



New 4-Week CDL Driver Program to Begin at BRTC Pocahontas

At their quarterly meeting on February 7, the BRTC Board of Trustees approved a proposal to implement a 4-week Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training program through the Pocahontas Corporate and Community Education department. The program has been developed in response to business and industry interest.

Class A, B, and C certifications will be available and endorsements will include hazardous materials, passenger vehicles, and school buses. The program is slated to begin in July. For more information, contact Patti Blaxton at (870) 248-4181 or via email at Patti.Blaxton@blackrivertech.edu.

Pat Johnson Shares NEA Black History with Adult Ed Students

On February 5, Pat Johnson of the Eddie Mae Herron Center in Pocahontas shared her experience of growing up in Pocahontas during the Civil Rights Movement with Cindy Robinett's adult education class. Until the 8th grade, Pat attended a segregated one-room school then spent high school boarding a bus at 6 a.m. to travel to an African-

American school in Newport.

Pat shared copies of the "Green Book" which identified the towns across the country which were safe for African-Americans to visit. She also spoke about sundown towns, even in Northeast Arkansas, which required African-Americans to live outside the city limits and prohibited them from being within city limits after sundown.

"Ms. Pat can testify from her own life experiences to something many of us can never relate to," said instructor Cindy Robinett. "We can watch all the documentaries made about the Civil Rights Movement and still not truly appreciate



it, but to sit across a table from someone who experienced segregation first-hand is powerful. My students were riveted to their seats for an hour and a half."

BRTC Experiences 3% Enrollment Increase

Despite a state and nationwide downward trend in college enrollment, BRTC data reflects a 3% increase in Spring 2019 enrollment over Spring 2018 enrollment. Spring 2019 enrollment is 1435 compared to the 1393 students in Spring 2018.

"The Enrollment Management team has done a fantastic job in not only recruiting but also retaining students," said Jason Smith, vice president for enrollment management. "I look forward to sustained enrollment growth in the future."

In addition, BRTC is one of six Arkansas 2-year colleges which experienced an enrollment increase from Fall 2017 to Fall 2018, according to the latest data from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.

JOIN IT DOWN

March 4

Business After Hours at
BRTC Paragould

March 9

BRTC Foundation Gala

March 18-22

Spring Break—No Classes

March 29

Serendipity Meeting

April 19

Law Enforcement Train-
ing Academy Graduation



Welding and Machine Tool Students Improve African-American Cemetery Signs

In honor of Black History month, BRTC Welding and Machine Tool students, led by Dean of Students Neal Harwell, began a project to erect improved signage at African-American cemeteries in Grant, Randolph, and Lawrence counties. Pictured is the new and old Clegg Cemetery signs in Grant County.

Melanie Chester Visits BRTC Students

Melanie Chester from BancorpSouth visited BRTC Pochontas' Adult Education class on February 5. She visited with students about financial literacy and explained credit scores, credit reports, checking and savings accounts, the importance of keeping good credit, and more. Every year, Melanie visits the class to help students better understand how to manage their finances. Thank you for your help, Melanie!



BRTC Student Receives National Nursing NCLEX Exam Scholarship

BRTC's Shila Dale is one of fifteen students nationwide to be awarded the Hurst Review NCLEX® Scholarship to help cover the cost of NCLEX exam fees and study materials. The scholarship, funded by national nursing exam prep company Hurst Review Services, is exclusively for Phi Theta Kappa nursing majors who plan to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX®).



"Hurst's mission has always been to help nursing students succeed by improving clinical judgement skills through the best NCLEX® preparation course available," Hurst CEO Pat Lowery said. "Together, Hurst and Phi Theta Kappa can provide the resources required to begin a successful career in nursing."

Calendar

- 3/11-17 Mid-Term Week
- 3/18-24 Spring Break
- 3/26 SGA Meeting
- 4/8 Summer 1 & 2 Registration
- 4/9 SGA Meeting
- 4/12 Last Day to Drop Grad. Intent Due
- 4/23 SGA Meeting
- 5/8-14 Final Exams
- 5/16 Commencement
- 5/18 BRTC Scholarship 5K & 0.0K at Paragould
- 5/20 Intercession Begins

BRTC Scholarship Deadlines

Don't miss out on applying for scholarships!! Contact us today!

- 3/1 Remaining BRTC Scholarships including Catfish Farmers of Arkansas

Allied Health Deadlines

Don't miss out on applying for entrance in the Fall 2019 allied health programs. Visit blackrivertech.org/academics/ for applications.

- 4/1 Phlebotomy
- 4/1 Practical Nursing
- 10/1 Respiratory Care

Don't miss out on applying for entrance in the January 2020 RN program!

- 8/31 LPN to Registered Nursing Bridge (ARNEC)

For more information or details, contact



Student Spotlight: Ahunjan “Jon” Muradov

In 2014, Ahunjan “Jon” Muradov moved with his family from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, to live in the U.S. After spending his freshman and sophomore years at Lake Charles, Louisiana, he and his family moved to Walnut Ridge after the death of his father in 2016. Jon graduated from Walnut Ridge High School in May 2018.

Jon was born in Turkmenistan, a country in Asia along the Caspian Sea which was ruled for two centuries by Russia. Both of his parents were Russian, but they divorced when he was young. A few years later, Jon’s mother Zarina married an architect from Walnut Ridge, Frank Boozer, whom he calls Dad. Frank was working as an architect in an American nuclear power plant in Dubai.

During his early life, Jon lived in Turkmenistan. He said the climate is like Arkansas in the summer, but the winters are very cold and often snowy. In fact, the last year he was there, Turkmenistan had several snows, one of which was 10 inches.

Jon’s education has been very diverse. In Turkmenistan, his school was about the same size as Walnut Ridge’s, but “the teachers were much nicer in Walnut Ridge.” In Dubai, his school was huge and he began at a disadvantage: he couldn’t speak any of the languages. Most students spoke Arabic or Romance languages like French or English. “They spoke everything but Russian,” Jon said. So in order to communicate, Jon immediately began learning Arabic. In fact, because his dad didn’t know Arabic, either, he bought Jon Rosetta Stone to help him. Every night after work, Jon’s dad also helped him with English.

Today, Jon speaks 6 languages: Russian, Turkmenistanian, Ucbaknistan, English, Arabic, and Turkish. His mother speaks 8 or 9 and his little sister, Selbi, who is 11, speaks 3. At home, the family speaks Russian, and Jon said his mom has the family watch Turkish movies and movies in other languages so they don’t forget.

Jon’s first American school was in Louisiana, but it was huge and he didn’t really like it.

Two years later, he began at Walnut Ridge. The problem at Walnut Ridge, though, was locals had trouble pronouncing his name. A teacher told him he could pick any name he wanted to go by, so he chose “Jon,” after wrestler John Cena.

Jon has always been an athlete. In Dubai, he earned a gold medal for track in middle school where he competed against 120 or more other students in the 100 meter. At Walnut Ridge, he played football, which he loved, and track, which he didn’t. “I hate to run,” he said, laughing, “but I was good at it.” Today, he is an avid power lifter, benching 248 pounds.

After high school, Jon wanted to join the military, but his mother refused. After considering ASU, Jon and his mother

decided on BRTC. “It’s the best option for saving money,” he said. Today, Jon is a BRTC freshman and is completing his basics before moving on to a 4-year to major in architecture or fitness.

Jon is a BRTC ambassador, a select group of students chosen for their demonstrated leadership, positive attitude, self presentation, and academic success who represent the college and participate in campus activities. “To me, it’s an honor to be an ambassador,” Jon said. He is also a student worker in BRTC’s Office of Institutional Advancement.

“Right now,” Jon said, “my focus is on college and my future.”



YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

24th Annual iBERIABANK/BRTC Foundation Golf Scholarships

Four-Star sponsors of last year's 24th Annual iBERIABANK/BRTC Foundation Golf Tournament generously donate to sponsor a \$2,000 BRTC student scholarship. Students who are awarded the scholarship receive \$1,000 in the fall and \$1,000 in the spring. The following students will be receiving \$1,000 this fall to pursue a degree at BRTC.

Thank you, sponsors, for making the following Golf Tournament scholarships possible!

The following scholarships were accepted as of February 15, 2019.

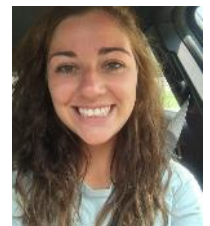
Archer Realty Scholarship



Recipient: Ashlie Richardson
Hometown: Paragould
High School: Paragould High School
Spouse: Jacob Richardson
Major: Nursing

Metro Restoration Scholarship

Recipient: Shea Capps
Hometown: Pocahontas
High School: Pocahontas High School
Parents: Dwayne and Angie Capps
Major: Nursing



Clay County Electric Cooperative Corporation Member Scholarship



Recipient: Kaytie Manatt
Hometown: Corning
High School: Corning High School
Parents: Nick Manatt & Melanie Riley
Major: Respiratory Care

Nielson Bainbridge Group Scholarship

Recipient: Jordan Westbrook
Hometown: Benton
High School: Bryant High School
Major: Nursing



Dr. Karla Baltz, DDS, Scholarship



Recipient: Londyn Smith
Hometown: Pocahontas
High School: Pocahontas High School
Major: Nursing

PECO Foods Educational Scholarship

Recipient: Abby Fears
Hometown: Walnut Ridge
High School: Hoxie High School
Parents: Keith and Kammie Fears
Major: Associate of Arts



GNC Industries Scholarship



Recipient: Charlotte Jennings
High School: Marmaduke High School
Parents: Tommy and Regina Jennings
Major: Nursing

VALIC Community Spirit Scholarship

Recipient: Stephanie Foster
Hometown: Pocahontas
Parents: Jimmy Dale Bibb, Cindy Tribble
Spouse: Michael Foster



L.D. Rose Family Scholarship



Recipient: Anne Bruetsch
Hometown: Lexington, VA
College: Radford University
Spouse: Mike Bruetsch
Major: Nursing

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Honor those special to you!

Your memorial or in-honor gift supports student scholarships and academic programs!



BRTC Signs Memorandum of Understanding with ASU Disaster Training Center



Left to right: Steve Shults, LETA Director; Deborah Persell, Coordinator; Alan Haskins, Fire Science Director

Arkansas State University in Jonesboro has plans to create a Disaster Training Facility on two sites in Lawrence County, one in Walnut Ridge and one in Imboden. However, before the facilities are ready to use, they need access to classroom space in the Walnut Ridge area.

On February 6, BRTC signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ASU agreeing to share classrooms space at the current BRTC training facility at the Walnut Ridge airport. In return, ASU has pledged to share the Imboden site with BRTC's law enforcement and fire science programs. The current agreement is for one year.

"ASU has some outstanding plans in the works," said Law Enforcement Training Academy Director Steve Shults. "We are happy to do what we can to support ASU in their efforts."

New Employee Here for You!



Matthew Whitlock

Position: Landscape Technician
Hometown: Pocahontas
Location: Pocahontas
Education: Black River Technical College



Left: The REACH Committee is sorting through hundreds of artifacts to curate into cabinet showcases.

Watch for a public viewing to be announced soon!

Students Share Valentines, Raise Money for Classmates, and More!

BRTC students participated in a wide variety of celebrations for Valentine's Day. The Kimbrough Choir, top right, performed Sing-A-Grams in which friends, co-workers, and loved ones selected a song which the Choir performed in person on the Pocahontas campus or over the phone for those off-campus. Funds raised support choir activities.

Paragould students, pictured bottom left and center, participated in Make a Friend and a Valentine where they enjoyed sweet treats while making cards for significant others, family, and friends. Over 40 students made cards.

At Pocahontas, SGA members sold Valentine gifts to raise money for BRTC student Courtney Waddell and family.



SNAPSHOTS

FOUNDATION



Katie Kirby, *right*, being pinned at her Fall 2015 PN graduation

Remembering Former Student Katie Kirby

Katie Kirby graduated from the Black River Technical College practical nursing program in Fall 2015. She was an excellent student who loved her family and her horses. She cared deeply about others and was much loved by her BRTC classmates.

Katie continued her education with the ARNEC program at Ozarka College and obtained her registered nursing degree in Fall 2016. Upon graduation she worked as an RN in long-term care and obstetrics.

Unfortunately, Katie lost her battle with breast cancer in June 2018. A Katie Kirby Memorial Scholarship was created by her family to assist future BRTC nursing students. In Fall 2018, two students in their last semester of the program were awarded scholarships in the amount of \$250 each.

The BRTC Nursing and Phlebotomy faculty and staff wanted to raise money to show their love for Katie and to support the scholarship. A t-shirt fundraiser was held in Fall 2018 and a check in the amount of \$866 was presented to Katie's mom, Leslie Blankenship, to be placed in the scholarship fund. Katie's family choose the recipients of the scholarship, and her mother Leslie stated they look for students "who are most like Katie." The family plans to award additional scholarships to practical nursing students in the spring semester.

This semester's recipients were Fall 2018 practical nursing graduates Ragan Rapert and Bianca Paige. Ragan is currently enrolled in the BRTC RN program and works at St. Bernard's Heart and Vascular. Bianca is enrolled in the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville's RN program and works at the Batesville Women's Clinic.



BRTC Nursing and Phlebotomy faculty and staff presenting a check to Katie's mother Leslie. *Left to right:* Tonya Hankins, Tina Stroud, Kelsie Cagle, Amanda Junkersfeld, Rebecca Simpson, Jennifer Hibbard, Katie's mother Leslie Blankenship, Dana Clay, Nancy Felts, Tahnee Green, Beth Davis, Ramonda Housh

BRTC M*A*S*H Camp Dates Set

Black River Technical College's M*A*S*H (Medical Applications of Science for Health) Camp applications are available. M*A*S*H Camp is a 2-week summer enrichment program which allows high school students to shadow health professionals and attend workshops which will enhance their experience in the healthcare field. Students must be entering their junior or senior year as of the camp date.

Applications are available online and due by March 15 to Angie French. For more information or to apply, contact her at (870) 248-4023 or via email at Angie.French@blackrivertech.edu.



M*A*S*H

Medical Applications of Science for Health

community

BRTC's Corporate and Community Education serves business, industry, and the community. Visit <http://lackrivertech.org/community/>

▷ Paragould

Contact Alan Decker at (870) 239-0969.

Excel 2016 Classes

Tuesdays & Thursdays
5:30-8:30 p.m.

\$119/\$139 per person

Basic: March 5-14

Intermediate: March 26
-April 4

Advanced: April 16-25

AutoCAD Level 1

March 30 – April 27

8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Saturdays

\$350/\$390 per person

▷ Pocahontas

Contact Cally Shore at (870) 248-4182.

Microsoft Excel 2016, Level 1

March 1 & 8, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

\$125 per person

Textbook included

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Left to right: Sydni Ellis, Mindy Ferguson, Richard Norman, Emilia Holder, Courtney Hays

BRTC Nutrition & Dietetics Students Visit Pocahontas Junior High School

Black River Technical College Nutrition and Dietetics student presented an educational class on dietetics and nutrition to students at PJHS in February. Students explained about eating disorders and portion control.



Practical Nursing White Coat Ceremony

On Thursday, February 7, Black River Technical College held a White Coat Ceremony for practical nursing students in their first semester. These students were cloaked with their first white lab coat by practical nursing students in their third semester, representing first-semester practical nursing students' decision to be part of the nursing profession. Sandra Green, Chief Nursing Officer at First Choice Healthcare and former BRTC nursing instructor, was the guest speaker.



Dean of Student Neal Harwell, *standing right*, listens to students as they discuss what they want out of BRTC student spaces at the Student Open Forum on February 5 in Pocahontas. More than 20 students attended, receiving free pizza and sharing ideas.

The event was hosted by the SGA president, Vice President of Enrollment Management, and Harwell. "We hope to incorporate these ideas in our future plans for our students," said Harwell.

BRTC MISSION STATEMENT

Black River Technical College transforms lives through quality academic and career education to enhance the community we serve.

INSIGHT With Dr. Jan Ziegler

BLACK RIVER TECH

New Program Brings Opportunities to Students, Companies

A recent decision by BRTC's Board of Trustees to offer CDL (Commercial Driver's License) training represents a major step forward to address a significant need. This new CDL program, with a projected start date of July, will address a high demand for additional safe, educated drivers in Arkansas and across the country.

The decision is a welcome one also because it will result in graduates with the needed skills to obtain gainful employment at an estimated annual wage of \$40,000, while helping local businesses to be more successful and profitable.

Developed and offered through BRTC's Office of Corporate and Community Education on the Pocahontas campus, this new program consists of four-weeks, using classroom theory and behind-the-wheel training with both driving practice range and public over-the-road driving. The program is based on a model proposed by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety. Each four-week class can serve up to six students.

Demand for CDL training is high, especially for heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, with Transportation and Material Moving Occupations projected to add 2,608 new jobs to the state economy over a two-year period, representing an increase of 2.39 percent. Confirming the need is the fact that Wal-Mart recently announced plans to double its spending by the end of the year to recruit and retain drivers for its 6,500-truck private fleet. The company has also announced plans to raise driver's salaries in order to attract more drivers. This growing need is reflected also by local firms which depend on trucking, with five local firms providing letters of support for this new program.

BRTC's Commercial Driver's License Program will provide students with the necessary skills to begin driving a truck professionally, with training offered in

- Class A - Tractor-Trailers, Livestock Carriers;
- Class B - Buses, Dump Trucks, Delivery Trucks, Garbage Trucks; and
- Class C - Passenger Vans, Small HazMat Vehicles.

CDL endorsements will include the following:

- H Endorsement - Hazardous Materials
- P Endorsement - Passenger Vehicles
- S Endorsement - School Bus

BRTC's new CDL program represents one of the many ways the college serves the community and the state--by listening to its constituents and responding to their needs.



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LEARN MORE OR
GET INVOLVED

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