MARCH BIRTHDAYS
Mar. 5, Clint Vannoy
Mar. 8, Wei Zhang
Mar. 13, Kathy Hawsey
Mar. 14, Pete Matak
Mar. 16, Lacey Stinebrickner
Mar. 17, Jason Bingham
Mar. 17, Michelle DeMoss
Mar. 17, Cindy King
Mar. 21, Roy Moore
Mar. 21, Dawna Whitmire
Mar. 24, Sheryll Snider
Mar. 25, Pat Calhoun
Mar. 26, Sha’Nelle Lawson
Mar. 27, Ebony Simpson
Mar. 28, David Hooker
Mar. 29, Shunetta Lewis
Mar. 30, Melaney Whiting

Enrollment increases again (7.4 percent)
The streak continues! Reversing past declines, every long semester since Dr. Howard has been at the helm, LIT enrollment has increased (sometimes near double digits). It has happened again for Spring 2019. Enrollment is up 7.4 percent compared to 2018.

When asked about this, Dr. Howard humbly said, “None of this is because of me. Rather, these increases are because of the efforts of our LIT Family. Our faculty and staff are among the ‘best’ that I have seen.”

LIT takes bite out of Big Apple
Although 1,400 individuals attended the League of Innovation Conference in New York City, LIT still garnered significant attention. This international conference provides a forum for two-year college experts and thought leaders to present inventive ideas.

Dr. Howard presented his original ‘post-doc’ research intended to help faculty, staff and administrators advance their careers. His session was titled, “A College President’s Perspective: 5-Steps to Enter/Move-Up in Leadership.” It was very well received; there was standing room only.

Additionally, the Institute had two ‘Excellence Award’ recipients. Sherry Kilgore (Executive Associate) as well as Dr. Kristina Mendoza (Dental Hygiene Faculty) were recognized for their amazing accomplishments.

Dr. Mendoza, a licensed dentist, organized an international humanitarian relief effort to the Philippines. She, along with college volunteers during their summer break, cared for countless adults and children by performing extractions, cleanings and providing needed dental education.

Kilgore developed a Facebook portal for the college to stay connected after Hurricane Harvey caused a loss of all communications. She also used this portal to collect water, toiletries and homebuilding supplies for families devastated by the tremendous flooding.

With 262 employees, there are only a few examples of the great talent and innovative minds at our college. When placed on an international stage, LIT took a bite out of the Big Apple (NYC).
For the third consecutive year the Institute received the $100,000 Texas Mutual Grant, which provides workplace safety courses for employers in our community, workers and the general public.

The grant has funded courses in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) certification, American Heart Association CPR/First Aid, forklift and aerial lift operation. Since 1999, Texas Mutual has awarded $7.6 million in safety education grants, and more than 30,000 students have attended free safety courses offered at various colleges.

**LIT receives $100,000 Texas Mutual Grant to further workplace safety**

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**Marketing Moment: March 2019**

Our website has received a total redesign, making it mobile and search engine optimization-friendly for future students and current users. Kentico, the content management system, will eventually allow content owners to submit updates directly to the website for approval, increasing productivity.

**State of Texas CTE Signing Day: Highlights Students, TWC, $4,000 Presidential Scholarship**

State Rep. James White for the 19 District (Hardin, Jasper, Newton, Polk, and Tyler counties) has a passion for Career and Technical Education (CTE). March 5, 2019 marked the first-ever CTE Signing Day in Texas for two-year colleges, which showcased LIT by a reading of a resolution on the House floor and being recognized by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

It was an emotion-filled room when TWC Commissioner Julian Alvarez presented four deserving LIT students a total of $12,000 in scholarships – $4,000 of which Dr. Howard generously donated out of his own pocket.

In addition, representatives from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Texas Education Agency, other two-year college representatives and local labor unions.

**Karen Gordon: March 2019 Employee of the Month**

Administrative Associate for Public Service & Safety Karen Gordon is credited with helping boost Workforce’s non-credit student enrollment to 1,315 students, and contact hours for Quarter 1, 2018 to an amazing 97.7 percent and 96.1 percent, respectively, over Quarter 1 2017 data!

“Eighty percent of Workforce contacts come from her!” Nominee Dr. Miranda Phillips effused. “Millions of dollars in funding also come from her efforts.” It was those substantial numbers and Gordon’s “ability to form key relationships with TDCJ” that prompted Phillips to nominate Gordon for this honor, she said.

Gordon “takes an innovative approach to finding ways to increase training opportunities and has initiated several agreements with TDCJ that have afforded LIT opportunities to extend training in ways that no other community college in the state of Texas has been able to establish,” Phillips said. Gordon has worked for LIT for 22 years. Congratulations!

**Spring Convocation rallies troops to march towards success**

College employees rallied around the Spring 2019 Convocation theme Champions of LIT. The Institute was ranked as the No. 1 two-year college in Texas by Niche.com. However, Dr. Howard charged all employees with striving for more in the upcoming year, with a laser focus on achieving TSUS Vision 2020 goals and in concert making progress on 10-in-10.

“Learning and innovation go hand-in-hand,” Dr. Howard said, quoting William Pollard. “The arrogance of success is to think that what you did yesterday will be sufficient for tomorrow.”
Speech faculty member Donna Burnside honored, KFDM’s “Hometown Hero”

For the first time ever, an employee in higher education…and a faculty member at the Institute was honored with KFDM 6’s coveted “Hometown Hero” award. Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communications faculty member Donna Burnside had a surprise visit from CBS affiliate reporter Kelsey Borza following a Tuesday morning class. She received the award and a plaque, sponsored by Conn’s Home Plus.

Burnside was featured in a segment that aired on Thursday, Feb. 28, and Friday, March 1. Although she was visibly shocked to be honored, she said, “It’s not about me. It’s about my students, and making an impact in my students’ lives.”

Burnside was nominated by her colleague and English and Humanities faculty member Dr. Tracy Spencer. Just a few of the causes Burnside has championed within the past year both on campus and in the community include: depression, domestic violence and sex trafficking.

Donna Burnside received a surprise visit from KFDM 6 Reporter Kelsey Borza following a Tuesday morning class.

1,100 Texas high school students converge on campus for SkillsUSA regional competition

High school students hailed from all over the state to gather for the District 7 High School Leadership and Regional SkillsUSA Conference.

Students came from as far north as Shelby County, as far west as Burleson County, as far south as Chambers County and as far east as Newton County.

An awards ceremony followed the competition at the James F. Jackson Center for Performing Arts. Winners will move on to Nationals.

College president inspires Martin Elementary students

Dr. Howard provided inspiration for dozens of Martin Elementary fifth-grade students, sharing his story of triumphing over adversity to become the president at one of the top two-year colleges in the state.

“It doesn’t matter where you start in life,” he said to a room full of students with the potential for greatness.

Dr. Howard shared how he went on to earn five degrees after almost failing in grade school, and he also let them know that there are many other career options available to them with the right training and education. Combined with the fun college giveaways, Dr. Howard was a hit with the attentive crowd.
Faculty Spotlight:
Stephen Hudnall

Faculty member Stephen Hudnall graduated from the Institute’s Real Estate program in May 2005. He worked in the market and then returned to work part-time at the college.

“I fully expected to only be in the real world selling real estate after graduating from LIT, but when the opportunity to return as an instructor happened, I remembered my time and the instructors who impacted my financial future,” Hudnall said. “I wanted to provide that same impact for LIT students by serving as their instructor.”

In addition to his real estate sales license, he furthered his education by obtaining his real estate broker’s license in October 2016. Hudnall joined the Institute August of 2013, and was a NISOD award recipient in May 2016. Hudnall worked with Blackboard, and after some initial hesitation about going fully online, he has experienced growth every year since adding online courses, including a 70.8 percent increase between Spring ’18 and Spring ’19.

Despite being fully online, Hudnall utilizes video from guest lecturers in the real estate industry so students can learn from the very professionals they aspire to be.

“Our guest lectures are always appreciated by the students, and our courses are very hands-on,” Hudnall said. “LIT real estate students really do get full value for