

# **Around the State: University of Mary-Hardin Baylor students start year with service**

August 12, 2025

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor students participated in Love CTX as part of Welcome Week on Aug. 9. For the sixth year, UMHB's Love CTX event supported One More Child, providing Christ-centered services to vulnerable children and struggling families. Nearly 450 UMHB students packed 28,000 meals and wrote notes for Belton schoolchildren. The local H-E-B in Belton donated all food items for the meals, totaling more than \$16,000 in-kind donations.

East Texas Baptist University announces the opening of the William B. Dean, M.D. Center for Language and Literacy Development, a no-cost clinic offering speech-language pathology services to the East Texas community. Located at Synergy Park in downtown Marshall, the clinic will begin serving clients Aug. 25, providing care for individuals of all ages with communication, language-literacy, speech and cognitive challenges. Appointments will be available Monday through Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings at the Dean Center housed in Synergy Park. The clinic will offer no-cost evaluation and treatment for written expression, reading comprehension, autism, social interaction skills, executive functioning difficulties, stuttering and other needs.

Hardin-Simmons University has launched phase one of its Equine Assisted Services, incorporating hippotherapy, to expand therapeutic services for adults and children in the Big Country while providing experiential learning through community service. Hippotherapy integrates the movement of horses into physical and speech therapy sessions, enhancing HSU's mission

of faith, service and academic excellence. While services are currently free, donations are encouraged to maintain its facilities and care for its horses. HSU also is expanding its clinical mental health counseling, communication sciences and disorders and speech-language pathology programs.

A group of Texas Panhandle and South Plains educators have returned from a month-long immersion in



Wayland Baptist University educators in Costa Rica. (Wayland Photo)

Costa Rica. The summer trip was the centerpiece of a \$103,754 Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad grant awarded to Wayland Baptist University in 2024 by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board and the U.S. Department of Education. Led by **Joshua Mora**, Joachim Endowed Professor of Spanish, the program provided 12 pre-service and in-service teachers from rural school districts an intensive training experience in both ESL strategies and Latin American cultural studies. In addition to classroom instruction and school visits, participants immersed themselves in Costa Rican life through daily meals prepared by local hosts, fresh native fruits, and cultural excursions throughout the region. Each participant received a certificate acknowledging completion of the Fulbright-Hays study tour.

Houston Christian University will launch an online Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence degree this fall through its College of Science and Engineering. The 33-credit graduate program is designed for students with technical backgrounds and provides advanced training in areas such as machine learning, neural networks, robotics and natural language processing. The institution also received a \$150,000 grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to help the nursing school implement an Individual Simulation Competency Evaluation Program to address the shortage of RNs and qualified faculty through an innovative approach to nursing education, recruitment and retention.

Hardin-Simmons University students **Jake Atherton, Andrew Bin, Luke Jun** and **Tyler Merchant** were recognized as All-American Scholars by the Golf Coaches Association of America in August.