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ANCRC Meets, Tours Heritage Sites

The agency which has funded Project REACH held its quarterly meeting on the campus of BRTC last week, taking the opportunity to hear words of appreciation from the college, the community, and family donors for the decisions by Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council to award grants to the college over the



Historical Interpreter John Holt and ANCRC member Kathy Mathews hold up a hand-made quilt cover sewn by Rice Family member Ozella Rice. Ann Gilliam (far left) brought the quilt for the members to see.

past four years. The following day, Council members were accompanied on tours of the two sites by Preservation Architect Tommy Jameson, Historic Preservationist Joan Gould, BRTC President Richard Gaines and BRTC Board Chairman Mike Dunn and others.

REACH (Researching Early Arkansas Cultural Heritage) is the effort to restore two of the state's oldest structures, the Rice-Upshaw House and the Looney Tavern, as well as to conduct historical, archeological, and architectural research that is revealing much about the early history of the region.

A highlight of the evening was an address by Ann Gilliam to the Council. Representing other members of the Rice-Upshaw family who were also in attendance, she spoke of the significance of the structure built by their ancestor, Reuben Rice, in 1828, and of her family's love for the "Old Monarch." She also thanked those who had made possible the restoration of this Territorial-era structure.

Jean Upshaw and children, Don Upshaw, Michelle Andrews, and Ann Gilliam, donated the now fully restored Rice-Upshaw structure to BRTC, while Jack and Christina French and family donated the Looney Tavern for restoration, a project that is currently underway. Work on the Rice-Looney site to make it accessible for public and student visitation is in the design phase.

In accordance with the requests of the families, both sites will serve as educational centers where students of all ages can learn about the region's

heritage.

Dunn acknowledged the college's appreciation to the ANCRC, insisting that the project would not have been possible without their faith in BRTC to carry out the work as planned.

BRTC VP for Development Dr. Jan Ziegler presented a brief over-

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Important Dates

December 6

RN Pinning

December 14

Serendipity Christmas Party

December 15

PN Pinning

December 17

BRTC Graduation

December 18

Employee Potluck and MSSPS Silent Auction

**December 23-
January 1**

*Offices Closed for
Holiday*

"Friend of the Year"

The Arkansas Council for the Social Studies (ACSS) association has named BRTC's Project Specialist Dina Hufstедler as "Friend of the Year" for "contributions to the field of social studies education in the state of Arkansas."

The award came as a result of her work in coordinating the Holocaust Survivor series and other special presentations, including a visit to the BRTC campus by Tuskegee Airman Milton

Crenshaw. Hufstедler was honored at the recent ACSS luncheon in Little Rock during the Arkansas Curriculum Conference.

The document nominating Hufstедler for the award states: "Ms. Hufstедler's role in organizing these events and working with teachers to schedule these large groups of students is essential to providing an environment conducive to learning and making the presentations successful. She is so organized, helpful, and courteous, and I believe the role she plays in providing



Project Specialist Dina Hufstедler was recently chosen as "Friend of the Year" by the Arkansas Council for Social Studies.

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Student Answers Different Calling



Jeff Wheelless is one of the few males in the Practical Nursing program at BRTC.

He was eighteen when he began working at Waterloo Industries. It was the place where Jeff Wheelless thought he would work from that point forward. In fact, he was employed for 23 years before Waterloo shut its doors in 2007, leaving Wheelless and hundreds of others wondering what to do next.

Wheelless quickly admits that as a younger man, pursuing a career in nursing would never have been an option. "I probably wouldn't even have thought about it," he admits. He had completed a degree in Machine Shop at BRTC in 1984. Back then, Wheelless said, "All I cared about was getting a new truck, being macho. And nursing is not about being macho."

But things changed.

"I'm 40, and I'm past all that. I see things a lot differently." Wheelless said when faced with no viable job prospects, he prayed. "I knew I wanted to do something for others for a change."

Being a male in a female-prominent program of study like nursing certainly was a change, and held more than a few challenges.

"For one thing," Wheelless said, "the girls in my class are really smart. It seems like they learn more quickly, or maybe it's just my age. I really have to work to keep up with them. And I now know more stuff about girls than I need to," he said with a laugh.

But his decision is one with which Wheelless is totally comfortable. He plans to work for a while following his projected May 2010 graduation date, and then to return and pursue a Registered Nursing degree. "But that will be later," he said. "I'm ready to do something besides having my head in the book all the time."

Wheelless said his son, a high school senior, has been very supportive. He also said he encourages anyone—male or female—not to fear pursuing careers that are considered non-traditional. "If you feel it in your heart, go for it. As a society, we place too much emphasis on the roles for women or men. I believe there is a calling for all us," he said. "In fact, we need men in careers like nursing, as well as women in careers mostly held by men. And we are changing. We have come a long way. I believe it will be a better world with more gender balance in the workplace."

Winners Chosen for Business Competition



Business Plan Winners are (L to R): Tricia Ellington, honorable mention; Carrie Rose, 1st place; Melissa Beraud, 2nd place.

Winners for the Mini Business Plan Contest sponsored by Black River Technical College and the Greene County Industrial Training Center in Paragould were recently announced.

Carrie Rose received first place, Melissa Beraud received second place and Tricia Ellington had honorable mention.

The contest, in celebration of Global Entrepreneurship Week, was open to anyone in Northeast Arkansas who submitted a business plan for a new business.

The top three finalists presented their business plan to a panel of three local business owners who judged the finalists on their ability to convince them that their idea had a chance to become a viable new product or service.

First place received \$200, second place received \$150, and honorable mention received \$25. All three finalists are students of Black River Technical College. The panel of judges included Dina Mason, Rick Nunn and Ed Tolleson.

LETA Fall Graduation Held



Forty-three law enforcement officers from across the state recently graduated from the Fall 2009 BRTC Law Enforcement Training Academy. The 612-hour training course began August 24. Instruction included standard police tactics, firearms, legal, education, technical skills, and practical exercises. In each course, emphasis is placed upon the officers achieving excellence in both academic subjects and firearms training. An officer must maintain an academic score of at least 70% on each examination and consistently fire at least 80% during firearms training exercises to successfully complete all phases of the course.

“Friend” (Cont'd from Page 1)

our students with first-hand accounts of those who share their experiences of the Holocaust or their experiences as pioneers in civil rights, like the Tuskegee Airman, provide a personal and irreplaceable connection for our students with those topics by bringing history to life.”

BRTC recently hosted its fifth Holocaust survivor. According to Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development and Hufstедler's supervisor, approximately 1800 individuals heard the presentation by Estelle Laughlin. "We are so very proud of Dina's well-deserved award. It speaks well of her efforts that our audience grows each year. She is a wonderful colleague and a valuable asset to our efforts at BRTC to serve as an educational leader and resource in our region through such events."

Career Pathways Discusses Program Changes, Updates

Black River Technical College was one of three locations hosting a recent Career Pathways Initiative workshop. “The one day workshop covered changes and updates for the Career Pathways database,” BRTC Career Pathways Director Tom Baker said. “As our numbers continue to grow, this information from the database can be analyzed to determine the areas of success within the program.”



BRTC recently hosted one of the Career Pathways Initiative workshops. The workshop was designed to discuss and update directors and staff of changes made to the program.

The database is used to keep up with Career Pathways students’ information and make it readily available so analyses of the growth of the program can be followed. Information stored in the data-

base includes the students, programs of study, date of enrollment, date of completion, and number of certification degrees completed.

Each Career Pathways Initiative Program is also assigned performance measures. The degree to which the CPI program meets these measures determines the amount of incentive monies distrib-

uted to each institution. During the last fiscal year (2009), the BRTC Career Pathways received incentive monies and was able to purchase computer desks, computers, PLATO software, and graphing calculators for both the Career Pathways and Development Education computer labs.

Area two-year colleges in attendance for the workshop, along with BRTC, were Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University-Beebe, ASU-Mountain Home, ASU-Newport, Mid-South Community College, North Arkansas College-Harrison, Ozarka College, and University of Arkansas Community College-Batesville.

Two representatives from the Department of Higher Education, Career Pathways Program, were also in attendance.

“BAT” Mobile Makes Debut



The first official checkpoint using the BAT Mobile was conducted in November by the Bay law enforcement agency and the Arkansas State Police Troop C in Jonesboro. The “joint checkpoint” was conducted at US Highway 63 Overpass and State Highway 463 in Bay.

Funding from a federal grant by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration enabled the BRTC Law Enforcement Training Academy to purchase a Breath Alcohol Testing sobriety checkpoint vehicle (BAT Mobile).

The vehicle is used by specially trained law enforcement agencies during sobriety checkpoints throughout the state.

The mobile platform is designed to provide trained agencies with the

equipment necessary to promote an effective, on-going sobriety checkpoint program which increases deterrence and reduces DWI-related traffic crashes, a major killer on Arkansas’ highways.

The federal grant is renewed annually and the monies are distributed to BRTC-LETA through the Arkansas Highway Safety Office in Little Rock.

The approximate cost of the BAT Mobile was \$229,000.00. The vehicle

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ANCRC (Cont’d from Page 1)

view of the Rice-Upshaw restoration and findings, and BRTC Construction Manager Ronnie Walker presented an extensive slide show chronicling the Looney Tavern project, complete with time-lapse photography.



ANCRC council members and Tommy Jameson examine the unique puncheon floor in the Rice-Upshaw House.

Grainger Presents Scholarships



Edward Anderson (photo at left) and Erick Shavalia receive a certificate and a Grainger special designed hard hat from Branch Manager Mark Smith.

Grainger, a local distributor of facilities maintenance supplies, recently awarded “Grainger Tools for Tomorrow” scholarships to Black River Technical College students Edward Anderson and Erick Shavalia, both Industrial Maintenance students.

The \$2,000 scholarship is awarded to full-time students entering their second year of technical education curriculum. Upon graduation the program recognizes the student’s achievement with a Westward tool-kit in an effort to help them launch their careers, according to a Grainger press release.

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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>

Campus Commentary



Dr. Jan Ziegler

VP for Development

Accreditation is everything to an institution of higher learning. This is the stamp that assures the public—students, the community, other colleges and universities, public schools, all of our constituencies—that this is an institution which meets certain standards. Accreditation assures others that our educational programs are of high quality, and that those who complete our courses and our programs of study have learned and mastered skills to specified levels of

competence. BRTC gained its initial ten-year accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association in 2002.

We are scheduled to undergo a review to maintain our accreditation just over two years from now, in 2012, and so we have just begun a two-year Self-Study cycle. The process is not only lengthy, but very broad and complex. A special guest, Dr. Mary Breslin of Chicago, BRTC's Liaison with the HLC, spent a couple of days visiting our Pocahontas and Paragould campuses last week as a part of the initial Self-Study activities.

She met with administrators and with faculty and staff committee members who are working on various components of the self-evaluation. A series of committees will meet frequently over the next two years to consider the institution's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement in five key areas.

Dr. Breslin's visit was helpful in a

number of ways: it served as a "kick-off" for the accreditation cycle; she provided guidance in understanding some of the new criteria requirements; her visit recognized the strides made by BRTC in the last ten years and helped the committees to focus their efforts as needed for the next accreditation visit.

We believe that this college has matured a great deal since our initial ten-year accreditation. We are prepared to manage our continued growth even as we work to improve ourselves and all that we do, which is the overarching goal of the Self-Study. After all, as Dr. Breslin reminded us, the Self-Study is something we do for ourselves as an institution, not for the HLC. We agree with this, and we are moving forward to evaluate ourselves. We have thus appropriately named our Self-Study effort, "In Quest of Excellence."

I look forward to working on this effort in the coming months.

"BAT" Mobile

(Cont'd from page 3)

was custom built at Taylor-Made Ambulance in Newport, Arkansas.

"Thanks to Black River Technical College, its BAT Project and the BAT Mobile, Arkansas' law enforcement community now has its first Sobriety Checkpoint Training Program and mobile sobriety checkpoint vehicle, which is made available at no cost to agencies throughout Arkansas," LETA Instructor Chris Hankins said.

The BAT Mobile is a custom sobriety checkpoint platform, built from the ground up as a dedicated vehicle designed for only one purpose.

"There is no other vehicle of its type or quality anywhere in Arkansas or throughout the region, and this brings great recognition to Black River Technical College's Law Enforcement Training Academy and its role in progressive law enforcement training," Hankins said.