

April 29, 2005

Volume 3, Issue 8



**Inside this issue:**

*Students Help Judge on Bridge Support (cont'd from page 1)* 2

*"Fun Before Finals" (cont'd from page 1)* 2

*Phi Theta Kappa Inducts New Members* 3

*Moss, Chitty Attend International Conference* 3

*Graduation (cont'd from page 1)* 3

*Prospective PN Students Invited to "Meet and Greet"* 3

*From the President's Desk* 4

*Pam Penn Honored* 4

**Important Dates**

May 3

- Fun Before Finals

May 4 - 10

- Final Exams

May 5

- ASSET Test 8:00 a.m.

May 11

- Nursing Banquet
- Faculty/Staff Potluck

May 12

- BRTC Graduation

May 16

- Intersession Begins

May 31

- Summer Session I Begins

July 5

- Summer Session II Begins

## City Supports New Technology Center



Left to right: BRTC President Richard Gaines, Mayor Gary Crocker and BRTC Board of Trustees Chair Mike Dunn

The City of Pocahontas has taken the lead step, announced BRTC President Richard Gaines, in the City Council's recent decision to fund construction and equipment costs of the Community Conference Center in the planned new Business Technology Center. Gaines acknowledged the \$272,000 contribution at the college's annual Scholarship Donor-Recipient Luncheon held Thursday in Randolph County Development Center.

President Gaines expressed his appreciation to Pocahontas

*(Continued on page 2)*

## 'Fun Before Finals'

Students at Black River Technical College will ease into their period of final exams with the annual "Fun Before Finals" scheduled for Tuesday, May 3, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event will feature fun, games, food and prizes provided by local merchants and organizations, according to event coordinator Dr. Roger Johnson, Division Chair for General Education.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Student Art Showcase**  
Sunday, May 1  
RCDC 1-4 p.m.

*"Starving Artist" Sale*  
Art Department

*Kimbrough Chorus (2-3 p.m.)*  
Gary Gazaway  
PHS Percussionist

*Baked Goods Sale*  
Dietetics Department

*Business Cards-Gift Cards*  
Business Department

## Graduation to Highlight 'River's End' Award



Regina Moore (seated), Dr. Michael Sullens, Kim Bigger review graduation list to determine eligibility.

Some lucky BRTC student will be named as winner of "The River's End" special incentive award at the conclusion of graduation ceremonies Thursday, May 12. The award, a brand new Pontiac Vibe, has been established by Universal Asset Management, Inc., of Walnut Ridge in order to encourage BRTC students to complete their programs of study and earn that degree.

The winner, selected by a random drawing, will meet several criteria. He or she must complete his or her first one-year or two-year degree or certificate in the 2004-05 academic year, with at least 75 percent of applicable coursework completed at BRTC. Additionally, the recipient must have applied for and must have a documented

*(Continued on page 3)*



## Students Help Judge on Bridge Project



Presenting the PowerPoint disc to Randolph County Judge David Jansen (center) are, from left, Julie Perkins, Donna Neeley, Danielle Bramlett, Jansen, BRTC Business instructor Debbie Prichard, Shirley Creech, Karen McCarson and Becky Matthews.

Randolph County Judge David Jansen has received the assistance of BRTC Business students in his quest to do something about dangerous bridges in Randolph County. The students used the skills from their Business and Professional Presentations course taught by Debbie Prichard to create Power-

Point presentations showing the nineteen bridges in question, and then assisted the judge in showing that presentation at the April 7 meeting of the Randolph County Quorum Court.

Some of the students actually traveled to the sites for photographing the bridges for use in the PowerPoint presentation, and then working in three teams of four students each, they created the slide shows. One presentation depicts ten of the bridges, and one shows the remaining nine.

Jansen, who assumed office in January, had notified the Quorum Court of his concerns about several

low water bridges which sometimes become impassable, often resulting in residents being totally cut off during periods of high water. In the case of nine of the nineteen bridges, all access, including by emergency vehicles, is totally blocked to area residents during periods of flooding.

The County Judge has pledged to seek funding to assist in rectifying the problem, and has indicated the students' project will be very helpful as he works to obtain funding.

The twelve students participating in this project are Danielle Bramlett, Shirley Creech, Cecilia Easley, Garry Foster, Jamie Hall, Jaime Hill, Lori Lynxwiler, Rebecca Matthews, Karen McCarson, Donna Neeley, Julie Perkins and Jody Potter. Group leaders were Bramlett, Matthews and Perkins.

The class itself is actually an online class, Prichard explained, in which students typically meet in person only two times. However, the group met an additional two times in order to complete this project.

"I am very proud of the entire class for the fine work they did, and I know they benefited from being able to apply the things they learned in a real life setting. I'm pleased we were able to hopefully be of service to the County Judge, as well."

## Support

Mayor Gary Crocker and members of the Pocahontas City Council for their commitment to the college and to the economic development this facility represents.

Gaines presented an overview of BRTC's "Building Technology Through Community" capital campaign, through which the college is seeking funding support for the \$3.2 million facility. In addition to a community conference center, the facility will include a new student center, large and small lecture halls, computer labs, classrooms and faculty offices. The city's donation entitles it to a naming opportunity for the conference center, with high-tech features for a wide range of community uses.

The luncheon, sponsored by the BRTC Foundation, brought together a large audience of students receiving scholarships and those who provide the funding for those scholarships. Each individual or organizational donor was recognized, as were the students. Three students, Pam Penn, Hugo Guerra and James O'Quinn, presented responses on behalf of all those who receive scholarships.

Also highlighting the event were a mini-performance by the Kimbrough Choir and a keynote by Steve Manley, CEO of Universal Asset Management, Inc. The company, based locally at

the Walnut Ridge Airbase, disassembles airliners and sells the components to airlines and repair facilities.

The Kimbrough Choir was developed following last year's major gift to the college by retired Pocahontas businessman Dexter Kimbrough. Under the direction of Joniece Trammel and accompanied by Glenda Blasini, the performance included a guest performance by percussionist Michael Guthrie and by internationally known jazz trumpeter, Gary Gazaway.

In his comments, Manley stressed to the students the importance of completing a degree or certificate, and to the donors, the importance of giving back to the community. He cited qualities for success as being commitment, focus on goals, belief in oneself and a positive attitude.

The entrepreneur has established at BRTC a special incentive designed to help motivate students to persevere and to complete their degrees. Each academic year, one randomly-selected graduate meeting specified criteria will be the recipient of a new automobile. The car this year, a Pontiac Vibe, will be awarded by a drawing at the May 12 graduation.

UAM has offices in Memphis, Atlanta, Seattle and Minneapolis, and in Melbourne, Australia and

Auckland, New Zealand. Manley cited the existence of an aviation program at BRTC as a major factor in the company's decision to locate at Walnut Ridge.



Steve Manley

Continued from page 1

## 'Fun Before Finals'

Continued from page 1

All students are invited for the free hot dogs, chips, cookies and drinks, and are urged also to take part in volleyball, horseshoes and other games, as well as to be present for the drawings for many prizes.

Final exams will be held May 4-10, and graduation is set for May 12.

Dr. Linda Beene, Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, will be keynote speaker at the graduation, which begins at 7 p.m. in Randolph County Development Center.



## Phi Theta Kappa Inducts New Members

The Beta Delta Phi Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society at Black River Technical College recently inducted 24 new members. The induction ceremony was held April 19 in the Randolph County Development Center.

Students are nominated for induction into PTK based on scholarship, leadership, service and fellowship, and who have completed at least 12 hours of applicable course work with a GPA of 3.5. The purpose of PTK is to recognize and encourage scholarship among associate degree students. PTK has been recognizing academic achievement in two-year colleges since 1918.

Serving as chapter advisors are Gary Buxton, Dr. Linda E. Moss, Phillip Dickson, and Ruth Schaa.

Students inducted include Dona Bissey, Tamara Caldwell, Ramona Coe, Jimmy Downs, Michael Doyle, April Elledge, Amanda Finch, Melissa Gugle, Tave Harris, Destiny Horton, Jeanna Howard, Logan James-Puckett, Monica James, Ruby Johnston, Justin Kemp, Alvin Lewis, Rebecca Matthews, Amanda Mills-Neill, Trella Moore, Elizabeth Snow, Trina Swift, Helen Swindle, Marcia VanCannon, and Karen White.



## Prospective PN Students Invited to ‘Meet and Greet’

All those planning to apply for admission into BRTC’s Practical Nursing program 2005 Fall class are urged to attend an informational “Meet and Greet” on Tuesday, May 10, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Randolph County Development Center. The meeting, according to Nursing Director Ramonda Housh, is not mandatory, but, she added, “We strongly suggest attendance.”

The meeting, which will include refreshments, is designed to bring together the prospective students and their immediate family members with the BRTC nursing faculty and staff, as well as some previous graduates and those who are currently

completing the PN program. “This will provide an opportunity for asking questions, gathering additional financial information, and in general learning what our program is all about,” Housh added.

To be accepted into the PN program, students must have completed the following prerequisites: Human Growth and Development, Basic Human Nutrition, Human Anatomy and Physiology with Lab I, Intermediate Algebra or equivalent, Introduction to Computer Concepts, and Freshman English I. Questions should be referred to Housh at 870-248-4000 EXT 4174 or Dana Clay at EXT 4150.

Housh also announced the following important dates for current and prospective nursing students: May 13—Deadline for applications for admission into the program; May 9-12—Acceptance of payment for Nursing Entrance Test (NET) and scheduling test appointments with Dana Clay at 248-4000, EXT 4150, Office SC107; and May 16-19—NET Dates.

Applications for the next PN to RN Transition class will be accepted during the months of July and August. The twelve-month RN program begins annually in January.

## Moss, Chitty Attend International Conference

Dr. Linda Moss, chapter advisor of Phi Theta Kappa at Black River Technical College, and Dawn Chitty, PTK regional vice president, attended the 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Phi Theta Kappa International Convention April 13-16 near Dallas, Texas.

Over 4,000 people representing all 50 United States, Canada, Guam, Germany, and several other countries were in attendance. An advisor education pre-conference began the week followed by a selection of over 70 educational forums held each day throughout the remainder of the conference.



Dr. Linda Moss and Dawn Chitty

Among the guest speakers and entertainers present during the conference was former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, pop and soul singer Patti LaBelle, three-time U.S. National Champion Figure Skater Michael Weiss, and Grammy Award-winner and Phi Theta Kappa alumnus Rudy Gatlin. Gaddi H. Vasquez, National Director of the Peace Corps and a community college graduate was a guest speaker at the opening ceremonies.

“The educational forums offered at the conference were very interesting and provided great ideas for increasing PTK awareness and involvement,” Moss explained.

## Graduation Continued from page 1

need for financial aid.

Steve Manley, head of UAM, will be on hand to present the keys of the car to the winner at graduation to be held in Randolph County Development Center. Approximately 170 students will graduate.

# Black River Technical College

P.O. Box 468  
1410 Hwy 304 East  
Pocahontas, AR 72455

Phone: 870-248-4000  
Fax: 870-248-4100

Website: [www.blackrivertech.org](http://www.blackrivertech.org)

P.O. Box 1565  
2402 North 12th Avenue  
Paragould, AR 72450

Phone: 870-239-0969  
Fax: 870-239-2050

## 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.*

*The River's Edge is produced by the Office of Institutional Advancement.*

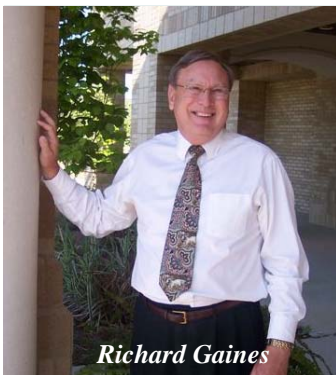
[janz@blackrivertech.org](mailto:janz@blackrivertech.org)  
[annd@blackrivertech.org](mailto:annd@blackrivertech.org)  
[dina.hufstedler@blackrivertech.org](mailto:dina.hufstedler@blackrivertech.org)

**On-line Application address:**

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



## From the President's Desk



*Richard Gaines*

BRTC is winding down yet another semester, and for close to 170 students, this May 12 will mark not so much an ending as a new beginning. They may think their relationship with this college is coming to a close, but this is not necessarily the case. Here's why.

As Arkansas works to increase its college completion rate, all two-year colleges track to some extent what happens to our students after the caps and gowns have been put away. We need to know, for example, whether

our graduates go directly into the workforce upon completion of their degrees. And if so, we want to know whether they are employed in the field in which they were trained, and whether their employers consider them to have been properly trained and educated. These matters are important to us for many reasons, including our desire to continually monitor and improve our programs and services here at BRTC.

Like other two-year institutions, we also look at information to learn whether our "college transfer" students do, in fact, transfer to a four-year institution. This is true not only of those who complete their Associate of Arts degree with us, but also those who have not graduated but who simply do not return in the subsequent semester.

Currently, our "success" and the "retention" rates look pretty good. According to the most recently released data from Arkansas Depart-

## Pam Penn Honored



*Pam Penn and Angie Caldwell*

Pam Penn, dietary student, at BRTC, is this year's recipient of the "Cathy O. Johnson Dietetic Leadership Award." Penn is in her last semester of studies at BRTC.

ment of Higher Education, BRTC's "success rate" places us in the top three among the 22 Arkansas two-year colleges. Our rate of 51% for the three-year period from 2001-2004 ties with that at ASU-Newport; only UACC-Batesville is higher at 57%. The state two-year average is 44%.

The award is designed to allow the honoree to start his or her professional library of appropriate dietary materials for use in the workplace. Penn announced she has purchased materials on childhood nutrition, particularly materials to help prevent childhood obesity, and indicated she will use these in her work with Head Start children.

The award, made through the BRTC Foundation, was established by Angie Caldwell in order to honor the late Cathy O. Johnson, a BRTC Dietetics and Business graduate who lost her battle with cancer in 2002.

Even with a good standing, we are not satisfied. We have begun intensive study of factors influencing student retention, and we will eventually develop a campus-wide retention plan designed to lessen the numbers of students who do not succeed by either completing their degree or by transferring to a four-year college.