



MID-SOUTH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

July 1, 2015

MSCC Event Celebrates Donors, Dr. Fenter, Scholarship Success

Friends, family, and supporters of Mid-South Community College and Dr. Glen Fenter gathered June 26 for a Donor Appreciation and Tribute Dinner that capped an overwhelmingly successful scholarship fund-raising drive.

MSCC Foundation Board Chair Franklin Fogleman announced at the event that the “Campaign for Hope” shattered its \$250,000 goal by collecting more than \$300,000 in contributions and pledges for the Dr. Glen Fenter Working for the Future Scholarship

“Some nine weeks ago, the Mid-South Community College Foundation launched its most aggressive scholarship fund-raising campaign ever, and what has happened in this community in these few short weeks is nothing less than a miracle,” Fogleman said.



“I want to thank each of you for being a part of this miracle. Because of your generosity, because you opened your heart and stretched...you have set a course in perpetuity that will not only honor the legacy of a great man but will change lives for generations to come.”

Dr. Fenter, who stepped down as MSCC president on June 30 to become chief executive officer of the Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce, thanked the donors for their generosity and ongoing commitment to the college.

“I have been here 23 years, and we have certainly raised our fair share of money. I’m very proud of this institution and the evolution in

terms of our finances. But what this group of people did in such a short period of time has never been done in this region and in many instances probably has never been done in other part of Arkansas. I think it’s an absolute testament to this community’s support of this effort.”

“This investment is just another page in a long, long book that is rewriting history in eastern Arkansas. This is the kind of continued commitment that will make Crittenden County look like a very different place 10, 15, 20 years from now.”

Jerry Fenter, the eldest of Dr. Fenter’s three sons, followed the exciting announcement with thoughts about what MSCC has meant to the family.

“When I was asked to speak on behalf of my family about what MSCC has meant to us, at first I was honored,” Fenter said. “About half a second later, I was scared to death because I knew no matter what I was going to say would be overshadowed by how impactful the school and community have been to us.”





He said family members mentioned words like “roots,” “heart,” “foundation,” “family,” and “faith” when reflecting on that impact.

Fenter also referred to several handwritten thoughts from his mother, Jody.

“She, like all of us, was a little overwhelmed when asked to put together 23 years of commentary. The three major things she and Dad focused on in life were faith, family, and MSCC. She talked about the passion that Dad poured out for the school.”

Following the family presentation, Bevin Hunter, senior advisor for the Delta Regional Authority, spoke on behalf of Federal Co-Chairman Chris Masingill.

“We have had a very long and good relationship with Mid-South Community College and Dr. Fenter. The chairman couldn’t be here, but he wanted to make sure you knew how much he appreciates your work and what you do.”

Troy Keeping, regional general manager and president of Southland Park Gaming and Racing, took the stage next to bestow a special honor on Dr. Fenter.

“Southland Park Gaming and Racing acknowledges that Dr. Glen Fenter has shown great leadership and investment in our local community throughout his years at Mid-South Community College. In recognition, we hereby honor him by naming the nation’s only super marathon distance stakes race after him.

“Effective immediately, it will be known as the Dr. Glen Fenter Super Marathon Division Championship. It’s one of the greatest honors that I think we can give from a Southland Park Gaming and Racing perspective.”

Mary M. Toney, chair of the MSCC Board of Trustees, followed with an announcement of another honor.

“It is my honor to announce that the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to name the athletic building where the Greyhounds play ‘The Glen F. Fenter Athletic Complex.’

“The eastern Arkansas community and Mid-South Community College became a mission field for Dr. Fenter some 20 plus years ago. His vision for this Delta area could only be dreamed until he dared to make a difference. We want the Fenter legacy to live in



the future of this institution of higher learning.”

Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe addressed Dr. Fenter via a video presentation.

“I am extremely proud of...what you have done for the kids in the Delta, what you did personally and the commitment you made when you turned down lots of jobs offers and lots of opportunities to go other places and

make more money because you felt a deep commitment to the people that you serve.”

U.S. First District Congressman Rick Crawford also spoke via a video.

“Glen Fenter, to me, has been sort of the gold standard for educators and workforce education and economic development in the First District of Arkansas. When I have the opportunity to talk to folks about those topics, invariably I mention his name because he’s done such a fantastic job.”

Michael Randle, editor and publisher of “Southern Business & Development” magazine, attended the event and reminded the audience of the special nature of the honoree.

“When I met him, it was like, ‘This dude is something special,’” Randle said. “I know at least 300 educators in the South; you’ve got the No. 1 right there. It’s just

amazing some of the things he says. His oratory is off the charts. What Fenter is doing right now is critical in workforce” training and development.

Dr. Fenter closed the program by putting a different slant on the recognition event.

“If you want to celebrate something, celebrate what you’ve done. Celebrate who you are as a community. Celebrate the fact that this community has beaten back all of the odds.



You have made things happen here that few communities in the region, the state, or in the country can lay claim to, all simply because you had conviction to be totally focused on making certain that everybody has a chance, everybody gets to dream, and everybody can have hope.

“If anybody has been blessed in this process, it has been us. This community has embraced our family, our work, our commitment, and to some extent even some of our delusional visions of what was possible for this region and done it in a way that has had a tremendous impact on our family. We are very thankful to have the opportunity to play a very small part of a very big effort and in the process have the privilege to witness the countless instances of nothing short of divine intervention.”

The outgoing president also recognized those who made significant contributions to the overall effort to establish and sustain an institution of higher learning in Crittenden County.

“We certainly wouldn’t be here today if not for the visionary leadership of a number of folks in this community. Without the support, guidance, and direction of our Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, and other community leaders, we would still be operating in a Quonset hut with a gravel road.”

“And that’s why you have what you have today in Mid-South Community College, not because of anything that I have done. This community chose to invest in the one option that clearly holds the greatest return in terms of potential for moving our region forward.



“I am a firm believer that when you do the right things for the right reasons, cool stuff happens, and I think there is a lot of cool stuff in Mid-South Community College and Crittenden County’s future.”

While the Donor Appreciation and Tribute event has occurred, the scholarship campaign remains open through July 31. Anyone

interested in honoring Dr. Fenter with a contribution may send a check to the Foundation (2000 West Broadway, West Memphis AR 72301), charge to credit card, or give online at https://www.midsouthcc.edu/foundation/give_online/donationsForm1.html. Pledges, which are payable by June 2018, are also welcome.

For additional information, contact Diane Hampton, MSCC Vice President for Institutional Advancement, at (870) 733-6880 or dhampton@midsouthcc.edu.