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– Virginia Leak, founding director,
Temple College nursing program

Chapter 9

Meeting the Need for Health Care Professionals

A remarkable summit was held in April 1957 to advance training for health professionals in Texas. Temple Junior College was an active participant in the discussions – partly because of Bell County's reputation for outstanding health care services. Dr. Hubert Dawson, dean of the college, was among key leaders present for the series of meetings.

During the first 50 years of the 20th century, medical education was divided into two major disciplines – training physicians and training nurses. As medical care evolved, more nurses were needed with advanced, specialized training.

Prior to World War II, a majority of the nurses in Texas and all of the nurses in Bell County were trained through hospital-based diploma schools such as the Scott & White Hospital School of Nursing and King's Daughters Hospital School of Nursing. In the majority of hospitals, the actual classroom time students received was secondary to their service on hospital floors caring for patients.

The 1957 summit was a culmination of more than 15 years of radical changes in nursing

education. The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston was the state's first institution to grant baccalaureate nursing degrees in 1940. By the mid-1950s, the Texas Legislature had tightened the requirements for nurse licensing, requiring more college work leading to associate degrees in general studies.

During the first 50 years of the 20th century, medical education was divided into two major disciplines – training physicians and training nurses.

Scott & White's School of Nursing, which was ranked in the top 25 percent nationally by the National League for Nursing Education, discontinued its affiliation with Temple Junior College in the 1955-56 school year. The college, still located in the Temple High School basement, had no more room for the growing number of nursing students. Scott & White Hospital at the same time faced

To meet a growing need for nurses, Temple College began starting two cohorts of associate degree nursing students a year in 2019. (Steve Lemmons/Temple College)



A one-year Licensed Vocational Nursing program started at Temple Junior College in 1973.



Bobbie Jean Dyess Waskow was the first licensed vocational nurse graduate in the state.

hospital accreditation problems because of overcrowding and aging buildings.

The 1957 summit became the bellwether for all of the state's front-line healthcare services, providing a comprehensive study of medical services in schools, hospitals, clinics and industry. Two years later, in 1959, Texas lawmakers approved measures permitting the first year of college core classes which were applied to diploma school studies.

Throughout the 1960s, as Scott & White's curriculum changed, the college continued to provide courses in basic sciences, liberal arts and social sciences. By 1968, Scott & White began negotiations to move the traditional diploma school to the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor to transform it into a baccalaureate program. After this was finalized in 1970, the partnership between the hospital and the college ceased.

SETTING STANDARDS FOR VOCATIONAL NURSES

With the rising profile and newfound respect registered nurses earned after the war, the nursing profession also faced new demands. By 1940, thousands of self-taught "practical nurses" were working to meet the state's health care needs. However, they lacked the education and experience that could be obtained only under supervision in established programs. They were unlicensed or otherwise unregulated because Texas, like most other states, had not established minimum standards for education or practice. By 1945, Texas was among the 47 states that did not require mandatory licensing for aides. The introduction of licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) into Texas health care was seen as one way to solve the thorny issue of nurse shortages and to mandate standards for aides.

However, tensions arose between the hospital diploma school-trained registered nurses and the growing numbers of practical nurses (also called nurses' aides) who also had little or no formal training, with the general public not really understanding the difference between the two. LVNs functioned under the direction and oversight of physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses and advanced practice nurses. As mandated by the State Board of Nurses, vocational nurse training was shorter in length and requirements than registered nurse training. Scott & White's director of nursing, Anna Laura Cole, was a member of the Board of Nurse Examiners in the mid-1940s that worked on setting standards and training for licensed vocational nurses. Ms. Cole was named to the first Board of Vocational Nurse Examiners, empaneled in 1951, and oversaw the examination process. She also served as

director of the college's nursing program while continuing her duties at Scott & White.

Temple was among the first communities to train and hire licensed vocational nurses. Scott & White in 1953 teamed up with King's Daughters Hospital in Temple and the Temple Independent School District to begin the Temple School of Vocational Nursing. Vocational nursing students studied for a year in a task-oriented curriculum at the college. Student Bobbie Jean Dyess Waskow (1931-2013) of Temple and Rogers was the first licensed vocational nurse graduate in the state. She would go on to enjoy a long career as an LVN, including 20 years at an assisted living center.

Eventually, King's Daughters Hospital assumed full responsibility for the program. Students also rotated through both King's Daughters and Scott & White for clinical training. As training for licensed vocational nurses advanced, King's Daughters Hospital transitioned its program to the college in fall 1973, shortly after the Scott & White School of Nursing moved to the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

A \$135,000 grant from the Moody Foundation to establish core curriculum for allied health science courses helped the college establish new programs in respiratory therapy, medical technology and medical records. An allied health program consortium was established with McLennan Community College in Waco to better serve area residents training for careers in health care.



Early pinning ceremonies for vocational nursing graduates were held in the chapel at the VA Medical Center. (Media Center/Temple College)



The LVN program moved to its permanent home in 1982, when the Nursing Education Building opened on the east campus. (Courtesy of Rose Anne Brasher Special Collections, Temple College Libraries)

“We always had challenges of expanding and creating allied health programs – including nursing. Those were expensive programs but sorely needed,” said the college president, Marvin Felder, Ed.D. “We were fortunate to get cooperation from McLennan Community College and the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.”

The LVN program moved to its permanent home in 1982, when the Nursing Education Building opened on the east campus. The building underwent renovations in 2005 and was renamed the Dell Martin Nursing Education Center in honor of Temple businessman Dell Martin, who provided funding for the addition after several nurses from the college helped care for him when he was hospitalized.

Licensed vocational nursing proved to be a needed profession and a popular choice for those wanting to enter the medical profession. The college expanded LVN training to Taylor in 2004 and offered it there until 2020.

CREATION OF THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAM

In 1980, Virginia Leak, B.S.N., M.S., joined the college’s Licensed Vocational Nursing faculty after working several years as a staff nurse at Temple’s three hospitals. A few years later, she was named department director. Nursing was in her blood. In looking back at her early career at the college, she



The Associate Degree Nursing program started in 1993 with 24 students. The second floor of the Nursing Education Building was renovated to house the new program.

said, “The idea of being a nurse came along as I grew up. I always knew I wanted to do something with people. I just wasn’t quite sure what. But then, I saw a TV commercial that said, ‘Be a nurse,’ and I thought, ‘Maybe I can, maybe I will.’”

Her experience and perspective convinced her that the college needed to widen its offerings in the nursing curriculum. After the Nursing Education Building opened in 1982, she began working for the next seven years to establish an associate degree program to train registered nurses, assisted by Karen Robinson, the first nursing instructor.

“As director of the LVN program, I became devoted to building new nursing programs to complement the LVN program,” Ms. Leak said. The first was a long-term care nurse aide program that began in 1989. In 1990, as director of the Licensed Vocational Nursing

program, Ms. Leak proposed creating an associate degree program in nursing to college administrators. Dean James Van Ness, Ph.D., (1932-2018) supported her.

The goal was to train nurses more efficiently in an academic setting and hasten them into the workforce. The holder of an associate degree was eligible to take the same licensing examination as graduates of diploma programs to become a registered nurse. The academic and clinical training also laid solid foundations for associate-degreed nurses to go on for bachelor’s degrees and higher.

Ms. Leak navigated the hurdles with the same resolve she demonstrated in her youth: “Maybe I can, maybe I will.” A steering committee in 1992 began the necessary steps to create an associate degree nursing program. Finally, by the next year, 24 students entered the program. The second

floor of the Nursing Education Building was renovated to house the new program.

Ms. Leak said she was excited to be at the helm of the RN program since the day it started. “I was able to choose everything, from what kind of program it would become to the students’ uniforms,” she said. “The philosophy of the program was one of the most important things to me. I wanted care to be at the core of it. It’s important for the students to know they’re in a caring environment. It’s important that they carry that care over to their patients. From application to graduation, I wanted the students to know we cared about them.”

The Texas Board of Nurse Examiners ranked the Temple program as exemplary, its highest rating. The program was fully accredited by the National League of Nursing Accreditation (NLNAC) and has maintained full approval status for every approval cycle since then. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board gave the program its highest rating in 1995. That same year, the college began offering an LVN bridging program to give vocational nurses the additional training they need to become registered nurses.

The nursing program’s successes also brought changes to the campus, including the securing of more land for expansion. In August 1994, U.S. Rep. Chet Edwards (D-Waco) presented the final deed from the federal Office of Veterans Affairs for the east campus acreage, making it a permanent part of the college.

Virginia Leak (left) helped build both the LVN and ADN programs. Leak is pictured here with former LVN instructors Glynda Parker (rear) and Barbara Ward (right).



LOOKING BACK WITH PRIDE

When the Associate Degree Nursing program marked its 25th anniversary in 2018, graduates and faculty looked back with pride on its growth and service to Central Texas’ health care institutions.

Among those attending the 25th anniversary celebration was Virginia Leak, who had first proposed creating the program in 1990. For Ms. Leak, her accomplishments in building both the LVN and ADN programs at Temple College gave her great personal satisfaction.

Growing up in the segregation era, Ms. Leak attended the all-African-American Dunbar High School in Temple. She was a senior when the 100 students at Dunbar merged with the 400 students at Temple High in 1968 – a challenging time for her. After high school, she moved to Hawaii and later to Fort Worth where she earned an LVN certificate. After a while she returned to Temple, attended Temple Junior College and then completed her bachelor’s degree in nursing at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. Later on, she earned a master’s degree from Texas Woman’s University. Along her journey, she opened doors for others to have equal opportunities.

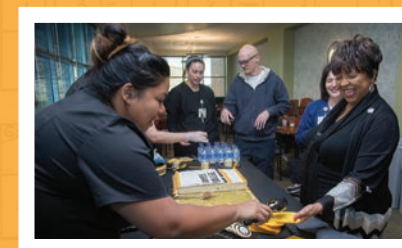
“I was able to get an education. To be able to go to whichever college I wanted ... And then, I not only attended Temple College, I went back to work at Temple College to actually become the director of the nursing program,” she told the *Temple Daily Telegram* in 2012.

As director of the nursing program, she parlayed the challenges she had as a student into nurturing support for her students who were dealing with the rigors of their training.

Even after her retirement in 2007, she continued to beam with pride over the programs’ continuing growth and high ratings. She especially enjoyed it when she saw Temple College nursing graduates working in health care settings – and when they took care of her.

Sheila Rogers, R.N., of Temple, a 2007 nursing graduate, credited Ms. Leak for shepherding her through the program. “I had a ninth-grade education with a GED and was out of school for 20 years when I first applied for nursing school,” Ms. Rogers said. “Virginia Leak is the one who was always there for me. She was the one who helped me, encouraged me and pushed me through.”

Virginia Leak (right) was among those who celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Associate Degree Nursing program in 2018. Leak first proposed the program in 1990. (Photo credit: Steve Lemmons/Temple College)





The Nursing Education Building underwent renovations in 2005 and was renamed the Dell Martin Nursing Education Center in honor of Temple businessman Dell Martin, who provided funding for the addition. (Steve Lemmons/Temple College)

The east campus tract had been given to the college by the Veterans Administration in 1968 with a “reverter clause,” meaning the Veterans Administration could reclaim the land. With land securely under the college’s control, officials could now begin planning permanent expansions.

BEGINNING A DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

As Bell County’s medical services continued with expansions of services at local hospitals, three Temple-area dentists in December 1994 discussed with Dr. Marvin Felder and other college administrators the possibility of launching a dental hygiene training program. Within six months, the program was a reality, approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The first class enrolled that following fall semester.

Temple Junior College was one of only 15 institutions in the state offering training in

dental hygiene, and the only program in the Central Texas area between San Antonio and Fort Worth. The first class came from Temple, Troy, Salado, Waco, Rogers, Rockdale, Holland and Fort Hood.

Temple’s Olin E. Teague Veterans’ Center was the designated clinical training center. Mack C. Hughes, D.D.S., was named director of the new dental hygiene program. Hughes came from Tyler, where he served as director of the dental hygiene program at Tyler Junior College for six years. A graduate of the Baylor College of Dentistry, Dr. Hughes was in private dental practice for 15 years in Mineola before joining the faculty at Tyler Junior College.

NEW PRESIDENT, NEW PARTNERSHIPS

When Dr. Marc Nigliazzo began his tenure as president in 1995, one of the priorities he focused on was developing partnerships

with the county’s medical community – something he felt was long overdue.

“We were going to be persistent,” he said, pointing to massive Scott & White complex sprawled over 340 acres on a hilly rock just a mile from the campus – so near, but so far away in working relationships.

By the time he retired in 2008, the college was poised to provide trained health-care workers as health care increasingly played a huge role in Temple’s economy with multi-million-dollar expansions at Bell County medical institutions.

Dr. Nigliazzo began by meeting with business and community leaders, especially in the medical community. Because medicine is an interdisciplinary profession requiring many skills, the Allied Health Division was expanded to include training in pharmacy technology, surgical technology, medical transcription and medical office systems.

Dr. Nigliazzo found the right resources close by to serve as important liaisons. College trustee Bea Wohleb, who had served for 11 years, resigned her elective office to accept an appointment as the college’s director of workforce development in health sciences. As a board member, she had worked to expand and develop the college’s health science programs, including dental hygiene, respiratory care and emergency medical services. Additionally, she had 12 years of experience as a Scott & White health-care administrator, where she developed

training programs and oversaw clinical training contracts from more than 50 colleges and universities.

“Gradually, I think Temple and the surrounding community began to see the value of what we were doing and the potential of what we were doing,” Dr. Nigliazzo said.

COMING HOME TO ‘THE HILL’

Relationships between the college and the medical community were further strengthened with the addition of Robert Wilton Pryor, M.D., M.B.A. as chief executive officer at Scott & White Memorial Hospital and Clinic, long dubbed “The Hill.”

Dr. Pryor had grown up in Temple, was educated in Temple schools and attended Temple Junior College. While at the college, he became a star student and protégé of Biology Professor Dr. Anne Penney Newton, who took him under her wing as a lab assistant. He continued his training, eventually becoming board certified in pediatric intensive care and executive health-care administration. After rising through the ranks at an Arizona hospital, he returned to Scott & White in 2005, where he was promoted to successively higher positions until he was named chief operating officer in 2007.

Dr. Pryor assumed the position just as the Scott & White Healthcare System was being transformed. In January 2012, Scott & White



The Texas Bioscience Institute, which was a partnership between several entities in Temple, opened in 2006. Its offerings included the first STEM-focused Middle College program in Central Texas. (Media Center/Temple College)

was the only Central Texas hospital named among the nation’s Best Regional Hospitals by *U.S. News & World Report* magazine. It gained other quality accolades after it merged with the Dallas-based Baylor Health Care System in 2013.

Dr. Pryor was named president, chief operating officer and chief medical officer of the new system. Once a teen student assistant in the Temple Junior College biology laboratories, he was now the chief executive officer of a vast health-care system spanning 45 hospitals, 5,216 licensed beds, more than 500 patient care sites, more than 6,000 affiliated physicians, and the Scott & White Health Plan. The two institutions – Temple College and the ever-widening Scott & White Healthcare System – needed each other now more than ever.

The first big test of outreach efforts by Dr. Nigliazzo and other key college

administrators was a successful 1997 bond issue to build the One College Centre and to add other campus improvements. Four years later, trustees again asked voters to approve a larger bond issue – \$7.23 million for a new 30,000-square-foot health sciences center to fully integrate health and science courses into one state-of-the art facility.

At the time, the college’s five health professions programs – dental hygiene, emergency medical services professions, medical laboratory technology, surgical technology and respiratory care – were spread over three separate campuses. College administrators, along with Dr. Nigliazzo, fanned out to speak to civic groups coupled with an aggressive advertising campaign. Voters again responded two to one with approval.

The bond issue proved to make the difference to expand the college’s mission and stature in



The new Health Sciences Center takes shape on the east campus. (Media Center/Temple College)

Central Texas. Voters as well as the medical community discovered what the college could and would do for them: Train medical support staff and expand health services throughout the county.

In 2006, the Texas Bioscience Institute Middle College program began, offering highly motivated high school students the opportunity to earn up to 60 college credit hours in a STEM-focused (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) foundational curriculum. Most program participants were able to earn associate degrees from Temple College before they even graduated from high school. The program was so successful that by 2021, it had two campuses – one in Temple on the Baylor Scott & White West Campus and another at the East Williamson County Higher Education Center in Hutto.

CUTTING-EDGE MEDICAL TRAINING

Some of the most essential additions to the Health Sciences Center were not faculty or students, but “living dolls.” These “living dolls” were highly sophisticated electronic models that could simulate patients in

distress or experiencing illnesses. Blood pressure, temperature, respiratory distress, trauma – the models could simulate it all.

The simulation center was part of the \$7.8 million facility dedicated in March 2004, a dream for President Nigliazzo and Walter P. Dyck, M.D., executive associate dean for the Texas A&M System Health Science Center College of Medicine and chief academic officer at Scott & White. Temple voters in 2001 approved the expansive bond issue to build the center – a clear sign that citizens supported the college’s direction.

“This is a beautiful facility and, yes, it is state-of-the-art,” Dr. Nigliazzo said. “But it is about people – talented people who will make this work, faculty and staff and members of the medical profession who will join us and our partners that will make this work. It’s about people, the student that will be in and out of this facility for many, many years to come.”

Keynote speaker Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst congratulated the college trustees on their foresight. “It’s clear to me that Temple College is on the forefront of cutting edge medical training,” he said at the opening.



The Clinical Simulation Center, which was part of the new Health Sciences Center, became a showplace for Temple and the nation. (Ellen Davis/Temple College)

The building attracted national attention for its state-of-the-art equipment, hospital, clinic simulations and unique approach to training, and became a showplace for Temple and the nation. Through a unique collaboration with Scott & White Memorial Hospital and Clinic and the Texas A&M University System College of Medicine, the center became a joint-use facility for students in a variety of health-care disciplines. The partnership was a foundation for a regional training center for health professionals and supported Temple’s efforts to become a regional center for the biosciences.

In addition, the new Health Sciences Center featured a fully operational dental hygiene clinic with 12 chairs, classroom and laboratories for medicine, microbiology, biotechnology and offices.

The new dental clinic was named the Jean and Ralph Wilson Dental Hygiene Clinic. Dr. Ralph Wilson (1924-2007), a former dentist and former president of Ralph Wilson Plastics (now WilsonArt), and his wife, Jean (1926-2004), donated the operator chairs. Their generosity made the new clinic one of the most advanced training facilities in the country.



Ribbon cutting for the new Health Sciences Center in 2004. (Courtesy of Rose Anne Brasher Special Collections, Temple College Libraries)

“I’m very pleased,” Dr. Wilson said as he toured the new facility, adding he was especially interested in the program’s advancement. “This is one of my babies.”

He added that Temple College had “the very best instruction with the most modern equipment in dental hygiene,” which is a far cry from how he learned his dental profession. He added that the facility is not only great for the students, but reflects well on Temple as a whole. “I think it’s known all over the country that Temple has a thing like this, and we should be proud,” he said.

Students also benefited from the real-life training of the new facility that included a waiting room, radiography suite, dental materials lab and classroom, sterilization area, long-term file storage area, conference room and general store. “It feels like we’re actually in a dental setting,” said Melissa Rebrovich, a second-year student and president of her class.



The new Health Sciences Center included a Dental Hygiene Clinic with 12 chairs. The clinic was named in honor of Jean and Dr. Ralph Wilson, who had provided funding for the clinic. Dr. Wilson was a former president of Wilson Plastics. (Media Center/Temple College)

A 5,400-square-foot addition to the simulation center, funded by a 2010 bond issue, expanded the simulation center. An additional \$335,000 grant from the state added more mannequins to the simulation center and enabled the college to retire earlier outdated models. Included in the new “family” of models were an adolescent and a child to enhance pediatric health training. The simulation center is used by the school’s nursing and allied health programs as well as for training programs of Scott & White Healthcare, A&M Health Science Center College of Medicine and the Olin E. Teague Veterans’ Medical Center. The simulation includes use of electronic medical records.

TRAINING DURING THE PANDEMIC

The planning and acquisition of advanced educational technology meant success even in the most difficult year of 2020. College officials had planned in 2019 to

double the number of associate degree nursing graduates. By early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced restrictions and quarantines, but flexibility would need to be the key to success.

By fall 2020, Temple College graduated its first spring cohort associate degree nursing class through its nursing expansion program – just in time to meet a critical shortage of nurses during the pandemic. These students, who had to complete nearly the entirety of their final year in the program online, were the first class to start its academic journey in January instead of September. The 2020 graduating class marked a multitude of firsts for the nursing program, including its first virtual pinning ceremony.

BIOLOGY PROFESSORS FOSTER GENERATIONS OF TEACHERS AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

Passing basic science courses such as biology was – and is – essential for students enrolled in any health science program.

Two biology professors – Anne Penney Newton, Ph.D., and Edward Morgan, Ph.D. – guided, cajoled and nurtured students as they attended Temple College and beyond. They were responsible for several generations of teachers and medical professionals who followed in their footsteps.

They were twice honored as outstanding teachers by faculty and students, but their real reward came when they saw their students excel in their chosen fields. Each succeeding generation of professor has influenced the next, so that Temple College has maintained a statewide reputation for excellence in science instruction.

DR. ANNE PENNEY NEWTON

Dr. Anne Penney Newton was hired to teach biology at Temple College in 1948 because – as she put it – “the college would have to pay a man more.” At first, she taught classes and held labs in the cramped high school basement. Then, she and her equipment made the move to the new campus. She fondly repeated the story of mischievous students tying a plastic skeleton model from her car trunk so it would bounce and wave as it made the journey to the new campus.

After retiring from teaching in 1993, she was elected to the college’s board of trustees the following year and served on that board until 2012 – capping off a total of 65 years of service to the college, either as a faculty member or trustee. Even after her “second



Dr. Anne Penney Newton (1977 Templar)

retirement,” she remained engaged and interested in the college and its students well into her 90s.

“Temple College is now a shining example of everything a community college should be,” Dr. Newton said. “Lives have been changed at Temple College. I’ve watched it happen.”

Early on in her tenure as a biology professor, students came to admire her energy, knowledge and patience. In 1958, *Leopard Tales*, the college’s student newspaper, described her as an “attractive, energetic pedagogue (who) fairly bubbled when talking about her job.” The report concluded, “Mrs. Newton, one word to you, we need and want more teachers with your enthusiasm for teaching and for helping

your students.”

Dr. Newton diligently studied for each class. “The preparation and presentation are a challenge, and the responses are often surprising,” she said. “Learning is something I like to do, and even more, I like to share what I learn in a way that the knowledge may be useful to the people who are in my classes.”

Dr. Newton extended her knowledge of medical science to botany and plants, which led to her curiosity about insects. Among those who were influenced by her was Temple College student Robert Smoot Baldrige (1944-2020), a Baylor University biology professor who specialized in entomology, thanks to inspiration from her. His “bug career” started with his first insect collection for her freshman biology class.

Another of her students, Robert Pryor, M.D., worked as her laboratory assistant as a freshman and sophomore. After earning a medical degree from The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, he became one of the first certified pediatric intensivists in the country and was involved in the formative years of pediatric intensive care. After 20 years as a pediatrician, he went into hospital administration, eventually becoming CEO and president of Scott & White Healthcare.

The Newton Science Building, which opened in 1965, was named in honor of Dr. Newton for her years of service as an instructor and chair of the Biology Department.



Dr. Bob Pryor
(Courtesy of Baylor
Scott & White)



Dr. Edward Morgan

DR. EDWARD MORGAN

Dr. Newton hired Dr. Edward Morgan (1944-2010) in 1974 to teach biology, human anatomy and physiology, and vertebrate zoology.

“It only took me a few minutes to see that he was absolutely enthralled and enthusiastic about his subjects,” Dr. Newton said. “He could take very difficult concepts in biochemistry and make them understandable without losing the meaning of what he was teaching. That’s a gift.”

Students recall Dr. Morgan being a challenging but respected teacher who prepared them for the rigors of health-science training and careers. “As a young man, fresh out of school, I was intoxicated by

the tremendous knowledge I could amass,” Dr. Morgan said. “This gradually gave way to the realization that I was in a position in life to be able to help change people’s lives.”

In reflecting over his career, Dr. Morgan recalled former students who had gone on to be scientists, teachers and health-care workers. “The most memorable and, to me, the most remarkable, are those students who came to us with little preparation and so many extraordinary burdens, but still rose to levels of excellence far beyond expectations,” he said.

One such student was Virginia (Willis) Leak, who would later become a driving force in the college’s nursing education programs.

“I had been working for a while and I decided I wanted to go back to school and be a nurse,” she said. “I had Ed Morgan that first semester. Nursing is hard, and advanced biology is hard. I went to his classroom, scared of college in general. He encouraged me to work hard, to hang in there. So I did. I got good grades, and he encouraged me to continue.”

Leak eventually earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees with Dr. Morgan as her cheerleader, urging her on. She joined the faculty of the Licensed Vocational Nursing program in 1980 and went on to help the college establish an Associate Degree Nursing program in 1993. She credited Dr. Morgan with giving her the solid foundation and firm pushes into her career path.

Another who benefited from Dr. Morgan’s mentorship was Dr. Jason Locklin, who

earned his associate degree in biology from the college and went on to earn a doctorate in biology from Baylor University. He came back to the College as a faculty member in 2002.

“As a former Temple College student, I love that I’m able to now teach here,” Dr. Locklin said. “My good friend and mentor, Ed Morgan, would occasionally say to me that he couldn’t believe he got paid to do what he loved so much – to teach. I, too, echo that sentiment.”

Dr. Locklin was named a Fellow in the Texas Academy of Science in 2015 and in 2016-2017 become the first community college instructor to serve as president of the Academy.



Dr. Jason Locklin conducts research with student Devin Corbitt on Lake Belton in 2015. (Ellen Davis/Temple College)