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Inside this issue:

<i>Rockefeller Foundation Grant</i>	2
<i>Entrepreneurship (Cont'd. from pg. 1)</i>	2
<i>Three BRTC Staff Earn Degrees</i>	2
<i>"Peeps Project" Pictures</i>	2
<i>Kersey Named ABEA Teacher of the Year</i>	3
<i>MSSPS Receives Matching Grant from ASPSF</i>	3
<i>Garvin is Awarded Collins Memorial Scholarship</i>	3
<i>Glisson is Awarded BRTC Academic Scholarship</i>	3
<i>Campus Commentary - Rhonda Foster</i>	4

Caldwell is Leadership Academy Graduate

Angie Caldwell, Vice President for Technical Education at BRTC, recently graduated from Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges' (AATYC) Higher Education Leadership Institute. She was among 24 participants from two-year colleges and Higher-Ed institutions around the state that completed the 10-day program. The graduation ceremony was held June 10 at the Winthrop Rockefeller Institute at Petite Jean Mountain in Morrilton.



Angie Caldwell, VP for Technical Education, shows her award earned from AATYC's Leadership Institute.

According to information obtained from the AATYC website, the goal of the Leadership Institute is to identify, develop, prepare and advance leaders from within Arkansas two-year colleges. Through an experience-based model, participants develop general leadership skills and executive leadership skills related to academics, finance and student affairs.

The Leadership Institute was established in 2008 after a study was done which highlighted the potential shortage of leadership in administration at community colleges in

Arkansas. The program allows participants to gain insight into the administration of higher education and higher education leadership.

To date, 99 leaders have graduated since the program was established four years ago. Each institution is allowed to send one representative. Roger Johnson, VP for General Education, was the first to represent BRTC when he participated in the program last year.

The course consists of three-day sessions held in November, February and April, at different locations across the state, with the final session being held the day of graduation. Caldwell was presented her award by BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher.

"It was the best Higher Ed experience I've ever had," said Caldwell. "It was absolutely wonderful and life changing."

Important Dates

- August 11**
REACH Sites Open
- August 13-17**
BRTC In-Service
- August 16**
Nursing Orientation
- September 3**
Labor Day Holiday - Campus Closed
- September 4-5**
PTK Blood Drive
- October 5**
IBERIABANK/BRTC Foundation Golf Tournament

Entrepreneurship is Topic of Town Meeting

A large number of local entrepreneurs and community leaders considered how the community can be a part of promoting local entrepreneurship at a town meeting organized by Black River Technical College on July 17. BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher is working to bolster entrepreneurship as a community economic development and educational tool through this joint project with leadership support also from the Randolph County Chamber of Commerce and the City of Pocahontas.

The meeting, held at Marilyn's Clogging Studio on the Court Square, featured a panel of small business owners and operators from around the Court Square area, and was moderated by Matt Hampton of Elevate Entrepreneurship of Little Rock. Also participating in the panel were Chamber Director Tim Scott, PHS Superintendent Darryl Blaxton and PHS High School Principal Ivy Pfeffer, Walnut Ridge Chamber Director L.J. Bryant, and BRTC Business Instructor Darendra Kersey. Other panelists included Jim Sadler of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), Wonder Lowe of Hope Credit Union, and Russell Hampton of ACCION, all of Little Rock, and

Richard Walden of Jonesboro, representing the office of Congressman Rick Crawford.

Hampton commended the community on the vibrancy of its downtown area. "You have one of if not the best developed court squares in the state," he said. Several speakers and audience members noted that the Court Square, which had only sporadic businesses just five years ago, today is filled with viable and diverse businesses, ranging from professional to service to entertainment, arts and crafts, residential and retail operation.

A common theme from the entrepreneurs was the level of hard work and commitment required, and a need for community support from each other and from city and county government. Many members of the audience also



Matt Hampton

(Continued on pg. 2)

Rockefeller Foundation Strengthens Higher Education Nonprofit Impact: New Grant Expands on Prior Success

The Center for Student Success at the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC) recently received a \$150,000 grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation (WRF) to strengthen policy and best practice initiatives that improve student success at the state's higher education institutions. AATYC, which represents all 22 public two-year colleges in Arkansas, is a private, nonprofit higher education membership organization serving the educational needs of two-year college students and the business/industry needs of the state.

"Over the last two years, the Center has worked hard to help Arkansas community colleges to increase their success rates. We are learning what works to retain and successfully graduate students," said Dr. Serece Y. West, WRF president and CEO.

"Our state must increase the number of college graduates to gain a competitive edge in today's global economy. The Center plays an important role in working with the two-year colleges to learn about how to support marginalized students and take that learning to scale."

The WRF grant also supports the creation of a new Arkansas Higher Education Fellowship that is being funded in partnership with the Kresge Foundation. With these additional resources, the Center will be able to better support colleges seeking to expand proven institutional practices, pilot new initiatives to improve student success, and translate learning and best practices from successful programs into state policy change.

"The Center has leveraged significant grants

from the Federal Government and national foundations to drive some very exciting innovation across the community college system aimed at improving student outcomes. Partnering with WRF provides us with the core support that the Center needs to build upon this momentum and be successful in the long-term," said Dr. Ed Franklin, AATYC Executive Director. "We want everyone in the state who is seeking higher education to not only have the opportunity to go, but also the resources and support to succeed."

For over 35 years, WRF has helped to build and sustain organizations that serve and strengthen Arkansas. Their mission, through grant-making, is to close the economic and educational gaps that leave too many Arkansas families in persistent poverty.

Entrepreneurship Cont'd. from pg. 1

included individuals engaged in entrepreneurial pursuits both in town and throughout the county.

Resources available to small businesses include SCORE, which provides assistance with development of business plans and other services, Hope Credit Union, which provides financial planning, and ACCION, a non-profit agency providing micro-lending services to small businesses.

The next step in the entrepreneurship initiative is a workshop scheduled for Wednesday, August 15, from noon to 3, at Marilyn's Clogging Company. The event will target those already involved in entrepreneurship who want to move to the next level, those who want to develop a new business, and local secondary and college educators who are interested in incorporating elements of entrepreneurship into their courses or programs of study.

Patti Blaxton, BRTC's Director of Corporate and Community Education, also announced a fall "Operation Jumpstart" training program designed to help those interested in starting up their own business.

For more information on these events, contact Blaxton at 870-248-4181 or Jessica McFadden at 870248-4000, ext. 4189.

BRTC Staff Awarded Degrees in May

Three BRTC staff were awarded degrees this past May.

Bridget Guess, Administrative Specialist in Career Pathways, received a Bachelor of Applied Science degree from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. She also holds an Associate of Science certificate and an Associate of Arts in Gen Ed degree, both from BRTC. She began working at BRTC April 2007.

Kathryn Lewis, Administration Specialist at the Paragould campus, received an Associate of Arts in Gen Ed degree from BRTC. She was hired into her current position July 2011.

Regina Moore, Distance Education Program Coordi-



Bridget Guess



Kathryn Lewis



Regina Moore

nator, received a Master of Science degree from Arkansas Tech University. She also holds an Associate of Arts degree from BRTC and a Bachelor of Arts degree from University of Arkansas in Little Rock. She began working for BRTC as Administrative Secretary to the Vice President for Student Services in August 2003 and was promoted to her current position in 2009.

"Peeps Project" See Page 4



Kersey Named ABEA Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year

Darenda Kersey, business instructor at BRTC, was named the Arkansas Business Education Association (ABEA) Post-secondary Teacher of the Year at a conference held July 24-25 in Hot Springs.

ABEA is a professional association comprised of business and marketing educators involved at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The purpose of ABEA is to promote quality education in all phases of business and to encourage professional growth and cooperative interaction among all individuals involved in this sector of education.

Kersey was nominated for the award by one of her former business professors at Arkansas State University, Dr. Terry Roach, who is also the Executive Director of ABEA.

"It is due to him (Dr. Roach) that I am a member of this organization," Kersey explained. "When I was taking one of his courses in 1999, he took me

and three other ladies to our first ABEA Conference and I don't think I've missed one since."

When Kersey received word of her nomination, she was required to complete an information form and submit it along with five letters of recommendation. An awards committee evaluated all nominees and made the final selection.

As an award winner at the state level, Kersey is automatically nominated for the Southern Region Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year Award. Winners will be announced at the SBEA conference to be held in April in Atlanta, GA.

"I enjoy being a member of this organization and attending the ABEA conference each year," said Kersey. "The conference always gets me excited about the upcoming school year, and I always come home with new ideas to improve and update my classes."



Kerry Eliason (left), Past President of ABEA, presents Darenda Kersey, BRTC business instructor, with her Teacher of the Year plaque.

MSSPS Receives Matching Grant From ASPSF

The Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship Fund has been awarded their first matching grant for 2012 in the amount of \$3,588.80, according to an award letter received from the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund (ASPSF).

Funds raised by MSSPS are matched at 160% by ASPSF with a maximum annual match award of \$8,000. Proceeds from the Christmas auction along with employee payroll contributions and memorial gifts comprise the \$2,243.00 raised through June 2012.

"With the generosity of BRTC's employees and friends of the college, we have successfully raised the \$5,000 needed to receive the maximum annual match each year," noted MSSPS Committee Member Vickie French, Administrative Specialist, Office of the BRTC President.

ASPSF has also been awarded a Community Impact Funding Grant through United Way of Northeast Arkansas. Funds raised are matched 160% by ASPSF for single parents of Clay, Craighead, Cross, Greene, Jackson, Lawrence, Poinsett and Randolph Counties. To date, the MSSPS fund has received two disbursements through this grant totaling \$1,625 for eligible students of Randolph County.

Scholarships are awarded each year through the MSSPS fund to eligible residents of Randolph County. For more information, visit the Financial Aid link on BRTC's website at www.blackrivertech.org or call the financial aid staff at 870-248-4000.



Vickie French (seated) and Janna Guthrey, review the award letter received by MSSPS.

Garvin is Awarded Collins Memorial Scholarship

Magan Garvin of Warm Springs has been awarded the Phillip Collins II & Beth Collins-Bagwell Memorial Scholarship for the 2012-2013 academic year at BRTC. She is the daughter of Wesley and Carla Garvin and graduated in May from Maynard High School. She plans to pursue an education in a health-related field.

The award is in the amount of \$1,000 per semester provided the recipient maintains a 2.5 GPA and is enrolled full time. The scholarship was established by Phil and Carolyn Collins of Paragould in memory of their children.

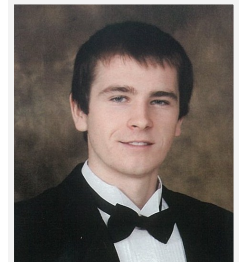


Magan Garvin

Glisson is Awarded BRTC Academic Scholarship

Gary Austin Glisson of Maynard has been awarded the Academic Distinction Scholarship at BRTC for the 2012-2013 academic year. The scholarship provides full tuition renewable up to four semesters provided the recipient meets certain guidelines. To be eligible, students must have an ACT composite score of at least 24 or be in the top 10% of their high school graduating class.

Glisson is the son of Gary Glisson of Maynard and Nancy Glisson of Pochontas. He is a Maynard High School graduate and plans to study science and nursing and become a nurse practitioner.



Gary Austin Glisson



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BRTC Mission Statement

Blending tradition, technology and innovation to educate today's diverse students for tomorrow's changing world.

Campus Commentary...



Rhonda Foster, Coordinator of Student Recruitment/Concurrent Enrollment

This past April while recruiting at Pocahontas High School, I stopped by the class of Lesa Grooms, History Instructor at PHS and adjunct instructor for BRTC, to view her AP US History students' "Peeps Projects." My son was in her class, which is also a concurrent class with BRTC, and after hearing him explain about each project, I wanted to take a look.

I asked Mrs. Grooms if she would be willing to share the "Peeps Project" concept for *The River's Edge* newsletter so the community could understand how utilizing 'thinking outside of the box' concepts help students to learn.

The project was designed for students to have a

hands-on activity while reviewing for a comprehensive year-end final exam, according to Grooms.

"I came up with the idea as I was researching Peeps." Grooms explained. "I don't really know why I was researching the candy, but hey... that is how ideas happen! I saw where the Peeps Company offered a contest each year for Peeps dioramas (a diorama is a three-dimensional model) on various topics. I thought the project would be a great review for AP U.S. History."

"I had 32 students in the class, so I selected 32 topics from people and events in U.S. History that we had previously discussed," said Grooms. "The topics were selected by the students on a first come first served basis. They worked on their projects for about a month outside of class, and included three pages of written information about the topic. On the side of each project was a large index card where the student had written a summary of their event. This was to help students review information as they look at all of the projects."

"Students had the opportunity in class to view each project by reading the summary and examining the scene. They were required to write a brief summary on each project as well as a short critique.

The review was done in small groups allowing for discussion among the students."

"It was good for the students to create their project, but also to talk to one another about their projects," she added. "The review and discussion hopefully helped to commit the information to long term memory.

"I was so impressed with the students," Grooms said in conclusion. "They did an excellent job and they were very proud of their work, as am was. I believe it was a great learning experience."

Thank you, Mrs. Grooms, for your creativity in student teaching – especially for those BRTC concurrent students you have in class. This is one more way you are preparing students for the college atmosphere of learning!

For more information on BRTC concurrent classes, contact Rhonda Foster, 248-4000, ext. 4157.



Lesa Grooms

(See pictures of projects on page 2)