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College “Will be Ready” for Fall Classes

Less than four months after the campus sustained substantial flood damage in ten of its thirteen buildings on the Pocahontas campus, BRTC “will be ready for students” for the fall semester, announced BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher this week.

Work is expected to continue at a fast pace up to the first day of classes, August 22. When students arrive, the only hint that anything unusual occurred and cut short the spring semester will be the fact that many of the interior walls, floors, and furnishings are brand new.



Debbie Sorg, BRTC library technician, is assisted with returning books to the shelves by Andrew Rogers, a subcontracted employee of Metro Builders.

The only exception to “business as usual,” Hatcher said, is the fact that the science labs are not expected to be ready until October, resulting in a modification of science classes with labs. “In those instances,” he explained, “students will study the theory components early in the semester, completing the lab portions once the labs are fully equipped and furnished.”

Dr. Hatcher announced the following projected level of completion of water damage issues in various buildings on the Pocahontas campus by August 8: Library - 80%; Academic Complex - 90%; Health/Sciences - 75%; RCDC - 99%;

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Important Dates

- August 16**
Guest Speaker - Edward Fitzgerald
- August 22**
Fall Semester Classes Begin
- August 31-September 1**
PTK Blood Drive
- September 5**
Campus Closed - Labor Day Holiday
- September 30**
IBERIABANK / BRTC Foundation Golf Tournament
- October 11**
Advisory Dinner

Presentation by Original Green Beret to Include Special Tribute to Veterans

The public is invited to attend a presentation by Edward F. Fitzgerald, an original member of the U.S. Army’s 10th Special Forces Airborne Group and author of *Bank’s Bandits: The Untold Story of The Original Green Berets*. Fitzgerald will be speaking about his book and his experiences on Tuesday, August 16, 7:00 p.m., in the Randolph County Development Center on the BRTC campus in Pocahontas. His presentation will also include a special tribute to local veterans.

Bank’s Bandits is an “outrageously funny and incredibly enlightening” novel about the birth of the Green Berets and the coming of age of draftee James Fitzpatrick, according to local attorney Kirby Riffel, a personal friend and colleague of Fitzgerald.

While the book is described by its author as a historically accurate memoir of his experiences in the 10th Special Forces, it is presented in a fictionalized form to allow a few composite characters to represent the many that were actually involved in the incidents recounted. *Bank’s Bandits* is not a “war story,” not a story of “blood and gore,” as Fitzgerald points out. Nor is it a

story of “superheroes,” but rather, in the words of the author, a “humorous account of the real growing pains that the original Green Berets went through to set Special Forces up and running.”

“We are very excited and pleased to be able to host this author,” said Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development at BRTC. “His book—and his correspondences as we have planned the event—are indeed ‘humorous.’ They are laugh-out-loud hilarious at times,” she added. “They make us look forward to a spirited, and entertaining evening, as well as one where we are



Edward F. Fitzgerald

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AATYC Conference Promotes Entrepreneurship

The Entrepreneurship Training Consortium of AATYC (Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges) presented "Entrepreneurship at the Next Level" July 14 on the campus of BRTC-Paragould. Sponsors of the event along with BRTC were Winrock International, Innovate Arkansas, and Greene County Industrial Training Council.

Approximately 52 individuals representing businesses, government agencies, and colleges from around the state attended the workshop held to provide entrepreneurship education and business growth information to people interested in making a difference in their community's economic outlook.

BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher gave a welcome on behalf of BRTC, acknowledging the importance of entrepreneurship as a force for economic development. He urged those attending to be supportive of entrepreneurial efforts in their respective organizations based on the information provided during the day-long conference.

Steve Lease, Director of Workforce Training for AATYC and Coordinator of the Entrepreneurship Training Consortium, gave the opening welcome and presided over the event. Lease praised Audra Howerton, Workforce Programs Development Coordina-

tor, who coordinated the event on the Paragould campus, and Vicki Kuykendall, Director of Off-Campus Operations, and the "great staff on the BRTC Paragould campus. "You have knocked the socks off the training stats over here," Lease said.

Special guest speakers throughout the day were Donna Uptagraft, Program Officer, U.S. Programs Division, Winrock International; Pat Nunn-Brown, Director, Small and Minority Business Development Division, Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC); Charles Fullen, Management Consultant; and Michael Marshall, Alternate Federal Co-Chairman, Delta Regional Authority (DRA), appointed by President Barack Obama.

Other speakers were Dr. Tim Cornelius, Associate Vice President, Northwest Arkansas Community College; James Brock, Education and Training Program Manager for Business and Marketing



Pictured at the conference are, from left, Jeff Bookout, Vice Chancellor, ASU Technical Center - Marked Tree; Steve Lease, Director of Workforce Training, AATYC; Dr. Wayne Hatcher, Black River Technical College President; and Paragould Mayor Mike Gaskill.

Technology, Arkansas Department of Career Education; Sherese Duncan, President and CEO, Efficia Inc.; and Matt Hampton, Founder, Elevate Youth Entrepreneurship; and Robert Mitchum, Chair, Business and Agriculture, ASU-Beebe.

BRTC Fire Science Students Performed Extremely Well on Firefighter Exams

BRTC's second-year Fire Science students performed "extremely well" on the Firefighter I and II exams taken earlier this spring. Fire Science Director Alan Haskins said that ninety percent of the students passed the tests on their first attempt.

"These tests are very hard to pass," Haskins said, "especially on the first try." Several of these students graduated in May with the remaining scheduled to graduate in December.

He explained that though a passing score is not required for graduation from the program, it is required in order to become a certified firefighter in the state of Arkansas. "We strongly encourage all students to take the tests," he added. "Those who pass make themselves more employable not only in Arkansas, but elsewhere in the country."

Arkansas' Firefighter I and II exams are certified by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC), a self-governing system that accredits both public fire service certification programs and higher education fire-related degree programs. IFSAC certified tests are accepted in every state that is an IFSAC state and also transfers to the military and most government contractors that provide fire suppression to the military.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Fire Science program at BRTC should contact Haskins at 870-886-5750 or email alan.haskins@blackrivertech.org.



Alan Haskins (far right), Fire Science Director, works with students of the Fire Science Program during a hands-on training exercise.

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Gaines Technology - 99%; LETA - 100%; Continuing Education/Adult Education - 80%.

Total costs of the repairs and refurbishing is expected to exceed \$3 million, according to Loretta Williams, VP for Finance. BRTC's insurance will cover the bulk of the cost of the work, though the college does have a deductible of \$100,000. Not known at this time is whether FEMA or other assistance can help BRTC recoup any of this expense.

Dr. Hatcher expressed appreciation for the assistance and cooperation of other educational institutions, including Williams Baptist College who offered library services, and Pocahontas High School, who allowed science students to meet in their science lab during summer classes.

Excellent Pass Rates Achieved by BRTC Nursing Students

Reports just released by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), show excellent pass rates for students of BRTC's Practical Nursing and Registered Nursing programs, according to Angie Caldwell, VP for Technical Education.

The Arkansas Rural Nursing Education Consortium (ARNEC), comprised of eight two-year colleges including BRTC, ranked second highest of all 28 RN programs in the state with a 95.54% pass rate. The UofA – Fayetteville, known to have the highest admission standards in the state, barely edged out ARNEC with a pass rate of 95.95%.

BRTC's Practical Nursing Program saw a 100% pass rate for this past fiscal year. Students must complete an intense set of pre-professional courses as well as a standardized admissions exam in order to be considered for selection into the practical nursing program. Students selected for the PN program are prepared for the academic rigor required to be successful in the nursing program and



Vivian Fisher and Chris Saala, students in BRTC's RN program, prepare for a delivery in the Labor and Delivery Unit at Arkansas Methodist Medical Center in Paragould.

to successfully challenge the NCLEX exam.

"Our students and our instructors work extremely hard," said BRTC's Nursing Director Ramonda Housh. "I think these achievements speak well of

their dedication and commitment, and we are very proud of every one of them. In addition to the nursing faculty, I want to thank the students for their hard work and perseverance, the general education faculty for their part in preparing them for the program, and the administration for their continued support. Without everyone's dedication here at BRTC, this program would not be the success it is."

BRTC's RN program was recently expanded to 40 students, while the PN program currently serves up to 112 students annually. Approximately 25 PN students complete their degree requirements each Fall and Spring semester, while approximately 40 RN students complete their degree requirements each Fall semester.

"This percentage and ranking speaks volumes for the success of our nursing programs," said Caldwell. "We are very pleased with the job that our nursing faculty is doing to prepare the students and very proud of the success of each graduate."

BRTC Dietetic Program Awarded Continued Accreditation

The Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education (CADE) voted during their June meeting in Chicago to continue accreditation of BRTC's Dietetic Technician Program, announced Angie Caldwell, Vice President for Technical Education.

CADE is the American Dietetic Association's accrediting agency for education programs that prepare students for careers as registered dietitians or dietetic technicians, registered. The agency serves to establish and enforce eligibility requirements and accreditation standards that ensure the quality and continued improvement of nutrition and dietetics education programs. These programs are evaluated every ten years.

"The Self-Study report was submitted July of last year followed by a site visit by CADE Board Members in October," Caldwell explained. "We received the letter of notification a few weeks ago stating that our program is in compliance with Accreditation Standards."

"This is wonderful news for our Dietetics Program and for the college," said Caldwell, "made possible, in large part, by the hard work and dedication of Dietetics Instructor Tina Harris, and the outstanding administrative support of Janna Guthrey. I am so grateful for their time and efforts that ensure the continued success of this program."



Angie Caldwell (from left), Janna Guthrey, and Tina Harris, review the letter announcing the re-accreditation of BRTC's Dietetics Program.

Books Donated to BRTC Library

Through collection efforts by Books-A-Million, the BRTC Library continues to receive generous donations of books, according to Librarian Anne Simpson.

"Books-A-Million is serving as a conduit to allow people to donate to the BRTC library in response to the many books lost due to flooding," Simpson explained. "People making purchases at the store are given an opportunity to either donate a book of their choice or donate money for the purchase of a book, to go to the BRTC library."

So far over 200 books have been donated with more to come. Donations for the BRTC library will continue to be accepted through the Labor Day weekend at the Jonesboro Store.

"We have been the recipient of the goodwill of Books-A-Million and the generosity of individuals in the area and around the state," said Simpson. "We wish to thank Books-A-Million for organizing this drive and to those who have so generously donated and are the real heroes in this effort."



Krystal Hendon, library technician, displays one of the books donated to BRTC.



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BRTC Mission Statement

*Blending tradition, technology and innovation
to educate today's diverse students
for tomorrow's changing world.*

Campus Commentary



*Dr. Wayne Hatcher
BRTC President*

We all face deadlines of one kind or another. Here at BRTC, we have been facing a deadline—a major one—since the May flooding closed many of the academic buildings on our Pocahontas campus. We, along with Metro Builders, have been working diligently toward that deadline: holding classes in those buildings beginning with the start of the fall semester.

I am pleased to say we will meet that deadline.

We will be ready when classes, many of which are already filled, begin on August 22. That is no small feat when you consider the extent of the flood damage, and the fact that ten of thirteen buildings had water damage at varying levels. The work has fallen particularly heavily on our own maintenance staff, but they are very capable and hard-working people who have stepped up to the task.

Here's where we are projected to be by the first of next week on completion of the work in the academic buildings: Library-80%; Academic Complex-90%; Science and Health-75%; Business Technology-98%; Randolph County Development Center-99%; Law Enforcement Training Academy-100%; Adult and Continuing Education-80%.

In the case of the most severely damaged area, the Science and Health Complex, though the building itself may be completed, the set-up of labs will take longer. But we have plans to modify the structure of some of the science classes so

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reminded about the commitment and sacrifices of our armed forces. Meeting Ed Fitzgerald and hearing of his experiences in training with the Special Forces during the Korean War will give us a front row seat to history—a great opportunity for those who lived it and will enjoy the reminiscing, and also great for those who know that part of history only through the stories of others.”

Riffel has made possible this presentation, which is sponsored by the BRTC Foundation and the Office of Continuing Education and Business Outreach. The event is free, though occasional mature language might not be appropriate for younger audience members. Books will be available for \$20 at the book-signing following his presentation.

For more information, contact Dina Hufstedler, Project Specialist, at 870-248-4000, ext. 4187.

that students can be assured they will receive the same level and content of instruction that would normally be expected.

On the subject of meeting expectations, Ralph Marston said this: Don't lower your expectations to meet your performance. Raise your level of performance to meet your expectations. Expect the best of yourself, and then do what is necessary to make it a reality.” At BRTC we walk the talk. Come and see for yourself.