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The River's Edge

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Important Dates

September 30

- Catalog Revisions Due
- Faculty Self Evaluations Due

October 2

- BRTC Board of Trustees Meeting

October 10

- BRTC Foundation Meeting

October 12-14

- AATYC-Conference

October 20

- Chamber of Commerce Banquet

October 13-17

- Mid Semester Exams

October 13

- ACT Testing

November 21

- Law Enforcement Graduation

December 18

- BRTC Graduation

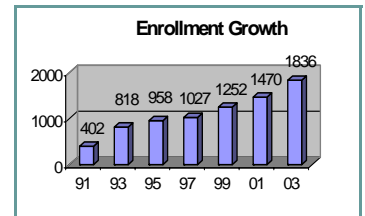
Record Enrollment for BRTC

Student enrollment at BRTC has broken yet another record this fall, according to Vice President for Student Services Mike Sullens. This fall's number of 1836 students represents a 9.9 % increase from Fall '02. The figure includes all credit students officially enrolled at the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses as of the eleventh day.

Of that number, 53% are considered "non-traditional," or age 25 and over, while 47% fall in the 16-24 "traditional" bracket. Of these in the "traditional" category, 76 students (8.8%) are concurrently enrolled students, receiving simultaneously high school and college credit. Full-time students outnumber part-time

students by a margin of 59% to 41%. A total of 667, or 36.3% of the students are from Randolph County. Other counties that are home to the largest number of students are Lawrence, 357 (19.4%); Greene, 300 (16.3%); Clay, 160 (8.7%); and Craighead, 136 (7.4%). The remaining students are from 29 other Arkansas counties and three counties in southeast Missouri.

President Richard Gaines expressed his pleasure that the college is continuing to grow, and he praised the efforts of the faculty and staff in working to meet the needs of the students during the busy enrollment period.



Above: Students fill the lounge area as fall classes begin at BRTC.

Baltz Completes Practicum at St. Louis Art Museum

Sandy Davis-Baltz, instructor of Fine Arts at Black River Technical College, has returned home from a seven-week interlude at the Saint Louis Art Museum where she witnessed and participated in the "behind the scenes" work and even "touched a painting worth over \$500 million." Her experience of being in the majestic museum surrounded by works of enduring beauty and fame was not unlike that of being "a kid in a candy store," Baltz said. The time she spent in the daily presence of the works of Monet, Picasso, Remington and thousands of other artists was all a part of the art teacher's own educational experience, since her work there con-

stituted her "practicum," a requirement for Baltz's doctorate in the Ph.D. program in Heritage Studies at Arkansas State University.

Not only did she witness the complexities of work at the St. Louis museum, regarded as one of the nation's top fifteen art museums, Baltz actually worked on projects in the museum's Registrar Department, proving herself a valuable resource even as she learned the intricacies of research, documentation and auditing, and de-installation and re-installation of exhibits.

Especially fascinating to her was her work with the crew charged with

relocating the Kiefer sculpture. This massive piece titled "Breaking of the Vessels" had to be moved from the museum's third floor to first floor. Baltz's job was to document the steps of the de-installation of the exhibit which contained seven tons of lead and hundreds of shards of broken glass, representative of windows from the Jewish synagogues ravaged during Kristallnacht in Nazi Germany in 1938. "I documented the steps," she explained, "...by taking digital photographs, installing them on the computer, printing off the images, labeling the images, and placing them in a binder with division sheets of shelving and floor pieces." (cont'd pg 2)



Daphne Perkins



Dr. Larry Hilburn



Jason Morrison



Joe Chappell



Susan Ramsey, BSN, R.N.



Eric Johnson, BS, R.R.T.



Joan Linnstaedter



Regina Moore



Shanna Akers



Dina Hufstedler



New Faculty, Staff Added at BRTC

The fall semester at Black River Technical College brings to the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses several new faculty and staff to meet the needs of the growing institution, announced BRTC President Richard Gaines. Gaines welcomed the entire staff at an in-service meeting on August 18, and updated employees on current and planned facility projects.

The college now has an all-time record employment level of 117 full-time employees, according to college records. In addition to these full-time employees, the college also employs approximately 40 individuals as adjunct instructors at the two campuses.

"We are pleased to welcome these highly skilled individuals to BRTC," President Gaines said. "Our institution has grown over the past few years to a level we hardly could have imagined when we first became a two-year college." BRTC is one of the state's fastest growing institutions of higher learning, having nearly quadrupled its enrollment of under 500 students in 1991.

Among the employees introduced were the six new permanent full-time faculty, an academic coordinator for the Paragould site, and three new members of the support staff.

Daphne Perkins of Corning will be teaching Math at both the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses. Perkins previously taught at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro for three years and ASU Beebe six years.

Dr. Larry Hilburn, Instructor of Science, returns to BRTC after teaching the past five years at Arkansas State University. Hilburn, who resides in Jonesboro, is originally from Texas. Dr. Hilburn was BRTC's first science instructor, and was instrumental in developing the science program.

Jason Morrison, Instructor of Social Sciences, will begin teaching

full-time in Pocahontas and Paragould. Morrison's experience includes teaching at ASU as well as at Mid-South Community College in West Memphis.

Joe Chappell of Imboden will be serving as Instructor of EMT/ Paramedics while continuing his own education at BRTC. Chappell brings with him approximately 20 years experience in the EMT field. He passed the National Registry exam and has served as a CPR Instructor for several years in Arkansas and Missouri.

Susan Ramsey will be a new Instructor in Nursing. Ramsey is originally from Chicago, but is now residing in Jonesboro. Ramsey most recently worked as an Obstetrics and Gynecology Charge Nurse at St. Francis Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee.

Eric Johnson of Corning will be the new Instructor of Respiratory Care at Pocahontas. Johnson comes to BRTC after working at St. Bernard's Regional Medical Center in Jonesboro for the past 12 years.

Joan Linnstaedter has been named Academic Coordinator at the Paragould campus. Linnstaedter previously taught English classes as an Adjunct instructor. She has taught at ASU, Penn State, and Texas A & M.

New members of the support staff include Regina Moore of Pocahontas as the new administrative secretary to the Vice President for Student Services. Moore had worked in the Randolph County Tax Assessor's office for the past 19 years before joining the BRTC staff. Moore is a 1983 graduate of Pocahontas High School. Shanna Akers is the new secretary for Student Services. Akers worked at the Lawrence County Family Clinic in Walnut Ridge for the past two years.

Dina Hufstedler of Walnut Ridge

will be serving as secretary for the Office of Institutional Advancement at BRTC. Hufstedler has worked the past six years for the Walnut Ridge Public Schools.

Baltz cont'd from page 1

Baltz compiled one binder for the installation crew, and a second one for the Registrar record. The task, during which she donned hard hat, mask and safety glasses along with the work crew, required five days for disassembly of the piece and documentation, another four days for rebuilding the lead portion of the sculpture, and two days for reassembly of the glass portion of the exhibit.

During the seven weeks, Baltz and her family were lodged in student housing on the campus of St. Louis University. Though she received a housing stipend from the Heritage Studies program, the balance of the financial burden was born by the artist herself. It was a life-altering experience whose value she can not fully comprehend, even now.

However, as wonderful as was the experience, she said she never lost the urge "to go back home," and looks back on her time at the Saint Louis Art Museum as a reaffirmation of the joy of her roots. "Pocahontas doesn't have million-dollar paintings or marbled halls, New York employees or Broadway cultural assets," she said. But as far as she's concerned, her home town "has the richest objects of all—a sense of home, family, natural beauty, and peace."

BRTC Inks Partnership Agreement with State Police

A new partnership between Black River Technical College's Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA) and the Arkansas State Police (ASP) is a "win-win" situation, according to Tim Daley, director of BRTC's LETA program. Captain Kathy Sparks of the Arkansas State Police couldn't agree more. "We are very excited about our new partnership with BRTC," she stated. "It's exciting to know that our graduating new troopers will not only have a certificate of completion for the school, but will also have earned 28 college hours through our partnership."

Sparks serves as commander of the Career Development and Human Resources Division of the ASP in Little Rock.

Under the provisions of the agreement signed in mid-August by offi-

cial from both organizations, BRTC will serve as the primary provider for credit hour courses for the ASP Training Academy. What this means for the new troopers with ASP, as well as for other state police officers continuing their education, is that they can receive college credit for their training. "This should prove to be an invaluable recruiting tool for the Arkansas State Police for years to come," Captain Sparks added.

For BRTC, the partnership signals an enhanced relationship between LETA and the Arkansas State Police. The ASP frequently provides instructors for components of BRTC's basic law enforcement courses and its Associate of Applied Science degree in Criminal Justice. "This partnership enables them (ASP) to elevate their training to a collegiate level," stated Daley. He explained that the college

assists the ASP with curriculum for the courses, along with "any new course identifications, titles, and course descriptions."

A total of 26 students are enrolled in the first group to be trained in accordance with the partnership. Classes begin in September. The Basic Recruit School program, according to Daley and Captain Sparks, consists of a 1126-hour regimen of criminal justice courses ranging from courses in traffic crash investigation to drug recognition to defensive tactics. The training will take place over a period of six months.

BRTC's LETA program accepted its first students on the Pocahontas campus in August of 1999. Since then, a total of 342 students have completed the basic law enforcement training program.



Steve Huddleston (right), instructor in BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Program, is pictured with Billy Calderon of Jonesboro, an Arkansas State Police recruit.

In addition to training for those employed in the field of law enforcement, BRTC also offers an Associate of Applied Science degree in Criminal Justice. Those students who plan to seek a four-year degree in Criminal Justice can also complete a two-year Associate of Arts degree with emphasis in Criminal Justice before transferring to a university.

Citizenship: a Bittersweet Joy

Lily Johnson was not prepared exactly for the flood of emotions washing over her when, on August 8, 2003, she took the oath of American citizenship in Memphis, Tennessee. It was a day long in coming, a climax to years of frustrating delays and "brick walls," fruitless phone calls and confusion, and many disappointing visits to the office of Immigration and Naturalization Service. And when Flor Liliana Abanto Johnson, native Peruvian, finally raised her hand and repeated the oath of allegiance, the tears flowed. They were expressions of her bittersweet joy.

Lily Johnson had grown up in a small town about 45 minutes from Lima, a farming community near the beach and the mountains where her father raised corn, potatoes, and strawberries. The youngest of eight siblings, four brothers and four sisters, she had moved to Lima when

she finished high school in order to attend college. The Peruvian native met her future husband, Roger Johnson, who was already her brother-in-law, when he was visiting in Peru in 1995. The two became friends, corresponding and visiting for over a year before their marriage in 1997. She would join her new husband in St. Louis where he was on the faculty of Washington University shortly after their wedding in her home country. But on their visits to the town where his father lived, Lily immediately knew she could be at home in Pocahontas, a town she described as "tranquilo." When her husband had a chance to join the faculty at Black River Technical College, the couple were confident the



Dr. Roger & Lily Johnson

move would be a good one. Moving to Pocahontas actually improved her developing English skills "a lot, because here no one speaks Spanish." She said her English-speaking ability also got a boost after she enrolled in ESL classes in the Adult Education department at BRTC. "Jean Wilson (BRTC ESL instructor) is great!" she added.

The classes would be crucial for Lily in her quest for becoming a United States citizen. When, with assistance from the office of Congressman Marion Berry, the process finally moved forward, Lily was required to pass both a written and an oral test. She only missed one question on the written test ("Who was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence?"), and sailed through

the oral part.

"I feel so proud," the new American said. "Before, I was 'legal,' because my passport was stamped." But because Lily had been issued a "green card," signifying her right to be in the United States, passing through emigration at airports after visits to her native country was always a hassle. "Now I can pass through the airport like everyone else." She feels proud, too, "to be in a free country." But the price of this feeling includes the pang of sadness at leaving behind her all allegiance to her beloved homeland, as the oath of loyalty requires of new citizens.

Lily Johnson's husband Roger currently chairs the General Education division at BRTC and teaches in the science department, and Lily works part-time in the BRTC bookstore.

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Name the Newsletter Results:

The River's Edge: 36

The Main Stream: 19

The Navigator: 15

The Wave: 15

Streams: 2

**Thanks to all participants
submitting potential names,
including the person who
submitted anonymously the
winning entry!**

Mission Statement

Black River Technical College is an institution of higher learning committed to a partnership with the individual and the global community to provide lifelong learning experiences, seeking always to empower those it serves to achieve their academic, vocational, and personal development goals.



Richard Gaines

From the President's Desk

I want to express my pleasure and my appreciation to all who had a hand in

the production of BRTC's first campus-wide newsletter. This bi-monthly publication is yet another sign of the growth and development of Black River Technical College. In addition to going out to our own staff, the Board of Trustees, and the BRTC Foundation Board, this newsletter goes also to community leaders and to those in business, industry, education, and government officials.

As our campus has expanded in faculty and staff, in facilities, in programs, and even in locales where our programs are offered, we find staying in touch with each other and with the community we serve is increasingly a challenge. I am confident these newsletters will be a real help to us in

meeting that challenge.

Though the newsletter is being produced by our Office of Institutional Advancement, it belongs to and is designed for the good of the entire institution. I will be using this venue (in lieu of the quarterly President's Newsletter) to communicate with the college community, and I hope you will do the same. I encourage all of you to become involved in this endeavor by providing to the Office of Institutional Advancement your news, information and ideas.

One final note—I want to recognize the efforts put forth by the entire faculty and staff in stepping up to the demands of yet another record enrollment. Growth is not easy, and the road is not always smooth, but we are off to a great start in this new academic year, and I greatly appreciate your work in making sure we serve the educational needs of our growing student body.

Trustee Conference Focuses on Education Reform Efforts

Several members of the BRTC Board of Trustees and others from the college attended the annual Trustee Conference in North Little Rock September 8. Those attending from BRTC were trustees Mike Dunn, Frank Bigger and John Jackson of Pocahontas; Joe Wessell and Ray Noel of Paragould, and Dr. Rebecca Edwards of Walnut Ridge. Also attending were BRTC President Richard Gaines, Vice Presidents Jack McCord, Mike Sullens and Loretta Williams, Administrative Assistant Vickie French and Director of Institutional Advancement Dr. Jan Ziegler.

The meeting was held to coincide with the joint annual meeting of the boards of the Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Department of Education, and Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. Presentations and panels centered on the is-

suues surrounding the role of each entity in the current education reform debates.

Black River Head Start Accepting Applications

The new Black River Early Head Start Child Care Program located on the northwestern corner of the BRTC campus is now accepting applications from BRTC students and staff. The new center plans a late October opening date.

One of the facility's pre-school classrooms serving up to 20 children ages 3-6 has been dedicated for use by college students and staff, open for their children and/or grandchildren. Cost of the services is \$65 per week. For more information, contact Terri Seagraves at 870-892-7755.