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The River's Edge

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Important Dates

May 5

- **Fun Before Finals**

May 6—11

- **Final Exams**

May 13

- **Graduation**

May 17

- **Intercession Classes Begin**

May 24 - 25

- **Administrative Council Retreat**

June 1

- **Summer I Classes Begin**

June 14

- **Fall Registration**

Major Gift Announced

A major gift by Pocahontas resident W. P. (Dexter) Kimbrough will allow Black River Technical College to begin development of a new program in choral music, according to BRTC President Richard Gaines. Announcement of Kimbrough's pledge in excess of \$50,000 was made April 22 at the college's Scholarship/Donor Luncheon at Randolph County Development Center on the BRTC campus.

More than 100 people, including student scholarship recipients and donors, along with members of the BRTC Board of Trustees, BRTC Foundation Board, and college administrators and staff, were on hand for the event. Director of Institutional Advancement Dr. Jan Ziegler, in recognizing Kimbrough for the contribution to the BRTC Foundation, praised the benefactor's demonstrated concern for students and



Dexter Kimbrough

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New Program Makes Bachelor's Degree Attainable

Representatives from BRTC met with Dr. Mary Ann Rollans of Arkansas Tech University (Russelville) April 26 in Little Rock to discuss a new program at Tech that would benefit BRTC graduates. The new program, a Bachelor's degree in Professional Studies, with emphasis in Early Childhood Education, will be available to BRTC students via online classes, beginning as early as

this summer. Dr. Rollans is the Dean of Community Education and Professional Development at ATU. Those meeting with Dr. Rollans included BRTC President Richard Gaines, along with Jack McCord, VP for Academics, Debbye Jarrett, Coordinator of Early Childhood



From left, Gaines, Jarrett, Rollans, and McCord

Education, and Dr. Jan Ziegler, Director of Institutional Advancement.

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Dr. Alan Sugg, President of the University of Arkansas System, Dr. Linda Beene, Director of the Department of Higher Education, and BRTC Foundation member John Jackson, converse during AHECB meeting Thursday evening.

BRTC Hosts AHECB

BRTC was the site of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board's quarterly meeting held April 29-30. Over 100 people were in attendance including officials representing AHECB, along with Director Linda Beene, as well as board members, presidents and vice-presidents representing universities and colleges from across the state.

BRTC Dietetic students provided dinner and breakfast for the group. The agenda included Finance Committee and Academic Affairs meetings, followed by the regular board of higher education meeting. All meetings were open to the public.

New Child Development Center Celebrated



BRTC President Richard Gaines (right) visits with State Representative Paul Miller of Melbourne prior to the open house celebration of Black River Head Start/Early Head Start Child Development Center.

bration for the new Black River Head Start/Early Head Start Child Development Center on April 19. The 12,000-sq-foot center, which can serve a total of 120 children ages 3-5, is located on the northwest corner of the BRTC campus. The new facility can also serve 16 infants and toddlers.

provided funding assistance: Arkansas Department of Economic Development, City of Pocahontas, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services Head Start Bureau, BRAD Corporation, USDA Rural Development, and BRTC. The college provided the land where the facility is located, as well as a cash donation of \$50,000. One classroom has been designated for priority use by BRTC students, faculty, and staff on a paying basis for those who do not meet income guideline restrictions.

and Dietetics. Several other departments, including Developmental Reading, Law Enforcement, and Fire Science, partner with the Center in various educational activities.

BRTC's ECE Coordinator Debbye Jarrett noted the new center is an excellent opportunity for all parties, and said the availability of the modern new facility on the BRTC campus is simply "awesome."

BRTC delegates attending the open house, in addition to President Gaines and Jarrett, were Administrative Assistant Vickie French, Director of Continuing Education Patti Blaxton, and Director of Institutional Advancement Dr. Jan Ziegler.

In addition to this service, the center also serves as a lab setting for students in various BRTC programs: Early Childhood Education, Nursing,

Representatives from the many funding agencies, along with several of the children the new center serves, participated in the open house cele-

Head Start Director Barbara Sisco moderated the open house event, and introduced representatives from the following agencies, each of whom

Gift Announcement

his love of music. She stated the two elements came together, resulting in Kimbrough's decision to commit to the start-up funding for the "Kimbrough Choir of BRTC" in Fall of 2005, and an elite performance group, "Kimbrough Singers of BRTC," in the Fall of 2006.

The luncheon, sponsored by the BRTC Foundation, included recognition of community individuals and

business firms, along with BRTC faculty and staff, who contribute money to fund scholarships. In addition, students receiving the privately-funded scholarships attended the event. Three student representatives shared their own stories and spoke briefly of the importance of the scholarships.

Guest speaker, *The Jonesboro Sun* Editor Roy Ockert, discussed sev-

eral issues facing higher education. He noted concerns of funding due to the as yet unsettled questions surrounding the Lake View Supreme Court decision. Ockert also noted the state's relatively low college completion rate, particularly in several counties in northeast Arkansas. In order to be economically competitive in the global marketplace, Ockert pointed out, a well-trained and educated workforce is essential,

Cont'd from Page 1

and the state must do better if it is to thrive economically. He noted that growth in the state's two-year colleges does not seem to have translated thus far into corresponding increases in the four-year university graduation numbers. Ockert acknowledged the growing importance of private funding if institutions of higher education are to progress without large tuition increases in the coming years.

Electricity/Electronics Department has Guest Speaker

Dwight Gary of Gateway Engineering in Jonesboro was a special guest speaker in the Department of Electricity/Electronics April 20.

"Gary discussed with students job opportunities, the nature of maintenance work, and other types of work relative to the I.E.E. certificate offered by Black River," stated David Bowlin, Electricity Instructor. "Gary emphasized what should be taught in a program such as we have, and what shouldn't."

Gary is founder and owner of his multi-million dollar engineering company, "Gateway Engineering," located in Jonesboro, and is on the cutting-edge of today's technological achievements. His company engineers new control systems, offers maintenance contracts, and performs troubleshooting for industries nationwide. Mr. Bowlin's class was honored to have Mr. Gary as guest speaker.



Dwight Gary

Degree

Cont'd from Page 1

The program will allow BRTC students to transfer 68 credit hours into the degree program. It is especially designed to enable students to complete a bachelor's degree that will meet anticipated mandates for a certain percentage of Head Start teachers to have bachelor's degrees by 2010.

Fun Before Finals
Wednesday, May 5,
11 a.m. -2 p.m.
Food ♦ Games ♦ Music ♦ Prizes
Between BRTC Bookstore &
Adult Ed Bldg.

Head Start Educators Complete Degrees

A large number of BRAD Head Start/Early Head Start employees were among those honored at the 2004 Arkansas Head Start Recognition Banquet held April 26 at Cajun's Wharf in Little Rock. Most of those receiving certificates signaling the completion of degrees have completed their Associate of Arts degree, in accordance with federal mandate. The local Head Start was distinguished as having the largest number of staff members recognized for degree completion.

Head Start Director Barbara Sisco was recognized for completion of her BSE degree from University of Arkansas, while Kathy Bergman received recognition for completion of

her MSE degree from Arkansas State University. Sisco presided over the presentation of certificates in her capacity of President of the Arkansas Head Start Association.

Those recognized for completion of the AA degree were Brenda Arnold, Jeanette Blevins, Kim Bounds, Karla Brigham, Melinda Calhoun, Luane Casey, Sandra Garrett, Joy Hudson, Toshya Lane, Henrietta Lawrence, Crystal Lucas, Lisa Martin, Rhonda McKinney, Robyn Patrick, Belinda Ray, Pamela Ray, Brenda Skaggs, Carolyn Teel, Jody Thomason and Tina White. Arnold and Calhoun accepted the certificate on behalf of their late sister, Debbie Faires.

The associate degrees were completed at Black River Technical College, and four college officials were on hand to offer congratulations. Attending from BRTC were Presi-

dent Richard Gaines, Vice President for Academics Jack McCord, Early Childhood Education Coordinator Debbye Jarrett, and Director of Institutional Advancement Dr. Jan Ziegler.



BRAD Head Start/Early Head Start employees who have completed various educational degrees are pictured with their certificates, awarded April 26 in Little Rock.

BRTC Staff Pursue Degrees in Vo-Tech Administration

Five staff members at BRTC are working towards a Masters in Vocational Technical Administration at Arkansas State University. Dennis Cooper, Cindy Robinett, Tammie Lemmons, Kimberly Bigger, and Rhonda Stone are currently taking a course called Educators in Industry.

The class involves touring various industries in the area to see how educators and technical schools work with the industries to fill the needs of the community.

Ray Noel, BRTC Board of Trustees member, recently gave the class a tour of the ARI plant in Paragould.

Noel works in Human Relations at the facility that manufactures railcars.

Cooper and Bigger just began the 33-hour degree program, while Robinett, Lemmons, and Stone plan to graduate in the fall.



From left, Cooper, Robinett, Lemmons, Bigger, and Stone at ARI.

Globalization Focus Group

Dr. Linda Beene, Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, and Dr. Edward Franklin, Executive Director of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, conducted a meeting on globalization Thursday, April 29 in the Continuing Education Building at BRTC.

The meeting was held in conjunction with the quarterly meeting of the ADHE Coordinating Board, and was the only one held in rural Arkansas. Beene and Franklin met with a community focus group of approximately 20 participants to discuss the effects

of globalization on the rural South and to identify opportunities for rural communities to thrive in a global

economy. Information obtained from the focus group discussion will be presented in the 2004 Report on

the Future of the South to be released later this year.



Focus group members from left, Stephanie Sutton, Dennis Cooper, Bev Ducker, Ralph Baltz, N. Ray Campbell, and Tim Scott

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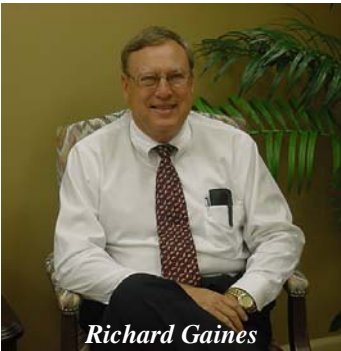
Mission Statement

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.

On-line Application address:

<http://connect.blackrivertech.org/nappadm.html>

From the President's Desk



Richard Gaines

It was truly a pleasure and an honor for BRTC to host the quarterly meeting of the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board April 29-30. This meeting brought many people from around Arkansas to Pocahontas and to this campus, many of them for the first time. Attending were members of the AHECB, staff members from the Department of Higher Education, and presidents and vice presidents of the state's colleges and universities. I so appreciate the efforts of the BRTC Board of Trustees, community leaders, and many

of the staff of this institution who worked so hard to make this a positive and enjoyable experience for our guests.

Sometimes we forget how fortunate we are and how impressive our campus and facilities are until we see them through the eyes of others. Certainly hosting this meeting gave us opportunity to reflect on the many positive aspects of BRTC. None of this happens without tremendous effort from the staff. In fact, a great deal of "extra effort" made this experience a great one. In particular, the dietary students of Tina Harris who prepared the dinner Thursday evening and the breakfast and lunch on Friday deserve special commendation. Also doing vital service were our Ambassadors, who worked to guide and assist in the activities. The maintenance and technology staff provided important service also. Many other individuals gave of their time and efforts to ensure the meet-

ing was a success, and I have tried to thank them individually. Special appreciation is due Vickie French, Administrative Assistant, for her planning and attention to hundreds of

details that will leave a favorable lasting impression of BRTC with key people from throughout the higher education network.

Delegation Plans D.C. Trip

Several area leaders are part of a delegation going to Washington D.C., May 1-4 as part of the 45th annual salute to Arkansas' Congressional delegation, sponsored by the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

After discussing the idea of presenting a united voice to help solve economic development and other issues for the region, officials of several Northeast Arkansas counties decided to form an alliance and send a delegation to meet with national leaders.

"One of the things we will do is meet as a group with our congressional delegation to let them know that we are working together and



Wayne Gearhart, Ann DeClerk
Review promotional material.

what our needs are," said Wayne Gearhart, executive director of the Pocahontas Chamber of Commerce who is a part of the delegation heading to the nation's capitol. BRTC Marketing Director Ann DeClerk is preparing promotional material for the delegation to take on their trip.