other public safety agencies have utilized the site—from practicing crowd control exercises to using the three-story burn tower.

Fahy, a retired Elgin Fire Department chief, has spread the word that the center is available for training and exercises. Departments have taken him up on his offer and first responders visiting the center for the first time leave impressed.

“When they come, they’re amazed because the facility is state-of-the-art,” he said.

In addition to first responder training, a new forklift training certificate course is now available at the site. The comprehensive, two-day, one-credit course is aimed at increasing and enhancing employability for truck drivers and warehouse workers. Additional information is provided on the front cover.

Fahy further noted that the first Basic Operations Firefighter Program students trained at the site graduated last May. Enrollment for emergency medical technician instruction has also grown rapidly since the center opened in 2016.

“The students are telling their friends and neighbors to get trained at ECC, so this is a positive step forward,” Fahy said.
**President’s Report**

**Purses with Purpose awards $18,000 in scholarships; celebrates five years**

In keeping with its mission to empower women to achieve their potential through education, the Elgin Community College Foundation’s Purses with Purpose giving circle has awarded 15 ECC students a total of $18,000 in scholarships for the 2017-2018 academic year.

The scholarship recipients—who are pursuing studies in nursing, pastry and culinary arts, communication design, business, early childhood education, and theater—are: Lauren Soohov, Antonia Gavina, Heidi Irene Ramos-Bangit, Maria Guerrero, Jaedyn Olson, and Griselda Alonso, all from Elgin; Hajra Farooq, of West Chicago; Beatrice Banda, of West Dundee; Aimee Padilla, of Lake in the Hills; Leticia “Lety” Murillo-Guevara, of Algonquin; Rachael Ann Jackson, of Carpentersville; Victoria Ford, of Pingree Grove; Hannah Keith, of Cary; Jessica Falco, of Hampshire; and Brianna Russell, of South Elgin.

Celebrating its fifth anniversary this year, the Purses with Purpose giving circle was launched in fall 2012 as a small group of female philanthropists and has grown to include 26 members in 2017. Over the past five years, the group has awarded more than $65,000 to 38 students.

“Giving circles are a national trend, and quite often they are organized and led by women,” said Katherine Sawyer, executive director of institutional advancement and the ECC Foundation. “It’s exciting for Purses with Purpose to have a local impact while also being part of a larger story in charitable giving.”

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**Esmeralda Flores**

Born in Elgin, Esmeralda Flores moved with her family to Mexico when she finished elementary school. When she later returned to Elgin, she discovered she could enroll at Larkin High School as a senior—instead of a sophomore—because of the excellent grades she earned attending school in Mexico. You could say Flores had an accelerated childhood.

After graduating from Larkin, she enrolled at Elgin Community College. Flores has been able to take advantage of the college’s Academic Top 10 Percent Scholarship, which awards $2,000 per year for two years to students who ranked in the upper 10 percent of their graduating classes.

“I don’t think I would trade those two years,” she said. “I’m challenged academically at ECC.”

Flores is now the Student Government Association president for the 2017-2018 school year—a role she had to grow into given that she didn’t know anyone when she first arrived on campus. A classmate, who served in Student Government, invited her to attend a meeting which became the incentive for Flores’ to serve as a senator.

As president, Flores wants to make sure students know they can rely on Student Government, as well as ensure they know about the many academic resources, such as TRiO and tutoring, that are available to them. She also wants to inspire students like herself to get involved in activities.

“As a first-generation college student and coming from another country, I see a lot of people like me,” Flores said. “I tell them if I can do it, they can do it too.”
Kenneth Volkening

Out of the 50 years Kenneth Volkening has been employed by Fox Valley Fire & Safety, his training at Elgin Community College has helped for 45 of them. Volkening, who is president and part owner of the Elgin-based company, said attending ECC was the best thing that has ever happened to him.

“ECC came around at the right time in my life,” he said. “It was the right fit for me and played such a great role in shaping me.”

Volkening attended ECC right out of Elgin High School from 1970-1971 and remembers the move from the old Renner Hall near downtown Elgin to a then-new campus on Spartan Drive. He remembered being challenged by his math and accounting professors, as well as being president of ECC’s chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. He was even named the college’s “Male Student of the Year” in 1971.

He earned an associate degree in accounting from ECC in 1971, followed by a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Northern Illinois University. Volkening thought he would eventually work for a big accounting firm, but continued on at Fox Valley Fire & Safety where he has worked since he was a teen. Like ECC, it was the right fit.

1,474 students benefit from Project Backpack

Students in need of school supplies received free backpacks filled with notebooks, pens, pencils, and other school supplies provided by Project Backpack—a community initiative hosted and organized by Elgin Community College. Approximately 1,474 students who live throughout ECC’s district were served during the Aug. 12 event.

The college and its sponsors collected supplies and donations. Community volunteers assembled the supplies, distributed the backpacks, and provided snacks, activities, and smiles for families in attendance. Community sponsors that have been essential to the event’s success include the ECC Faculty Association, ECC Pension Plan Participants (ECCP3), Community Crisis Center of Elgin, Kane County Regional Office of Education, Kane County Teachers Credit Union, School District U-46, and United Way of Elgin.

Whittenhall wins gold for ECC speech team

In April 2017, Mitchell Whittenhall earned Elgin Community College’s first national speech title since 2007 during the Phi Rho Pi National Speech and Debate Tournament in Washington, D.C. He won the gold medal during the “Speech to Entertain” event, in which a speaker gives an informative or persuasive speech, but adds humor to entertain the audience.

In total, 650 students from 59 schools participated in the tournament, hosted by Northern Virginia Community College.
ECC HIGHLIGHTS

ECC takes home gold in State and National SkillsUSA competitions

Students enrolled in the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration (HVAC-R) Program at Elgin Community College excelled at the 53rd annual State Leadership and Skills Conference held in April in Springfield. Alex Ginkel won a gold medal in the sheet metal division, and David Valdez won gold in the HVAC-R division. A third student, Monico Perez, won fifth place in HVAC-R. Ginkel also earned a gold medal at the National SkillsUSA competition in June in Louisville, Ky. More than 6,000 career and technical education students—all state contest winners—competed in 100 different trade, technical, and leadership fields.

Basketball, baseball coaches honored at Illinois Skyway Collegiate Conference

Men’s Basketball Coach Reed Nosbisch and Baseball Coach Bill Angelo were both honored in July at the Illinois Skyway Collegiate Conference. Nosbisch was named Male Sports Coach of the Year and Angelo was named to the conference’s Athletics Hall of Fame.

Both Nobisch and Angelo coached their teams in successful seasons last year, resulting in a national runner-up title for men’s basketball and a regional championship title for men’s baseball.

Student wins $500 scholarship for Gandhi/King essay

Mauro Rosiles was awarded the 2017 Gandhi/King Peace Essay Scholarship coordinated by the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA). The $500 scholarship is awarded to a student who best articulates the peaceful messages of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Rosiles received the scholarship during ICCTA’s annual awards banquet on June 2.

Science instructor receives ICCTA award

Adjunct Instructor of Applied Physical Science Soma Chattopadhyay was awarded the 2017 ICCTA Outstanding Part-Time Faculty Member Award, the Elgin Community College Orrin G. Thompson Teaching Excellence Award, and the M. Hildred Blewett Fellowship from the American Physical Society for women physicists returning to careers in physics.
President’s Report

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ECC shared values: excellence, accountability, freedom of inquiry, respect for diversity, equity, ethical practices, community engagement.