



# JCTC NEWS

JCTC News Team:  
Madeline Lee  
Victoria Balius

## FROM THE DESK OF THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the JCTC, we want to wish each of you a Happy New Year. Last newsletter, I got to congratulate Mrs. *Gena Heffner*, the 2018 Jackson County Technology Center Teacher of the Year. I am proud to announce that she has also been selected as the Jackson County School District Teacher of the Year! She will now compete with other district winners for the Mississippi State Teacher of the Year. We are so proud of her and her students.

The Jackson County Technology Center has begun preparing for our yearly student organization competitions. Our organizations represented in the district are Health Occupations Student Organization-HOSA, Culinary, Robotics, Future Farmers of America (FFA), DECA, FBLA, and SkillsUSA. Students from the JCTC programs participate in HOSA and SkillsUSA. After competitions are concluded, we will begin our state testing.

Dr. J.J. Morgan

### Microsoft Academy State Champions

JCTC is proud to announce our Microsoft Academy state champions for Fall 2018! ten of the Fall 2018 winners represent JCTC, with three third place titles, three second place titles, and four first place titles! Mr. Rickey Corker, IT instructor, says every student studied hard for these tests and represented JCTC well. "You find these products used by every business in the world," he said, "so this will definitely benefit them later on." Congratulations to the following champs: Victor Thorne (1st place PowerPoint 2013, 2nd place PowerPoint 2016), Alexis Rushing (1st place Excel 2013), Kaitlyn Culpepper (1st place Word 2016, 3rd place Word 2013), Sean McClellan (1st place Word 2013), Matthew Mixon (2nd place PowerPoint 2013), Jason Micor (2nd place Excel 2013), Tara Buyatt (3rd place PowerPoint 2013), and Breanne Strawn (3rd place Word 2016)!

### MCEF STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to Kyle Albritton for being selected as the October Student of the Month by the Mississippi Construction Education Foundation! He was selected for his excellent grades, attendance, discipline in class, outstanding achievements, leadership abilities, and post-graduation plans. He will go on to compete for student of the year recognition at the MCEF annual awards program this May.



## Mrs. Gena Heffner- Teacher of the Year!

Our 2019 Teacher of the Year is Mrs. Gena Heffner! As the JCTC Teacher Academy instructor, Mrs. Heffner has devoted countless hours preparing her students for their future careers. Mrs. Heffner is a graduate of the University of South Mississippi and an active member of Mississippi Professional Educators. She has been married to Mr. Ashley Heffner since 1996, and they have two children, Reid and Hannah Heffner. JCTC is so proud to recognize Mrs. Gena Heffner for her hard work and passion for teaching.



- What do you think it means to be teacher of the year?

"I'm extremely honored to be Teacher of the Year for Jackson County School District.

Our district has so many dynamic teachers that I've been fortunate enough to work with and who have even taught my own children. I'm very humbled to be listed among the ranks of my fellow teachers."

- What do you think makes a good teacher?

"Effective teachers must be entertainers. They must be passionate about their content area and must be able to capture their students' attention in order to teach it. They must have big hearts, without compromising the integrity of the class. Teachers need to have a sense of humor and just be approachable, while also being in control of their class. Teachers must know where each student is, academically, when they enter the class and should take them as far as possible, academically. Sometimes that means going beyond the curriculum for enrichment, and sometimes it means working equally as hard just to covered the required material."

- Why do you do extra in your classroom to make you an outstanding teacher?

"I try to make every one of my students feel important because they are! I really make it a point to listen to them and to help them if I can. Sometimes students have needs that aren't addressed in the curriculum. Sometimes they need to be heard, to be seen (at an athletic event or such), to be fed, or to know that their future is based on their own merit. I feel like my lessons are differentiated and the energy level of my class is high, but I also know those descriptions are irrelevant when basic needs aren't met."

- Is there anything else we should know about you and your achievement?

"This my 25th year to teach (most of which was teaching high school English). I am a National Board Certified teacher with a Master's degree. I work with wonderful people at JCTC."

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### Students of the Month

Automotive: Austin Wallace

Construction: Gracey Gaedchens

Information Technology: Noah Hankins

Instrumentation and Controls: William Travis

Medical: Kelsey Brooks

Teacher Academy: Jaida Trotter

Welding: Connor Stringer



## Spotlight Program

JCTC is proud to honor Teacher Academy as our January spotlight program! Taught by Mrs. Gena Heffner, this program prepares the next generation of teachers for a career in the classroom. Students plan lessons, evaluate effective teaching strategies, and volunteer with teachers from St. Martin, East Central, and Vanleave in a real time classroom setting. We sat down with Mrs. Heffner to learn more about this fantastic class.

- What skills do your students learn in your classroom?

“They learn how to use technology which is typical in a classroom setting. They learn interpersonal skills as well as being able to exercise tact, discretion, and confidentiality. They learn how to access and record grades; how to plan for and how to teach effective lessons for various grades and subjects; how to make instructional games, and interactive bulletin boards. My students provide extra assistance to students with special needs.”

- What awards or honors have you and your class received that you feel can help us demonstrate the class’s success?



“My students have placed 1st in the state every year except one for our Teacher Academy state tests, which is incredible when considering the high number of Teacher Academy programs that we have in the state of Mississippi. Additionally, every single year that JCTC has had Teacher Academy II

students, I have had one student earn the prestigious METP scholarship, which is a full-ride scholarship worth over \$100,000.00 to either MSU or Ole Miss.”

- What is unique aspect of your program that would not be found in a typical classroom setting?

“My students create instructional games and materials to meet the needs of their students during clinical rotations. My students are total rock stars who serve their community by showing up and by doing what needs to be done every single week! They help teach your younger brothers, sisters, or cousins. They are behind the scenes in helping with Grandparents' Day, Christmas plays, etc. These students work hard with little recognition. If you know a Teacher Academy student, please let them know how much they are appreciated.”

- Is there anything else we should know about Teacher Academy or its students?

“Teacher Academy is a class like no other. My students spend over 100 hours in local elementary, middle, and high school classes working for the betterment of their community.

