



Released February 8, 2011

Family Establishes Scholarship in Honor of Isabelle Kate & Beau Franklin Fenter

To honor the births of their children Isabelle Kate and Beau Franklin and to accentuate the benefits of community college education, Sara and Jerry Fenter have established a \$500 annual scholarship through the Mid-South Community College Foundation.

The Isabelle Kate & Beau Franklin Fenter Scholarship will be awarded each year to an MSCC student interested in pursuing a career in Allied Health. Other requirements for the award include a minimum



high school or college grade-point average of 2.75, enrollment in at least nine credit hours, and demonstrated financial need.

“We wanted to do something for our kids that would last forever and would also benefit other people,” said Jerry, who took his freshman- and sophomore-level classes at MSCC.

“Mid-South was a great stepping stone for me because it helped me start in an environment that wasn’t intimidating. I became confident and figured out I could learn there. When I went to ASU (Arkansas State University), I already had the mentality that ‘I can achieve here’ because I had done well at Mid-South. It was a very big help in my education.”

“I wish that I would have had a place like Mid-South Community College to get my basics, and maybe I did, Sara said. “But my thought process was totally different than what it is now. Back then I thought, ‘I’m going to go to a four-year college; why would I go to a junior college or community college?’”

“It takes maturity to recognize the value of two-year institutions,” she continued. “Community colleges are so beneficial, and we plan to instill that understanding in our children.”

Jerry said he focused more on athletics than academics while in high school. MSCC helped him adjust his priorities.

“Coming out of high school, I was a fair student,” he said. “My first semester at Mid-South I had a 2.75 GPA. Then I realized, ‘I’m here for a reason. I’m not playing ball anymore, so I can put more effort into school.’ I didn’t have good study habits when I first started, but I learned them at Mid-South. That made all the difference in the world.”

“By the time I was in my second semester at MSCC and later during my studies at ASU, I was an honor student and held many leadership positions in organizations that helped prepare me for my career.”

In spite of their classroom success, the Fenters found scholarship help extremely limited while working toward their degrees because some awards required top honor-student GPAs or specific standardized test scores. When Jerry and Sara established their scholarship, they did so with goal of making it accessible to a wider range of academic achievers.

“Despite graduating with honors, neither of us finished at the very top of our class, and we don’t necessarily expect our scholarship recipients to do that either,” Sara said.

“We succeeded because we had discipline and worked hard, and we understand that there is no substitute for effort. This stands true in our business today. This scholarship will give more students an opportunity to receive the assistance they need to succeed.”

Patti Coleman, MSCC Director of Advancement, said the Isabelle Kate & Beau Franklin Fenter Scholarship fits well with the college’s mission of making higher education more accessible.

“We greatly appreciate Jerry and Sara for their generosity and their commitment to expanded opportunities for our students,” Coleman said. “They understand the value and importance of higher education, and they have acted upon that understanding in a way that will help others pursue their hopes and dreams of a brighter future.”

Jerry and Sara graduated from ASU with master of physical therapy graduate degrees, and they own, manage, and work at Fenter Physical Therapy.

The company, which employs nearly 20 full- and part-time workers, performs a variety of health and injury prevention services including home health physical, occupational, and speech therapy throughout eastern Arkansas, as well as, physical therapy intervention at their main outpatient facility in Marion. FPT also services the West Memphis and Forrest City schools and maintains an office at Schneider Trucking, as well.

In addition to their personal reasons for establishing the scholarship at MSCC, the Fenters also have professional ones.

“As a business, part of our philosophy has always been that as we grow, we help our community grow,” Jerry said. “We want to do and be involved in things that help move our community and our people forward. It’s important to us to support our community as it supports us.”

Fenter Physical Therapy is a member of the Marion and West Memphis Chambers of Commerce and the Marion Rotary Club. Jerry serves on the West Memphis chamber board and is chairing the Leadership program, “which is really exciting,” he said. “It’s a great program to help give back to the community.”

To contribute to the Isabelle Kate & Beau Franklin Fenter Scholarship or to establish one of your own, please contact Coleman at (870) 733-6764 or by email at pdcoleman@midsouthcc.edu. For additional information about the Isabelle Kate & Beau Franklin Fenter Scholarship, please call MSCC’s Financial Aid office at (870) 733-6068.

The Foundation, which administers nearly 60 scholarships, is also offering direct on-line giving through the College’s website, www.midsouthcc.edu (point to the MSCC Foundation link, and click on Give Now).

The Mid-South Community College Foundation, Inc. is an independent charitable organization created to raise and oversee funds donated to MSCC in support of the college’s efforts to meet the needs of Crittenden County. The Foundation operates under a tax exempt 501(c)(3) status.