

ACC ALVIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

SUMMER 2025 ISSUE

Right Now



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Message from the President

At Alvin Community College, we believe education is a journey. It leads our students to discover their passions, transform their futures and make a difference in the communities we serve. As we look ahead, I am filled with excitement and pride to feature what's happening in this issue of Right Now magazine.

Every day we witness remarkable stories unfold on our campus and throughout the community. Students like Carline Njeru and Noah Paul remind us why our work matters. Carline has embraced new opportunities that are opening doors while Noah has found his path through hands-on learning and mentorship. Their stories reflect the heart of our mission and inspire us to keep expanding the possibilities for all of our students.

One of the most exciting steps forward this year is the opening of ACC West. This new location increases access to education for students in growing parts of our region. ACC West is a symbol of our dedication to serving more students by bringing programs and resources closer to them. It also strengthens our role in supporting the local workforce.

We are proud to introduce new programs that meet industry needs and student interests. With the addition of Crane Operations, Forklift Training and Live Event Technology we are preparing students for in-demand careers with practical, job-ready skills. Alvin College Online is another important step, offering greater flexibility for students who are balancing work, family and school, with 11 fully online degrees available. Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunity to offer our next bachelor's degree, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, once we receive final approval. This program will provide new pathways for our students and help address critical healthcare needs in our area.

As we celebrate these milestones, we also recognize the achievements of the ACC community. This spring, Congressman Randy Weber, an ACC alumnus, received the Outstanding Community College Alumni Award from the American Association of Community Colleges. His leadership and dedication show the positive impact our alumni have beyond our campus. Our Drama program has also earned multiple honors from the BroadwayWorld Regional Awards, highlighting the talent and creativity of our students and faculty in the arts.

These accomplishments reflect the momentum that is moving ACC forward. As we grow and innovate, we remain focused on our mission to provide high-quality education that changes lives and strengthens the community. I invite you to join us in this work whether as a student, supporter, partner or friend. Together we are building a strong future for Alvin Community College and the students we serve.

Thank you for being part of the ACC family.



Robert J. Exley, Ph.D



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Read Online Here

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The West Is Won:

ACC West's Grand Opening Makes Its Mark

by Scott Turnbough

Alvin Community College marked a major milestone with the grand opening of ACC West on April 22, 2025. The event welcomed a large crowd of community members, local businesses and elected officials from across the college's service area. Guests explored the new campus through interactive program showcases, meeting faculty and students while learning about ACC's diverse career training and academic offerings.

"This is a momentous occasion in the life of Alvin Community College," said Dr. Robert J. Exley, ACC President. "We celebrate not just opening the building but the launch of a whole new chapter in our

institution's history—one that extends our mission, strengthens our reach, and reaffirms our commitment to the students and the communities we serve."

ACC West currently offers seven workforce programs, with plans to expand academic and career training opportunities in the future to meet growing industry needs.

The ACC Board of Regents joined Dr. Exley for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and shared remarks about the college's vision. ACC West stands as a symbol of the college's growth and its promise to meet evolving community needs.

This is a momentous occasion in the
life of Alvin Community College.

Dr. Robert J. Exley



Scan to learn more about what ACC West has to offer!



CAUSING DRAMA

(THE GOOD KIND)

by John Tompkins

It's great just to be nominated.
No, really.

The ACC Drama Department was ecstatic with recent honors for their productions. The Drama program received several recognitions from the BroadwayWorld regional awards this past year for directing, lighting, set design and more.

"To have the work that our students take so much time producing be recognized by the community is a wonderful honor," said Drama Director Chris Tennison. "I think it shows the quality of the work we do at ACC Theatre, and I hope it encourages more folks to come and see what we have going on."

Tennison was nominated for best direction and best lighting. Coordinator D'Carrey Stell was nominated for best scenic design. The Addams Family production was nominated for best musical while The Diary of Anne Frank was nominated for best play.

"To be nominated for any kind of award was a true surprise," Stell said. "It is not something that you go looking for if you are trying to do the craft correctly. The satisfaction of being part of the show is payment enough."



The Drama program had a packed schedule for 2023-24 that included productions of The Addams Family for the Fall semester, It's a Wonderful Life: a live radio play for the holiday season and The Diary of Anne

Frank for the Spring. The Summer Children's Theatre Festival included performances of *Alice in Wonderland* and *The BFG* (Big Friendly Giant).

"We take great pride in producing professional quality theatrical experiences for our audiences and providing

superior training to our students," Tennison said. "We look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come."

The Drama Department puts on three performances every year in the Fall, the holidays and in the Spring. The actors consist of students and members of the community.

Every summer the Drama Department also hosts the Summer Children's Theatre Festival, which includes two plays that feature local, aspiring young thespians (see page 24.)



"We look forward to continuing this tradition for years to come."

Chris Tennison

To learn more about the auditions for the upcoming productions or to purchase tickets, visit:

www.alvincollege.edu/drama
or call 281-756-3606.



LOCAL ROOTS WITH NATIONAL IMPACT

ACC Alum Congressman Weber Honored

by John Tompkins

U.S. Rep. Randy Weber received the Outstanding Community College Alumni award from the American Association of Community Colleges on April 16.

The Award Honors community college graduates who have made outstanding contributions in their chosen field at the national or international level.

"I'm truly honored to accept this award," Weber said during his acceptance speech. "It's humbling to stand before the very people who work every single day to shape the future of this country. You do all of this every day without headlines, but with heart and hands-on training and a whole lot of dedication. I know because I witnessed it up close and personal."

Weber attended Alvin Community College from 1971-74 and continued his education at the University of Houston – Clear Lake where he earned a bachelor's degree in Public Affairs. He also met his wife Brenda while attending classes at ACC.

"This is such a great place in the community and it does a fantastic job," Weber said in a recent interview with ACC. "ACC holds a very important place in my heart. The impact that Alvin Community College now has on the area is unbelievable."

After starting and running his own business Weber Air and Heat, he became very involved in his community becoming a member of the Pearland City Council from 1990-96.



In 2009, he won his first term as a State Representative to the Texas Legislature. After serving two terms in Austin, Weber turned his eyes toward Washington D.C. and was elected to Congress in 2012 where he currently serves as the representative for Texas District 14.

He has long been supportive of ACC and the ACC Foundation, using his 60th birthday as an opportunity to raise funds for student scholarships with a celebrity roast in 2014.

In 2023, Weber recognized ACC on the floor of Congress to honor the college's 75th Anniversary.

"As an ACC alum I can personally attest to the transformative power of this institution," he said. "It laid the academic groundwork for my future."



“THE IMPACT THAT
ALVIN COMMUNITY
COLLEGE NOW
HAS ON THE AREA
IS UNBELIEVABLE.”

Randy Weber

For more information, visit www.aacc.nche.edu.

BIGGER. Bolder. Better.

by Scott Turnbough

What's Next at ACC?

Alvin College Online: Learning Without Limits

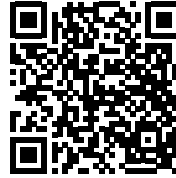
Students now have access to **11 fully online programs**, making it easier than ever to earn a degree from anywhere, on a schedule that fits their life. These programs provide the same high-quality education ACC is known for, but with the added convenience of 100% online learning.

Fully Online Programs:

- Bachelor's in Business Administration & Management
- Business Management (A.A.S.)
- Business Administration (A.S.)
- Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement & Police Administration (A.A.S.)
- Criminal Justice (A.S.)
- General Studies (A.A.)
- Mathematics (A.S.)
- Psychology (A.A.)
- Sociology (A.A.)
- Health Information Management (A.A.S.)
- Logistics & Supply Chain Management (A.A.S.)



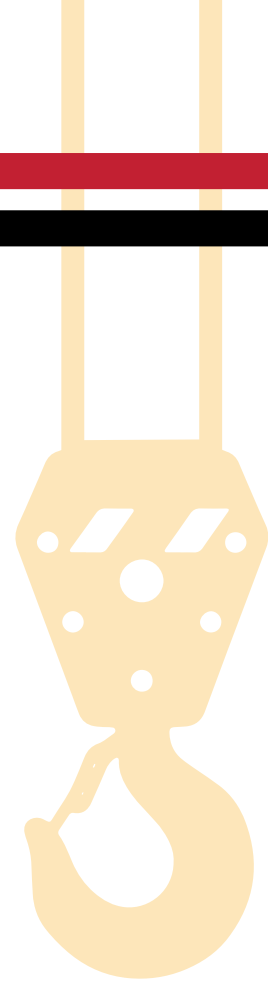
Scan to check out our workforce programs!



New Career-Focused Programs

ACC continues to invest in training programs that lead directly to high-demand careers:

- **Crane Operator Certification (Now Enrolling):**
Prepares students for high-paying, skilled positions in construction and heavy industry.
- **Forklift Operator Program (Launching Soon):**
Offers short-term certification for rapid entry into warehouse, logistics, and manufacturing fields.
- **Live Event Technician Program (Coming Fall 2025):**
Trains students to set up and manage sound, lighting, and video systems for concerts, theaters, sports events, and corporate productions.



Looking Ahead: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

With board approval secured, Alvin Community College is developing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to help meet local healthcare needs. The degree is currently progressing through the accreditation process with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and other regulatory bodies.



The BSN will prepare registered nurses for leadership roles and advanced clinical practice – strengthening the local healthcare workforce and providing students with a seamless, affordable pathway to career advancement. ACC aims to welcome the first cohort of BSN students in the Fall 2026.



Scan to stay up-to-date on all of our programs!



MONDAY *with* MORNINGS *Noah*

ACC Student Taking to Airwaves

by John Tompkins

Noah Paul has always wanted to hear his voice coming over the radio. As a student at Alvin Community College, he has finally gotten his chance.

"I just love FM and AM radio stations," he said.

Every Monday morning, Paul takes his seat behind the microphone in the KACC 89.7 FM studios to introduce the music and talk about sports.

Paul is a student with the Skilled Training Rewarding Independence and Vocational Education (STRIVE)

program which provides vocational training for adults with intellectual disabilities with an end goal of transitioning students into the workforce. The program is approaching its 10th anniversary in 2025.

"Being able to collaborate with KACC, Noah has had the opportunity to learn more about what he is passionate about in the communications field in a hands-on and valuable way," said Mary Vlahovich, ACC STRIVE director. "By working with other departments, our students are given an opportunity to network with other students and instructors on campus."



Over the past 10 years STRIVE has helped many students improve their skills to find employment and better their lives.

"Our students have benefitted on many levels being in the STRIVE program," Vlahovich said. "Not only do they make lifelong connections within the program, but they are also increasing their independence by becoming part of the workforce. They are building confidence, increasing their skills and adding value to their communities."

Communications chair Jason Nichols said Paul has been a good addition to the KACC students who work in the broadcast studio.

"Noah is a great student," Nichols said. "He comes to his shift prepared every Monday. It's obvious to me that he's done research over the weekend, because he knows exactly what sports topic he wants to discuss."

Paul said he was inspired to take to the airwaves after starting a small YouTube channel in 2016. Being in the studio has been an awesome experience that he feels will help him in the future.

"I have learned a lot and had a lot of training with Jason about broadcasting," Paul said.

“
**Our students have
benefitted on many
levels being in the
STRIVE program.**

”
Mary Vlahovich

To learn more about the
STRIVE program, visit:
www.alvincollege.edu/cewd/strive.html







PIPES, PURPOSE & PERSEVERANCE:

A Journey in PROCESS TECHNOLOGY

by Scott Turnbough

THIS PROGRAM GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO GIVE MY KIDS A CHILDHOOD I NEVER HAD.

Carline Njeru



By all accounts, Carline Njeru is a powerhouse. As an operator at Chevron Phillips in Pasadena and a key member of the fire and emergency response team, she handles high-stakes responsibilities in a field still largely dominated by men. But her path to success didn't start in a control room. It began thousands of miles away in Nairobi, Kenya.

Raised by her grandparents, Njeru came to the United States as a teenager after the loss of her mother. Her journey is marked by resilience, reinvention and a relentless desire to create a better life for her children.

"I always wanted to be an engineer like my grandfather," she said. "But when I came to this country, I met Robert Leal, a process operator and ACC alum, who introduced me to operations, and I realized that was exactly what I needed to do."

That realization led her to the Process Technology program at ACC, a decision that shaped her future in powerful ways.

Njeru speaks passionately about the program, which trains students not just to pass exams but to walk into industry jobs with confidence.



“The instructors have actually worked in chemical plants,” she said. “They don’t just teach from a book. They teach you to be an operator.”

Hands-on training is a core element of the program. From full-scale equipment labs to the Polaris Unit outside campus, students interact with the same systems and tools they will encounter in the field.

“We touched the pipes. We learned how to trace lines. We used the DCS (Distributive Contrast System.) So by the time you get to a plant, it’s not a shock. It’s second nature,” Njeru said.

The program also offers mock interviews with industry professionals, plant tours and strict training on workplace expectations. Even classroom policies mirror the real world.

“If you’re five minutes late to class, it’s marked as a missed day. That’s how it is at work. If you’re late, your coworker can’t go home,” she said.

The program is rigorous. Coursework includes chemistry, physics and instrumentation. Students must be ready to compete.

“The job market is mature. Only the best get hired,” Njeru said. “Your GPA matters. You have to bring your A-game.”

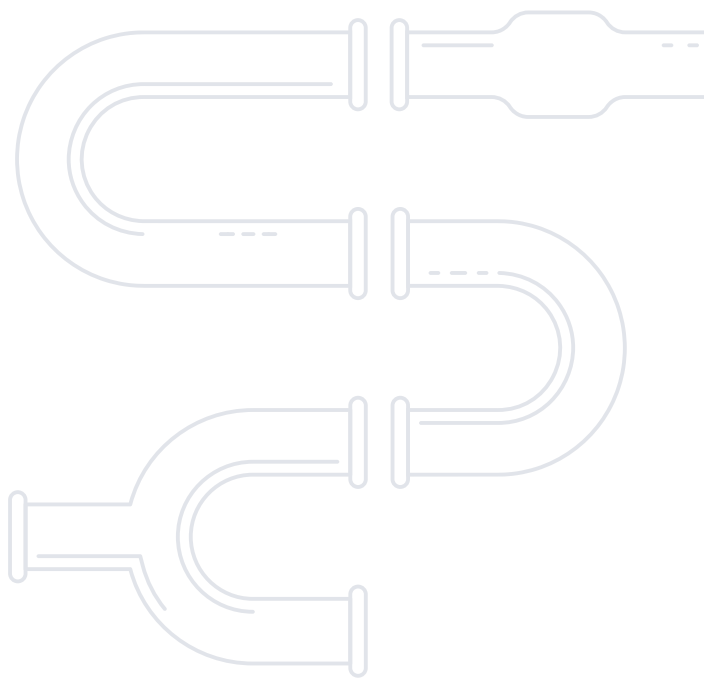
She completed her degree with minimal student debt thanks to scholarships offered by the college. Today, she has a job that allows her to provide for her family and build a future she once only imagined.

“This program gave me the chance to give my kids a childhood I never had,” she said.

As a woman in the field, Njeru has found a welcoming environment at her company.

“They treat you like one of the team,” she said. “It’s like going to work with family.”

For Carline Njeru, ACC’s Process Technology program was more than a path to a paycheck. It was a path to purpose.



To learn more about the
Process Technology program, visit:
www.alvincollege.edu/process-technology/



Culinary Corner

*by Chef Laura Trigo,
Department Chair/Instructor*

Farmers Market Salad



To learn more about the
Culinary Arts program, visit:
www.alvincollege.edu/culinary-arts/



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cucumbers (depends on size), washed and sliced
- 2 tomatoes, quartered (depends on size) or 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 tbsp green onion, chopped
- 1 red or yellow onion, thinly sliced
- ½ tbsp dill, chopped
- 1 yellow bell pepper, thinly sliced
- ½ tbsp olive oil
- ⅛ cup white sugar
- 1 cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl and toss well.
2. Refrigerate for at least 20 minutes before serving (overnight is even better).

SERVING SUGGESTION:

Delicious over a bed of mixed greens or served as the perfect side dish for a barbeque!

SERVING SIZE: 2





The ACC Foundation: *Making It Happen*

by Sydney Hildenburg, Scholarship & Foundation Coordinator

At Alvin Community College, transformation happens every day—and behind the scenes, the ACC Foundation is often the driving force. With a mission to support the growth and success of ACC students, staff, and the college itself, the Foundation raises funds year-round through events and generous donations. The goal? To ensure that ACC students have every opportunity and resource they need to thrive.

Here's a look at some of the meaningful ways the Foundation made an impact during the 2024–2025 academic year!

Opening Doors: The First Step Award

The First Step Award continues to inspire new beginnings. Created to encourage students to take their very first college course, this scholarship saw a record number of applicants this year. In total, \$135,000 was awarded to 270 first-time students beginning their higher education journey. A follow-up survey revealed that the majority of recipients said the award directly influenced their decision to enroll at ACC—a powerful testament to the difference even one class can make.

Honoring a Life: Ivan's Boots Scholarship

In Spring 2025, the Foundation proudly introduced a heartfelt new scholarship: Ivan's Boots. Established by Tiffany and Jeremiah Ermenc in memory of their son, Ivan—who tragically passed away just days into his first job. The scholarship honors his excitement for industrial work and the pride he felt about buying his first pair of steel-toe boots. In Ivan's honor, multiple \$250 awards are given to students in ACC's industrial programs to help purchase essential boots or tools as they prepare to enter the workforce. This meaningful tribute ensures Ivan's legacy supports others chasing the same dream.

Lending a Hand: The MaSH Scholarship

Michael and Susan Hoover, longtime supporters of ACC, launched the new MaSH Scholarship this year to help students who just need a little support to stay on track. Many ACC students are hardworking and committed, but face unforeseen challenges—car trouble, medical issues, or family responsibilities—that can threaten their ability to continue school. The Hoovers wanted to make sure that when life gets tough, students don't have to choose between education and survival. Thanks to their generosity, several students received assistance during the MaSH Scholarship's inaugural year.

Crisis Support: Emergency Fund

The Foundation's Emergency Fund continues to be a lifeline for students facing obstacles to their education. Whether it's help with car repairs, a utility bill, temporary housing, or even a bicycle to get to class, these small but vital grants are often the difference between staying enrolled or dropping out. Working hand-in-hand with ACC's dedicated counselors, the Foundation ensures students in crisis are quickly connected with the resources they need.

Fighting Food Insecurity: The Student Resource Center

When ACC's counseling team saw the growing need for basic student support, they teamed up with the Foundation to create a centralized Student Resource Center, launched in Fall 2024. Designed as a "one-stop shop," the center offers snacks, school supplies, clothing, toiletries, and more—all free to students in need.

To expand the center's reach, counselors and the Foundation applied for a \$5,000 grant from TDECU, a committed community partner, gladly awarded the grant.

The funding allowed for the purchase of a refrigerator, freezer, food bins, and canned goods displays—transforming the center into a place where students experiencing food insecurity can access fresh, nutritious food. Thanks to a new partnership with the Houston Food Bank, those shelves will stay stocked, and hungry students will have one less thing to worry about.

So many remarkable things are happening at ACC thanks to the support of the ACC Foundation—and you can

be part of that impact. The ACC Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and all donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

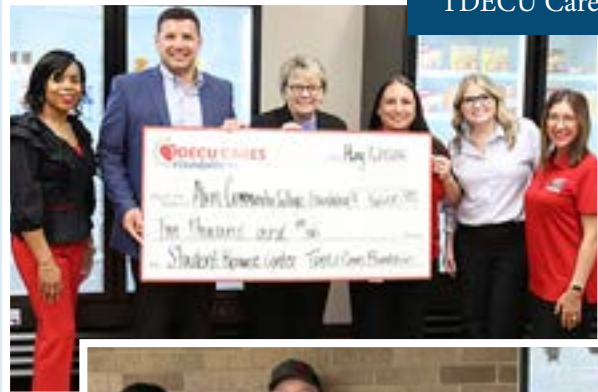
Your contribution could be the difference that helps a student take their first step, stay in school, or cross the graduation stage.

On behalf of the ACC Foundation Board, thank you for believing in our mission and helping us Make It Happen at ACC!

Alvin Sunrise Rotary Joe Saladino
Memorial Culinary Scholarship



TDECU Cares



MaSH Scholarship



Ivan's Boots Scholarship



To learn more or help the Foundation continue its mission through a donation, contact us:

☎ 281.756.3600

✉ accfoundation@alvincollege.edu

🌐 alvincollege.edu/foundation/

Other Ways to Give

- Donate to Support the Emergency Fund
- Give an Honorary or Memorial Gift
- Establish a New Scholarship
- Request Corporate Matching Gifts
- Offer Program Support monetarily or with an equipment donation

ACC

ALVIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

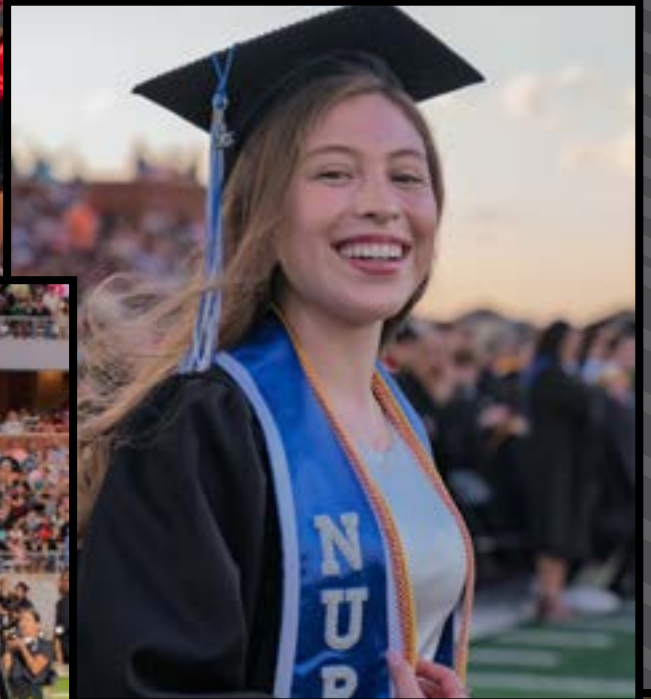
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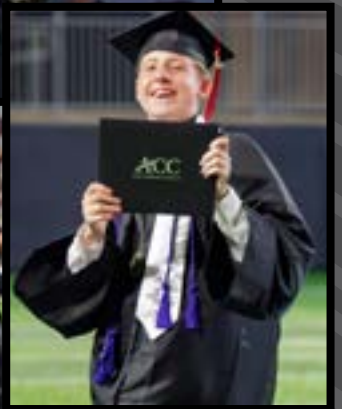
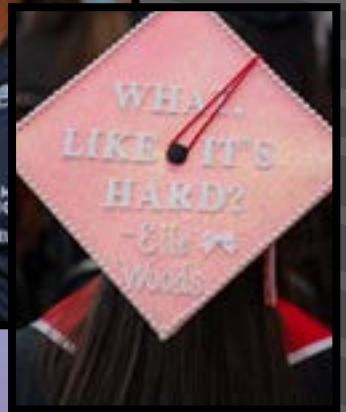
Scan to donate today!



Commencement

2025





*Congratulations
Graduates!*

Scan to view our
full Commencement
photo gallery!



THE 40TH ANNUAL
ALVIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SUMMER CHILDREN'S
THEATRE Festival.

**The (Almost) Totally True Story of
Hansel & Gretel**

BY STEPH DEFERIE



It should be a piece of cake for a fairy godmother to tell the story of Snow White, but her wand is bent and things aren't going quite as they should. Then, to make things worse, she's interrupted by a couple of English policemen who are hot on the trail of two very devious and dangerous criminals - children who are causing no end of trouble in the forest. Their names? Hansel and Gretel!

June 24 - 26 • 10:30 a.m.

June 24 -25 • 2:30 p.m.

June 26 • 7:30 p.m.

Presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of
Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

**A Wrinkle
in Time**

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY
MORGAN GOULD

FROM THE BOOK BY
MADELEINE L'ENGLE

One of literature's most enduring young heroines, Meg Murry, is back - stubbornness and all. In this adaptation of the beloved novel, she's joining forces with Mrs. Whatsit, Charles Wallace, Calvin O'Keefe and more to battle the forces of evil so she can rescue her father, save humanity, and find herself.

July 29 - 31 • 10:30 a.m.

July 29 - 30 • 2:30 p.m.

July 31 • 7:30 p.m.

Produced by special arrangement with Stage Partners.
www.yourstagepartners.com

TICKETS: \$3 ADVANCE PURCHASE • \$4 AT THE DOOR

To purchase tickets: acctheatre.ludus.com, 281-756-3606 or boxoffice@alvincollege.edu

For more information or to book a group reservation for parties of 10 or more, email: boxoffice@alvincollege.edu

Congratulations Dolphins!



Congrats to **ACC Baseball** and **Softball** on two successful seasons both earning a spot in the **2025 Region 14 Tournament!** We're proud of your dedication and achievements – Fins Up!

Scan to stay up
to date on all
things Athletics!





FOUNDATION

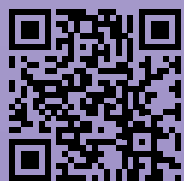
\$500 First Step Award

Application Deadline: August 24

To apply, you must be taking your very first college course ever, have a high school diploma or GED and be enrolling in Fall 2025.

Does not apply to Dual Enrollment, CEWD or TDCJ programs.

Scan below to apply!



Real **TRAINING**
for Real **PEOPLE**

Apply now for Fall 2025!

Join us to prepare for your first day of college at Back to Campus Friday on August 15 from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.



LET'S COLOR!

Get creative and color the image below! Submit a photo of your masterpiece via the QR code below for a chance to be featured.

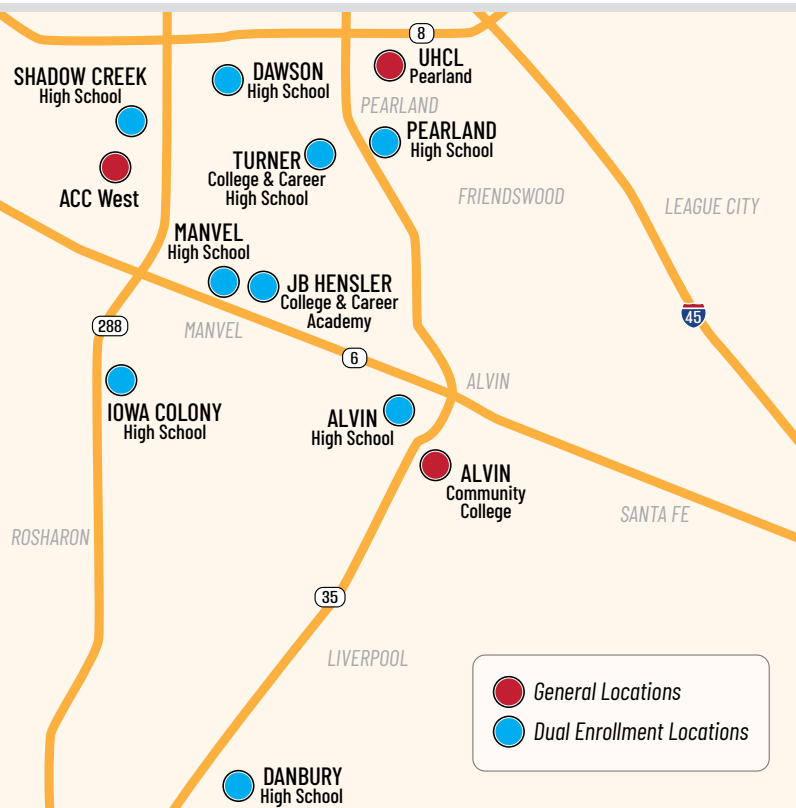




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Your College **Right Now**

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SCAN TO APPLY



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