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'College Goal Sunday' to Highlight Financial Aid Options

On Sunday, February 18, Black River Technical College will be one of 29 sites throughout the state to host Arkansas' first College Goal Sunday, according to Director of Financial Aid Carolyn Collins. The event will take place at 2:00 p.m. in Randolph County Development Center on the BRTC campus in Pocahontas.

College Goal Sunday is designed to assist prospective college students and their parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and is funded through a three-year grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education. "The Arkansas College Goal Sunday program is an effort by hundreds of volunteers from across Arkansas who will come together on a Sunday afternoon with the common goal of making sure that the process of applying for college financial aid does not become an obstacle that would keep any person from pursuing an education beyond high school," said Scott

Medlin, state-wide coordinator.

"We just want folks to know that an education beyond high school is important, that financial aid is always available to help pay for their education, and that it's definitely worth the effort to successfully complete the federal financial aid application," Medlin added.



BRTC Financial Aid Director Carolyn Collins and Financial Aid Officer Mary Anderson

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Important Dates

- February 18**
College Goal Sunday
- February 23**
Jim Armstead - Black History Chautauquan Presentation
- March 6**
Health Fair
- March 8**
PTK Induction
- March 12**
Advisory Dinner
- March 15**
Holocaust Survivor Visit
- March 27**
Foundation Board Mtg

BRTC Grad Pursuing Dream

Cora Turner was a non-traditional student when she enrolled at BRTC. That was eleven years after abandoning her college studies in Michigan because of the demands of life in general and motherhood in particular. At 37, she's still considered "non-traditional." But the determined and bright young woman who now has completed two degrees at BRTC is on a mission, and she is clicking off achievements one by one, enroute to a future she has long envisioned.

Technical College. Turner was a single parent when she began her studies at BRTC in



Cora Turner

2004. The recipient of a Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship, she found encouragement from the faculty and

staff, and was named BRTC's Academic All-Star at the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges. She then gained entrance into BRTC's Respiratory Care program, and completed the AAS degree last semester. The task was not easy, she points out, with days beginning as early as 2 or 4 a.m. at times when she had clinicals at Poplar Bluff.

"If it were not for my husband and kids and the support they, along with the staff at BRTC gave me, I never could have done it," she declares emphatically. "The people at BRTC have been great."

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Local Heritage Class Learns of 'Corn Shuck Chair'



Shirley Chester of Pocahontas is a student at BRTC. She recently brought a 'corn shuck chair' to school to show fellow students in her Local Community Heritage class taught by Gary Buxton. Following is the story behind the corn shuck chair in the words of Ms. Chester.

"As a territory and state it has been a very rocky road to travel to get to the year of 2007 for Arkansas and certainly it is true for Randolph County. However, traveling toward unmapped horizons have been honest, creative and decent men and women so industrious with great perseverance and zeal the following story might bring to mind that shortly after World War II hard times lingered in early 1950's.

Schools had very little money for comfortable seating in many classrooms so the McClroy Home Demonstration Club just west of Eleven Point River on Highway 90 decided to use materials with very little cost to make seating for the 1st and 2nd grade children at Ravenden Springs School. The women retrieved old discarded ladder back chairs that no longer could be used and had been retired and hung out of the way in barn lofts. The women met several times each month for three or four months to work all day putting corn shuck bottoms in the cast-a-way chairs. The chair legs were sawed off about 3 inches and the chairs painted with paint left over from households (many colors of red, blue, green, black and white and all

very beautiful). Then the women would braid strips of corn shucks, soaked in water to be made pliable, and wove beautiful seats, and with the heights of the chairs (with legs sawed off) the children rested their little feet on the floor.

The school personnel and parents alike admired the art of corn shucks braiding for the use of the young with the comfortable height and beauty. This is only one story of industriousness and zeal practice in those times of history. The good women of the Home Demonstration Club were paid well for they would have an all day visit with pot luck lunch and what they called 'social event' and OH! that H.D.C. (club) had some super good cooks."

Grad Pursuing Dream

Continued from page 1

On the same day Turner graduated with her AAS degree in Respiratory Care in December of 2006, she sat for and passed the National Board for Respiratory Care. Now a Certified Respiratory Therapist, Turner has gained admission to Arkansas State University's Exercise Science program. She is seeking a BS degree in the field, with plans to continue on for a Master's degree in Exercise Science.

ASU awarded Turner the Academic All-Star Scholarship in recognition of that earlier designation. She said ASU staff have also been helpful and cooperative. She travels three days weekly to

Jonesboro, and works two days weekly at Randolph County Medical Center in the Polysomnography (Sleep Study) Department.

She has found that her studies at BRTC have prepared her well for the junior and senior level coursework she must complete at ASU. "I just can't say enough about Dr. (Larry) Hilburn," she said. "He has always encouraged me to go on, and he always challenged me to rise to the level where he is teaching. I owe so much to him. I feel I am well-prepared academically."

Turner hopes eventually for a career in which she combines Exercise Science with Respiratory Care, in a Senior Wellness Center, for example. "I hope I can help people to have a better quality of life with small changes in their diet and exercise. Maybe I can help promote healthier living, say, for those with COPD and other pulmonary diseases, maybe cut down on visits to the ER and increase their ability to perform functions like walking or bathing on their own. That may seem like a small thing, but to many people, these things are major," Turner says, and then adds, "At least that's my dream."

Photography Class Tours Professional Studio



Kellee Hardage's Digital Photography Class

The BRTC Digital Photography class toured the Joey Glaub Fine Art Portraits studio in Bono, Feb. 6. The entire facility was showcased, beginning with the display lobby area. In the framing area, Glaub explained how portraits are matched to frames. In the actual studio, students took part in a photo shoot. Glaub explained various shooting methods and techniques. He talked about backgrounds, props, outdoor scenes, camera settings, and a great deal about how lighting affects pictures. Glaub discussed some of the features of PhotoshopCS2, the editing software he uses, and described the different levels of photos he offers his clients, from Basic to Masterpiece, all depending on how much editing of the image is involved. In the viewing room, students viewed pictures taken of the class and then saw demonstrations of how images are edited, organized and compared for his clients.

Student's Awarded Scholarships



Sheisla Coffman

Keith Frankenberger

Sheisla Coffman and Keith Frankenberger have each been awarded scholarships at Black River Technical College.

Coffman, a nursing student from Cincinnati, Ohio, is the recipient of the H.O.P.E. (Hispanic Outreach Program for Education) Scholarship in the amount of \$250 for the Spring 2007 Semester.

The H.O.P.E. scholarship was established by staff members of BRTC in order to encourage and support diversity by reaching out to students of Hispanic ethnicity.

Frankenberger of Pocahontas is the recipient of the Jay Williams Memorial Scholarship for both the Spring and Fall 2007 semesters in the amount of \$500 per semester. He is a student in the Respiratory Therapy program.

The Jay Williams Memorial Scholarship was established by the Northeast Arkansas District Respiratory Therapists, together with friends and family of Jay Williams, described by campus officials as "a friend to BRTC, and an individual whose life made a difference to those around him."

Williams served on the Advisory Committee for BRTC's Respiratory Care program. He was a Newport resident and former Director of Respiratory Services at White River Medical Center in Batesville.

'College Goal Sunday'

Continued from page 1

Collins noted that in addition to receiving assistance in filling out the FAFSA, participants will receive general information regarding state and federal financial aid programs from BRTC's financial aid administrators. The event, co-sponsored by the Arkansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, is free to participants and is

to include non-traditional students as well as currently enrolled students who may not already be receiving financial aid.

Participants will have a chance to win a tuition scholarship of 12 credit hours at BRTC to be used during the Fall 2007 semester. For more information on College Goal Sunday, contact Collins at 870-248-4000 ext. 4020, or email carolync@blackrivertech.org.

March 27 Foundation Gala Ticket Sale Opens



Vickie French and Ann French

The Black River Technical College Foundation will be holding its first annual fundraising "Gala" Tuesday evening, March 27, in

Randolph County Development Center on the BRTC campus in Pocahontas. The event, which begins at 6:30 p.m., will include dinner prepared by BRTC's Dietetic Department and entertainment by Delta String Quartet of Arkansas State University. Proceeds from the coat and tie evening will assist the Foundation in providing scholarships and other needed services to the college, the students, and the community, according to President Richard Gaines.

A limited number of tickets for the event are on sale through March 1 at \$100 per couple. For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Vickie French at 870-248-4070.

Chautauquan Presentation to Feature 'Thaddeus Dunkley'



Jim Armstead

Jim Armstead, Ph.D., is an attorney, public speaker, and visiting professor at Stanford University who will speak and perform for audiences in Pocahontas during Black History Month. Dr. Armstead is a Chautauquan scholar and performer. During his visit to Pocahontas, he will portray Thaddeus Dunkley, African American cowboy. His presentation will include discussion of the Chautauquan experience in America, as well as the African American experience in the west.

The performer has completed graduate studies in Public Policy and International Relations, and serves as Professor at the U. S. Navel War College in Monterey, California. He had held numerous overseas assignments, and has worked extensively in the field of criminal justice. Armstead has held several fellowships and served as guest speaker at various international conferences and symposia.

Armstead will be speak to student

audiences on Friday, February 23, at 10 a.m. in Randolph County Development Center. His evening performance for the general public will be held at 7 p.m., also in RCDC. School groups interested in attending should contact Gary Buxton at BRTC at 870-248-4000, EXT 4154.

Both events, sponsored jointly by the Eddie Mae Herron Center and the BRTC Foundation, are free of charge.

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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.

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From the President's Desk



Richard Gaines

One of the enduring issues colleges must confront is that of retention. The research on learning, persistence and attainment grows daily, as we seek to better understand what promotes student success. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is one of the leaders in this effort.

What we increasingly are hearing from CCSSE and other organizations is that the development of relationships, or connections between students and faculty, staff and other

students, is highly significant to student success. According to the January 2007 report from CCSSE, many factors that we may have believed to be major factors—geography, student level of preparedness, and social and economic factors—are less critical than student relationships in predicting which students persist and complete their studies.

The study goes on to say that high expectations, bolstered with appropriate support, will yield high levels of success. Student-centered is more than a concept, according to CCSSE. On a true student-centered campus, "The focus on students comes from all directions, including attitudes and language about their potential, rather than their challenges," the report states. "Students know when they and their success are important to faculty and staff." The knowledge that others believe in them, an understanding which comes through those critical connections

and relationships, makes them want to succeed.

None is this is new actually, but as we work to improve retention rates at colleges across the state and nation, it is good at times to stop and reflect and remember these simple ideas.



Arkansas Game and Fish Officer Brian Aston and his K-9 partner Dash recently gave a presentation for students in Jared Bassham's Intro. to Crime Scene Techniques class.

Green Named to Position



Sandy Green

Sandy Green of Pocahontas has joined the Black River Technical College nursing staff as a full-time instructor. She has been serving as an adjunct nursing instructor for BRTC for the past four years while also working as a pharmaceutical Sales Specialist for AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals. She is a registered nurse and received a Master of Science in Nursing degree from Arkansas State University.