



# The River's Edge

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### Important Dates

December 21—January 1

Offices Closed for Christmas Break

January 2

Registration Resumes

January 8

Classes Begin

January 12

Last Day to Add a Class

January 19

BRTC Foundation Board Meeting

January 26

Serendipity Meeting

## December Graduation Breaks Records

A record number of students received degrees and certificates at BRTC's December commencement Thursday, December 14, according to data from the office of Student Services. BRTC President Richard Gaines conferred a total of 184 degrees and certificates earned by 175 students, with several completing more than one program of study. This number is an all-time high for winter graduations, and ties the record for spring graduations.

College officials also were pleased that a record number of the graduates attended the ceremony, where Arkansas Farm Bureau President Stanley Reed served as commencement speaker. Graduate Roger Steven Jones of Hoxie served as the class spokesman.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the names of five finalists were drawn and announced. These finalists' names will be included in the May commencement drawing for the "River's End" Incentive Award, a new car

given by Universal Asset Management's CEO, Steve Manley of Memphis. The five are Jeffrey Arthur Jordan, Sr., of Pocahontas; Elizabeth Diane Smith of Pocahontas; Lena Mae Johnson of Walnut Ridge; Gretchen A. Yates of Pocahontas; and Andrea Katherine Prondzinski of Pocahontas. Five names from those completing either two-year degrees or one-year certificates in May will be drawn, making a total of ten finalists for the new car.



The award is currently in its third year, and was established by Manley as a tool for encouraging students to complete their degrees and programs of study.

Departmental awards were presented to the following: Patrick Ballard of Paragould, English; Shana Akers of Ravenden, Fine Arts Visual; Samantha Blackwell of Maynard, Drawing, History and Music; Carl D. Finley of Marmaduke, Math; and Dilliu Henderson of Corning,

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## Power's Book Publication Announced



Dr. Charlotte Power

Dr. Charlotte Power has signed an agreement with University Press of America for publication of her

book. Power, who lives in Jonesboro, is instructor of Social Sciences at BRTC. The book, *A Quiet Revolution: American Women and the Vietnam War*, is based on Power's dissertation completed in fulfillment of her doctoral degree at University of Memphis in 2001.

The book's topic is the presence of American women in Vietnam, both military and civilian, according to Power. "I interviewed about 32 women regarding their experiences in Vietnam," she explained. "It was profoundly interesting to me."

She said her dissertation exam-

ined the fact that women who served as nurses in Vietnam were allowed to perform more sophisticated medical procedures than they typically performed in the United States. Consequently, she continued, Vietnam veteran nurses often either left the profession upon their return home, or pressed for reforms, making this a sort of "revolution."

The book also explores other issues the women faced, including a delay or reluctance by the government in recognizing them as veterans

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# Graduation

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Chemistry and Physical Science.

Also, Vicky Carter of Pocahontas, Psychology; Joy Clairmont of Maynard, Criminal Justice; Bryan Meeks of Black Rock, Aviation; Lena Johnson of Walnut Ridge, Accounting; Roger Jones of Hoxie, Business Administration; Karen White of Pocahontas, Microcomputer Business Applications; and Matthew McFadden of Paragould,

Networking.

Also, Stacey Brown of Paragould, Dietary Manager; Steve Matlock of Warm Springs, Industrial Electricity/Electronics; Heather Hanson of Pocahontas, Practical Nursing; Lisa Hayes Rohrer of Imboden, Registered Nursing; and Reba Grooms of Hoxie, Phlebotomy.



GRADUATION  
FALL 2006



Front row, from left, Crystal Brower, James Ross, Josh Morris, Erick Shavalia, Bryan Rosse, Cord Matthews, Cory Long. Back row, from left, Chris Moore, Conrad Newberry, Paul Burgess, Matt Wesley, Josh White, Mark Panter, Mark Niswonger, Nate Taylor.

## Interim Comm Class Held

While many students were sleeping in and enjoying the holiday break after completing the fall semester, sixteen technical education students at BRTC enrolled in and successfully completed an intensive eight-day intersession course in Career Communications. The intersession pilot project was developed by Instructional Specialist Dr. Martie Shull in response to a survey she administered to students enrolled in the technical programs.

The survey showed that a large percentage of technical students complete their required technical courses but do not continue on to complete their Gen Ed components and earn a degree. "I wanted to know why they weren't finishing," said Shull. "I

found that students were not continuing on in school because of the demands of balancing work, school, and family responsibilities." The Career Technical Education course was developed through funding from the Perkins Grant to increase vocational achievement and completion rates for degrees among BRTC technical students. The intersession course, which ran from 8:00-2:00 each day for eight days, was scheduled during the break time to accommodate those students wishing to complete their program of study so they can graduate in May, 2007.

The course covered many aspects of communication in a workplace environment beginning with writing a resume and cover letter, followed by

## 'Never too young...'



To the surprise and delight of the audience at BRTC's commencement December 14, the young son of graduate Donna Stormes followed "Mama" onto the stage for the diploma presentation. His tears turned to smiles when Stormes noticed Ayden George, not quite two years old, and picked up the tot as she left the stage. She is one of 175 students graduating, and one of approximately 50 students receiving an Associate of Arts, or college transfer degree. Stormes is a Corning High School graduate. She lives at Walnut Ridge where she is employed at McDonald's.

an interview and a thank-you letter. Students were required to complete a personal portfolio by the end of the course.

Students also participated in mock interviews and listened to several guest speakers from various businesses in the community. These included Jonesboro businessmen Drew Beaverstock of Thomas and Betts and Josh Sandlin of Jones and Company, CPAs ; Mike Dunn, retired executive with John

Deere; Kelly Rose of Bank of Pocahontas; and Scott Trammel of Tool Central.

"The students were great," noted Shull. "They were very friendly and cooperative and dedicated to their work and attendance." The 3-hour-credit course completed by the group of sixteen students will not only satisfy a Gen Ed requirement in preparation for earning a degree, but will also help prepare students for advancement in the workplace.

# Gaines Scholarship Winners Named

Seven students have been awarded Gaines Scholarships for the 2007 Spring semester, according to the office of Financial Aid. The scholarships, \$1000 each, are funded by First Community Bank in honor of BRTC President Richard Gaines and his wife, Patti Gaines.

Recipients are Terri Milburn, Jonathan Bennett, Eric Oliver, Tammy Lundry, Kimberly Lamb, Stacey Brown and Kayleigh Wilson.

Milburn is a 1995 Hoxie High

School graduate. She is seeking an Associate of Arts degree at BRTC before transferring to a university to major in Physical Education. Bennett graduated from Greene County Tech in Paragould. He plans to major in nursing, eventually working toward a BSN and MSN degree at ASU.

A Walnut Ridge High School graduate, Oliver plans to complete the Gen Ed courses at BRTC and then transfer to ASU to major in Radiology. He is the son of Sandy Denton and Ronny and Sharon Oliver. Lundry's career plans are in

the field of Dietetics, with plans to become a Registered Dietitian. She is a Pocahontas High School graduate.

Lamb, a Pocahontas High graduate, plans to complete the Practical Nursing degree program at BRTC. A 1983 Oak Grove High School graduate, Brown plans a career in the field of Dietetics. Wilson, daughter of Jerry and Ursula Wilson, graduated from Corning High School. She is completing her AA degree at BRTC, after which she will transfer to a university where she will major in Orthodontics and Orthodontic

Hygiene.

President Gaines expressed his appreciation to FCB for their generous gesture in establishing the Gaines Scholarship program. "On behalf of the students, Patti and I want to once again say thank you to First Community Bank for this honor. We know it is making a positive difference in the lives of many students."

The awarding of these seven scholarships bring to 25 the number of Gaines scholarships awarded to date, for a total of \$25,000.



Stacey Brown



Kimberly Lamb



Tammy Lundry



Terry Milburne



Eric Oliver



Eric Turner



Kayleigh Wilson

# Silent Auction Generates \$5,000 for Single Parents

When combined with "match" monies from the Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship program, the proceeds from a silent/live auction at the BRTC employee potluck represents approximately \$5,000 for the local Single Parent chapter, according to Janna Guthrey, Academic Secretary.

The auction was held in conjunction with the annual Christmas potluck and included BRTC employees, retired staff, and members of the BRTC Board of Trustees and the BRTC Foundation Board and spouses. Guthrey organized the event, where just over \$2,000 in actual purchases was raised. That money will be matched up to 150% by the state organization, and then used to fund scholarships for eligible Randolph County single parents pursuing higher education.

The Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship program has provided

more than \$71,000 in scholarships to date. A total of 16 students were awarded scholarships (\$500 per full-time student) in the Fall 2006 semester.

"We are thrilled with the outcome," Guthrey said. "Everyone seemed to have a good time while helping with a very worthwhile cause."

Academic VP Jack McCord served as "auctioneer," while BRTC Board of Trustees Chair Mike Dunn assisted as "ring man." BRTC employees Tina Harris, Travis DeClerk and Gary Meier provided the barbecue, while others brought side dishes and drinks.

"Every penny of the money goes toward scholarships," Guthrey said. "We greatly appreciate all those who brought items to auction, those who bought the items, and those who bid on the items," Guthrey said. "Our

goal as a chapter is to be able to fund every eligible applicant at \$500 per semester for full-time enrollment, and this great participation by so many people helps us to do just that."

MSSPS applications for the Spring 2007 semester are due in the office of

financial aid are due February 1. Applications are available online ([www.blackrivertech.edu](http://www.blackrivertech.edu)) or in the Office of Financial Aid and at Camera Corner in downtown Pocahontas.



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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.*

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

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## From the President's Desk



*Richard Gaines*

Black River Technical College is no stranger to ever-increasing enrollment levels. It is still astounding to consider that in a ten-year period, our enrollment has increased from 1092 in the fall semester of 1996 to 1920 students in the fall semester of 2006. That's an increase of more than 75 percent.

Increasingly, however, institutions of higher education like ours are focusing on the completion and retention rates. To greater extent

than previously, state funding levels will be tied to the numbers of students who either graduate or continue their education at other institutions.

That makes good sense in that degree completion is crucial to a healthier economic future for this state. Accordingly, our graduation numbers have continued to increase as our enrollment has grown.

It is vitally important to community colleges like BRTC that the state develop a way to accurately reflect those students who do complete their educational goals, even though in some instances that goal may be neither to complete a degree nor to continue at a senior institution.

We are continually working with legislators and others to ensure that the students who attend two-year colleges are accounted for with that fact in mind.

## Power's

Continued from Page 1

and in admitting their exposure to Agent Orange, a carcinogen.

Power is drafting an additional chapter on "Operation Babylift," an attempt at the end of the war to try to

save "Amerasian" children. She indicated publication will proceed once the chapter and formatting changes are completed.

## Career Comm Guest Speakers

*Speakers for the Career Comm class, top from left, Drew Beaverstock, Scott Trammel. Bottom from left, Mike Dunn, Kelly Rose, and Josh Sandlin.*

