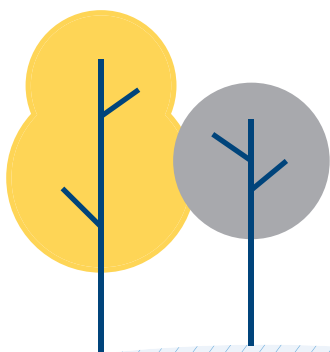


# ANNUAL REPORT

OZARKS TECHNICAL  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE





## ELEVATE

*Elevate. It's an action word used to describe the act of lifting up oneself or others. Whether done consciously or out of habit, everyone strives to elevate physically, morally and intellectually.*

*In 2021, Ozarks Technical Community College worked to elevate its facilities and create more opportunities for students. We're building a training hub for new programs through the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing. Focusing on students has helped OTC become a model for two-year colleges nationally during our three decades of teaching, and we'll continue that culture of caring into the next decade.*

*We hope you enjoy the imagery throughout this annual report, which represents OTC's aspirational attitude. Together, the college community thrived during 2021 with a goal of elevation.*



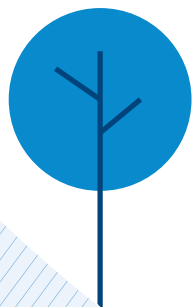


# MESSAGE FROM THE CHANCELLOR



## MISSION STATEMENT

*The college mission is to provide accessible, high quality and affordable learning opportunities that transform lives and strengthen the communities we serve.*



OTC's deep commitment to the success of our students and the communities we serve was on full display in 2021. This past year marked my 15th anniversary as the leader of the best community college in the country, and I have never been more proud.

While the effects of the pandemic stretched throughout 2021, we found ways to overcome these challenges and continued to serve our students and meet their needs. At our rural education centers, we gave students the option to attend classes in-person or virtually, which led to more course completions because a student did not need to miss class due to a sick child or a broken-down car. At the Table Rock campus, we accepted high school students into our EMT program, which gave those students a career pathway after graduation. At our Richwood Valley campus, we expanded the popular lineworker program to meet student and employer demand.

In 2021, we also introduced Eagle Breakfast, a no-cost breakfast program for all OTC students. The data shows that students who take advantage of the program have better grades and complete their courses at higher rates than those who do not. While COVID-19 presents challenges, we see them as opportunities to holistically serve our students.

This approach to student success and a culture of caring has existed since the college's founding, but now it has a name: OTC Cares. We've created an environment that promotes the success of all OTC students by viewing every situation, assignment, process change and decision item through a student-centered, data-informed, proactive and holistic lens. Eagle Breakfast embodies this culture, along with many other college initiatives you will read about in this annual report.

By removing barriers, the college helps students get to the finish line, thereby creating the workforce our community needs to thrive in the 21st century. A significant piece of the workforce puzzle will become a reality in August 2022 when we cut the ribbon on the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing. The Plaster Manufacturing Center is a game-changer for students and employers, and will attract new industry to Southwest Missouri.

It's the start of a new year, and promise and hope come from new beginnings. I want to thank you for the support and encouragement you've given the college over the past year. Your gifts of time, resources and financial contributions help us make the college's mission a reality. Whether you call it a boost, a lift or a hand up, the goal is elevation. Here's to another year of elevating our students and the community.

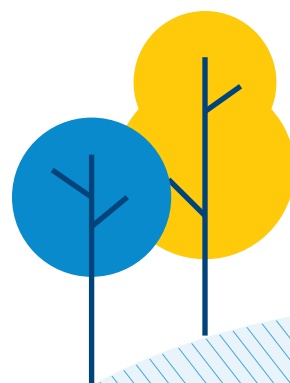
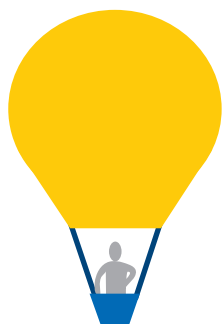
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hal L. Hedges".

Chancellor, Ozarks Technical Community College

# BY THE NUMBERS

*OTC has acquired a national reputation for academic and technological innovation, excellence and service. Delivering on promises made to the voters, the construction of the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing is on schedule and on budget. The college's most ambitious project will shape the future of manufacturing in the region.*



# 179

individual donors

# 120,000

square feet of  
customizable  
training space

# August 2022

Grand Opening



# \$431

million impact on the  
economy in 10 years

# 7

degree programs  
available

# \$40

million  
transformative  
investment

## OTC names president for education centers

*January 12, 2021*

Dr. Dustin Childress was named president for education centers at OTC. In this role, Dr. Childress oversees the operations of the college's Lebanon, Republic, Waynesville and Fort Leonard Wood locations. He began his new duties on Jan. 7, 2021.

A Southwest Baptist University graduate, Dr. Childress began teaching life sciences at OTC in 2007 following a two-year career as a pitcher in the New York Mets minor league organization. Dr. Childress went on to earn a master's degree in biology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He earned his doctorate in higher education administration from Northcentral University in 2015.

## OTC hires its first director of diversity, equity and inclusion

*February 8, 2021*

OTC hired Daniel Ogunyemi as the institution's first college director of diversity, equity and inclusion.

"I want anyone from any background to know that they can come to OTC and get a great education," Ogunyemi said. "In my new role, I will focus on finding the barriers to accessing an education at OTC and work to change them for the better."

Ogunyemi is no stranger to OTC, having taught psychology as a part-time instructor. He comes to the college from Burrell Behavioral Health, where he worked in diversity, equity and inclusion for the mental health provider. Before Burrell, Ogunyemi worked for CASA of Southwest Missouri as the organization's volunteer coordinator. He also has experience in the local human services field with Lutheran Family and Children Services of Missouri and The Arc of the Ozarks.



## A former student reflects on the 90-year history of Lincoln Hall

*February 1, 2021*

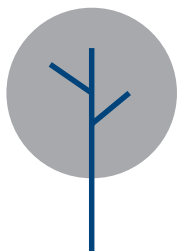
Lincoln Hall now houses most of the health sciences programs at the OTC Springfield Campus, including nursing, dental hygiene and respiratory therapy. However, long before Lincoln Hall became a part of OTC, the building served as a school that was the hub of education for African-American children in Springfield.

"It was the only school for Black children here in Springfield, but this was one of the best Black schools in the state of Missouri," said Norma (Bland) Duncan, 81.

She attended Lincoln School, as it was known then, from 1945 until integration allowed her and her classmates to attend Central High School in the 1950s.

Opened in 1931, Lincoln School was one of nearly 5,000 Rosenwald Schools built between 1912 – 1937 in the South and neighboring states to educate African-American children. Julius Rosenwald, then the leader of Sears, Roebuck and Company, established the fund that bears his name to construct the schools after meeting with famed African-American educator Booker T. Washington.

Lincoln Hall was one of the schools included in Andrew Feller's book, "A Better Life For Their Children," featuring photos of the surviving Rosenwald Schools. Feller's photographs were also part of a touring exhibition organized by the National Center for Civil and Human Rights.







## OTC earns initial approval to offer bachelor's degrees in respiratory therapy

**March 3, 2021**

Missouri's Coordinating Board for Higher Education approved OTC and St. Louis Community College to offer bachelor's degrees in respiratory therapy. This marked the first time any community college in Missouri has been approved to offer bachelor's degrees in any subject.

OTC sought the approval to offer bachelor's degrees in respiratory therapy because the college hopes to expand the program in the future, and the professional accrediting body for respiratory therapy requires that any new programs offer bachelor's degrees.

OTC plans to admit the first cohort of bachelor's degree-seeking students in Spring 2023 at the Springfield and Waynesville locations.

## OTC earns \$25,000 grant to establish STEM scholarships for women

**February 10, 2021**

The OTC Foundation was awarded a \$25,000 grant to fund scholarships for female students pursuing education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The Coca-Cola Foundation Women in STEM Scholarship gave 25 students a \$1,000 scholarship (\$500 each semester) for the 2021 – 2022 academic year.

"We've seen women thrive in medical programs like nursing and dental hygiene, but women also find success in fields such as mathematics, physics, fire science and emergency medical services," said Dr. Tracy McGrady, OTC vice chancellor for academic affairs. "These scholarships will encourage women to pursue STEM degrees and increase the diversity of qualified employees entering the workforce."



## OTC Foundation hires new director of development

**February 19, 2021**

The OTC Foundation hired Danielle Wise as its new director of development.

Wise is responsible for implementing a comprehensive development program, which includes major gift stewardship and community engagement efforts. She spearheads the cultivation of private donations for the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing, which will open in August of 2022.

A well-known figure in the Springfield non-profit community, Wise comes to OTC with a wealth of experience, having worked as the director of development and marketing at The Arc of the Ozarks since 2014.



*Above: Thanks to donors Gene and Gerry Diullo, PTA students have a new scholarship opportunity.*

## Longtime friends of OTC's Physical Therapist Assistant Program endow memorial scholarship

**February 26, 2021**

Gene and Gerry Diullo created a way to commemorate the life and legacy of their late son, Anton "Tony" Diullo. The couple recently established an endowed scholarship in his name through the OTC Foundation. The funds will support students in pursuit of a physical therapist assistant (PTA) degree at OTC.

A physical therapist himself, Gene



worked 26 years as a commissioned officer for the United States Public Health Service, including 11 years at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield. Upon retirement, he became involved in OTC's PTA program where he served in multiple roles, including clinical coordinator, advisory panel member, instructor and volunteer.

### **OTC construction students ramp up community service efforts with CoxHealth**

**March 8, 2021**

Daniel Youngblood was released from the Acute Rehabilitation Unit at Cox Medical Center Branson following the amputation of his lower right leg and the toes on his left foot. The 58-year-old needed a wheelchair ramp to access his Reeds Spring mobile home.

Cox Branson asked for help with the ramp on social media. Construction Instructor Steve Fischer learned about the project and offered up assistance. Fischer and his students built the ramp in less than a day, and Youngblood was greeted with a brand-new wheelchair ramp when he arrived home.

### **Eagle Breakfast debuts**

**March 8, 2021**

When COVID-19 forced the cancellation of student picnics during the 2020 – 2021 school year, the college used those funds to provide no-cost breakfast options for students at the OTC Springfield Campus. More than 600 students took part in Eagle Breakfast, and those students completed their courses and had better grades than students who did not.

The program was so popular and had such positive outcomes for students that when the fall 2021 semester began, Eagle Breakfast was available at every OTC location.

"If something as simple as a breakfast sandwich and a bottle of juice can help our students succeed, I'd say that's a program worth keeping," said Dr. Joan Barrett, vice chancellor for student affairs.



### **OTC expands line worker program to Christian County campus**

**March 8, 2021**

After debuting the program in the fall of 2018 at its Lebanon location, OTC expanded its line worker training program to the OTC Richwood Valley Campus in the fall of 2021. The two-year program leads to an Associate of Applied Science in Electrical Distribution Systems.

"We realized very quickly that there was a great deal of demand for line worker training in Southwest Missouri," Dr. Higdon said. "Right now, we turn away more students than we can admit to the program. This expansion allows the college to double the number of graduates we turn out."



## OTC named a Military Friendly School for the third straight year

**March 10, 2021**

VIQTORY, an online information platform for military personnel returning to civilian life, named OTC a Military Friendly School for the third straight year. OTC is one of only three community colleges in Missouri to receive the designation and the only community college in the state in the "large community college" classification.

## OTC honors staff, faculty at virtual Innovation Celebration event

**April 1, 2021**

OTC hosted its second annual Innovation Celebration on April 1 to recognize individuals, departments and programs that make exceptional contributions to the college's strategic plan. The event — held virtually in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic — funded eight different grant initiatives across the OTC System, including walking pathways, an outdoor classroom and open educational resources for students.

To conclude the virtual Innovation

Celebration event, Dr. Higdon congratulated the award winners — and the entire college community — for fostering a spirit of innovation at OTC.

"You've proven that a crisis doesn't halt innovation, it inspires it," Dr. Higdon said. "OTC's future is bright thanks to each and every one of you."

## No tuition increase for the 21-22 school year

**April 12, 2021**

OTC held tuition flat for the 2021 – 2022 school year. At its April meeting, the board of trustees adopted the administration's recommendation to not raise tuition.

"The board agrees with college leadership that now is not the time to raise tuition," John Gentry, OTC board chair, said "As our community emerges from the pandemic, we need to remove barriers to education so students can receive the training they need to enter the workforce."



*Above: Ozzy helps the Dickerson Park Zoo raise eagle conservation awareness.*

## OTC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter receives international recognition

**April 13, 2021**

OTC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter Alpha Psi Tau earned several awards at the international honor society for two-year college's annual convention.

For the second year in a row, Alpha Psi Tau was named a Distinguished Chapter,

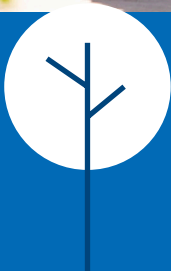
## OTC and other colleges partner for mass vaccine clinic

**April 9, 2021**

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department, OTC, Missouri State University and other area higher education institutions partnered to offer a vaccine clinic at MSU's Hammons Student Center. More than 6,000 people received vaccinations during the two-day clinic, which established a single-day record. Dozens of OTC employees volunteered at the clinic.







### **OTC hosts two outdoor job fairs**

**May 5, 2021**

OTC's Career Services hosted an outdoor job fair on the Student Plaza at the OTC Springfield Campus, and the event was so popular, a second job fair was scheduled to accommodate even more companies. Eighty employers attended the two job fairs including CoxHealth, Arvest Bank and Paul Mueller Company.

placing it in the top 10 of all chapters internationally.

At the convention, Alpha Psi Tau was also one of 21 chapters recognized for its Honors in Action project, titled "Understanding Bluegrass and Old-Time Fiddle Music Through Genre as Text."

The following individuals also received international recognition at the convention: Jo Fritts, Continued Excellence in Advising; Jo and Steve Fritts, Distinguished Advisor Team; Nikohl Watson-Lowe, Distinguished Regional Officer.

### **OTC students honored for academics, leadership at MCCA virtual event**

**April 21, 2021**

Eight OTC students were honored for their academic success and student leadership at the Missouri Community College

Association's (MCCA) Phi Theta Kappa and Student Leadership Virtual Celebration.

At the virtual event, three OTC students received MCCA Student Leadership Awards. The awards are presented annually to an outstanding student leader from each of Missouri's community college campuses. OTC's honorees were: Jaden Collins, OTC Springfield Campus; Reagan Shelby, OTC Richwood Valley Campus; and Linday Williamson, OTC Table Rock Campus.

Additionally, five OTC students were named to the All-Missouri Academic Team, including Shannon McKaig-Buffington who was named to the All-Missouri First Team. Further, McKaig-Buffington was awarded the 2021 New Century Workforce Scholarship.

### **OTC sponsors Dickerson Park Zoo eagle exhibit**

**April 28, 2021**

Springfield's Dickerson Park Zoo announced OTC's sponsorship of its eagle conservation exhibit in April.

"We are thrilled OTC is partnering with the Friends of the Zoo education department to help share the message of eagle conservation," Mike Crocker, zoo director, said.

For OTC, eagle exhibit sponsorship is an opportunity to enhance awareness of the college's eagle mascot and support the zoo's education efforts.







## OTC sheep give birth

**May 5, 2021**

OTC agriculture students received a real-world lesson in animal husbandry when sheep belonging to the OTC agriculture program gave birth to three lambs.

"We were in class when the sheep were giving birth, and a person walking on the trail stopped by the agriculture building to tell us the lambs were making their debut," Rob Flatness, agriculture instructor, said.

The 12 Katahdin sheep (10 ewes and two rams) arrived at Richwood Valley in September of 2020, along with five steers. All of the livestock was donated.

"Even the students who grew up on farms were eager to see these baby lambs," Flatness said. "To see the excitement on their faces when we heard that the first lambs were arriving was just really cool."

## College confers 2,733 degrees and certificates at commencement

**May 19, 2021**

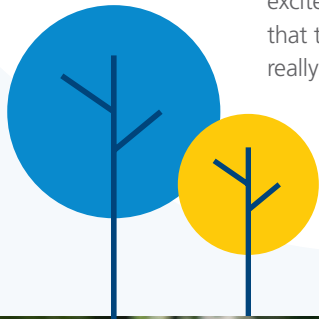
More than 750 OTC graduates participated in the 2021 commencement ceremonies held at JQH Arena on the Missouri State University campus.

The college held two ceremonies to allow for social distancing. Since the 2020 ceremony was virtual due to the global pandemic, graduates from last year were invited to participate.

In 2021, OTC conferred 2,733 degrees and certificates to graduates.

OTC alumnus and former Missouri Speaker of the House Elijah Haahr gave the commencement address. After earning his associate degree in 2002, Haahr went on to obtain a bachelor's degree and eventually graduated from the University of Missouri School of Law. Haahr was first elected to the legislature in 2012. He later became the youngest Speaker in the nation and the first person from Greene County to hold that position. After leaving the legislature due to term limits, Haahr returned to Springfield where he serves as

*Above: Agriculture students welcomed three baby lambs to the world in their outdoor classroom on the OTC Richwood Valley Campus.*







### OTC offers no-cost classes to meet employer demand

**May 18, 2021**

OTC offered accelerated courses in construction, welding and manufacturing over the summer to meet industry needs. The classes were free, and the college provided stipends to students to defray living expenses while attending class. Seventy students completed the courses, and many were offered jobs before the classes were complete. Additional courses continue to be offered in this format.

the Executive Director of the Noble Health Foundation.

"There will be little moments and big moments as you go through life," Haahr said to the graduates. "And every time you come to one of those moments — no matter how small or how big — you don't want to miss it. You don't want to waste it. You need to seize it."

Graduate Karen Sharley gave the student address. A former homeschool student, Sharley entered OTC in 2017 where she became active in the Phi Theta Kappa honor society, the OTC Honors Program and worked as a tutor in the writing center. She plans to transfer to Missouri State where she will pursue a double major in English and chemistry.

During the event, Matthew Thomas was named the 2021 Distinguished Alumnus. Thomas attended the OTC Career Center as a high school student in the electronics program. Now, he is the co-founder and owner of WON Communications, LLC, which provides business and residential internet and phone service.

Once the degrees and certificates were conferred, OTC Chancellor Higdon concluded the ceremony by congratulating the graduates and welcoming them into the OTC Alumni Association.

### OTC reaccredited by the Higher Learning Commission

**June 11, 2021**

Following a site visit in March, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) reaccredited OTC for another ten years. Accreditation assures that OTC is a quality education institution because the college meets standards and is engaged in continuous improvement.

The HLC site visit team noted:

"Ozarks Technical Community College is a future-focused, vibrant institution. The communities served by OTC overwhelmingly embrace and support the efforts of the college to fulfill its mission. Voters consistently pass tax levies supporting OTC as it expands facilities and programs to meet the educational and workforce needs of its service region. That in itself speaks volumes about OTC's accomplishments."

### OTC student wins Breaking Traditions Award

**June 8, 2021**

OTC aviation student Anita Golovin was honored as a winner of the 2021 Missouri Breaking Traditions Award, earning a scholarship worth \$1,000 per semester. Presented by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Breaking Traditions Awards honor students, educators and employers for their achievements related to nontraditional careers.







*Top: The Student Plaza on the OTC Springfield campus received a makeover. Bottom Left: The Center for Public Safety includes a new degree in Emergency Management and Disaster Preparedness. Bottom Right: The college acknowledged 15 years under the leadership of Chancellor Hal Higdon.*



## OTC names new dean of health sciences

**June 14, 2021**

Dr. Aaron Light was named the Dean of Health Sciences to replace Dr. Sherry Taylor, who retired in March 2021. Previously, Dr. Light was director for OTC's Respiratory Therapy Program.

Dr. Light is an OTC graduate with an associate degree in respiratory therapy, with bachelor's degrees from Missouri State University in both respiratory therapy and management. In addition, he earned a master's in respiratory care leadership and a doctorate in health science.

Health Sciences is the new name of the OTC department previously called Allied Health, which encompasses several programs, including nursing, respiratory therapy and dental hygiene. The name change to Health Sciences is to better align with national trends in health education. The name change took effect on July 1.

## Five students earn gold medals at SkillsUSA

**June 29, 2021**

Multiple OTC students placed and earned medals at the annual SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference held virtually June 7–17. During the event, more than 6,500 career and technical education students competed in 107 different trade, technical and leadership fields. OTC had thirteen national competitors this year, and all of them finished in the top 20.

The following OTC students won gold medals: Cooper Boyce, Advertising Design; Teofil Iacob, Collision Repair Technology; Gabriel Hamlet, Telecommunications Cabling; Hieu Dang and Nylah Rogers, Web Design.

SkillsUSA is a United States career and technical student organization working to ensure America has a skilled workforce. Serving middle school, high school, college students and adult professionals since 1965, SkillsUSA has more than 400,000 student and professional members.

## Dr. Higdon surpasses 15 years as OTC's leader

**July 5, 2021**

On July 5, 2006, Dr. Hal Higdon became just the second chancellor in the college's history. Now, a decade and a half into the job, Dr. Higdon is the longest tenured leader of any public two or four-year college in Missouri.

During Chancellor Higdon's 15 years of leadership, the college has seen growth in enrollment with a peak of more than 15,000 students in 2011. OTC has also broadened its footprint with new facilities in Ozark, Lebanon, Hollister, Waynesville and, most recently, Republic. He also strengthened the college's financial foundation by bringing new communities into the OTC taxing district and boosting the college's property tax assessment, which is still the lowest of any community college in Missouri.

Shortly after Dr. Higdon surpasses his sixteenth year at OTC, the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing will open its doors to students for the first time. Dr. Higdon, who has led the fundraising efforts for the \$40 million facility, expects the facility to elevate the lives of students and the economic vitality of the region.

## New programs and growth come to OTC for fall 2021

**August 23, 2021**

OTC debuted new programs and restructured others in the 2021 – 2022 school year. The changes included a new Center for Public Safety (CPS), new programs in emergency management and cybersecurity, and changing the

name of industrial systems technology to mechatronics.

The OTC Center for Public Safety brought programs from across the college system under one umbrella. The college also added an Associate of Arts in Emergency Management and Disaster Preparedness, an entirely online degree. Other programs included in the CPS are: Emergency Management and Disaster Preparedness, Fire Science Technology, and the Center of Excellence for Medical Simulation. Initially, the programs will not be housed in one physical location, but long-term plans call for all of the programs to be located together.

Cybersecurity professionals manage data and the tools that keep digital information safe from criminals and hackers. The addition of this program serves workforce demand for these skills.

In anticipation of the opening of the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing, the college changed the name of the Industrial Systems Technology Program to the Mechatronics Program. The term "mechatronics" is emerging as the industry standard for the disciplines that encompass automation, robotics, and the design, installation and maintenance of logic control systems.

## Student plaza at Springfield gets a facelift

**August 24, 2021**

When students returned to the Springfield campus for the fall 2021 semester, they were greeted by a brand-new Student Plaza. The area now features better accessibility, improved WiFi, enhanced student seating and more lighting.



## OTC named a Great College to Work For

**September 13, 2021**

OTC is one of the best colleges in the nation to work for, according to a survey by the Great Colleges to Work For® program.

The results, released in a special insert of The Chronicle of Higher Education, are based on a survey of 196 colleges and universities. OTC is included in the category of large institutions with 10,000 or more students.

OTC also won acknowledgment as an Honor Roll institution, a status granted to only 42 colleges each year, with special recognition in 8 of 10 categories, including: job satisfaction and support, professional development, mission and pride, supervisor/department chair effectiveness, confidence in senior leadership, faculty and staff well-being, faculty experience, and diversity, inclusion and belonging.

## Fall picnics return

**September 17, 2021**

For the first time since 2019, OTC campuses and centers hosted student picnics in the fall of 2021. The coronavirus pandemic prevented the picnics from happening during 2020 and the spring of 2021. Their return was happily received as students chowed down on hot dogs and bratwurst, mugged for photos with Ozzy and rocked during the always popular dance party.

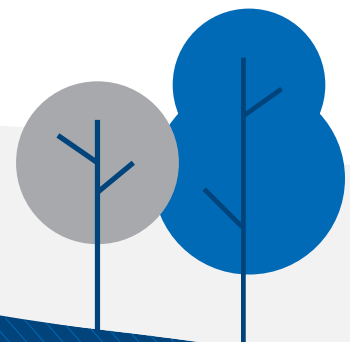
## OTC Foundation hosts annual golf tournament

**September 20, 2021**

A record 38 teams hit the links at Hickory Hills Country Club for the 15th Annual OTC Foundation Golf Tournament. This year's tournament raised \$32,000 for student scholarships, which provides qualifying students financial support they need to earn a degree.



*Left: Ozzy makes friends at the OTC Fall Picnic. Top Right: The 15th Annual OTC Foundation Golf Tournament raises record funds. Lower Right: The annual Car and Motorcycle Show draws attendees to the OTC Springfield Campus.*







## OTC Foundation launches third annual Sock Star campaign

*September 10, 2021*

Eagle hosiery adorned feet around Southwest Missouri this fall as the OTC Foundation held its third annual Sock Star campaign. The sale of the eagle-inspired argyle socks raised \$3,500 for the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing.



## OTC and SPS partner to place student success advisor at Hillcrest High School

*September 21, 2021*

OTC and Springfield Public Schools entered into an agreement to place a student success advisor at Hillcrest High School. The advisor counsels and instructs Hillcrest students on their post-secondary options, including college, vocational training and military service.

The Hillcrest student success advisor is similar to the model OTC has at rural high schools in southern Missouri. Advisors in those schools encourage students to take the ACT and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), along with other behaviors that lead to college enrollment. Since the implementation of the program in the 2019-20 school year, the five high schools have seen positive results, including an increase in FAFSA completion as high

as 29%, and an increase in college enrollment as high as 10%.

"The student success advisor will complement the Hillcrest counseling staff and focus solely on helping students develop a successful plan for their lives after high school," Dr. Grenita Lathan, Springfield Public Schools superintendent, said. "We're excited for this partnership and the positive impact it will have on the Hillcrest community."

## OTC hosts annual Car and Motorcycle Show

*October 9, 2021*

Students in OTC's automotive programs judged a record number of vehicle entries and awarded trophies to the top contenders at the annual Car and Motorcycle Show on the Springfield campus. All proceeds from the event supported SkillsUSA student activities.

## College names initiative to serve the entire student

*October 12, 2021*

At its annual all-employee meeting on Development Day, OTC announced that the existing OTC Cares initiative would include formalizing the college's commitment to a culture of care. Designed to address the needs of students in and out of the classroom, OTC Cares focuses on four pillars of care: student-centered, data-informed, holistic and proactive supports. All college decision-making will be informed by those four attributes. Since its inception in 1990, OTC has acted in the best interest of students, but OTC Cares gives these characteristics a name and a college-wide focus.





## **OTC commemorates Veterans Day** **November 11, 2021**

At the college's annual Veterans Day ceremony, the Sons of the American Revolution presented the colors and OTC Trustee J. Howard Fisk gave Mr. Anthony Risvold the 2021 Outstanding Student Veteran Award. In a moving tribute to veterans, the OTC Concert Choir sang and OTC Instructor Philip Forrester played "Taps."

## **OTC Richwood Valley Campus** **hosts annual PTA 5K and Fun Run** **October 15, 2021**

More than 50 runners participated in OTC's Physical Therapist Assistant 5K and Fun Run held at the OTC Richwood Valley Campus. This year, the annual event raised money for the Anton "Tony" Mario Diullo Memorial Scholarship Fund.

## **OTC announces first-ever** **sports team** **November 4, 2021**

For the first time in the history of the college, OTC will field a sports team when it debuts esports in the spring of 2022. Esports is competitive video gaming. Students will compete against other colleges in Rocket League and League of Legends. All OTC students will have an opportunity to use the new esports facility during recreational play periods.

## **OTC Technical Education Division** **hosts Explore OTC** **November 4, 2021**

Nearly 700 students from area high schools attended this year's Explore OTC event on the OTC Springfield Campus. Students learned about the Career Center and Middle College — options that allow high school juniors and seniors to attend OTC to earn college credit.





## MCCA honors OTC employees, alumni and supporters

**November 12, 2021**

The Missouri Community College Association (MCCA) honored OTC employees, alumni, donors and legislators at its 56th annual convention, held in Branson Nov. 10–12.

At the convention, MCCA acknowledged these donors, alumni and legislators for their commitment to OTC's mission: Robert W. Plaster Foundation — Award of Distinction; Elijah Haahr, former Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives — Distinguished Alumni Award; Lincoln Hough, Missouri State Senator — Show-Me Leadership Award; and John Black, Missouri State Representative — Distinguished Legislator Award.

The following OTC faculty were honored for their commitment to students and the teaching profession: Charlotte Choate, associate of science in nursing coordinator — Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching; Rob Flatness, construction technology department chair — Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching; Rene Wade, drafting design and technology instructor — Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching; Rebecca Caceres, dental programs instructor — Global Educator Award; J. Michael Ferguson, psychology instructor — Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award; Jon Herbert, theater instructor — Mel Aytes Faculty Innovation Award.

OTC administrators and staff earning recognition for their excellent service to the college include: Dr. Abby Benz, chief strategy officer — Administrative Professional Award; Becky Noel, accounting clerk — Senior Service Award; Amber Moran, SkillUP grant manager and Jacque Harris, instructional designer — Technology Innovation Award; Ann White, administrative assistant — Classified Staff Achievement Award.

MCCA is a statewide organization through which Missouri's community colleges work together to advance common agendas.



*Runners, walkers and riders participated in the annual PTA 5K and Fun Run.*



## OTC announces Excellence in Education award recipients

**October 12, 2021**

OTC unveiled its 2021 Excellence in Education award recipients. Dr. Judy Dasovich received the Full-Time Instructor Award, Dr. Harlow "Sandy" Sanders received the Adjunct Instructor Award, Chelsea Foresee received the Full Time Staff Award, Cindy Hurt received the Part Time Staff Award, and Blayne Radford earned the Administration Award.







# THE ROBERT W. PLASTER CENTER FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING RISES

Construction on the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing began a year ago, and now the size and scope of the 120,000-square-foot building is taking shape. The roof, floors and walls are complete. And, the detailed work begins as features of the classrooms, laboratories and industry space come into focus. The Plaster Manufacturing Center will open for students this August.

The facility will be OTC's home for the following programs: Drafting and Design, Manufacturing Technology, Mechatronics, Networking, Precision Machining, Cybersecurity and Automation & Robotics.

Although a building of this size comes with a \$40 million price tag, the college is fortunate to have generous donors and supporters who understand the vital role the center will play for students and the economic future of the state and region.







Left: Executive Director Robert Randolph leads community group tours of the PMC building site. Top Right: Junior high students participate in the Advanced Manufacturing Bootcamp to learn more about the industry. Mid Right: BKD CPAs & Advisors is one of the many donors who have made a transformative investment in the PMC. Bottom: An eagle-eye view of construction of the PMC illustrates how massive the facility is.



## MAJOR DONORS

In the fall of 2021, the college received a seven-figure donation from the **Sunderland Foundation** grant program for construction.

The PMC also received multiple six-figure donations in 2021, including:

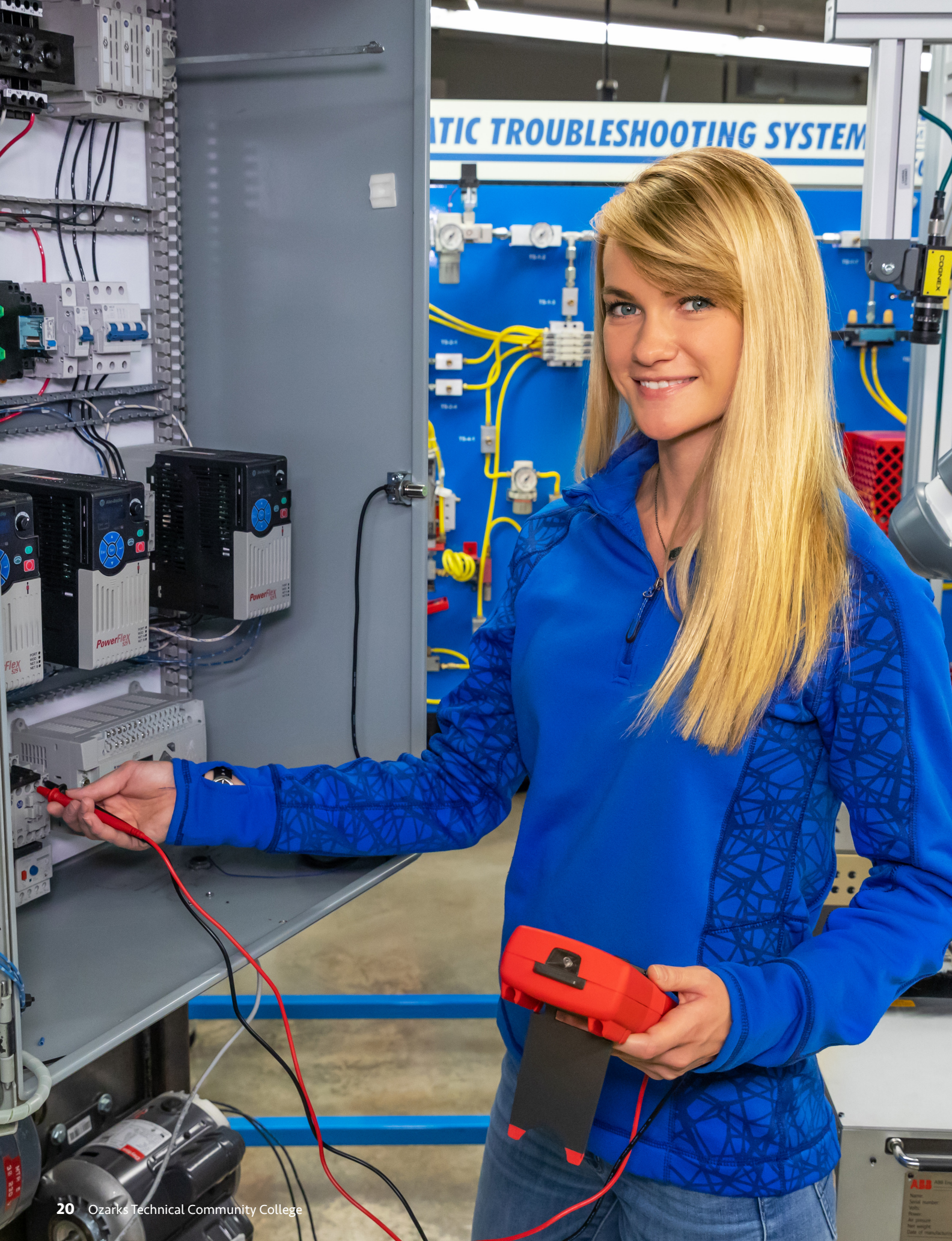
- American National for the American National Business Incubation Lounge
- The Durham Company for the Durham Company Student Lounge
- Larry and Donna Snyder for the Larry and Donna Snyder Atrium
- Rick's Automotive for the Rick's Automotive Student Lounge
- Gene Haas Foundation for the Gene Haas Precision Machining Lab
- Gentry Family for the Gentry Family Event Room

Other significant contributors to the project prior to 2021 include:

- The Robert W. Plaster Foundation
- Emerson Climate Technologies











# ABBHEY DOTSON

## Automating the future

Amid humming machinery and whirring computer systems, former OTC student Abbey Dotson is in her happy place. A 2021 graduate of the Industrial Systems Technology Program, Abbey now works in the automation department at ESC Consulting Engineers in Springfield.

"I've always been interested in taking things apart and putting things back together," Abbey said. "It's always fascinated me."

Abbey's interest in mechanics began at an early age when she would help her father with projects around the house. Abbey's family encouraged her unconventional career goals throughout her childhood and into adulthood, despite the lack of women in engineering and manufacturing.

After graduating from Ozark High School in 2017, Abbey enrolled in Missouri State's mechanical engineering program. But two-and-a-half years into the program, she decided to pursue OTC's Industrial Systems Technology Program instead. Abbey thought it would be beneficial to work in the field for a while before resuming her education at Missouri State.

"My friends who worked in manufacturing said that there's a disconnect between the engineers and the operators," Abbey explained. "I figured if I start off understanding the operational side of the process, that will help me become a better engineer."

While she still has plans to earn her bachelor's in engineering, her job now is full of learning opportunities. Abbey notes that at OTC, she took two classes in programmable logic controls and that knowledge has been invaluable in her career.

"We get the electrical and mechanical packets and bring them to life. We make it run," she said.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, women hold fewer than 30 percent of manufacturing jobs in the U.S. But Abbey says her male colleagues have already shown a great deal of trust and confidence in her abilities, so she won't let societal norms stand in the way of her career.

"The fact that it's a male field doesn't deter me from being a part of these cool things," Abbey said. "If you're interested, don't let the boys have all the fun and just get into it."

**"I've always been interested in taking things apart and putting things back together. It's always fascinated me."**



# RILEY BRAKER

## Ready for anything

When 18-year-old Riley Braker kicked off her Missouri State University college career last fall, she was already a junior, even though it was her first year. The Ozark, Missouri native enrolled in a dual credit program at OTC while still in high school. Riley graduated with her associate degree and high school diploma simultaneously last May.

While Riley is studying business at Missouri State, her biggest passion is music. The singer/songwriter wrote her first piece at the age of 10. In fact, she wrote a song right before she started taking classes at OTC. Riley says her compositions helped see her through life's challenges.

"It's called, 'I'm Not Ready,'" Riley said with a grin. "I was homeschooled since kindergarten, and I didn't think my 15-year-old self was prepared to take on college life."

But she was ready. Riley says the small class sizes and easy going environment at the OTC Richwood Valley Campus were just her style. It helped that her older sister Reagan had already taken classes there. Reagan gave Riley a tour of campus and introduced her to some of the instructors.

"I was nervous — just because it was a totally different atmosphere than what I was used to," Riley explained. "But it was a really good transition overall."

During her time at OTC, Riley worked as a student ambassador and took a music appreciation class just for fun. When COVID-19 hit, Riley turned to songwriting again. Her piece, "Love's Gone Cold," explores the topsy-turvy nature of the post-pandemic world. Last spring, she submitted her music to a University of Missouri songwriting competition and received an honorable mention recognition for her work. The song is available for streaming on Spotify.

"It was pretty unbelievable," Riley said. "It's a big deal to be recognized as a high schooler, so the fact that I got an honorable mention was a bit mind-blowing for me."

The songwriting award wasn't the only honor Riley would earn in 2021. Fellow homeschooler State Representative Alex Riley presented Riley with a courtesy resolution recognizing her academic and musical accomplishments.

Although Riley doesn't plan to make a career out of songwriting, she says music will always remain a big part of her life.

"I chose a business degree (with marketing emphasis) because career opportunities in that field are pretty open-ended," Riley explained. "And who knows, maybe I can find a way to work in the music industry someday."

Whether she pursues music as a career or a hobby, Riley will always have songwriting to guide her through life. Perhaps another award-winning composition is in the works before she's done with her bachelor's at Missouri State.



“It’s a big deal to be recognized as a high schooler, so the fact that I got an honorable mention was a bit mind-blowing for me.”











# GIOVANNI SANCHEZ

## Emerging leader

Born in California to Mexican parents, Giovanni Sanchez and his three siblings are United States citizens, but his parents are not. When he was just 9-years-old, Giovanni's parents were deported to Mexico, and their children went with them. For his parents, the move to Mexico was a return home, but for Giovanni, he was moving to a foreign country.

"When I'm in America, I'm not American enough, and when I'm in Mexico, I'm not Mexican enough," Giovanni said with a laugh.

Giovanni attended the rest of elementary school, middle school and most of high school in Mexico. Then, Giovanni moved back to California for his senior year to finish school and live with his older sister and her family. After graduation, Giovanni moved to Springfield to join his older brother and attend OTC.

"That first semester, I went all out and earned a 4.0 GPA," Giovanni said. "Then, I had the opportunity to join the OTC Honors Program, so I went for it and got in."

Through the honors program, Giovanni took a service-learning class where he worked at the Ronald McDonald House doing handyman work. Plus, while going to college, Giovanni has always had a job, first at Wendy's and now at Einstein Brothers Bagels. These experiences developed the leadership skills that likely helped Giovanni become the first OTC student to earn the Purdy Emerging Leaders scholarship.

"At Einstein Brothers, I train new employees, show them around the store and introduce them to all of their co-workers," Giovanni said. "In class projects, I like to make sure everyone has a chance to be heard and has a role in the presentations."

2021 is the first year community college students are eligible for the Purdy scholarship. Giovanni was one of the students urged to fill out the application.

"He's just one of those kids that you meet and think, 'He really cares about what he's doing here, about others, about the things that matter,'" said Todd Yerby, director of the OTC Honors Program.

Giovanni was in Mexico with his parents for the summer when he learned that he'd earned the valuable Purdy Scholarship, worth up to \$5,000 per year and renewable for up to three years.

"My parents were super excited," Giovanni said. "The scholarship pays for school."

When Giovanni's parents first came to the United States,

they were both just 19-years-old and worked in fast food. At 20, Giovanni has worked his share of fast food, but those jobs were a means to an end, and Giovanni's on his way to earning a bachelor's degree in computer science.

"I just feel very blessed," Giovanni said. "Challenges can make you stronger."

*\*Later in the summer, OTC Aviation Student Anita Golovin earned a Purdy Emerging Leaders Scholarship.*

"I just feel  
very blessed.  
Challenges can  
make you  
stronger."



# WHITNEY LA

## Just breathe

Whitney La had never heard of respiratory therapists before her son's seven-month stay in the neonatal intensive care unit at Mercy Hospital in Springfield. Now, her son is a toddler, and Whitney has a new career in respiratory therapy. A business entrepreneur and mother of three, Whitney grew close to her son's team of respiratory therapists during his extended stay at Mercy. Max, delivered via an emergency c-section at 25 weeks gestation, weighed just 1.5 pounds at birth. His lungs were severely underdeveloped.

"He was born so early. I didn't hear him cry in the operating room," Whitney remembered. "He had respiratory issues, of course, so he was intubated and whisked away to the NICU."

Over the next several weeks, Whitney learned how to care for her premature son alongside the doctors, nurses and respiratory therapists in his charge. She visited Max twice a day during "touch times," which were periods allocated for diaper changes, temperature checks and other medical procedures.

"I've always been a hands-on mom, and the only way for me to be 'hands-on' in the NICU was to learn and understand exactly what they were doing for Max," Whitney said. "I would ask his respiratory therapists questions like, 'What are you doing?' and 'What does this mean?' They explained everything to me. I was fascinated by it."

Max, who was initially given a 40-to-60 percent chance of survival, graduated from the NICU in September of 2019. During his homecoming, Whitney felt overjoyed, relieved — and nervous. Max, like most micro-preemies, would still require around-the-clock medical care. But Whitney and her family quickly settled into their new routine with help from an in-home nurse.

While processing her family's NICU journey, Whitney decided to apply for OTC's Respiratory Therapy Program. She began classes at the college in the spring of 2020.

"I decided to become a respiratory therapist to see and understand everything Max went through," Whitney explained. "Everything he had experienced in the NICU was so fresh in my mind. I wanted to understand it fully."

Whitney graduated from the program in May of 2021 and went to work at Mercy on the eve of the Delta surge in Springfield.

"That could be overwhelming. I was dealing with extremely ill patients. People who were about to die," Whitney said.

Whitney works with all sorts of patients, including those suffering from COVID, brain and neural trauma, and preemie babies like her son. Max still has some challenges at three years old, but Whitney's youngest child and her new career have given her a new perspective.

"As long as Max and my other two kids are healthy, I don't worry about anything else," Whitney said.







“I decided to become a respiratory therapist to see and understand everything Max went through in the NICU. I wanted to understand it fully.”





*The Carr family continues to invest in OTC students and the regional economy.*

## THE DURHAM COMPANY INVESTS IN OTC

For the Carr family, manufacturing isn't just the family business. The Carr's passion for the industry comes from a place of patriotism and what's best for the country.

"Manufacturing is imperative to keep and grow our middle class," said Jenny Carr, L&W Industries president. "For each manufacturing job created, you create multiple jobs amongst vendors, service industries and other employers. We cannot afford not to build the Plaster Manufacturing Center."

Ms. Carr and her family's companies don't just talk about the importance of manufacturing – they invest in the future. In 2021, The Durham Company and its affiliates, L&W Industries and GEC Durham Industries made a six-figure donation to the Robert W. Plaster Center for Advanced Manufacturing. Durham's contribution will fund the Durham Company Student Lounge inside the Plaster Manufacturing Center.

"Durham founder George E. Carr is passionate about education," Ms. Carr said. "We recognize the importance of educating and training the workforce of the future, and we're proud to make this investment in the Plaster Manufacturing Center."

Ms. Carr and her brothers have manufacturing in their blood. Their grandfather, George T. Carr, is a former Ford Motor employee who founded Detroit Tool in Lebanon. George E. Carr, their father, bought The Durham Company in Washington, Mo. and eventually moved it to Lebanon.

"That passion for manufacturing was handed down to us,"

Ms. Carr said. "And it continues to grow."

While Durham's contribution to the Plaster Manufacturing Center is the Carr family's latest involvement with OTC, the relationship goes back more than a decade. Ms. Carr began her affiliation with the college by speaking to students about post-graduate employment opportunities. Later, she had her employees come to the college to conduct mock interviews with students, and Ms. Carr has hired OTC graduates or sent her employees to OTC to seek continuing education.

"I hope this is just the beginning of our involvement with the Plaster Manufacturing Center," Ms. Carr said. "When we were approached about contributing to the project, there was no hesitation. Springfield has been starving for this kind of resource."

When the facility opens in August 2022, the Durham Company Student Lounge will bear the logos of the Durham Company, L&W Industries and GEC Durham Industries.

*With five facilities in southwest Missouri, Durham is owned by the George E. Carr and Doug Russell families from Lebanon and Springfield. Durham's more than 700 team members manufacture metering and distribution products for the electrical utility marketplace. Located in Springfield, L&W Industries produces and distributes signaling and communication equipment for the rail industry. GEC Durham makes transformers for metering applications.*



# OTC RECEIVES SEVEN FIGURE GIFT, NAMES ATRIUM AFTER BENEFACTOR

Emma Talbot was an educator in and out of the classroom. She was a long-time Nixa schoolteacher, she taught her friends about investing, and she taught herself about cancer and treatments following a diagnosis. While her death in 2020 took away her ability to teach, Ms. Talbot's seven-figure gift to the OTC Foundation removes cost as a barrier for students pursuing higher education at OTC.

"Emma was an inspirational, compassionate and generous educator," said Betsy Kester, Ms. Talbot's friend.

Ms. Talbot's gift established the Talbot Family Scholarship Fund, which provides financial assistance for OTC students with an emphasis on single mothers. The fund provides scholarships for up to 40 OTC students each year and began

disbursements to students in Fall 2021.

"Emma had special concern for children from broken homes," Kester said. "She wanted to provide single mothers with an opportunity for an education so they could provide themselves and their families a better life."

As a teacher in Nixa Public Schools, she twice earned Teacher of the Year accolades, but her care for children did not end at the schoolhouse door. When some students did not have enough to eat, lacked support at home, or simply had trouble getting to school, Ms. Talbot would lend a hand.

A lifelong learner, when Ms. Talbot taught herself the ins and outs of financial investing, she shared her knowledge by creating an all-female investment group. Even after a cancer diagnosis, Ms. Talbot borrowed her doctors' medical journals

to learn as much about the disease as possible. It was this desire to continue learning that fueled her passion for education.

To honor Ms. Talbot for her gift, the college named the atrium at the Richwood Valley campus in Ozark the Talbot Family Atrium. At the August event to honor Ms. Talbot for her generosity, Amy Bacon, the executive director of the OTC Foundation, offered this thought.

"Finally, a quote from Elton Trueblood, 'A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows full well he will never sit,'" Bacon said. "We can't thank Emma enough for the amount of shade she is creating for our students."



Above: Ms. Emma Talbot leaves a legacy. Left: Friends of the Talbot family attend a dedication ceremony for the Talbot Family Atrium.



# DONOR HONOR ROLL

We would like to extend a special thanks to those who support students and programs at OTC by contributing to the OTC Foundation. Your generosity helps provide education, job training and lifelong learning to countless students.

Gifts and pledges received between January 1 and December 31, 2021 are included in this report. (\*Deceased)



## LEGACY SOCIETY

*Friends of OTC who remember the OTC Foundation through a bequest or other type of planned gift become members of the Legacy Society.*

**Mike & Judy Breeding**  
**Alden & Dolores Brooks\***  
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**Jan Robbins**  
**Neal Spencer**  
**Emma Talbot\***

### \$1,000,000 AND ABOVE

\*Emma Talbot

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*Student Ambassadors are the life of the party at the OTC Fall Picnic on the OTC Springfield campus.*



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# DONOR HONOR ROLL



*Nursing students in Lebanon receive a lesson from Ozzy.*

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## EMPLOYEE GIVING

When former OTC Dean of Students Karla Gregg began working at Graff Vo Tech in 1990, she oversaw the New Perspectives program (now called Breaking Traditions). The program helped displaced homemakers, single parents and non-traditional students. There, she encountered many adult college students who needed help with scholarships, gas money and childcare.

"Adult students have more obligations than traditional students who don't have to support themselves yet," Karla said.

One of the adult students Karla helped was a woman named Nancy. After ten years of marriage, Nancy suddenly found herself a single mother. Nancy had graduated from high school but had never worked outside the home. She was a woman with little work experience, no in-demand skills, and she needed a way to support herself and her child.

"Nancy was bright and very motivated," Karla said. "But she needed a great deal of guidance choosing classes and accessing financial aid because she didn't know anything about college."

Karla guided Nancy into the Health Information Technology program, and she became one of its earliest graduates. Nancy went on to earn a bachelor's degree, and, years later, Karla received a call from Nancy to tell her that she was about to graduate from law school.

Stories like Nancy's are the reason Karla always gave to the OTC Foundation during her nearly 30 years as an OTC employee, and why Karla bequeathed a portion of her estate to the college.

"Nancy's story stands out, but OTC has saved so many students from poverty or pulled them out of poverty," Karla said. "I want to support OTC's mission any way I can."



*Karla Gregg, former Dean of Students*

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*Students walk out of historic Lincoln Hall on the OTC Springfield Campus.*





*Many special scholarships have been established through the OTC Foundation. Some are in memory of individuals; others are funded by generous businesses, organizations and individuals in our communities.*

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 Anton "Tony" Mario Diullo Memorial Scholarship  
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# IN HONOR OR MEMORY

*Gifts to honor or remember outstanding individuals are a special way to pay tribute to a friend or loved one. The following donors made contributions to the OTC Foundation in honor or in memory of someone special. (\*Deceased)*

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*Fall colors adorn the newly-renovated Student Plaza on the OTC Springfield Campus.*

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The OTC Foundation and our supporters believe every student should have access to higher education and a brighter future. We invest in student success because we know an educated community is a thriving community. With your help, we can continue this essential work. To learn more about how we can align your passion with OTC's mission, contact the OTC Foundation at 417-447-2651 or [foundation@otc.edu](mailto:foundation@otc.edu).

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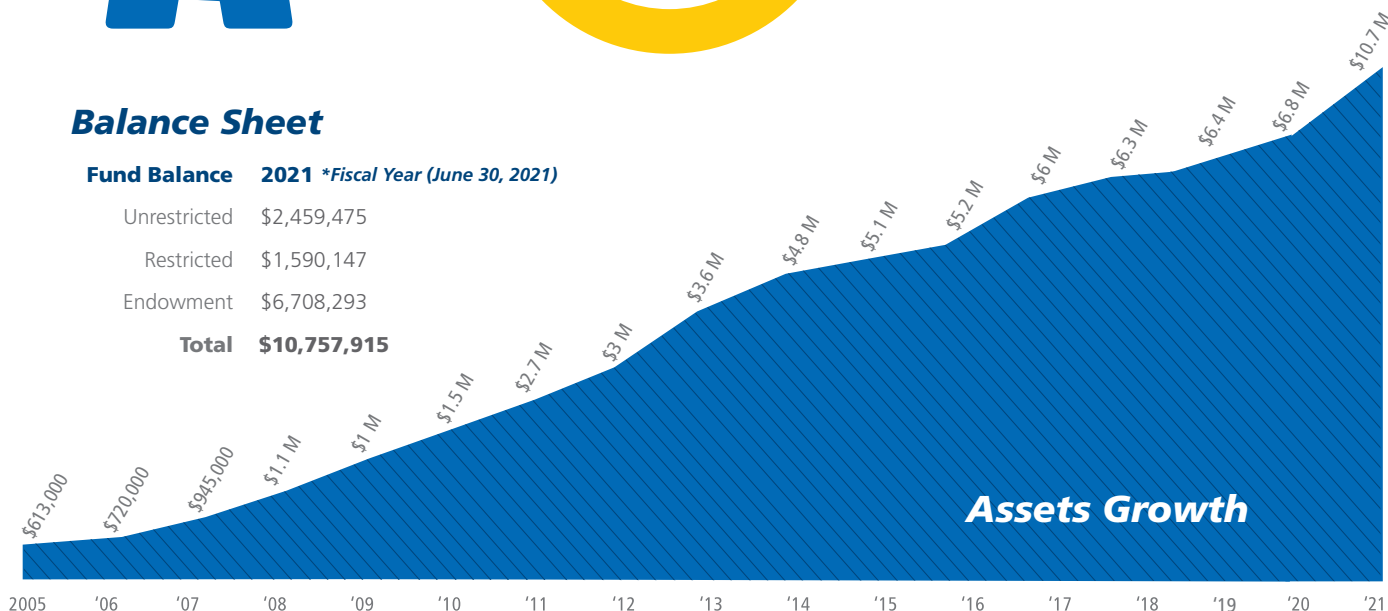
**= \$582,834**  
TO STUDENTS  
IN 2021

### Balance Sheet

**Fund Balance 2021 \*Fiscal Year (June 30, 2021)**

Unrestricted \$2,459,475  
Restricted \$1,590,147  
Endowment \$6,708,293

**Total \$10,757,915**



**\$32,486**

IN PROCEEDS FROM  
2021 GOLF TOURNAMENT

**89**

**MAJOR DONATIONS**

to the Robert W. Plaster Center  
for Advanced Manufacturing




**Employees  
Contributed**

**\$71,843**

dollars





**“The word-of-the-year at OTC was care. As COVID disrupted society, the college stepped up with outreach to all students and efforts to meet their needs in and out of the classroom. We cared for our communities with new workforce programs and lent a hand up to neighbors in need. In 2021, Ozarks Technical Community College epitomized a culture of caring.”**

**—John Gentry, Board Chair**


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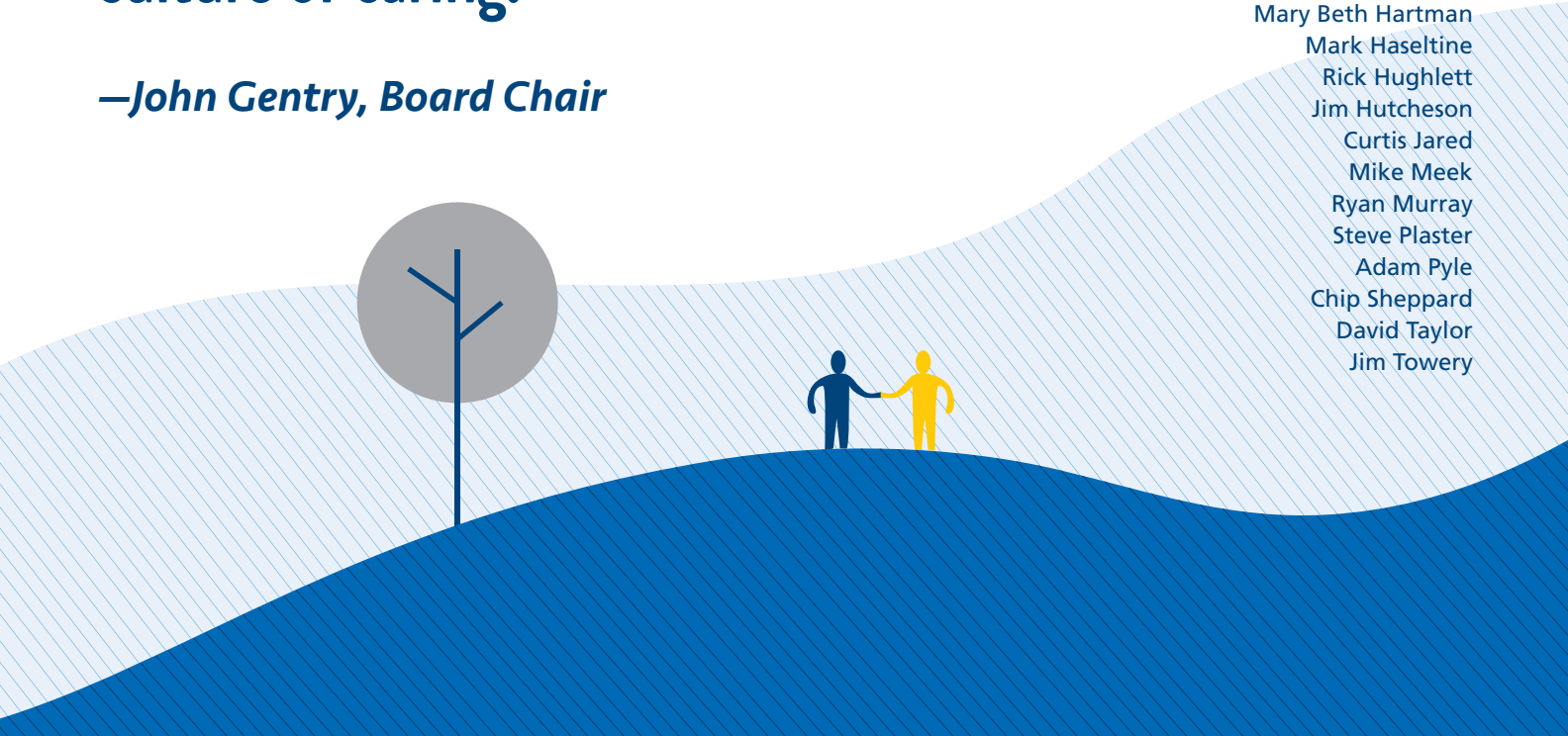
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