



The River's Edge

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Important Dates

- February 1**
Board of Trustees Meeting
- February 18**
College Goal Sunday
- February 23**
Jim Armstead - Black History Chautauquan Presentation
- March 15**
Holocaust Survivor Visit
- March 16**
Foundation Board Meeting
- March 27**
BRTC Foundation Gala
- March 19 - 23**
BRTC Spring Break

Mike and Barbara Dunn to Chair 'Growing Strong' Campaign

Mike and Barbara Dunn have agreed to serve as co-chairs of the BRTC Foundation's 'Growing Strong' Annual Campaign. The campaign, which was launched at the January 19 Foundation meeting, is a targeted effort to generate additional funding for scholarships, special event and activities support (SEAS), endowments, and Foundation operating support.

Dunn serves as Chair of the BRTC Board of Trustees, and is an ex-officio member of the BRTC Foundation. He and his wife Barbara returned to Pocahontas after Dunn's retirement as an executive with Deere & Co.

"We are extremely honored to have been asked to co-chair this campaign," Dunn said. "We

believe in the importance of BRTC in this community, and we are happy to do what we can to help."

The goal of the campaign, according to BRTC President Richard Gaines, is to allow the college to continue and expand in those areas designated in the campaign, or in other ways as specified by the donor.

"All institutions of higher education increasingly must rely on private funds to help us serve all our constituents," said President Gaines. "There are so many worthwhile programs and services that are beyond the scope and ability of state funding. Dollars generated from this campaign will help us to provide some of those opportunities that otherwise might not be within our means."



Mike and Barbara Dunn

Spring Enrollment Remains Steady

For the third consecutive spring semester, BRTC's student headcount hovered around the 1,800 level, according to information released by the Office of Student Services. The official figure for the Spring 2007 semester is 1796, down about one percent from Spring of 2006, and virtually the same as Spring of 2005.

The number includes 1431 students enrolled on the Pocahontas campus, and a new record number, 365, enrolled at the Paragould campus. The FTE level, or full-time equivalency number, according to

VP for Student Services Dr. Michael Sullens, is also down slightly from the Spring 2006 FTE level.

In approximate percentages, Randolph County is home to 38% of the students; Greene County to 19%; Lawrence County to 18%; Clay County to 9%; Craighead County to 8%; other Arkansas counties to 5%; and about 3% of the students live out of state.

Just over half, about 53%, are full-time students, and almost 14% are concurrently enrolled high school students.

College Goal Sunday

To assist prospective college students and their parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

February 18, 2007

2:00 p.m.

BRTC - RCDC

www.arcollegegoalsunday.org

For more information contact: Carolyn Collins
870-248-4000 ext. 4020

FNB Gives to Business Technology Center

Milton Smith of First National Bank of Walnut Ridge, Hoxie and Pocahontas presented a check last week to Black River Technical College for the new Business Technology Center.

FNB is one of several corporate supporters of the new facility, slated for an early summer opening. The bank's pledge of \$100,000 entitles FNB to a naming opportunity for the large lecture hall in the 26,000 sq-ft facility. The facility, currently under construction adjacent to Randolph County Development Center, is projected to cost some \$3.3 million. Technology classes will be moved to the facility, freeing up needed space elsewhere on campus and allowing for the consolidation of the program and its faculty.

"We are pleased to support the college and hope that others in the community will follow us by making similar commitments," Smith said. "BRTC is a vital economic and cultural resource to the area."

This brings the bank's total gift to \$35,000 to date.

"We are extremely grateful to First National Bank for their support of BRTC, and in particular for the pledge toward the construction of this new technology center. The college and the community will benefit greatly from your partnership in this project," BRTC President Richard Gaines said in accepting the check.



Richard Gaines and Milton Smith

First Community Bank Continues Gaines Scholarship Program

Officials of First Community Bank have signaled their continued funding support for the Richard and Patti Gaines Scholarship program at Black River Technical College with a \$25,000 donation for the second year of the project.

FCB established the Gaines Scholarship program last year in order to support the college while recognizing

the efforts and commitment of President Gaines and his wife. "This is an excellent way for our bank to honor two wonderful people," bank officials said. "The Richard and Patti Gaines Scholarship fund is another way they can enjoy giving back to our community." To date, 25 scholarships, each totaling \$1,000, have been awarded with the FCB gift.

"Patti and I are so appreciative for this gesture and for the generosity of First Community Bank," President Gaines said. "FCB has long been a tremendous supporter of this institution, and this scholarship program just extends what we are able to do to provide much-needed scholarship dollars to our students."

**BRTC
Foundation Gala**

March 27, 2007

See Vickie French
for tickets
248-4000 ext. 4070

Bank of Pocahontas Officials Make Donation



Pictured from left, Richard Gaines, Terry Dixon, and Mike Miller.

Bank of Pocahontas officials presented a check in support of the new Business Technology Center to BRTC President Richard Gaines last week. The bank has pledged a substantial donation to be paid over a five-year period toward the construction of the facility, which will house the college's business and computer technology program and provide other much-needed space for college and community activities.

In keeping with the college's policies, the BOP pledge entitles the bank to a naming opportunity in the building's Student Center and Internet Café. The facility will also include a high-tech Community

Conference Center, as well as classrooms, faculty offices, and lecture hall space.

"This support from Bank of Pocahontas is deeply appreciated. Because of this type of commitment, we are able to construct a facility that will not only meet critical needs, but will do so at a level of sophistication otherwise not possible," said President Gaines.

On hand to make the check presentation were BOP President Terry Dickson and Senior Vice President Mike Miller. The contribution brings to \$40,000 the amount the bank has contributed to date.

Four Staff Members Earn Degrees

Black River Technical College staff members, Shana Akers, Suzette Musick-Hicks, Janet Mason and Malissa Crawford, were recently awarded college degrees.



Shana Akers

Akers was awarded an Associate of Arts in General Studies degree from BRTC in December. She began working as Secretary for Student Services in 2003 and was promoted to Registrar Assistant this past July. She also holds an Associate of Applied Science degree which she earned from BRTC in 2000.



Suzette Musick-Hicks

Respiratory Care Program Director Musick-Hicks has earned a Bachelor of Theology degree from Christian Life School of Theology in Columbus, Georgia, where she also earned an Associate of Theology degree. She also holds the following: Associate of Science degree from Chattanooga State Technical Community College in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Registered Respiratory Therapist, Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist, Nursing Assistant, and Emergency Medical Techni-

cian-Ambulance certificates. She began working at BRTC in 2005.



Janet Mason

Mason recently earned a Bachelor in Business Administration degree with a major in Healthcare Management from American Intercontinental University (AIU). She also holds a Secretarial Training certificate from Arkansas State University, Associate of Applied Science degrees in both Microcomputer Business Applications and Respiratory Care from BRTC, and an Advanced Respiratory Care Technology certificate. Mason has been at BRTC since 2005 as an instructor in the Respiratory Care program.



Malissa Crawford

Crawford, an Applications Programmer at BRTC, was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Technology degree from Arkansas State University in December. She also holds an Associate of Science degree from ASU. Crawford has worked in Computer Services at BRTC for ten years.



Samantha Cates of Pocahontas, a student in the Practical Nursing program at BRTC, donates blood for the first time during Phi Theta Kappa's quarterly blood drive held January 17 in the Randolph County Development Center. She is tended to by Mary Ferguson, a nurse with the Jonesboro Red Cross staff. According to Dr. Linda Moss, PTK Advisor, over 30 pints of blood were collected during the drive which saw many first-time givers.



Adjunct Nursing Instructor Sandra Green assists Practical Nursing student Rebecca Robins with checking the blood pressure of Angie Caldwell, Division Chair of Business and Technology at BRTC. According to Nursing Director Ramonda Housh, Nursing I students were learning how to check vital signs, and faculty and staff were invited to receive vital checks from the students allowing them to practice what they have learned.

Serendipity Hears about Immigrant Experiences

BRTC's Serendipity members considered different aspects of the immigrant experience during their meeting Friday. Guest



Consuelo Cobian

speaker Consuelo Cobian shared her family's personal experiences in coming to the United States from her home in Jalisco, Mexico.

Serendipity is co-directed by Patti Blaxton of the Department of Continuing Education and Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development. The organization which currently consists of more than thirty members is designed to appeal particularly to those who are retired or nearing retirement. Members attend monthly luncheon meetings centered around a central theme with varied topics and readings. The year's theme is "The Power of 'Place': How Do I Belong?" Ziegler led the members through discussion of a short story by Chinese American author Gish Jen, "In the American Society," and on questions of how identity is formed. The program also included a video segment from "U. S. Immigrants: A Multi-Cultural Journey."

Serendipity members listened as Cobian explained her family's odyssey from their home first to Chicago, and later to Pocahontas. She explained the hardships and the joys of the journey. Among questions Cobian fielded were those relating to learning English and obtaining American citizenship, a feat she has accomplished.

She spoke of the many years she has studied English to reach her present fluency, and of the daunting road, literally and figuratively, to American citizenship, requiring her to travel to three different cities, Memphis, Tennessee, Louisville, Kentucky, and finally Little Rock, along with a great deal of study and work. In the process of many years, she explained, Pocahontas has truly become "home" to her and to her husband, Rigo Cobian, and their three children. The Cobians operate El Acapulco Restaurant in Pocahontas.

For more information on Serendipity contact Blaxton at 248-4181.

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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

We are well into the swing of another semester here at BRTC. A full schedule of events and activities that support and complement what goes on in the classrooms is also well underway. These include continuing construction, funding campaigns, and many community and campus events in the coming weeks and months.

It is always gratifying when our community partners, such as Bank of Pocahontas, First National Bank of Walnut Ridge, Hoxie and Pocahon-

tas, and First Community Bank, provide actual dollars in support of building and scholarship programs. Announcements of financial support from these financial institutions appear in this issue of *The River's Edge*.

Some of that support stems from our recent capital campaign for the new Business Technology Center. Even though we are nearing completion of this building, opportunity remains for other businesses, organizations, or individuals who would like to partner with us in this project. We also have just initiated an annual campaign, designed to expand the college's ability to provide additional scholarships and services to better serve the community's needs. Announcement of a fundraising "Gala" is further evidence of BRTC's commitment to fulfill its purpose in improving the quality of life in our region.

In the coming weeks, we hope you will join our students and staff as well as secondary school students in taking advantage of the opportunities to enjoy guest speakers and attend events which are made possible, at least in part, through the hu-

man and financial resources of this college. We know we benefit greatly from this community, and we take seriously our responsibility to give a good return, educationally and culturally, to this community.

BRTC Adds Two to Staff



Gloria Thompson

Gloria Thompson of Jonesboro has joined the BRTC staff as Business and Industry Instructor at the Paragould campus. She will be working directly with area businesses and industries, primarily in Greene County, teaching soft skills such as leadership, team training, workplace readiness, customer service, and human resource management. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Social Work with a minor in Human Resource Management.

She previously worked at Arkansas State University as a Human Resource Specialist.



Tracy Greenway

Tracy Greenway of Marmaduke has joined the BRTC staff as Secretary for the Paragould Campus. She holds both an Associate's degree in Office Administration and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Arkansas State University. She has worked for the past four years as a flight attendant with Sky West out of Denver, Colorado.