Newsletter

Fall 2026

MCCOY COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, & ENGINEERING

The Dean's Message

Dear alumni and friends of the McCoy College of Science, Mathematics and Engineering,

I am excited to share this inaugural newsletter with you which highlights the activities, initiatives, and wonderful accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni who embody the spirit of this college, which I have had the privilege to serve since the fall of 2024. I was drawn to the college for several reasons. My familiarity with its academic units offered an opportunity to serve as an effective advocate for our programs and the people who make them successful. I was also encouraged by the strong foundations already in place, the investments made by the state and institution in STEM, and the opportunity to work collaboratively to develop a shared vision for the college's future. Most importantly, however, it was the people.



Dr. Robert Brennan, Dean

Everyone I interacted with demonstrated a genuine commitment to our students and to one another. That was a community I wanted to join, support, and help grow.

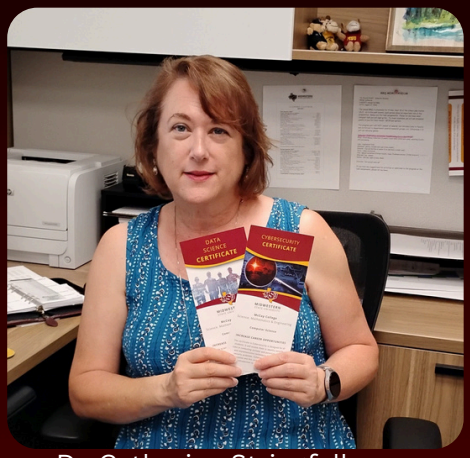
Now a little more than two years in, that sense of pride and community continues to be ever present, and together we have made some meaningful progress.

The renovation and expansion of Bolin Science Hall is now complete, providing state-of-the-art teaching and learning spaces that reflect the same excellence as the faculty, staff, and students who gather here to teach and learn, to explore and innovate, and pursue their ambitions.

Shaping the Future

To ensure our curriculum remains current and responsive to the workforce needs of our region, we have expanded our academic offerings with several new degrees and certificates. These include a B.S. in Electrical Engineering, an M.S. in Industrial Technology, and certificates in Cybersecurity, Data Science, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). We have also been able to acquire and upgrade space in Martin Hall to help support some of these programs and provide students with valuable learning opportunities.





Dr. Catherine Stringfellow

We are encouraged by positive trends in enrollment and retention, and we remain committed to identifying new ways to support our students' academic and financial success. Scholarships, paid research experiences, and teaching assistant opportunities are among the ways we are working to reduce financial barriers and help students make progress toward their degrees. This past spring, we received an extraordinary gift of $750,000 from the James N. McCoy Foundation to establish endowed scholarships for Engineering students. This generous investment will provide lasting support for students pursuing engineering degrees and represents an important commitment to the future of engineering education at MSU.

As I reflect on our progress, I am especially grateful for the people who make this college such a special place. Our accomplishments are the result of the dedication, creativity, and collaboration of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partners. We have much to celebrate, and tremendous opportunities ahead.

Dr. Robert Brennan



For more information about the college visit:
McCoy College of Science, Mathematics, & Engineering
For opportunities to support the college, visit:
MCOSME Giving

Highlights

In June of 2025 we hired Taylor Majewski as the Director of the STEM Center for Excellence. Taylor is helping strengthen and expand our support for current students while broadening our engagement with the surrounding community. This year she launched the STEM Mentorship Pathways Program in collaboration with Gonzalo Robles and the Café con Leche organization. This initiative is designed to encourage more local students to explore STEM fields and pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.



Taylor Majewski, STEM Director



Student & Community Engagement

August
- 27th - Back to School Bash

September
- 11th – STEM Careers Panel

October
- 7th – Hendrick Health Academy STEM Day
- 23rd – Distinguished Alumni Master Class

November
- 6th – Boys and Girls Club STEM night
- 21st – Best Robotics Competition

December
- Final's week – Finals Fuel
- Date TBD - Trivia night

February
- 12th - Region IX Science and Engineering Science Fair

March
- Date TBD - Boy Scouts Merit Badge College

April
- 2nd – STEM Conference for high school sophomores
- 9th – Pre-Professionals Workshop/Tour
- 16th – Pre-Professionals Workshop/Tour

May
- 7th – College Picnic
- Final's week – Finals Fuel
- Date TBD – Trivia night









Departmental News

The big event for the Biology Department this past year has been moving into the newly renovated Bolin Hall. For the past couple of years, the faculty, staff, & students have been nomads as the classrooms, labs, & offices in Bolin Hall were essentially gutted and rebuilt. For the Biology Department the primary renovations resulted in a new centralized office suite so all faculty are in one place, renovated teaching labs to enhance course delivery, the addition of lab preparation rooms to improve the ability of faculty to set-up labs, and the addition of 2 new lecture rooms. As with any move, it takes a bit to unpack and there are several areas where we need to finish unpacking. However, we are settling into the new spaces and the students appear to enjoy the upgraded facilities. Now if we can only remember the new room numbers.

The other change this year is the addition of 2 new faculty. Dr. Joel Brant has joined us as the new Department Chair and Vertebrate Zoologist. Dr. Brant received his PhD from Texas Tech University in 2005 and is a mammalogists with a passion for field biology. Dr. Brant comes to us from McMurry University where he served as Vertebrate Zoologist for 20 years. Mr. Tenzin Shakya graduated from our graduate program in 2025 where he worked with Dr. James Masuoka investigating the interactions between pathogenic yeast and gut bacteria in humans. Mr. Shakya heads up our Anatomy & Physiology course offerings.

Welcome!



Dr. Joel Brant



Mr. Tenzin Tashi Shakya

Chemistry

Last year the Chemistry Department continued to participate in events that exposed K-12 students to the joys of chemistry and participated in college events promoting STEM (YES camp (engineering), Boys and Girls club science night, Boy Scouts merit badge, STEM conference, and others). Also in 2025, the chemistry department was awarded a 3 year continuation of the Welch department undergraduate research grant for $135,000 and a Welch equipment grant for $75,000. The chemistry faculty continue to perform research with undergraduate students and present results at various conferences. Dr. FuCheng Liang received an MSU EURECA research grant for the 25-26 school year and Dr. Elizabeth Machunis Masuoka received an intramural grant for the 25-26 school year. The chemistry department has been collaborating with the Wichita Falls water treatment facility; Candice Fulton and Hunter Adams (MSU alum) presented at the Promoting Careers: Academic and Industrial Collaboration conference this summer highlighting the collaboration.



Ms. Candice Fulton



Dr. Elizabeth Machunis Masuoka



Dr. Fu-Cheng Liang





Computer Science

In the past year, faculty in the Computer Science Department have had several research articles accepted for publication and presented at peer-reviewed conferences. Notably, five faculty had work accepted to the Small Computing Colleges Conference in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The department has been fortunate that students have performed work with the faculty and have also been co-authors on many of the works.Students have also presented their work in poster presentations at MSU Texas.

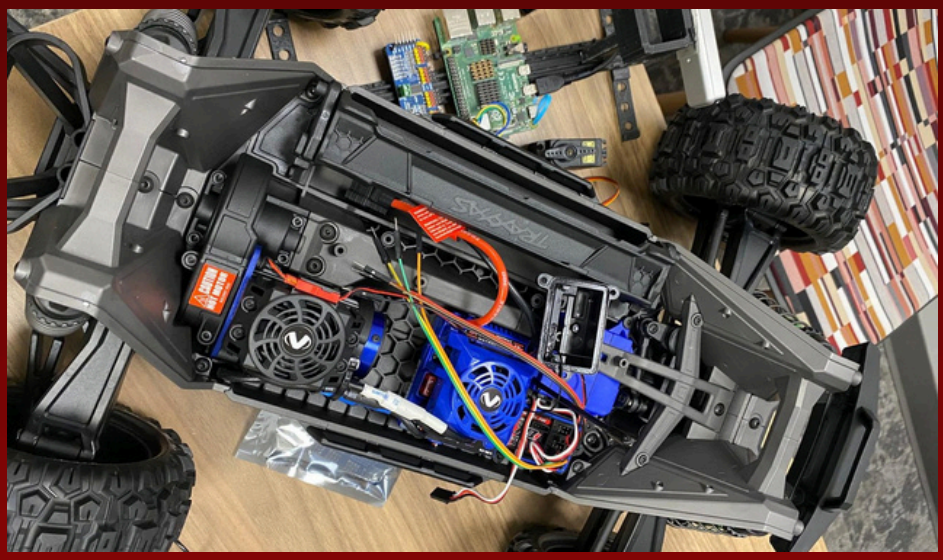
In addition, Dr. Terry Griffin has almost completed setting up the IoT Lab in the Martin Building, which he will share with Dr. Mahmoud Eldefrawy for his AI-driven robotics work. They are looking forward to having students share in this new "maker space."



Dr. Mahmoud Eldefrawy



Dr. Terry Griffin



Engineering

Dr. Mahmoud Elsharafi and several students attended the Southwestern Petroleum Short Course (SWPSC) conference at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. Students had a great opportunity to attend professional speakers' presentations and talk with people who have experience in the oil industry. Faculty and students had a chance to visit Texas Tech University's electrical and petroleum departments. Since spring 2024, the Southwestern Petroleum Short Course Association has supported our Petroleum Engineering Minor program with funds to support student scholarships. To date approximately $75,000 has been gifted MSU Texas with more than 20 students from engineering and science departments receiving scholarship awards.





Geosciences

Last year, the Kimbell School of Geosciences welcomed Dr. Luel Emishaw as our new professor of geophysics. Dr. Emishaw holds a Ph.D. in Geosciences from Oklahoma State. He has both an outstanding research record and considerable experience teaching and mentoring students. He has spent the last five years as a research geoscientist with Kleinfelder, with whom he maintains an active relationship. His research interests and teaching strengths are geophysics, writ large – shallow subsurface characterization, tectonic attributes, and resolution of the deep-Earth. Dr. Emishaw is attracting students to work on projects as diverse as rift mechanics, structural characterization with LiDAR, and gravity and magnetics exploration of shallow subsurface geology.

The KSG was extremely active last year. We launched two new initiatives for post-graduates. First, we established a non-thesis pathway to the M.S. that is tailored to professionals. Secondly, we developed a Geographical Information Systems certificate. Both should increase interest in our graduate program and further increase our reputation for producing quality graduates.

Additionally, Mahmud, Emishaw, Price, and Rosscoe were each accepted into the MCOSME C-STEM program and immediately engaged undergraduate projects. Dr. Mahmud received and intermural grant from MSU, and was the PI on the USGS Texasview grant. Mahmud, Price, and Rosscoe engaged students in EURECA and UGROW research programs. Mahmud's students evaluated vadose water movement at Natural Bridge Caverns, wildfire particulate air contamination, and GIS mapping at Camp Perkins along the Red River. Rosscoe's students focused on characterizing the Pennsylvanian strata, in north-central Texas. Price's students continued work on water-saturated emplacements in the Wichita Mountains, and embarked on the geochemistry of meteorites. All of the faculty and eight students presented papers at the Geological Society of America's annual Connects meeting in San Antonio last October.

In January, the KSG professors and three students joined faculty from Angelo State University and Sul Ross at the Dalquest Desert Research Station to observe and discuss its amazing geology and consider future projects. Rosscoe and his students ran a trip to Mineral Wells for the geology faculty at Tarrant County Community College. Price led field trips in the Wichita Mountains for the Wichita Falls high schools and Friends of the Wichitas. Mahmud visited classrooms at West Foundation Elementary and Memorial High School to demonstrate LiDAR techniques.



ASU, SRU, and MSU crew at DDRS. L-R: Jon Price, Sarah Heinlein, Luel Emishaw, Brad Carter, Kevin Urbanczyk, Madeline Price, Aryah Rogers, Sam Horton, Kashif Mahmud, Jessie Kelsch, and Steve Rosscoe

Geosciences Continued

Emeriti Professors Rebecca Dodge and John Kocurko remain active and frequently engage the department. Dr. Kocurko visits us frequently, and recently provided new samples for Dr. Rosscoe. Dr. Dodge continues to assist us with online teaching, is active as Texasview co-PI, and engages many outreach efforts.

The year saw the final renovations to our space, and we have moved all of the teaching and research equipment to their homes. Our local branch of the USGS Texas-Oklahoma water office, manned by Monti Haynie and Molly Milmo, moved into new and improved spaces. Dr. Rosscoe quickly filled up his new lab, and started breaking apart rocks in the building's biggest fume hood. Drs. Emishaw and Mahmud set up new computing spaces, and both are enjoying loading-dock-accessible storage for their equipment. Our large display collection, largely assembled by Jackie Watkins, Jay Murray, and John Kocurko, is slowly making its way back to hallway cases.

The KSG was fortunate to have the support of Craig & Sheila Reynolds this year, who donated $50,000 to establish a Petroleum Geology Scholarship, which we began awarding this fall. We are also thankful for the Desk and Derrick Club of Wichita Falls for the annual support of $4000 to honor four top students. Price was gratified to serve as keynote speaker at their annual Industry Luncheon. The KSG also received a donation of software from PE Limited, valued at $2,764,444.11, to provide cutting edge structural software for student and faculty use:

GEOS: Research and Student Opportunities



Dr. Rebecca Dodge



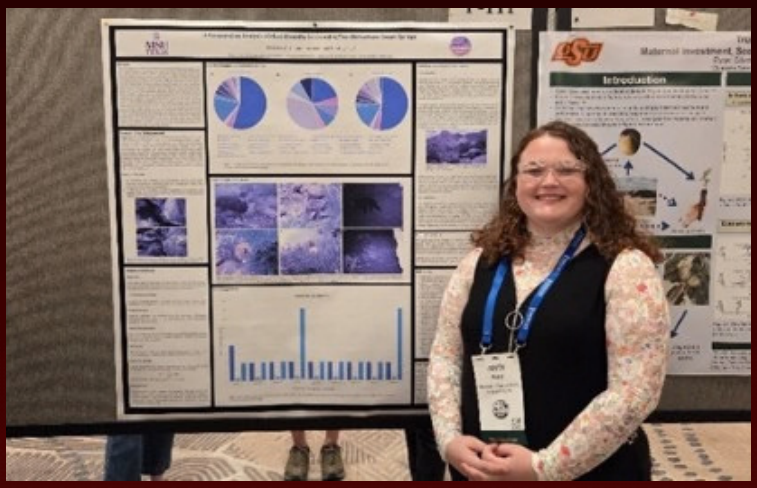
Dr. Steven Rosscoe



Student Spotlights

Joyce Reed a graduate student in the Biology Department and 2024 graduate of the Biology department was awarded Ann Miller Gonzalez Graduate Research Grant from the Native Plant Society of Texas. This competitive grant is awarded annually to graduate students at Texas universities who are conducting research related to Texas native plants and/or the conservation of native plant habitats. Joyce is one of nine recipients for 2026. This grant will fund Joyce's Master's thesis research investigating the environmental variables that impact the floral diversity of desert riparian habitats. Joyce is conducting her research at Alamo & Fern Springs located at Dalquest Desert Research Station.

2025 Ann Miller Gonzalez Research Grant Recipients - Native Plant Society of Texas



Bismah Ahmed is a junior Biology and Chemistry major on the pre-med track. She is working with Dr. Liang on a research project investigating Type 2 diabetes and the formation of harmful protein aggregates that can contribute to pancreatic beta-cell dysfunction. Her project focuses on whether cpSRP43, a molecular chaperone, can prevent or reduce the aggregation of hIAPP, a protein involved in pancreatic damage in Type 2 diabetes. Bismah is the lead TA/Teaching Assistant for the chemistry department and is involved in multiple organizations, including the American Chemical Society and Tri-Beta Biological Honor society. She is also a volunteer in hospice care, creates handmade cards and bracelets for pediatric hospital patients, and works as a medical scribe.



Student Spotlights Continued

Rykir Evans, an undergraduate student in the Computer Science Department, was hired as an intern at NASA Spring/Summer 2026. His work on the NASA SUITs Challenge Project the previous year and the team's "Pay it Forward" award were instrumental in his successful hire. In addition, Rykir was named as the Hardin Scholar May 2025 and received a scholarship for the 2025-2026 academic year. He has served on the McCoy College of Science and Mathematics Student Advisory Committee and is very involved in campus activities.



Ellen Langford and Nicole Vigilant both seniors in the Mathematics Department participated in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities and Workshops (UGROW) program this summer working on mathematical questions and ideas from the card game Swish. Their faculty mentor was Dr. Sarah Cobb. Swish is played with transparent cards featuring balls and hoops; the goal is to find sets of cards where every ball is matched to a hoop. The cards can be flipped and rotated, allowing cards to be put together in several ways. Ellen and Nicole worked on methods for counting the number of different cards in the deck, as well as the number of matched sets of cards. They presented their research at the UGROW Symposium on July 2, and are currently working on a paper to publish their results.



Langford and Vigilant with faculty mentor, Dr. Sarah Cobb

More Student Spotlights



Muroi and Dr. Mahmoud Elsharafi

In spring 2026, one of Dr. Elsharafi's students, Joshua Muroi, received the 1st Place Award of $1500 for the Poster Contest in Spring 2026 for his research on “Electrochemical Potential of Produced-Water-Mud Systems”. Joshua Award announced at the Southwestern Petroleum Short Course (SWPSC) at Texas Tech University. He also received 2nd Place, Oral Presentation: Awarded at the URG2025 Undergraduate Research Symposium at MSU Texas, Fall 2025.



Student Spotlights Continued

Six Geosciences students completed theses: Katherine Brown (LiDAR at Natural Bridge Caverns), Mekerie Francis (geophysics of groundwater sensing in Uganda), James Mora (geochemistry variation and contacts in the Terneros Creek Rhyolite), Krishna Winston (imagery analysis of deforestation in Indonesia), Jared Steger (petrology of the Long Mountain Granite), and Jordan Swearingen (defining the Medicine Park Granite).



Katherine Brown successfully defended her thesis mentored by Kashif Mahmud.

Geosciences undergraduates Sage Gilbert, Anna Kough, Nathalie Devoir, Javaughn Bullard, Elizabeth Uhl, and Madeline Price completed EURECA projects, Jessica Wyman, Chelsea Kafesu, Sharadha KC, Cliff King, Brody Letz, and Aryah Rogers successfully undertook UGROW projects.

Great work, scholars!

Faculty Spotlights

Dr. Timothy Pegg, Assistant Professor in the Biology Department, has had a busy year. In Fall 2025 he published an article entitled Pectin Peek-a-Boo: Homogalacturonan Turnover During Flooding-Induced Legume Root Aerenchyma Formation in the international journal Plants. In Summer 2026 he published another article in an international journal, Frontiers in Plant Science (entitled Cell Wall Xylogucan Epitope Modifications During Flooding-Induced Root Aerenchyma Development in Select Cool-Season Legumes).Both papers stem from Dr. Pegg's dissertation research investigating the cellular response of plants to flooding events.Dr. Pegg is taking advantage of the newly renovated Bolin Hall to expand his research activities by taking on 4 graduate students with project ranging from drought tolerance in rice to the floral diversity of desert spring habitats at Dalquest Desert Research Station.In August, Dr. Pegg is taking his graduate students to the Botanical Society of America annual meeting in Tuscon, AZ, where he and several of his students will be presenting talks on their research.



Dr. Timothy Pegg

Dr. Jianguo Shao, Professor in the Chemistry Department, is an analytical chemist who teaches upper level analytical and environmental courses, as well as general chemistry sequences. Dr. Shao joined MSUTexas in the fall of 2005. His current research focuses on using catalysts to electrochemically accelerate the degradation of various chlorine-containing pesticides, such as DDT and HCH, both of which are classified as persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in the environment. Passionate about his teaching, Dr. Shao frequently brings real-world water chemistry into the classroom to inspire students and bridge the gap between abstract chemical concepts and practical applications.



Dr. Jianguo Shao

Faculty Spotlights Continued

Dr. Mika Morgan, Assistant Professor in the Computer Science Department, received her Ph.D. from the University of North Texas (UNT) in Computer Science, December 2025. She has been an instructor in the department for several years and was hired as a tenure track assistant professor in January. Her research in computer science teaching pedagogy has been recognized in peer-reviewed conferences and journals over the past few years. She is warmly welcomed as a member of our department, where her passion for teaching and service will be an asset to the university.

Congratulations!



Dr. Mika Morgan

Dr. Dawn Slavens and Dr. Linda Fosnaugh, professors in the Mathematics Department received funding for a Fall 2026 Intramural Teaching Pilot Grant for their project Redesigning Homework and Review Assignments with AI-Supported Tutoring for Calculus I. During the fall semester, students will complete assigned homework using MathGPT.ai, a platform that provides students with the option of receiving AI-supported math tutoring as they work through problems in their assigned homework sets. To help ensure that students develop problem-solving skills aligned with course objectives and do not become overly reliant on generative AI, the project will incorporate a two-step review process before exams. Students will first complete a review assignment within MathGPT.ai, allowing them to use the platform's AI tutoring features as they prepare for the exam. This will be followed by a graded, in-class worksheet based on the review assignment, which students will complete with a partner during class, without the use of AI. This project will examine how combining AI-supported practice with AI-free in-class assessment can support student learning prior to high-stakes course exams.



Dr. Dawn Slavens and Dr. Linda Fosnaugh

Alumni Spotlights

Marcus Thibodeau B.S. in Biology 2014 and M.S. in Biology 2016 was awarded the 2026 Joe Kurz Wildlife Manager of the Year from the National Wild Turkey Federation. Thibodeau has been a Wildlife Biologist with the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation for the past decade and has risen to the position of Senior Biologist for Southwest Oklahoma. Thibodeau credits his time at MSU for cultivating his love of the outdoors and for preparing him with the skills necessary to pursue his passion through his position as a wildlife biologist.

MSU alum named Wildlife Manager of the Year in Oklahoma.



Dr. Gerad Troutman, MD, MBA, FACEP, FAEMS graduated in 2002 with a B.S. in Chemistry. While at MSU, Dr. Troutman was the American Chemical Society Student Affiliates President, American Chemical Society Student Association Chapter President, General Chemistry Student of the Year, and held membership in the Gamma Sigma Epsilon Chemistry Honor Society, Tri-Beta Biological Honor Society, and Pre-Professional Health Sciences Society. Over his career, he has served as the National Medical Director of Innovative Practices for Global Medical Response, Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine for TTUHSC, and an emergency department physician for the University Medical Center in Lubbock. Notable appointments and awards include appointment to the EMS Trauma Advisory Council by Governor Abbott; the Top 20 under 40 for Emergency Physicians; membership on the Amarillo TX Chamber of Commerce; Past President of the Texas College of Emergency Physicians; and Past Chair of the Texas Medical Association Young Physicians Section. Finally, Dr. Troutman received the Texas College of Emergency Physicians James Hays Legacy Award for outstanding contributions due to his more than 20 contributions to the field through presentations, journal articles, and newsletters. Dr. Troutman will be recognized as the 2026 MCOSME Distinguished Alumni during homecoming week this year.



More Alumni Spotlights

Geosciences alumni were active at the GSA Connects meeting in October. Wes Williams (B.S. 2020) presented work towards an M.S. in hydrogeology at Baylor. At the meeting, students got to spend some time with Ashley Scott (M.S. 2020) and Amber Quevy (B.S. 2017; M.S. 2019); Ashley is completing a Ph.D. in models of calcite microcrystal diagenesis at Western Michigan, Amber is leading the X-ray fluoresce research group at Rigaku Americas Corporation in the Woodlands. Amber took time in March to work with Nathalie Devoir and Dr. Price on advancing geochemical analyses from the Wichitas and DDRS.



Grad student Nathalie Devoir and alumna Amber Quevy at Rigaku Americas Corporation, the Woodlands.

We were also grateful to see Sadie Gent (B.S. 2018; M.S. Biology 2020) Environmental Scientist/Assistant Project Manager at BGE, Inc., as a panelist for MCOSME's STEM Careers Panel last fall and interacting with regional and university students at the MCOSME STEM Conference last spring. And Dr. Troy Rasbury (B.S. 1984), Professor at Stony Brook University, is back in the neighborhood, at least research-wise, working with Dr. Lynn Soreghan (OU) on paleogeochemistry in the Anadarko basin, as part of the "Deep Dust" project. Dr. Rasbury recently stopped by for a tour of the renovations and to connect with faculty.

Alumni Spotlights Continued

Dr. Katia (Passos) Maxwell, Computer Science graduate (BS, BS) was recently named as the Assistant Dean at Athens State University. She will become a full professor August 2026. While Dr. Maxwell was a student at MSU Texas, she participated in undergraduate research with Dr. Stringfellow and Dr. Passos, which resulted in a publication. She also volunteered and assisted in computer science workshops at the Math, Science, and U Girls' Conference. Dr. Maxwell is a dedicated higher education leader, scholar, and advocate for transformative student learning whose work reflects a deep commitment to innovation, access, and student success.



Inspirational

Keyla Ahow, B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, 2016, will be recognized as Alumni "GOLD" Graduate Of the Last Decade award recipient for 2026 at homecoming festivities this fall. The GOLD award recognizes the outstanding accomplishments of a recent Midwestern State University graduate (graduated within the last 10 years) who is making a difference in their community, their profession, and at MSU Texas.

Keyla is currently working as an Application Engineer and Data Analyst for the Flowserve Corporation. Kayla also holds an M.A. in Human Resource Development from MSU. As a former board member of the Zavala Hispanic Cultural Initiative, Keyla helped raise more than $5,000 for the Café con Leche Program, which provides scholarships for MSU students.

As Chair of the Texoma Gives campaign, she helped raise over $10,000 for nonprofit partners across Wichita Falls. At Flowserve Corporation, she has designed and launched an enterprise Aftermarket Lead Engine that integrates booking history, installed-based intelligence, and commercial analytics, an initiative projected to generate more than $600 million in revenue opportunities by 2028.

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