



Released November 3, 2010

Savings to Goldsby Scholars, Parents Nears \$7 Million; MSCC Seeks Funds to Keep Program Open to All Eligible

The Thomas B. Goldsby Jr. Scholarship program at Mid-South Community College continues to save area students and parents tens of thousands of dollars each year, and additional funding is needed to keep the effort going.

The Goldsby family has invested more than \$500,000 in the high school concurrent program alone, and using a relatively conservative projection, the overall savings to area students and parents since the scholarship's inception in 2001 could be estimated at more than \$6.88 million.

MSCC has invested in excess of \$263,000 in the effort, but it doesn't possess the long-term resources to continue to meet the monetary demands of the program.

"We want this innovative and vital program to continue to be available to every eligible student in our region, but for that to happen, we need more people to step up and follow Tommy Goldsby's example," said Dr. Glen Fenter, MSCC President. "One of the most important things we can do for our region is increase the college-going rate, and this is one of the greatest models ever created to accomplish that."

"I am convinced there is absolutely nothing we can do with our money that is more important than investing in the future of our young people, and we encourage everyone to help us continue this tremendously powerful effort."

Since its creation, the Goldsby Scholarship program has grown dramatically and quickly. Fifteen students took advantage of the initial opportunity to earn both high school and college credit free. Since that humble beginning, participation and the number of hours taken have risen exponentially.

For the current semester, 201 Goldsby Scholars from Earle High School, Marion High School, West Memphis Christian, and West Memphis High School are taking 393 classes and 1,179 credit hours.

“Our students are very fortunate to have this opportunity, and we just want to make sure that it’s always available,” said Jeremy Reece, MSCC Director of Enrollment Services, who coordinates the Goldsby Scholarship program. “The beauty of this program is that it doesn’t matter who you are, where you come from, or who your parents are. Everyone who meets the program qualifications receives the award.”

“I certainly don’t want us to reach a point where we have to pick and choose who gets the scholarship. Sending a donation to the Mid-South Community College Foundation will allow us to give our future doctors, lawyers, business entrepreneurs, and teachers a taste of what college is all about.”

Reece said high school students who take as many as 24 hours over a two-year span can save their parents as much as \$18,000 in higher education-related costs.

“If you look at an institution like the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and consider its cost of attendance -- tuition, fees, textbooks, room and board – the number is about \$18,500 a year for 30 hours of tuition.”

“Students who take the maximum number of hours allowed by the Goldsby Scholarship at Mid-South Community College end up with close to a year of college. We’re saving that student and that family \$18,500. If they chose to enroll in a private institution or to an out-of-state institution, the value is even greater.”

MSCC has initiated a Parent Partnership Campaign designed to encourage parents who have benefitted from the program to donate a fraction of their savings in support of the Goldsby Scholarship.

“There are hundreds of families in our community who have already benefitted greatly from this program,” Dr. Fenter said. “Without additional financial support, drastic changes will be necessary, and I don’t want us to end up in that position next year or the year after that.”

“This is a great program, but it is struggling because it’s successful, because we’re doing something for our kids. We’re not asking people to give something for nothing; we’ve already provided a service. We’re merely encouraging families that have received Goldsby scholarships to give back 10 percent of what they saved.”

The scholarship program has allowed students to earn 11,320 total credit hours since its creation – the equivalent of about 90 bachelor’s degrees. Goldsby Scholars have used their MSCC credits to attend more than 120 prestigious colleges and universities

throughout the nation. They have earned more than 100 master's, bachelor's, and associate's degrees and certificates of proficiency.

“Those numbers grow significantly every semester, and that demonstrates that the Goldsby Scholarship is an exceedingly wise investment,” Reece said. “This is a great giving opportunity to make a difference for young men and women who will do great things, get wonderful degrees, and hopefully come back here to help the community.”

Reece said area high schools remain enthusiastic about the program.

“We're fortunate that our high schools understand the need for this program and provide such a high level of cooperation,” he said. “We can walk onto any campus, see students, and talk to teachers, counselors, and parents. All the schools have been amazing in their support of this program.”

While everyone expected the scholarship initiative to be successful, no one anticipated the overwhelming response.

“During the Fall Semester of 2005, it was determined that we would cap the Goldsby financial obligation at \$25,000 each year to make sure that the scholarship would be perpetual,” Reece said. “We projected that we would reach a critical mass of students, and there would be a point in our county and our region where we would max out the number of students who would be eligible for the scholarship.”

“But the students in Crittenden and surrounding counties are qualifying and responding beyond our expectations, which is a good problem to have overall.”

The cost for the fall 2010 semester alone totaled \$91,340, so the College covered the additional \$66,340 to meet the increasing demand.

“The Goldsby Scholarship program continues to be a powerful force in helping high school students prepare for additional higher education and great careers,” Dr. Fenter said. “The number of scholarships awarded through this program is nothing short of amazing, and we hope community support for it will grow as we continue to prepare our residents for the jobs and the Delta of the future.”

To participate in Goldsby Scholarship Parent Partnership effort at the college, please call MSCC Director of Advancement Patti Coleman at (870) 733-6764 or email her at pdcoleman@midsouthcc.edu. For more information on Goldsby scholarship opportunities at the college, please call Reece at (870) 733-6786.