

'Dancing for Our Stars' Raises \$134,000 for Lee College Scholarships

The Lee College Foundation's latest fundraiser was full of twists and turns as dancers sashayed across the floor of the Dayton Community Center to support Lee College students. The inaugural "Dancing for Our Stars" raised more than \$134,000 for scholarships.

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The May 21 competition featured six teams of dancers from across the Lee College service area who sought to win a Mirror Ball trophy similar to the one in the popular television show, "Dancing with the Stars."

Each competing couple was tasked with soliciting donations and sponsorships to participate in the event, and for every \$10,000 raised in the contest, the Foundation endows a scholarship in the contestant's honor.

"We wanted this event to be very grass-roots and very community-oriented, where the participants' communities and towns rally behind them to fundraise," said Jennifer Garcia, Lee College Foundation interim executive director and director of major and planned gifts. "At the end of the day, this is for our students. That is why we are here. Our stars are the students."

The winners were announced in three categories:

- **Mirror Ball** (based upon judges' scores): Sam Watkins, Integrity Environmental, and Dr. Jessica Johnson, Dayton ISD and Sam Estrada and Robin McDougald with Texas First Bank and Baytown Little Theatre
- **People's Choice** (online votes from audience members): Sam Watkins, Integrity Environmental and Dr. Jessica Johnson, Dayton ISD
- **Foundation Favorite** (team that raised the most money): Sam Watkins, Integrity Environmental and Dr. Jessica Johnson, Dayton ISD

Other dancing stars included: Derrick Anderson, ExxonMobil; Gina Guillory, Lee College Board of Regents; Earnest and Alicia Brooks, Goose Creek Consolidated ISD; Carl and Laura Pickett, Lee College Foundation Board members; Kirven Tillis, Barber's Hill ISD, and Elizabeth Oyler, Crosby Dance Studio. Richard and Angela Vinson, with the Liberty ISD Education Foundation, had to withdraw on the day of the event.

"Dancing for Our Stars" was such a huge success that Garcia says round two is on the books for Saturday, May 20, 2023, at the Dayton Community Center. [Visit the Lee College Foundation online](#) for information about the various scholarships and funds and how to donate.