

# Chapter Research Project NTCC Webb Chapter Film on Mary Kay

## A) The Scope of the Undertaking:

Our yearly historical dramatizations of Texas legends are year-round efforts that

Last January of 2017, Webb member Yami Zuniga took an honors credit in History 1302, and began her research on Mary Kay. Her final paper is featured in our yearly Call to send. For this effort, she visited a local Mary Kay consultant in Pittsburg, Texas, and developed the point that Kay was a 'refined feminist', trying to fend off the ugliness and selfishness of the northern feminist movement. Yami Zuniga was also instrumental in getting a group together to start our group research on Mary Kay in March of this year. She is shown with this group below, and is on the extreme right. She also enlisted help from Anna Cantrell to her left. Cantrell will present one of the invited yearly essays for the Webb Society this spring in San Marcos on two other Texas women, Barbara Jordan, and Ann Richards. She also recruited William Fox who was our Film Scholar for the Cherokee film the right below in the back:

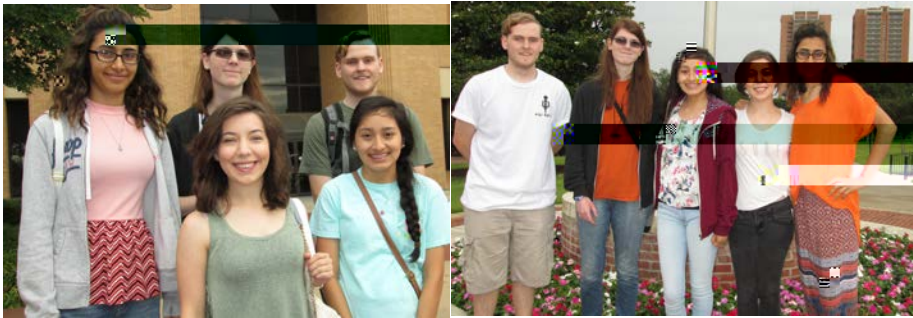


During our 2017 spring break in March, our first research team explored the Mary Kay Corporation in Addison, and utilized resources at Southern Methodist University for research

Above: William Fox, Yami Zuniga, Alicia Cantrell, Leivy Zuniga, and H. Dyal at Mary Kay Corporate Headquarters and at Southern Methodist University

While all this was going on proposals were made and accepted to feature our films at the upcoming Beaumont meeting of the Great Plains Honors Council, and Atlanta Meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council. Cassidy Watkins did an excellent job of presenting our filming ideas at the GPHC, outshining we thought, two upperclassmen who presented

of North Texas library, saw favorite state librarian, Ana Krahmer, who leads the Portal to Texas History project, and presented her with a little present for helping us through years. We also did research at Texas Woman’s University where the staff was exceptionally kind to us granting us our own private room for research.



In Photo on Right from Left: Webb members Matthew Chambers, Laura Ross, Jazmin Garcia, Hannah Dickson, and Karina Pena at UNT. Also, at left at UNT

Van ride provided time for our discussions and various readings from Mary Kay’s books. We scanned all the notes, and shared them out in email files, to gather the feedback of a larger group. In our discussions we noted that Mary Kay had a very dramatic personal narrative, she used her own life to marry the right husbands at the right times, and that much of her effort was consumed in the end of trying to envision a whole new South with an Evangelical slant to female employment. We wrote the script. This year we again transliterated our drama into a professional film script with lines, and indented dialogue. We also compiled a comprehensive listing of Northeast Texas Webb which we now distribute to all the students involved in the film.

June and July are busy months as we form our executive committee, choose our location, and hustle to try to win student involvement, make reservations at B&Bs at the designated location—this last year in Ft Worth, attempt to wring every penny we can get from the

NTCC honors budget for equipment, and travel, and try to match the evolving script with available students.

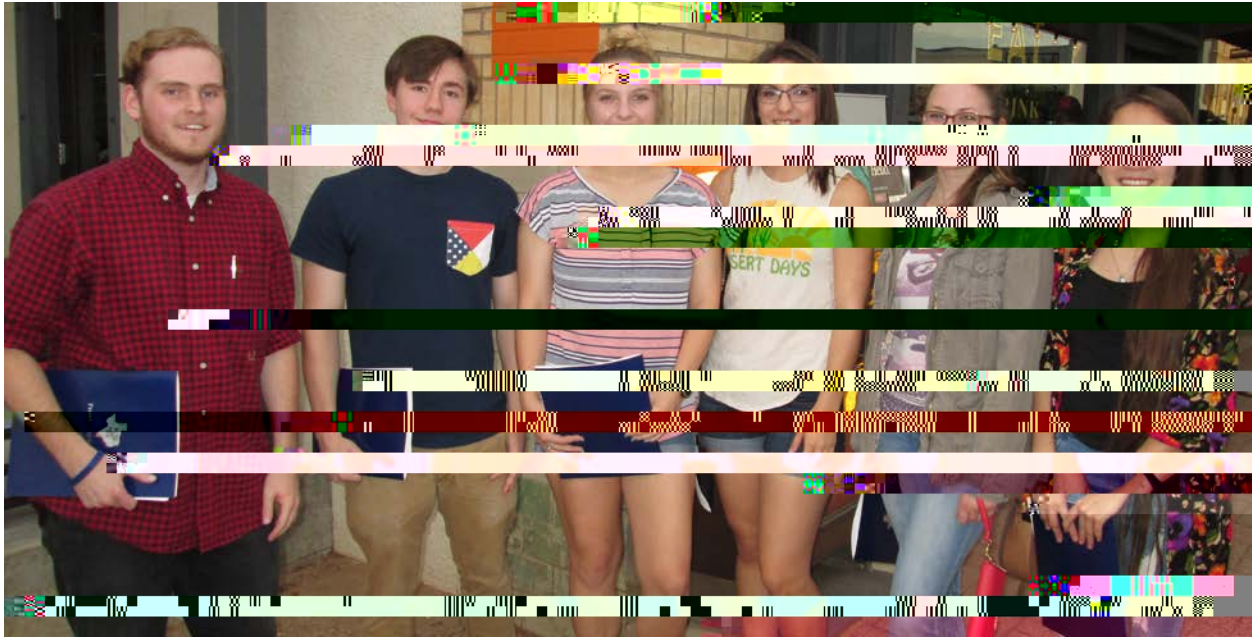
Our sophomores are the most important catalysts for the film effort. Without the experience, and enthusiasm, it is hard to envision how we could proceed. We were indebted this year to Cassidy Watkins, last year's producer for turning around and agreeing to star as Mary Kay this year. This required assembling ten outfits, including a bumblebee which was an important part of Mary Kay iconography, and memorizing the lines of four scenes in which she was the preeminent speaker.

### Cassidy Watkins with her Bumblebee Pin

We were fortunate also to gain Brenda Godoy as our Director. Webb member Godoy is an expert on the "shock trauma" experienced by leaders in the Texas Revolution, and presented at the East Texas Historical Society last October. She is a very gifted student with a high acumen, and she won universal respect.



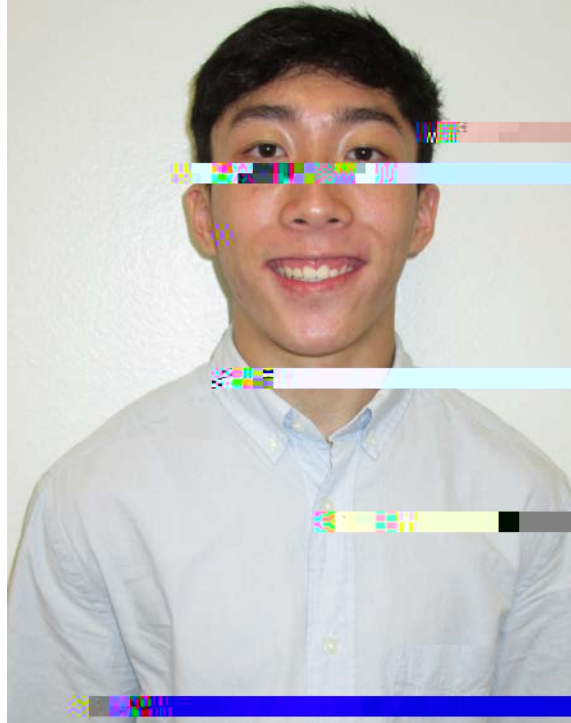
Our Executive Committee was fully formed by late July, and agreed who would be taking the parts, and playing other important roles like Unit Production Manager and Producer.



Executive Committee Above composed of Matthew Chambers, Jordan Whelchel, Rachel Jordan, Adriana Rodriguez, Cassidy Watkins, and Brenda Godoy.

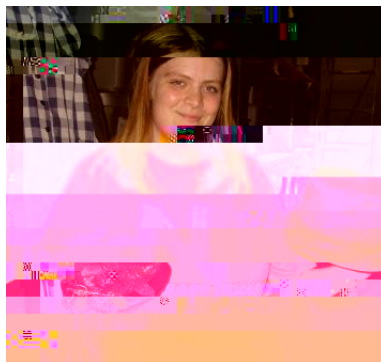
We were very pleased that entering freshman, Warren Wu, agreed to be the film's producer. A Webb member, student, and also a social media director for the

Wu became our first producer to use Adobe Premiere, and the first one to compose a trailer without a template.



Warren Wu

Webb members memorized their parts, Yaxta Romo tallied prop needs, and Karsen Nelson helped Theatre Northeast, our college theatre department, to loan us some of their outfits. It was rather unfortunate that when returning the costumes in late August, Yox dropped one, and it was out all night in the rain until found the next morning by Theatre Northeast Director Marin Holden. Profuse apologies followed.



Karsen Nelson in Costume Room of Theatre Northeast



Our practice sessions at Jo's Coffeehouse went as scheduled, except that on August 1st, they had scheduled a gathering in their upper room that left us stranded. Fortunately, our Webb Society has gained a very good friend over the years in Hudson Old, publisher of the Hudson Old, public house. He not only allowed us to practice at his establishment, he and his staff took one of our professional photos ever in Mount Pleasant below:

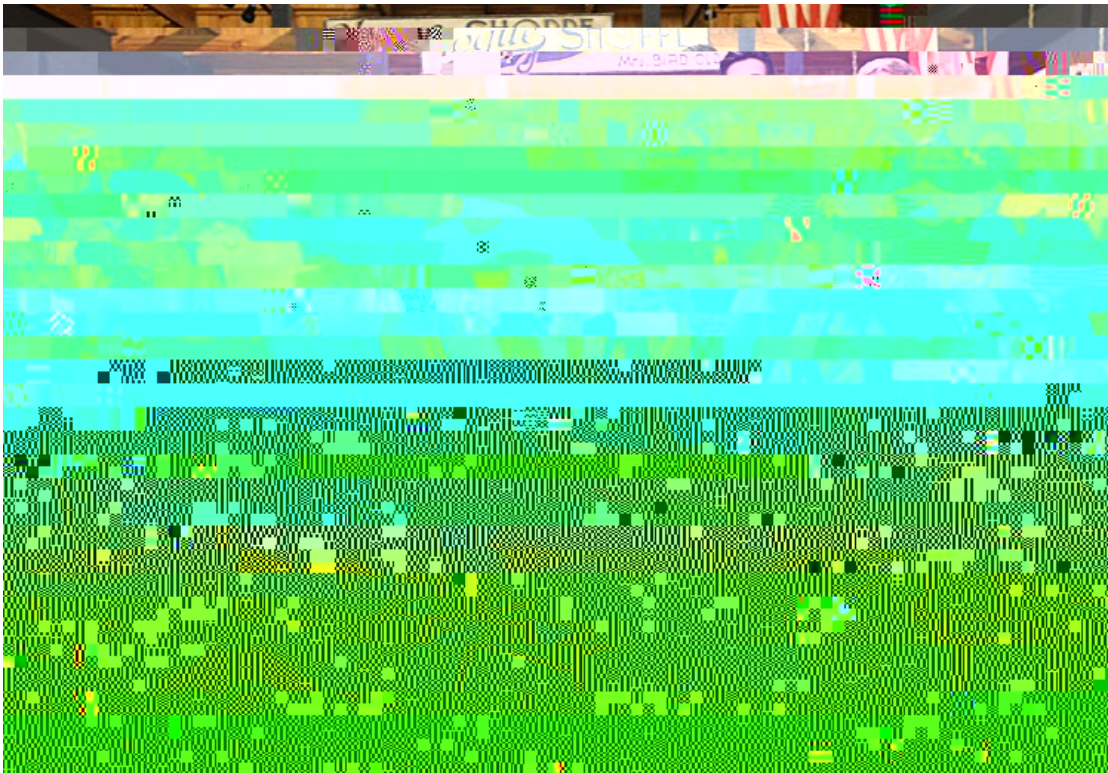


Photo courtesy of Hudson Old, Publisher of Hudson Old. Left to right: Madison Blood, Karsen Nelson, Adriana Rodriguez, Rachel Jordan, Jordan Whelchel, Brenda Godoy, Sebastian Martinez, Leivy Zuniga, Cassidy Watkins, Dr. Andrew Yox, Matthew Chambers. Not pictured Rhyllie Anderson, Alicia Cantrell, and Yaritza Romero.

At last we were ready for the initial filming in Mount Pleasant, and the big trip to Fort Worth 14-18 August. The Executive Committee made this the longest filming experience ever, stretching through five straight days. We were excited but also concerned. One boom mic was not functioning properly, and NTCC Technical advisor, Adam Bise, could not fix it. A preliminary trip to Fort Worth by Webb Director, Dr. Andrew Yox, in July elicited assurances from the Fort Worth B&Bs, but they were lukewarm, and conditional. It almost seemed we had made a mistake. Our budget was limited by the College's reconfiguration of the Honors Budget, so we only had two drivers, Cass Watkins, and Dr. Yox. In fact, Yox, had to make two trips each way to Fort Worth, leaving students there at the Texas White House B&B and returned for another five trip to get more actors. We had booked three other B&Bs ahead of time: The Rosen House, the Azalea Plantation, and Miss Molly's by the Stockyard District.

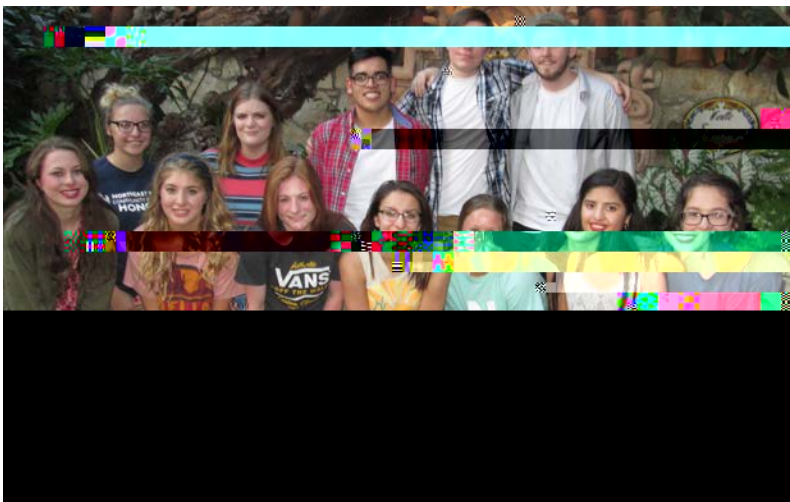
All four B&Bs did indeed allow us to film, though the experience of Matthew

and Alicia Cantrell and others as liaisons to anticipate scenes. Alicia Cantrell helped a deal with makeup, and indeed that was an expensive little sidelight for doing a Mary Kay



Alicia Cantrell as Makeup Director

We worked each day from about 9 AM to 11 PM, with the officers, and Godoy working even later in the evening to figure out the sequencing. ~~We did have~~ nice breakfasts in the B&Bs, and dinners, including this one below at Joe T. Garcia's. ~~The~~ only problem with this Fort Worth standby ~~was~~ that they wanted the payment all in cash, and this took away almost all our cash reserves!



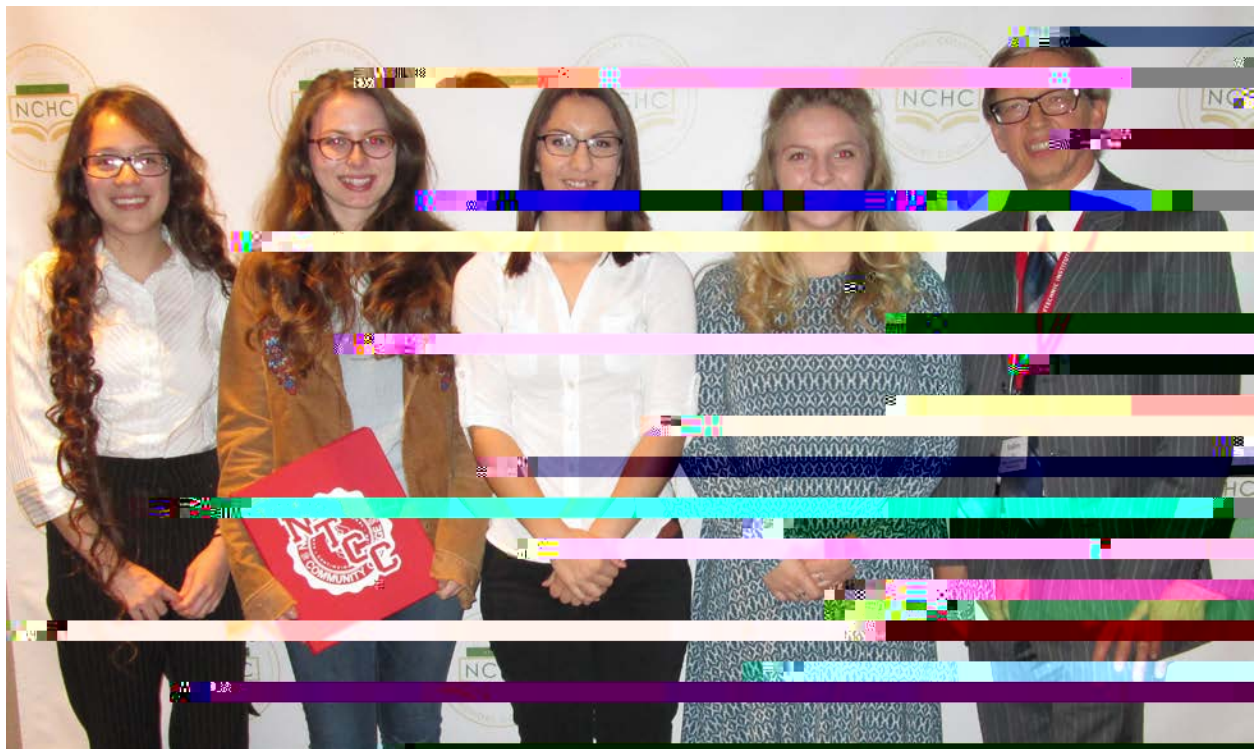
Our Group at Joe T. Garcia's:  
From Left: Cassidy Watkins,  
Rachel Jordan, Alicia Cantrell,  
Karsen Nelson, Rhyllie Anderson,  
Sebastian Martinez, Adriana  
Rodriguez, Jordan Whelchel,  
Madison Blood, Matthew  
Chambers, Leivy Zuniga, and  
Brenda Godoy.

Warren Wu took over the production of the film on our return. He produced the trailer we featured at the Walter Webb Meeting in October in Austin. Our group that made the trip are shown below.

Warren Wu, Rhylie Anderson, Jordan Welchel, Karsen Nelson, and Chaiton Austin.

that Kerry Wooten, a probate lawyer in Mount Pleasant, the subject for our next film which was recently funded: the American operatic legend from Pittsburg, Texas, Barbara Conrad.

At the Atlanta meeting of the National Collegiate Honor Council in November of 2017, Adriana Rodriguez, Brenda Godoy, Cassidy Watkins, Jordan, and Dr. Yox presented aspects of our Webb film culture, including Wu's trailer on *May Day*. discussed our use of niche cinema with Texas legends, the effort to "academic, an engage the community.



Finally, in December our group went on the radio to promote our upcoming Mar  
Kay premiere, February 16 at the Whatley Center for the Performing Arts at NTCC

## B) Its Purpose:

Our Webb Society film on Mary Kay provides a number of stories and revelatory details that can serve as an inspiration to people in our community who believe they struck out in life. Mary Kay by 1946 was divorced with three children. She had a severe medical diagnosis from Scott and White in Temple that indicated she would never walk again. She had earned a degree at the University of Houston. But from there, Mary Kay created an empire in direct sales. The fact that she was from Texas and did all this from the standpoint of being a Southern evangelical with a strong Texan accent makes this work doubly relevant.

Mary Kay also invites discussions on regional culture, and the way regional values filter national trends. Our film shows that though Mary Kay believed in employment opportunities for women, and refused to speak out on controversial issues like abortion, she refused to be classified as a feminist. Fifty years after the "Freedom Trash Can" had served as a receptacle for cosmetics, Mary Kay was helping to make the South and West the new capital of cosmetics use. Moreover, Mary Kay wanted corporations to accommodate female needs rather than force women to the same career race known to males.

We also believe that a film on a Texas legend like Mary Kay can help brighten the work of Webb students, honors students, and the academic aspect of the college. A hundred years ago, the English discovered that if you put a flame to calcium oxide, quicklime, it would admit a torrent of white light. Community vaudeville, and culture was born. But who got into that lime light? Football rather than academics. We believe that niche cinema is one way to bring academic activity into the center of community life. That is necessary to increase support and funding for Texas history on the local level.

### C) Procedures Followed

Our basic approach is to begin with a relevant Texas subject, obtain some funding, perform the research, write the script, inform the executive committee, recruit, fix the logistics, film, produce, and disseminate.

This year the idea for our film about Mary Kay came from the fact that our Webb Society has turned decidedly female, and we wanted to do a woman. We noticed she has written a number of books, and we were impressed by her corporate headquarters in Addison.

Our need for funding translates into year-round enterprise. A primary source of our funding has been unused amounts in the Honors Scholarship fund that at the end of the year. This fund is endangered as the college cut honors scholarships by 33 percent this September. We are hopeful that this Cherokee film is not the last with access to this fund. The College has also held faculty salaries without a raise for



president and vice president, and visits to a psychiatrist because of the disciplinary action that resulted. We made all the students sign a form which stated that they were to quit, but that major changes in the script could not be made after 30 June, and minor changes could not be made after 30 July.

We have the benefit of recruiting from a solid base, the 25 members of Honors Northeast, who are then drafted into our Webb Society. Sophomores like Pres McClendon, Emmalea Shaw, and Alecia Spurlin already had Texas history. The freshmen almost all required to take it their first semester.

Fixing the logistics was pretty much in the province of two who maintained a presence at NTCC this past summer, Dr. Yox, and Ryan Mendoza. Often Yox has to go ahead and reserve B&Bs before the funding is there, and we have had to pay extra for them when changes are made. One particular mistake was ordering the Hardeman B&B through an

## C.M. Caldwell memorial Award Entry



read. Not only is interaction with yesteryear usually through television or film, it is with legend rather than history. Whereas or Stephen Spielberg's (2012) may provide exemplary channels to awaken public interest in the fact and past, in reg Texas, the fictional deluge is especially pronounced. The second highest rated prime telecast ever, an episode of the Soap Opera, reverberated with that show's fictional obsessions and verisimilitudes. Cowboy Westerns accounted for about the films produced by Hollywood in the twentieth century. As one of the most admired of the West

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<sup>1</sup> Marnie Hughes Warrington, (New York: Routledge, 2009, 1; William Indick, (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland, 2008), Richard Schickel, "The Man Who Shot the West," 9 January 2000. Peter C. Rollins, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), xi.