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## Important Dates

## November 16

Law Enforcement Graduation

## November 20

Country Feast

## November 21-23

Thanksgiving Holiday Campus Closed

## November 29

Kimbrough Choir Presentation

## December 3

Respiratory Care Pinning and Graduation

## December 4

PN/RN Pinning and Graduation

## First "BRTC's Got Talent" Competition Held

Cierra Wrench of Imboden won first place in the first "BRTC's Got Talent" competition held last week. She topped the 38 contestants with her performance of "Bist Du Bei Mir" and was awarded the \$500 top prize.

The competition consisted of students from the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses as well as the concurrent program.

Receiving 2nd place and \$250 was Gregory King of Pocahontas who sang an original song. Kimberly Lovelady and Brad Harp of Walnut Ridge won 3rd place and \$100 by singing "Love Song."

The event, co-sponsored by BRTC's English Club and Student Government Association (SGA), was a fundraiser for the student organizations in addition to promoting



Winners were, from left, Cierra Wrench, first place; Gregory King, second place; Kimberly Lovelady and Brad Harp, third place.

student engagement, according to Lisa Inman, English Club sponsor. The event netted \$635.

Talents included skits, comedy routines, dancing, singing, and instrumental solos.

Judges were Dr. Roger Johnson, VP for General Education, Rachel Koons, social science instructor, Ramonda Housh, Director of Nursing, and Kelly Grooms, fine arts instructor.

Admission was free for students with an ID and \$3 for general admission. SGA provided free snacks during intermission, and door prizes were given away during the evening.

"The event was a great success," said Inman. "The house was packed and all feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We look forward to holding another BRTC's Got Talent next year."

## BRTC Faculty Elected to Lead ARKade

Lisa Jackson, instructor of Developmental Math at BRTC, was recently elected president-elect of ARKade (Arkansas Association of Developmental Education) during the organization's conference at Win-Rock near Morrilton. Also, BRTC instructor Joan Linnstaedter was elected to succeed Jackson as chair of the ARKade Scholarship Committee.

Jackson's responsibilities as president-elect include the planning of next year's state conference. This will involve locating a venue, arranging for catering, and program development, she explained. In addition, she



Lisa Jackson  
President-Elect



Joan Linnstaedter  
Scholarship Chair

will be Arkansas' lead representative at the NADE (National Association of Developmental Education) in Denver in February.

The organization's mission is to promote, "through professional collaboration and development, the use of best practices in developmental education."

"BRTC is proud of Lisa's and Joan's election to lead this organization," said Dr. Roger Johnson, VP for General Education. "We know their involvement in ARKade not only is a benefit for them, but for the institution as well."

## Plus 50 Encore Grant to Aid Nontraditional Students

Nontraditional students at BRTC, specifically those age 50 and over, will benefit from services provided by a grant the college received recently from the American Association of Community Colleges. Through this award, according to Patti Blaxton, Director of Corporate and Community Education, BRTC will be a participant in the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program. The grant program is designed to increase the number of students over the age of 50 who complete degrees, certificates and non-for-credit credentials to increase their labor market competitiveness.

"This grant will help us to help those in this student group to provide training or retraining, especially in the high-demand labor market areas of education, health care, and social services," Blaxton explained. She indicated the funds will be used to provide computer skills and refresher training in core areas as needed, along with other support services that impact a student's likelihood of success.

In addition, the grant will help BRTC to locate, assess, and assist plus-50 students with some prior credit to facilitate their rapid completion of a credential. "We view this component as extremely important," said Dr. Hatcher. "It is our goal to serve people in every way possible on the path to higher education degrees or credentials. We are honored to have been selected by AACC for this award that will help us help our students."



*Patti Blaxton (far left), Corporate and Community Education Director, and Peggy Weir, Director of Adult Education, present the check for the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program to BRTC President Dr. Wayne Hatcher.*

## BRTC Welcomes New Employees

Julie Edington, Director of Human Resources at BRTC, as announced four recent additions to the BRTC staff. They are: Jackie Needham, Chris Nunally, Karla Thielemier, and Elizabeth Tyler.

Both Needham and Nunally have been hired as institutional services assistants for the night shift. Needham is from Imboden and previously worked at the Postal Service for five years and Sloan-Hendrix High School for 15 years prior to that. She is a



*Jackie Needham*

graduate of Quitman High School.

Nunally previously worked in the scrap metal business as well as eight years at Cedar Glades Baptist Camp in Imboden. He attended Black Rock School and resides in Ravenden.



*Chris Nunally*

Thielemier is the new Learning Center Coordinator. She has worked at St. Paul's

Catholic School in Pocahontas for the past 16 years, with the last seven as an administrator. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Williams Baptist College and an MSE in Educational Leadership, and Curriculum and Instruction.

Tyler has accepted the position of Administrative



*Karla Thielemier*

Specialist I in the Department of Student Services. She is a resident of Pocahontas and a graduate of Pocahontas High School. She earned Child Development Associate certification from BRTC. For the past 11 years, Tyler worked for Baltz Bookkeeping in payroll and accounts.



*Elizabeth Tyler*

## Employees Attend Benefits Fair

A Benefits Fair was held October 17 in the Randolph County Development Center for employees of Black River Technical College, according to event organizer Julie Edington, Director of Human Resources at BRTC.

"This was a wonderful opportunity for employees to meet with benefit providers from the area, ask questions and see what products and services are available," explained Edington. Approximately 87 employees attended.

"I would like to thank everyone who came out and participated in the Benefits Fair," Edington said. "I also want to extend a special thanks to the businesses that donated items for the door prizes and the businesses that came and



*Julie Edington (far right), Director of Human Resources, with representatives of QualChoice.*

shared their products and services."

Businesses that participated were: American Fidelity, BanCorp South, Corn-ing Savings & Loan, First National Bank of Pocahontas, Delta Dental, IBERIABANK, Integrity 1st Bank,

Insurance Brokers and Services, Sam's Club, QualChoice, and Valic.

Refreshments were also served in addition to the many door prizes and items given away by the vendors.

"I was very pleased with the turnout and the positive feedback from the employees and the vendors," said Edington. "It was a great success and we hope to make this an annual event."



## Kimbrough Choir to Perform

The Black River Technical College Kimbrough Choir will be partnering with First Methodist Church of Pocahontas Church Choir and Hand Bell Choir for a special Thanksgiving music presentation.

They will perform during the Thanksgiving Community Service to be held November 20, 7:00 p.m., at Grace Fellowship on Highway 115 in Pocahontas. The community is invited to attend.

Jonecie Trammel, Kimbrough Choir Director, and Karen Parish, with First Methodist Church and also a member of the Kimbrough Choir, have headed this collaborative effort to bring together school and community, and to encourage and uplift the hearts of people through music.

The musical presentation will feature the songs "Come Let Us Sing," "Non Nobis," and "Ave Maria."

For more information contact Trammel at 870-248-4000, ext. 4188.



*Kimbrough Choir performing at a recent competition held in Fort Smith*

## Learning Center Opens

BRTC announces the opening of the new Learning Center housed in TM106, a newly renovated area on the Pocahontas campus. The lab offers free one-on-one tutoring with professional and peer tutors available to help in Math and English.

In the near future, the lab plans to offer a Writing Lab and Science Lab along with a bank of resources (hands-on and web-based links) that the students can access. The new center will also offer online links through Moodle, BRTC's learning management system. Also, subject-specific software will soon be available.

The lab is equipped with 29 computers for student use along with two private study rooms and a large meeting /group study room. The lab is currently open Monday through Thursday for tutoring services and Monday through Friday for lab usage. BRTC plans to offer extended hours in the Spring 2013 semester.

"This lab has long been a part of our planning, and we are excited to be operational," said Dr. Roger Johnson, VP for General Education. "Nothing would please us more than to outgrow this center soon, because that would mean our students were using it to the maximum, and that's what we hope to see." Dr. Johnson also welcomed Karla Thielemier as the coordinator for the center. "Her skills and 16 years of experience in education and as an administrator are exactly what we were seeking for this position," he added.

## Three Awarded Scholarships

Jeremy Green of Marmaduke and David McGonigal of Pocahontas have each been awarded the Wal-Mart/BRTC Success Scholarship, while Green and Carter Garrett have each been awarded the Aviation Maintenance Manufacturing Scholarship at Black River Technical College, according to Natasha Rush, Financial Aid Officer. Both scholarships are for the Fall 2012 semester.

Green is pursuing an AAS in Aviation Maintenance Technology with plans to become an A&P mechanic. He and his wife, Rachelle, have two children.

McGonigal is the son of James McGonigal and a graduate of Pocahontas High School. He is working towards his AA in Gen Ed at BRTC with future plans of becoming a dental hygienist.

Garrett is a graduate of Brookland High School and the son of Annette Garrett of Brookland. He plans to complete his Aviation Maintenance Technician Certification and own his own crop dusting service.

For more information on scholarships, visit [www.blackrivertech.org/financial-aid/scholarship-opportunities](http://www.blackrivertech.org/financial-aid/scholarship-opportunities) or contact Rush at 870-248-4000, ext. 4019.



*Jeremy Green*



*David McGonigal*



*Carter Garrett*

## PTK Induction



The BRTC chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society welcomed 34 new members during its Fall induction ceremony held October 18 in the Randolph County Development Center on the Pocahontas campus. Requirements for selection include maintaining a 3.5 grade point average or above while enrolled in at least 12 college credit hours per semester. PTK has been recognizing academic achievement in two-year colleges since 1918.

Current PTK officers are Jonathan Milgrim, President; Kimberly Riddle, Vice President of Fellowship; Jeff Martin, Vice President of Leadership; Shawnya Fraysher, Vice President of Service; Joy Callahan, Treasurer; Trent Morledge, Secretary; and Secret England, Historian.

Chapter advisors of PTK include Shana Akers, Ashley Hall, Karen Liebhaber, and Daphne Perkins. Alexandra Smith is currently serving as Regional Vice President of Oklahoma/Arkansas Region, Eastern District.



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## BRTC Mission Statement

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

## From the President's Desk...



*Dr. Wayne Hatcher*

The new Learning Center is one of the ways this college has responded to convincing data proving that tutoring availability is a critical "promising practice" to improve student success. We know through research by the Center for Community College Student Engagement, for example, that participation in tutoring is associated with higher GPAs and pass rates. Here at BRTC, we have long given attention to support for learners in many ways, and this includes through the offering of tutoring services. However, staffing and space restraints have typically restricted tutoring in the past to limited services in unused classroom space

with part-time tutoring and limited technology.

Our new Learning Center actually has its genesis in studies done by two of our own staff members, Regina Moore, Distance Education Coordinator, and Rhonda Foster, Student Recruiter, while working on advanced degrees. The design and components they envisioned in their classroom projects morphed and eventually gave shape to BRTC's new Learning Center, where our students can receive one-on-one or group tutoring from full time staff and assistants. As we gauge the usage patterns and assistance needs of those who use this new center, we plan to add additional services and availability to meet those needs.

We know from data gleaned in the 2012 BRTC Key Findings report of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement that our students already give BRTC relatively high marks for learner support services overall, but our ratings for tutoring and skill labs, both of which the new Learning Center encompasses, are low. Only about 25% of our survey respondents indicated frequent use of tutoring services; more than 53% of BRTC students responding to the survey report they rarely or never use a skills lab. Clearly this is an area this college needed to address—and we have! We think our

students will be pleased, and we believe their grades will reflect just how much.



*BRTC students are utilizing the new Learning Center on the Pocahontas campus.*

*Linda Stacy, business instructor at BRTC, recently received a plaque from Cisco Networking Academy, recognizing her for ten years of active participation teaching Cisco 1, 2, 3 and 4.*

