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Foundation Scholarship Luncheon Honors Donors and Student Recipients



Guest Speaker Leigh Ann Gibson

A large number of scholarship donors and student recipients were honored at the Annual BRTC Foundation Scholarship Luncheon held in the Randolph County Development Center April 16. The event is designed to acknowledge businesses and individuals who make financial contributions for scholarships, along with the students who are the recipients of those scholarships, according to Dina Hufstедler, event coordinator. Leigh Ann Gibson, VP of Sales at Pocahontas Aluminum Company, served as guest speaker.

Foundation Board Chair Ruth Ann Ellis welcomed the guests who enjoyed food prepared by BRTC's Dietetics Department and entertainment provided by BRTC's Kimbrough Choir under the direction of Joniece Trammel and accompanied by Glenda Blassini. Foundation Board member Mike Dunn gave the invocation. Dr. Jan Ziegler, VP for Development, and Dr. Wayne Hatcher, President, acknowledged the scholarship donors and scholarship recipients.

Highlighting the event were brief presentations by four student spokespersons: Stephanie Brech and Carmen Cummings of Pocahontas, Justin Beck of Rector, and Lisa Cook of Paragould. Each shared their story and gave thanks to the donors for helping to make their education possible, and each expressed their hope of one day being able to help others with the same generosity that was given to them. "Many of us in the audience had watery

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Important Dates

- April 25**
Business Expo/Job Fair
- April 30**
Fun Before Finals
- May 2**
Retirement Reception
- May 6**
Phlebotomy Graduate Banquet
- May 7**
PN & RN Pinning and Graduation
- May 9**
Graduation
- May 16-18**
REACH Event
- May 20**
Business After Hours at BRTC

REACH Event Scheduled for May

In celebration of Arkansas Heritage Month, an event has been planned through BRTC's Project REACH (Researching Early Arkansas Cultural Heritage) for May 16-18.

The event, entitled "Showcasing Treasures: the Rice-Upshaw House and the William Looney Tavern," will feature three days of activities all open to the public.

On Thursday, May 16, a presentation on Subscription Schools will be given at 7 p.m. at the Randolph County Heritage Museum on the square in Pocahontas. On Friday, May 17, 7 p.m., a presentation on Frontier Slavery will be given at the Eddie Mae Herron Center on Archer Street in Pocahontas. Both presentations will be led by



Gerry Barker, Living History Re-enactor, will return with his oxen for the May event.

Gerry Barker, living history re-enactor.

From 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., both Friday and Saturday, May 17-18, tours will be given at the Rice Upshaw House and William Looney Tavern sites in Dalton.

Also at the site of the Rice Upshaw House, visitors will enjoy seeing demonstrations by a team of oxen led by Barker, as well as demonstrations by Eric Sammons, log craftsman.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase at the Rice Upshaw site both Friday and Saturday. Made possible in part by a grant from the Department of Arkansas Heritage, funded by a 1/8 cent conservation tax, Amendment 75. For more information, contact Jessica McFadden, at 870-248-4000, ext. 4189.

PBL Members Earn Awards at Leadership Conference

On April 12 and 13, 15 members, two advisers, and one guest of BRTC's chapter of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) attended the Spring State Leadership Conference in Little Rock where members participated in competitions and received several awards, according to Darendra Kersey, business technology instructor and PBL advisor. Almost all two- and four-year colleges in Arkansas were represented at the conference.

The group as a whole received fourth place for Chapter Membership in Two-Year Colleges. Individual awards among the BRTC chapter members went to: Michael Isham, fourth place in Computer Concepts; Shaunya Fraysber, fourth place in Organizational Behavior; Heather Dunlap, fourth place in Computer Applications; Jamie Weeks, third place in Job Interview; Olen Hunt, second place in Networking Concepts; and



PBL award winners are: (front row, l to r) Shaunya Fraysber, Heather Dunlap, and Jamie Tillman Weeks; (back row, l to r) Carlo Obregon, Michael Isham, and Olen Hunt.

Carlo Obregon, first place in Justice Administration. Weeks, Hunt, and Obregon qualify to compete at the National Conference to be held in Anaheim, California, in June.

PBL is a business-oriented student organization, helping its members achieve their career and leadership goals in life. "I am so proud of our PBL students and their accomplishments," said Kersey. "They did an excellent job of representing our school."

During the conference, students were able to hear guest speaker Todd Huston, an author, inventor, and amputee mountain-climber and record-holder. "His words 'Every challenge is an opportunity. Every opportunity is a challenge,' can well apply to BRTC's PBL members and their dreams," noted Kersey.

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eyes as we listened to the students tell their stories," said Hufstедler. "It was touching to hear about the challenges they have faced and their appreciation for those who helped them overcome those challenges, including the donors who helped pave the way for their education."

Gibson followed up on their stories by sharing her own story of overcoming obstacles and challenges, and the fact that she, too, could not have done it without the help and support of others. "Over the years, I have come to realize that no matter how hard you try to do something on your own, without asking for help, you just can't do it," said Gibson. "Everyone needs help in even the smallest of ways."

"When I was diagnosed with cancer in March of 2010," Gibson continued, "it only took me about three seconds to realize that 'I can't go through this alone.' Without the support that I received, I could not have been so positive and determined. As we all struggle with life on a day to day basis, it is very rewarding to know that people have not given up on the challenge of helping others. As in my life - with struggles of school, work, being a wife, being a mother and battling cancer - I never could have done any of it without support and help from others."

"Be proud of what you have here at BRTC," Gibson added. "And, more importantly, remember that gifts can go an extremely long way. Through encouragement, advice, instruction and even monetary support, this college and its students will be a pinnacle aspect of all our lives in this community and to others as we celebrate these scholars and especially the donors that make this all happen."

The event concluded with student scholarship recipient Dillon Varner of Delaplaine winning a new 32 GB 8.9" HP Kindle Fire courtesy of an anonymous donor. The giveaway was an added surprise at the end of the event, and Varner held the 'winning' program.



Dillon Varner

Scholarships Awarded to Four

Amber Johnson of Jonesboro and Maddison Woodard of Black Rock have each been awarded an Academic Distinction Scholarship to attend Black River Technical College Fall 2013, while Shayla Dickson of Imboden and Jacob Pipkin of Pocahontas have each been awarded General Education Scholarships through the BRTC Foundation.



Amber Johnson

Maddison Woodard

Johnson will graduate in May from Westside High School as an honor student. She plans to seek the PN and RN degrees at BRTC and pursue a career in nursing.

Woodard is the daughter of Barry and Shelly Woodard of Black Rock and will graduate in May from Hoxie High School, where she has been involved in basketball, volleyball, track, FFA, FCCLA, FBLA, TLC, Beta Club and Green Earth Club. She is also the recipient of the Wendy's Heisman Award. She plans to get a degree in nursing and become an anesthesiologist.



Shayla Dickson

Jacob Pipkin

Dickson is the daughter of Phillip and Lisa Dickson of Imboden and plans to pursue a career as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. She will graduate in May from Sloan-Hendrix High School, where she has been a member of FCA, HOSA, Art Club, Student Council, BETA, FBLA and Annual Staff. She is also a Fire Marshall and has played basketball for the past four years. Dickson was chosen to represent Sloan-Hendrix in the Ralph Joseph Youth Leadership Program.

Pipkin is the son of James and Melissa Pipkin of Pocahontas and is currently working towards an Associate of Arts in General Education degree at BRTC. He is a 2012 graduate of Pocahontas High School and plans to become a chiropractor.

Boozman Addresses 43 LETA Graduates

Arkansas Senator John Boozman addressed 43 officers during a graduation ceremony held April 12 for BRTC's Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA). Graduating students completed a thirteen-week course that included instruction in standard police tactics, firearms, legal education, technical skills and practical exercises. Officers are required to score at least 70% on each exam, and consistently fire at least 80% during firearms training exercises in order to graduate.

Boozman stressed to the graduates the significance of their role in influencing the lives of young people and to never forget how important that is. He also praised the officers for their hard work and willingness to protect others when their efforts are often taken for granted.

James Ebbert of the Jonesboro Police Department



Senator John Boozman (2nd from right) is welcomed by BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher (from left), Board of Trustees member John Jackson, and LETA Director Steve Shults.

received the Top Overall Award, which is earned by having the highest overall average in the areas of academics, firearms, and physical fitness. Shane Fox, also of the Jonesboro Police Department, received the Top Physical Fitness Award; Dalton Shaw of the Paragould Police Department received the Top Firearms Award; and Anya Hogan of the Benton Police Department received the Top Academics Award.

Fox was selected by classmates to serve as class spokesperson. He talked about the relevance of the badge the officers wear and related it to a shield, serving to protect. LETA Director Steve Shults served as Master of Ceremonies, and Kimbrough Choir member, Cierra Wrench, sang the National Anthem. The ceremony began and concluded with the playing of bagpipes by two members of Jonesboro Fire Department's Honor Guard Pipes and Drum.

Please Join Us For a
Retirement Reception
Honoring

Dr. Michael Sullens
VP for Student Services

Peggy Weir
Director of Adult Education

Vernon Cates
Welding Instructor

David Bowlin
Electricity/Electronics Instructor

Linda Stacy
Business Instructor

Thursday, May 2

Drop-In 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Special Presentations at 4:00

Randolph County
Development Center

Art Club Enjoys Cultural Activities on Trip to St. Louis

A group of twenty BRTC Art Club members, faculty and staff enjoyed a two-day field trip to St. Louis and its various art and entertainment venues on April 12 and 13. Highlights of the trip included visits to the St. Louis Art Museum and the Arch.

On Friday, all participants viewed the Da Vinci Exhibit in the Bank of America Plaza, discovering many of Da Vinci's famous inventions and machines, then went on a docent-led tour of the St. Louis Art Museum, experiencing many masterworks of Monet, Picasso, Flemish painters, the Hudson River School, ancient Western civilizations, and more. On Saturday, the Art Club peeked into the iconic St. Louis Arch, walked through its Westward Expansion Museum, and watched a film on the building of the monument. Some of the group members opted to ride the elevator all the way to the top of the Arch, while others preferred the relatively less dizzying experience of a steamboat ride at Laclede's Landing. In the free time many participants split off into smaller groups to enjoy other attractions, such as the St. Louis zoo, carriage rides, train station, mall, and wax museum.

Faculty member and Art Club group leader Dr. Sandy Davis-Baltz said, "This was an amazing experience for students and chaperones, most of whom had never ridden a train, experienced a subway or Mississippi riverboat ride, nor visited the beautiful city of St. Louis before. The group was fantastic, and everyone had a great educational and fun-filled time. The hotel was exquisite, the food was great, and the sites provided memories the group will never forget. I can't thank the SGA enough for helping provide funding for part of the trip. Otherwise, this comprehensive trip would never have been possible for many of the students."

Participants had to get up early to catch the Amtrak train, running from Walnut Ridge to St. Louis, which departed at 12:30 a.m. Friday, but were rewarded by a fun ride over the rails. Students making the trip were Pam Allen, Viola Green, Lacey Morris, Jessica Keeling, Haley Quest, Lacey Blackwell, Scott Jurs, Kera Hufford, Armand Jurs, Brittany Grooms, Keri Hufford, Betty Hodge, Nikki Key, and Elyssa Davis. Chaperones in addition to Baltz were Janice Harvey, Bookstore Director, Samantha Baltz, adjunct English instructor, Daniel Parker, Distance Education Coordinator, and Kim Bigger, Registrar, joined by her daughter, Katelyn.





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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. Roger Johnson
VP for General Education*

If you have not been on the campus at Black River Technical College for the past few years, you might notice a few changes regarding classroom delivery methods and support services for students. We are well into our second year of our PACE grant, designed to get students through their course of study more quickly, so they can go into the workforce or be ready to transfer to a four-year

institution. Our Distance Education Department has grown out of necessity, as the number of online and hybrid-class offerings have increased dramatically. These classes are usually the first to fill.

Despite the changes in how students receive class material, one constant remains! When a student is outside the classroom they often realize that they need additional help. That is what our new Learning Center is for! The Learning Center has been open to students since November, 2012, making it one of our newest structures and services on campus. The environment is pleasant and certainly conducive to learning.

The facility has an open area where most of the tutoring occurs. Students receive one-on-one help in math, English, science, or just about any subject they need. Our tutors are trained and are competent in the discipline they serve.

The Learning Center is much more than just a place where students can receive tutoring help. The facility also houses 29 computers in an area separated by glass doors. Students utilize these computers to work on papers and modular math assignments, and also use them for testing. When

students require a more private, quiet environment, there are two smaller rooms designed to study with a partner. There is also one larger room that will accommodate 6-8 students to work on projects or provide a meeting place for our active clubs on campus.

In addition to the new facility, we were able to hire a coordinator for The Learning Center. This person supervises the tutors, manages room and computer usage, and has become vitally important in implementing our student success plan. She has reached out to the faculty for their assistance and they have responded favorably by addressing specific needs of students with the coordinator.

Our goal is to improve student performance, which will increase the number of students retained and ultimately allow them to obtain their academic goals.

Please stop by The Learning Center the next time you are on campus. Hours of operation are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. On Wednesday the center is open from 8 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. We hope to be expanding these hours next fall.