JOHN WOOD

COMMUNITY COLLEGE UPDATE 2026



EVERY PATH LEADS FORWARD









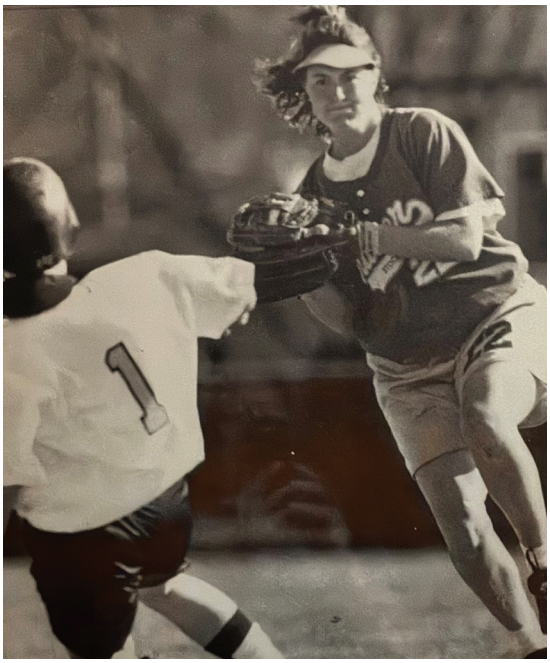
Dr. Aron Potter brings regional roots and a coach's Back on the HOME FIELD

As she begins her tenure as the eighth and first female president of John Wood Community College, Dr. Aron Potter is grateful to be back in the place she has always considered home.



Dr. Aron A. Potter

"As I've had the opportunity to meet community members and partners, I've also reconnected with friends and family," Potter said. "I am happy to be home again." Raised on a farm near Vandalia, Missouri, Potter earned a softball scholarship to Culver-Stockton College, where she discovered a passion for combining athletics and education.



Today, Potter has returned home to ensure every student has the opportunity, support, and confidence to achieve their educational and career goals to strengthen the communities JWCC serves.

Since becoming president, Potter has often been asked two questions: "Where are you from?" and "Are you going to stay?"

"I'm from here," she says with a smile. "And the plan is to make this the final chapter and a meaningful bookend to my career."

JWCC will hold a formal inauguration for Dr. Potter on October 2.

Before leading a college, she was leading double plays.
Long before becoming JWCC's eighth president, Dr. Aron Potter was making plays at second base for Culver-Stockton College. That same determination, focus, and competitive spirit continues to define her leadership today.

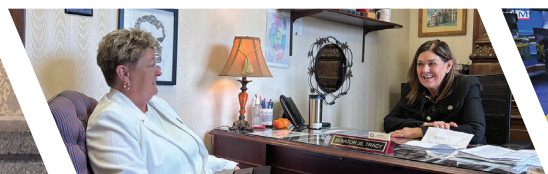
Connecting with the Community

In Dr. Aron Potter's first several months, she has connected with members of JWCC's district and spent time with family. L/R: State Representative Kyle Moore, State Senator Jil Tracy, JWCC staff and students, WGEM General Manager Ben VanNess, her father Mike Potter at their family farm, JWCC past presidents Mike Elbe and Dr. John Letts, area superintendents and educational leaders.











mindset to the presidency.



Dr. Potter celebrated her first commencement as JWCC President in May 2026.

A note from Dr. Potter

One of the greatest joys of returning home has been reconnecting with people who care deeply about this region and meeting new partners who share a commitment to helping our communities thrive.

In recent months, I've listened and learned from many across our district which reminds me how fortunate we are to live among those eager to create opportunities for others.

I've met more wonderful people than I could ever thank individually, so please accept my heartfelt gratitude. Thank you for welcoming me home, supporting John Wood Community College, and partnering with us to strengthen our students, workforce, and communities.

With gratitude and Blazer Pride,

Dr. Aron A. Potter

JWCC President

Path TO POTTER'S PRESIDENCY

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Vice President of Academic Services
Coffeyville Community College

Instructor & Collegiate Softball Coach at:
University of Central Missouri
Missouri Southern State University
Coffeyville Community College
Culver-Stockton College

EDUCATION

Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership

Education Specialist

Master of Science, Physical Education and Exercise Sport Science

Bachelor of Science



A New Beginning *Surrounded by the Board of Trustees and College Leadership Team, this photo taken at commencement marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Dr. Aron A. Potter and John Wood Community College.*







2026 COMMENCEMENT

Caps. CAREERS. COMMUNITY.

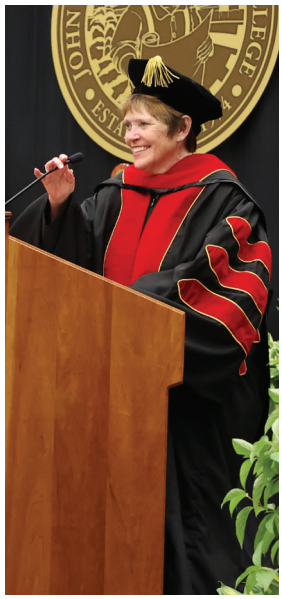


JWCC President Dr. Aron Potter and Quincy Mayor Dr. Linda Moore join students and community partners at the 2026 Career Launch signing ceremony.



IPSE Day in Quincy: *Quincy Mayor Linda Moore presented a proclamation recognizing Inclusive Postsecondary Education Day with JWCC College for Life students, celebrating opportunities for students of all abilities.*

A Proud Alumna Giving Back



Quincy Mayor Dr. Linda Moore, a 1979 graduate of JWCC, spoke at the College's 51st commencement.

As Mayor of Quincy and a proud John Wood Community College alumna, Dr. Linda Moore deepened her connection to JWCC throughout 2026. Moore served as the 2026 commencement speaker and shared insights from her leadership journey to encourage graduates to make a positive impact in the community. Her support for workforce and educational initiatives was also evident throughout the year. Moore joined JWCC and community partners for the Career Launch signing event at the Workforce Development Center and issued a citywide proclamation recognizing JWCC's College for Life's Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) Day. Moore's continued involvement reflects the strong partnership between JWCC and the Quincy community, as well as the lasting impact of alumni who choose to invest in the next generation of leaders.

Ready, Set, Career!

Scan to explore career resources and opportunities

Finishing your degree or starting a new career path can feel intimidating, which is why JWCC offers support through Career Services. New Coordinator Prudence Bickhaus-Martin is ready to help students and community members navigate their next steps. With services including résumé assistance, internships, employer connections, and more, Career Services provides guidance for individuals at any stage of their career journey. Resources like the Handshake platform connect students with internships and employment opportunities, while career fairs, presentations, and networking events help build valuable professional connections.



Finding Purpose Through Education

For 2026 graduate and JWCC Presidential Scholar Libby Goodwin, a passion for working with children shaped both her college experience and future career. An Early Childhood Education graduate, Goodwin gained hands-on experience through JWCC's partnership with PACT Head Start located on the JWCC campus. Goodwin will attend Culver-Stockton to complete her education degree.

Libby Goodwin
2026 Graduate



664 DEGREES & CERTIFICATES AWARDED

Scan to learn more about the Great River FAME program

The First of Many FAME-ous Graduates

The Great River Federation of Advanced Manufacturing Education (FAME) chapter celebrated the graduation of their inaugural cohort in May. By combining classroom instruction at JWCC's Workforce Development Center with hands-on work experience, students developed professional skills and advanced manufacturing skills. The success of the first FAME cohort paves the way for the program's incoming third cohort and growing interest from industry partners.



Graduates include Nathan Howell and Wyatt Schemerhorn (Gardner Denver), Eugene Haynes, Masson Kurk, and Adam Venvertloh (General Mills), Josef Lawler (Knapheide), and Hunter Hibbert (Titan Wheel).

Pinnings & Beginnings

In addition to the full commencement ceremony, JWCC recognized 56 nursing graduates, 41 students who completed their GED high school equivalency credential, and four students earning their College for Life non-credit certificates in special ceremonies.

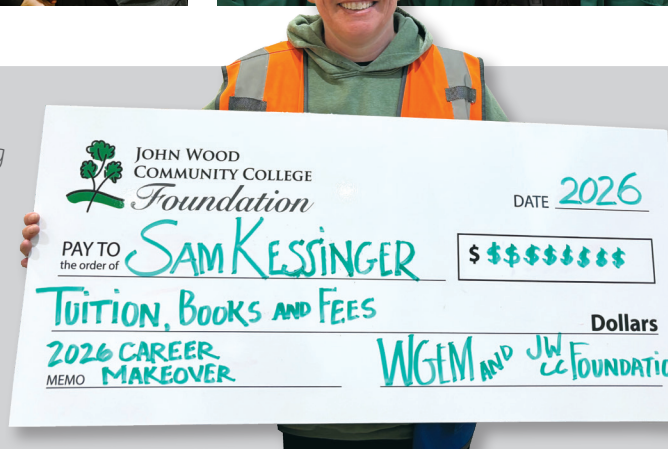








The 14th Annual Career Makeover awarded Sam Kessinger a life-changing scholarship covering tuition, fees, and books to pursue her nursing degree at JWCC. Sponsored by the JWCC Foundation and WGEM, the program empowers adult learners to transform their futures through education.



JWCC Regional Centers

Training that Travels

JWCC is leading the region in workforce education by delivering training when and where it is needed most, on plant floors, in conference rooms, at local high schools, and now through a new mobile training lab. Home to the region's skilled trades experts, the Workforce Development Center provides flexible, hands-on learning that meets students of all ages where they are while helping employers develop the skilled workforce they need.

JWCC partners with companies like Wis-Pak, General Mills and Dot Foods to solve workforce challenges through customized training and introduces high school students to high-opportunity careers. Scan the QR code to explore dozens of training opportunities or contact Valerie Howell to customize training for your organization at wdc@jwcc.edu.

Scan to learn more about JWCC's Business & Industry Training



Driving Opportunity Forward

Truck Driver Training (TDT) remains one of JWCC's most in-demand workforce programs, preparing students for high-demand careers in the transportation industry. To increase access across the region, training is offered at multiple locations, providing flexible pathways for students to earn a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and enter the workforce quickly.

Scan to explore Truck Driver Training

A Regional Hub for Career Growth in Pike County



JWCC's Southeast Education Center (SEC) in Pittsfield expands access to education through CNA classes, Truck Driver Training, GED preparation, Pike County CEO, and other flexible learning opportunities.

Workforce Pathways through Bella Ease

JWCC at Bella Ease continues to expand access to education and workforce training. Last year, 65 students received Adult Education services, including GED preparation and literacy programs. Workforce training opportunities also grew, with 12 students participating in job training while earning their GED, two completing a Logistics course, and 28 enrolling in on-site Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) classes.





AG NATIONALS

Six JWCC Agriculture students traveled to Bloomington for the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA) Conference in May 2026 and earned national recognition.

STUDENTS EARN TOP TITLES

National Champion Ag Computers Team

Pictured left to right:
Austin Kindhart
Brenna Schantz
Daniel Miller



2nd Overall Team
Livestock Management
Jacob Davis, Wyatt McClintock, Garrett Morris, Maxwell Perry

4th Overall Team
Parliamentary Procedure
Abby Chamberlain, Jacob Davis, Wyatt McClintock, Garrett Morris, Maxwell Perry

Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo

Swine 2nd Overall Individual
Wyatt McClintock

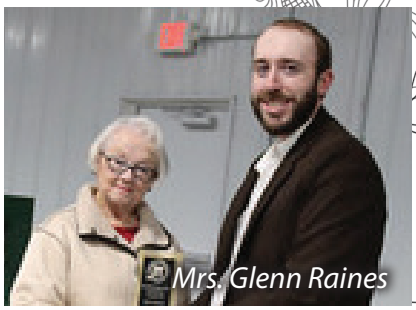
Cattleman's Congress 4th Place in Cattle
Wyatt McClintock

Ag Hall of Fame

JWCC's Ag Alumni Association welcomed three distinguished individuals into its Hall of Fame in February 2026: Lynn Curry, Dr. Jeff Galle, and the late Glenn Raines. Ag Alumni representative Luke Merritt shared how their dedication, leadership, and lasting contributions have strengthened the agriculture program and created opportunities for generations of students.


Lynn Curry


Dr. Jeff Galle


Mrs. Glenn Raines

Supporting Brown County and Beyond

TRACY FAMILY FOUNDATION

JWCC and the Tracy Family Foundation continue to support Brown County students through the Brown County Promise Program and rootEd advising initiative. This fall, 23 of 49 Brown County High School graduates are participating in the Brown County Promise Program, helping more students earn credentials, transfer to four-year institutions, and enter the workforce successfully.



Brown County Promise student Jagr McGath earned his associate degree from JWCC in May.

Beyond the Classroom









Lauren McDowell signs the resolution formalizing her role as JWCC's Student Trustee for the 2026-27 academic year.

Leading with Purpose

As the 2026–2027 JWCC Student Trustee, Lauren McDowell serves as the student voice on the College's Board of Trustees. A Presidential Scholar, Student Government Association leader, and Vice President of the Science and Engineering Club, Lauren exemplifies academic excellence and servant leadership. She is pursuing an associate degree in biology with plans to transfer to a four-year university and continue her path toward becoming a dentist.



Lauren McDowell is preparing for a career in dentistry through JWCC's biology program. Like many pre-professional students, she chose JWCC to build a strong academic foundation and reduce the overall cost of her education.

Scan for Day in the Life of Lauren McDowell



Mr. John Wood

The Mr. John Wood title made its return in March 2026 for its ninth year. JWCC students participated in the pageantry to raise money for Quanada's local domestic violence shelter. Contestants competed in categories of evening wear, athleisure, talent, and live on-stage interviews. An evening filled with novelty, laughter, and compassion ended with Jacob Davis, Student Trustee, being crowned as Mr. John Wood 2026. Jacob Davis will attend Iowa State this fall to complete an agriculture degree.



Smart Start, Strong Finish.

Emoree Stauffer jump started her future when she graduated in May with both her diploma from Griggsville-Perry High School (GPHS) and her Associate's Degree from JWCC. She enrolled in JWCC's Smart Start Transfer Academy as a high school freshman, and through a combination of online classes and JWCC courses offered at GPHS, Emoree will transfer to the University of Illinois as a junior this fall.

Scan to learn more about discounted courses and options at regional high schools.

John Wood Community College
SMART START
Earn college credits in high school



National Leadership, Rural Impact

John Wood Community College is proving that rural communities can lead the way in student success. Recognized twice by the prestigious Aspen Institute for excellence in student outcomes, JWCC's results have paved the way to bring national resources to rural students.

As one of only 28 colleges nationwide selected for the Rural Guided Pathways initiative, JWCC is working alongside national thought leaders to deliver proven strategies to the region. Through this collaboration, JWCC is transforming how students identify, enter, and complete high-opportunity degrees and certificates aligned with regional workforce needs.

Four Decades of Inspiring Young Minds

For 42 years, JDub Academy has helped young learners discover interests that often become lifelong passions and future careers. In 2026, the program reached 346 students through more than 70 hands-on classes. From robotics and agriculture to art and baking, JDub Academy continues to spark curiosity, build confidence, and inspire students to explore the paths that shape their futures.





The Coolest Career Pivot Yet

For Grace Shanks, a second career began with a bold step into JWCC's one-year HVAC program. Driven by a passion for helping others and solving problems, she embraced the challenge of entering a traditionally male-dominated field and quickly turned determination into success.

After graduating in May, Grace launched her new career with Peter's Heating & Air, proving that it's never too late to learn new skills, pursue a new passion, and build the future you envision.



Scan to learn how JWCC can help you launch a career in the skilled trades.




ATHLETES *Move* ON




Post Season *Honors*

Baseball

All Region Team
Gabe Wagner

All Region Gold Glove
Evan Sohn

2nd Team All MWAC
Evan Sohn
Reid Livingston
Quin Saxer

Hon. Mention All MWAC
Shaun Hunt

Academic All-Conference
Jansen Lawson
Zach Light
Reid Livingston
Isaac Long
Michael Lucas
Kaden Meeker+
Evan Okuhara
Brock Runyon+

Men's Basketball

Hon. Mention All Region
Hans Dorleus

Academic All-Conference
Henry Arthur
Nikos Connaway
Alex Dance
Hans Dorleus
Nicholas Moore
Mason Smith

Volleyball

Academic All-Conference
Kayli Bockhold
Abigail Bunch
Ayanna Douglas
Sophia Freesen
Libby Goodwin
Megan Mackinder

Softball

1st Team All MWAC
Elizabeth Tanner

2nd Team All MWAC
Jordan Pedersen

Honorable Mention All MWAC
Abby Harshbarger
Elizabeth Tanner
Tanner Records Set:
11* Homerun & 55* RBI's
(*single season)

Academic All-Conference
Adrian Adorno
Olivia Buckner
Charlee Gerleman
Carlee Gilker
Abby Harshbarger
Austin Lewis
Jordan Pedersen
Jasmine Peppers
Taylor Pfaff
Kayden Smith
Payton Stupavsky
Evan Sohn
Jack Sparrow
Abram Wiewel

Women's Soccer

Academic All-Conference
Isabella Montero
Xitlayaris Marquez
Lindsey Miller
Emma Vick

Women's Basketball

Academic All-Conference
Kelsi Chagolla
Kamryn Mitchell
Taylor Pfaff
Bailey Walter
Emma Vick

Men's Soccer

All Region
Leo Siquiera
Dylan Print
David Ferraro

Academic All-Conference
Tedros Berhorst
Andrew Brown
Pedro Candido
Logan Epping
David Ferraro
Kieran Jordan
Mason Monteyne
Diogo de Almeida
Dylan Print
Zak Schoneville
Adrian Sommers

+NJCAA First Team All-Academic

THE EMERALD EFFECT







The Emerald Celebrates Student Creativity

The Emerald has showcased the exceptional artistic and literary talents of John Wood Community College students each year. The publication features award-winning works selected through the Student Fine Arts and Creative Writing Competition, providing students with the opportunity to share their creativity with the campus and community.

Winners of the competition are recognized at an annual Fine Arts and Creative Writing Awards Ceremony, highlighting students' excellence in visual art, photography, creative writing, and poetry.

JWCC invites community members to consider sponsoring The Emerald and the annual awards ceremony to inspire the next generation of student artists and writers. For sponsorship information, contact **Barb Holthaus**, Executive Director of the JWCC Foundation, at **(217) 641-4104** or **foundation@jwcc.edu**.

STUDENT ART EXHIBITION WINNERS

Best in Show	Lakota Friday, "Burrow of Bones"
Second Place	Cara Koch, "Amber Hour"
Third Place	Angel Scarber, "Black Opium Incense"

STUDENT CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

FICTION

First Place	Casandra Waldrop, "The Clearing"
Second Place	Tae'ana Roan, "We're All Mad Here"
Third Place	Lydia Lee, "Battery Blues"

NON-FICTION

First Place	Adrienne Ransdell, "Between Shots"
Second Place	Riley Hesson, "Love"

POETRY

First Place	Tae'ana Roan, "Behind the Mask"
Second Place	Caylee Cox, "Landslide"
Third Place	Braden Cashman, "Sleep"

Scan to view the 2026 edition of The Emerald

TO FUTURE SUCCESS










Blazing Forward to Four-Year Institutions

NCAA Division II

Baseball

Michael Lucas
Missouri S&T
Reid Livingston
Missouri S&T
Zach Light
Missouri S&T
Drew Quinlan
Indianapolis University
Evan Sohn
Indianapolis University
Gabe Wagner
Quincy University
Mitchell Meier
Quincy University
Jansen Lawson
Quincy University
Grayson Coleman
McKendree University

NCAA Division III

Baseball

Nolan Whiteside
Greenville University

Softball

Abby Harshbarger
Rockford University
Samantha Stevens
Rockford University

NAIA

Baseball

Kaden Meeker*
Mission University
Quin Saxer
Univ. of Northwestern Ohio
Cameron Sporing
Culver-Stockton

Softball

Elizabeth Tanner
Cottey College
Taylor Pfaff
William Penn

Volleyball

Libby Goodwin
Culver-Stockton

Men's Basketball

Josh Thomas
Hannibal-LaGrange Univ.
Isaiah Bannister
Grandview University

Men's Soccer

Marcelo Santos
Doane University
Haitam Kaouch
Hannibal-LaGrange Univ.
Zak Schoneville
William Woods University
Gustavo Dutra de Souza
Doane University
Dylan Print
William Penn University

NJCAA First Team All-Academic

Emma Vick - Basketball & Soccer
Kayli Bockhold - Volleyball
Libby Goodwin - Volleyball
Lindsey Miller - Soccer

Olivia Buckner - Softball
Abby Harshbarger - Softball
Payton Stupavsky - Softball
Kayden Smith - Softball

Tedros Berhorst - Soccer
Andrew Brown - Soccer
Pedro Candido - Soccer
Mason Monteyne - Soccer

Dylan Print - Soccer
Jansen Lawson - Baseball
Zachary Light - Baseball

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The John Wood Community College Foundation recognizes the alumni, businesses, foundations, organizations, and friends who support John Wood Community College through generous donations. The Honor Roll of Donors includes gifts to the JWCC Foundation received between July 1, 2025, and June 30, 2026. Thank you to our 2025-2026 donors:

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Tri State Car Wash Solutions LLC
United Community Bank
United Systems Inc.
United Way of Adams County Inc
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A Legacy of Learning That Lives On

Throughout his life, Wilfred K. "Kenneth" Flesner believed in the power of education to change lives.

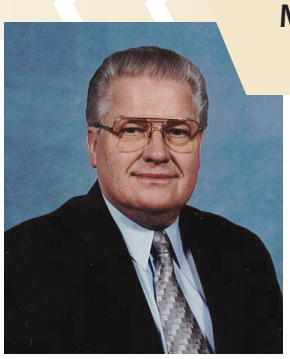
For more than 40 years, Kenneth served students as a teacher, principal, administrator, and later as Assistant Regional Superintendent for Adams and Pike Counties. From his beginnings teaching in a one-room schoolhouse to his leadership roles in education, he remained committed to helping students learn, grow, and exceed expectations.

Yet Kenneth's impact extended far beyond the classroom. He was deeply involved in his church and community, a champion of local history, and a mentor to countless individuals.

It was not uncommon for former students, colleagues, and community members to stop him years later to share a story, ask about his family, or simply thank him for the impact he had made on their lives. Kenneth had a remarkable gift for connecting with others and encouraging them to believe in themselves.

Today, his legacy continues through the Wilfred Kenneth Flesner Memorial Scholarship at John Wood Community College.

Scan to Give or Learn More about JWCC Scholarships



Established through a generous planned gift from his estate, the scholarship supports Camp Point Central High School graduates pursuing their education at JWCC.

Kenneth understood that education creates opportunity. Through this scholarship, future students will have the support they need to pursue their goals, ensuring that his commitment to learning and personal growth continues for generations to come.

His gift is also a powerful example of how planned giving can create a lasting impact. Through a bequest or other estate gift, donors can support the causes they care about while leaving a legacy that reflects their values.

Kenneth spent a lifetime investing in others. Thanks to his generosity and foresight, he will continue opening doors for students and changing lives through education for years to come.

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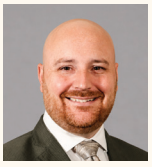

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John Wood Community College enriches lives through learning by providing accessible educational opportunities and services at an exceptional value.

JOHN WOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ANNUAL IMPACT

OPERATIONS spending impact
$14.1 million

\+ **CONSTRUCTION** spending impact
$0.5 million

\+ **STUDENT** spending impact
$2.9 million

\+ **ALUMNI** impact
$87.0 million

= **$104.5 million** in additional income
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