



**Wharton County
Junior College**

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FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

'Generations' film documents WCJC's history through interviews with alumni, former staff

WHARTON, TEXAS – Some remember the football team. Others recall when the oak trees were planted. And many remember the bus route which took students to and from the college.

When it comes to Wharton County Junior College's history, memories abound. Founded in 1946, the college has been a mainstay in the lives of countless individuals, providing courses to those looking to continue their education and a place of employment to those seeking a good, family-oriented place to work.

From generation to generation, the college has continued to be passed on – like a sacred heirloom handed down from grandparent to grandchild.

It's this unique heritage that is the focus of *Generations*, a short-film produced by the WCJC Office of Marketing and Communications. The film – which premiered at the Wharton campus's Horton Foote Theatre on Jan. 29 – chronicles the college's early years through the recollections of former students, staff and community leaders.

Amanda Heard, the college's Internet Marketing Coordinator, oversaw the project, which began back in August of 2014. It was a massive undertaking, requiring everything from conducting on-camera interviews to editing numerous hours of footage to scouring antique photographs stored in the WCJC library.

Heard said she couldn't be happier with the project's end result.

"We are really excited to share this with the community," she said. "This is the largest video we have produced and I couldn't be more pleased with how it turned out."

Heard reached out to the public for the interviews, asking any former graduates, employees or friends of the college to contact her if interested in being part of the oral history. In the end, 24 individuals were selected. Filming commenced over a four-day period at the Wharton County Historical Museum.

WCJC biology instructor John Dettling Jr., an avid photographer and videographer, was in charge of the filming.

"None of this would have been possible without John and his expertise in filming," Heard said.

She further thanked the museum's board of directors – and especially executive director Linda Bubela – with providing the location. Wharton-based Franklin Furniture also assisted by donating furniture for the production.

“We’re extremely grateful to them all,” Heard said.

The project is particularly timely as WCJC will celebrate its 70th anniversary in 2016. The college was founded in April of 1946, with the first classes beginning in September of that year. Approximately 200 students were part of the inaugural class, housed in former fairground buildings at the corner of Alabama Road and Boling Highway.

Generations paints a vivid history of the college, from inception to its current status as a four-campus institution. Along with the personal anecdotes, the film uses historical photographs to document how things looked as the college grew in stature and outreach.

Heard said it’s remarkable to realize how far WCJC has come – and just how widespread its impact has been.

“So many of us have built homes and families in this community and the junior college is a significant part of what we do and who we are,” she said. “The college itself is greater than any one of us individually. It connects us and unites us across the generations.”

For anyone missing the premiere, *Generations* can still be viewed by visiting the college’s website – www.wcjc.edu – and clicking on the “News” button on the far right of the top red bar. Scroll down the “News” page and click on the “College Videos” link.

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