



# The River's Edge

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## Fall 2007 Semester Brings New Challenges, New Milestones

While no one yet knows the "official" number of students enrolled at the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses of BRTC this fall, most people expect the number to be a milestone for the college. Certainly that's how it feels to Gen Ed Division Chair Dr. Roger Johnson.

In fact, Academic Vice President Jack McCord predicts the "eleventh-day" reporting figure will break the 2,000 mark. The current record enrollment, 1920 students, dates to the Fall 2006 semester.

Classes began Monday, August 20, with more than the usual amount of first-day transition-

on the new Business Technology building, we have moved almost all the Gen Ed faculty into new office space," Johnson said. "In fact, I can think of only four Gen Ed faculty members who did *not* relocate."

The office moves were prompted primarily by the opening of the new facility, creating a "domino-effect," he explained. In addition, office renovations and realignments in the Administration Building created other relocations, including the moving of the offices of Johnson and the Technical Division Chair, Angie Caldwell.

Johnson, like most of the Gen Ed faculty and a large

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*Dr. Roger Johnson moves boxes of files into his new office.*

### Important Dates

- August 29  
*PTK Blood Drive*
- September 6  
*Foundation Board Meeting*
- September 7  
*Serendipity*
- October 6  
*Golf Tournament*
- October 24  
*PTK Blood Drive*

**September 15**

**Deadline**

**Mary Sallee Single Parent Scholarship**

## Annual Golf Tournament Date Nears



*Standing from left: David Doherty, Pulaski Bank President, Northeast Arkansas, Tracy Radcliff, Assistant Vice President Branch Manager, Kevin Rose, Vice President Commercial Relationship Manager, Richard Gaines, President of BRTC, and tournament co-chairs Dr. Roger Johnson of BRTC, and Mike Miller, BRTC Foundation Board Chair.*

Plans are in full swing for the annual Pulaski Bank-BRTC Foundation Golf Tournament. This year's event,

the 14<sup>th</sup> tournament, is the premiere fundraising activity of the Foundation, and receives \$10,000 in annual support from Pulaski Bank. Typically filled with 72 teams competing, the event will be held Saturday, October 6, at Rolling Hills Country Club.

Tournament organizers anticipate once again a full slate for the two-person scramble. Entry fee is \$80 per team. Three-star, two-star and one-star sponsorships are available for \$500, \$250, and \$125, respectively. The three-star sponsorship includes a team entry fee and golf cart.

BRTC Tournament Coordinators Mike Miller of Bank of Pocahontas and Dr. Roger Johnson of BRTC said the number of flights and prizes will be determined by the number of entries. In keeping with tradition, the grand prize for a hole-in-one on #15 is a new pick-up donated by

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# Eight Awarded Gaines Scholarships

Gaines Scholarships for the Fall 2007 semester have been awarded to eight students, announced the Office of Financial Aid. The scholarships have been made possible through a donation from Pulaski Bank and were established to honor longtime BRTC President Richard Gaines and his wife, Patti Gaines. Each scholarship provides \$1,000 to the recipient.

These awards bring to 33 the total number of Gaines scholarships awarded to date.

The eight awardees are Bridgette Kick, Toshia Weisenbach, Christy Hibbard, Crystal Reed, Shala Melton, Terri Milburn, Meredith Allred and Sherri Echols.



*Bridgette Kick*

Bridgette Kick is the daughter of Jackie and Carol Kick. A 2002 Pocahontas High School graduate, she is currently enrolled in the nursing program at BRTC. She plans to transfer and complete a bachelor's degree in nursing.



*Toshia Weisenbach*

A 2005 Pocahontas High School graduate, Toshia Weisenbach is also working toward a degree in nursing. She is a Ravenden Springs native. She and her husband

and son live in Pocahontas.



*Christy Hibbard*

Maynard High School graduate Christy Hibbard is also majoring in nursing, and hopes to complete an RN and BSN. She lives in Pocahontas with her husband and daughter, and is the daughter of Harlene and Eldon Barnett.



*Crystal Reed*

The daughter of Jane and William Reed, Crystal Reed graduated from Corning High School. After completing her nursing degree at BRTC, she plans to transfer to SEMO and study to become a nurse practitioner.



*Shala Melton*

A Business Administration major, Shala Melton is a Corning native and graduated from Corning High School. Her parents are Larry and Phyllis Melton.

Terri Milburn lives with her husband and daughter in Hoxie. The daughter of Eddie and Cathy Parsons, she is working on her Associate of Arts degree at



*Terri Milburn*

BRTC before transferring to a four-year university.

Maynard High School graduate Meredith Allred is studying nursing at BRTC, and has plans to work in pediatrics or obstetrics. She has a son and she is the daughter of Ron and Virginia Kerley, all of Maynard.



*Meredith Allred*

Formerly of Keller, Texas, Sherri Echols is majoring in Respiratory Care at BRTC. She has a daughter and she is the daughter of Derl and Joyce Echols.



*Sherri Echols*

President Gaines once again expressed his deep appreciation to Pulaski Bank for their generosity to the students and for the honor the scholarship program represents to him and his wife.

"This is truly a tremendous honor for us, and a wonderful way to show Pulaski's commitment to the community and to education," he said.

# Instructor Transitions to College Reading



*Virginia Moore*

Virginia Moore has spent virtually her entire career teaching reading—35 ½ years so far. With her retirement in May from Pocahontas Public Schools, it seemed that career was at end. A phone call that very

day changed things. When fall classes began at BRTC August 20, Moore could be found once again at the desk in front of students doing what she does with great expertise—teaching reading skills to students.

"Dr. [Roger] Johnson called on my last day at work," she explained. "He actually wanted me to teach classes in the summer." That was not possible, Moore explained, because of a requirement that she be retired at least thirty days before re-employment. But when the need was still there for a adjunct read-

ing instructor for fall classes, the now-retired Moore did not hesitate. It seems the decision was the right one.

"I just love it!" she says

As a part-time instructor at BRTC, Moore teaches three classes: one section of Advanced Reading and two sections of College Reading, all of them on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Moore formerly taught reading to students in grades two through six. As much as she enjoyed the young students, there is a new kind of pleasure she already feels in her work with adult students. "They are so conscientious, and they listen carefully to everything," she said. "Many of these students are anxious. They are worried because in some cases, they haven't been in school in many, many years, and they've spoken to me after class about their concerns. And they are very polite and respectful," she added.

Moore said the classes have worked so far on

strategies for success, including such activities as planning and scheduling time for studies and assignments. Teaching reading skills to adult students requires obviously a different approach than teaching young students to read. "We will be focusing on how to read and comprehend what they have read, and how this can be applied in their other subjects," she noted.

The students, for their part, are already showing great commitment, according to Moore. "Some of them take recorders to class, and they are using highlighters. They are doing everything they can." They must score 70% or higher on their end of course exams to move on, she noted. "I hope I can help them."

Moore began teaching at Newport before taking a job in Pocahontas, where she taught second grade for "many years," then taught in a departmentalized fourth grade setting, and concluded her career as a public school educator teaching reading at the sixth grade level.

# Two Accept Academic Scholarships

An additional two students have been awarded Academic Distinction Scholarships to BRTC for the Fall 2008 semesters. They are Alex Richardson and Bryan Byrd.



Alex Richardson

These awards are made on the basis of class rank and/or academic test scores, and provide full tuition. They are renewable and may transfer to four-year institutions if certain conditions are met.

Richardson is the son of Terrell and Rachel Richardson, and is a graduate of Hoxie High School. He plans to major in English and Philosophy and would like to teach at the college level.



Bryan Byrd

A Maynard High School graduate, Byrd also plans to teach. He is the son of Tim and Angie Byrd.

According to information from the Office of Financial Aid, these awards, along with the Gaines Scholarship awards also announced in this issue, bring to 52 the total number of scholarships awarded to date for the Fall semester.

Students may still apply for a Mary Sallee Single Parent scholarship, as well as the Jo Larsen Memorial scholarship. For more information, contact Brandi Chester at 870-248-4000, or go by the Office of Financial Aid.

## Fall Semester

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number of technical faculty spent at least part of that first week moving into a new space.

The start of the new semester was further made complicated for the Division Chairs in light of the need for more than the usual number of "adjunct," or part-time instructors, to cover the higher than usual number of course sections brought about by the increased number of students.

"We had to rely more than usual on our full-time faculty to teach 'overloads,'" Johnson said. "In fact, I had to pick up two overloads myself for science classes I couldn't find an adjunct to cover."

When preparing the schedule of classes, Johnson said he had "based courses on numbers in the previous year. But with growth like we have had," he continued, "it becomes necessary to add sections and then it is difficult to find qualified adjunct instructors who are available at the times and who want to take



Roy Clark (right), Director of Maintenance, talks with a paint contractor about finishing touches to the Business Technology building.

those TBAs." TBA, or "To Be Announced," refers to class sections which are scheduled to be offered, but which are not yet assigned to an instructor. As of a few days before the first day of classes, Johnson said he was still scrambling to fill more than ten TBAs. "I placed ads and made a lot of phone calls. A couple of times I was lucky to receive phone call inquiries out of the blue. I know we have hired nine new adjuncts," he added, "and I feel very confident about them.

According to information from the Office of Academics, a total of 24 adjunct instructors teach Gen Ed classes on the Pocahontas campus, nine teach Technical classes, and another 24 teach Gen Ed classes on the Paragould campus. These numbers do not include the full-time faculty members who may also be teaching overloads in an "adjunct" capacity.

The need for adjunct instructors has been spread across several disciplines this semester, but was especially acute in Science, due to a former adjunct relocating to another town, and in English and Reading, due to sheer volume of students in these areas, he noted.

In spite of start-up glitches and challenges, Johnson said the experience created for him a 'high' rather than real worry. He noted also that the enrollment numbers, coupled with the opportunity for much of the faculty to move to newer spaces, had created campus-wide excitement for the start of another year.

McCord noted that the enrollment increase means that fewer classes had to be canceled due to low numbers. He said almost all technical programs are at or near capacity, and he praised the work of the division chairs in rising to meet the challenges of what is shaping up to be BRTC's largest semester ever.



### Bustling Bookstore

Right - Students pick up books and more in the BRTC Bookstore during the first week of classes. VP for Finance Loretta Williams reported record purchases of not only books, but clothing and other specialty items during the first part of the week. Staff members kept the facility open for extended hours to accommodate the sometimes long lines of students.

Left - The BRTC Bookstore carries a wide array of items, including backpacks, computer jump drivers, and specialty items such as jewelry and cards.



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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  
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## From the President's Desk



*Richard Gaines*

Beginnings are often difficult, and the start of this Fall semester has certainly held its share of challenges for us here at BRTC. But these challenges have largely been good ones, brought about by our growth and our building expansions. Though the new Business Technology Building was not 100% completed by the first day of classes, the unfinished areas did not prevent our meeting classes in the facility. We have been dealing during the first week of the semester with inconven-

iences due to construction delays rather than with major problems.

In a related vein, the staff has stepped up in many ways to ensure that the moving of offices has not had negative impact on students. All of us have worked hard, often putting in many hours above the normal work week to be ready when the semester began on August 20.

From all accounts, the new Business Technology building is one that is greatly appreciated, by students as well as staff. We still are eagerly anticipating the completion of the facility's new Student Center/Internet Café. We know these areas will enhance the campus experience for our students.

We are continuing to experience growth here at BRTC. While some of that growth can be attributed to the former Waterloo and other dislocated industrial workers who are re-training, we continue to attract many new students, especially those recent high

school graduates. Those who come to us from Waterloo and other manufacturing plants are enrolling in our technical programs, in accordance with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), through which they receive funding assistance. Some of those recent high school graduates are also choosing to pursue a career in a technical field, while many are enrolling in Gen Ed classes

with plans to transfer to a four-year institution and complete a baccalaureate. This explains why we are seeing our technical programs filling with students and at the same time demand for classes in Gen Ed soars.

Thanks to our building expansion and the hard work of our faculty and staff, we are able to meet the demand.

## Tournament (Continued from Page 1)

Baltz Chevrolet Olds. Players may purchase two mulligans for \$5 each.

Sponsorships at the various levels are available through any member of the BRTC Foundation, or by contacting Vickie French, Dr. Roger Johnson, or Ann French at 870-248-4000. Those who wish to register as teams should contact Vickie French at this number.

"We have set a goal of \$30,000 in net proceeds this year," said Johnson. "A large part of the proceeds from this event help to fund scholarships, and each year if we increase our proceeds, we are able to increase the number of scholarships we fund. So we hope the community will join in with Pulaski Bank, whose support we greatly appreciate, and help to make this the biggest tournament ever."

A rain date of October 7 has been selected.