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Important Dates

January 21

Martin Luther King Day—No Classes; Admin. Offices Open

January 22-23

PTK Blood Drive

February 12

LETA Blood Drive

February 25

***Ain't I a Woman!* Performance**

March 9

**BRTC Foundation Gala
REACH Sites Open**

March 12

Advisory Dinner

March 18-22

Spring Break

Ain't I a Woman! Scheduled for February 25

Black River Technical College in collaboration with the Eddie Mae Herron Center will present *Ain't I a Woman!* Monday, February 25, 7:00 p.m., in the Randolph County Development Center in Pocahontas.

Ain't I a Woman! combines vocal and chamber music to celebrate the life and times of four powerful African American Women: Zora Neale Hurston (novelist and anthropologist), Sojourner Truth (ex-slave and abolitionist), Clementine Hunter (folk artist), and Fannie Lou Hamer (civil rights worker).

The production is the work of Core Ensemble based in Florida and will feature Shinnerrie Jackson playing Hurston, Truth, Hunter and Hamer while interacting with a musical trio of cello, piano and percussion.

The musical score is drawn from the heartfelt spirituals and blues of the Deep South, the urban vitality of the Jazz Age, and contemporary concert music by African American composers such as Charles Mingus, Max Roach, Thelonius Monk, and Diane Monroe.

Core Ensemble, established in 1993, has produced a series of chamber music theatre works that combine music with other performance elements such as narrative and dance. The group has performed nationally and interna-

tionally since 1995.

This production is funded in part by the BRTC Foundation SEAS project, the Eddie Mae Herron Center, Dean and Brenda Gillogly, and Scott and Joniece Trammel.

Admission for the event will be \$5 for adults and \$3 for students of any age. Admission is free for children age six and under.

For more information on *Ain't I a Woman!*, contact Dina Hufstедler at 870-248-4000, ext. 4187.



BRTC Gala to be Held at Rolling Hills

The 7th Annual BRTC Foundation Gala will be held this year at Rolling Hills Country Club. In addition to the change of venue, according to Ann Savage, Director of Marketing and PR and this year's Gala Chair, the March 9 event will take place on a Saturday evening instead of the usual weekday evening. "We hope to make the event even more special and exciting, and the Gala Committee thinks these and other changes may add to the fun and create a less formal atmosphere," Savage said. However, she added, the changes do not mean the event will shed its "elegance" impact, she added.



Foundation Gala committee members Vickie French (from left), Ann Savage, Sharon Watson, and Ruth Ann Ellis are preparing for the Annual Foundation Gala to be held at Rolling Hills Country Club.

"This event is one of the BRTC Foundation's major fundraising opportunities to generate funds for scholarships, as well as other needs of the college," said Savage. "The event will still include a dinner, as well as a live and silent auction."

"Tickets for the event remain at \$125 per couple," Savage added. "Seating is limited so individuals are encouraged to purchase tickets early." Tickets may

be purchased by contacting any BRTC Foundation Board member or calling Vickie French at (870) 248-4070 or Ann Savage at (870) 248-4025.

BRTC Announces New Staff and Position Change



Ashley Conrey

Ashley Conrey has been hired as Administrative Specialist I in the Department of Student Services, according

to Vice President Dr. Mike Sullens. She previously worked at Riverside Express as an Assistant Manager and for Custom Pak in Walnut Ridge. She has 15 years of customer service experience.

Conrey received an Associate of Arts degree in 2004 and a Certificate of Proficiency in Phlebotomy in 2011, both from BRTC. In her spare time, she teaches Yoga at Black River Health Club in Pocahontas.

Kelsey Jones and Paige Newboles have been hired as full time Nursing I Instructors for BRTC,

according to Angie Caldwell, Vice President of Technical Education.

Jones has been working at BRTC since August 2011 teaching Medical Terminology and Math for Nurses on both the Pocahontas and Paragould campuses. She earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing degree in 2010 from



Kelsey Jones

Arkansas State University, and previously worked at St. Bernard's Regional Medical Center in Jonesboro as an Oncology RN. She lives in Walnut Ridge and is a graduate of Hoxie High School.

Newboles comes to BRTC from NEA Baptist Hospital where she has worked since 2010. She

earned her RN certification after graduating from Arkansas Northeastern College in Blytheville with her Associate degree in nursing. She earned her practical nursing degree from Cotton Boll Technical Institute and received EMT certification from Tulsa County Area Vo-Tech.

Other work experience for Newboles includes Flo and Phil Jones Hospice House of St. Bernard's Medical Center, Woodrow Wilson Elementary in Paragould, Arkansas Methodist Medical Center, Outpatient Surgery Center of Jonesboro, and NEA Surgery Center. She and her husband, Buddy, live in Paragould with their 14-year-old son.



Paige Newboles

Haskins Earns Bachelor's Degree

Alan Haskins, Director of BRTC's Fire Science program, was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Fire Science degree from Columbia Southern University. He graduated Summa Cum Laude in December.

A graduate of BRTC's Fire Science program, Haskins has been working in his current position at BRTC since July 2010. He previously worked 17 years for the Walnut Ridge Fire Department serving the last three and a half as Fire Chief. He also served on BRTC's Fire Science Advisory Committee for 15 years and taught as an adjunct instructor.



Alan Haskins

Skaggs Receives Distinguished Alumnus Honor at ASU

Audrey Skaggs, science instructor at BRTC, was awarded "Distinguished Alumnus" for the Clinical Laboratory Science department at Arkansas State University during a ceremony held this past October. She was one of five distinguished alumni from the College of Nursing and Health Professions at ASU honored for their professional achievements in their specific department.

Skaggs was hired in August at BRTC to teach Anatomy and Physiology, General Biology and Microbiology. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Clinical Lab Sciences from ASU and earned a Masters in Health Science Education from ASU in December, graduating with a 4.0. She was also inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society earlier in the year.

Skaggs grew up in Belgium then served in the U.S. Marine Corps and participated in medical mission trips to South America. Prior to joining BRTC she worked as a Med Tech for NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital in Jonesboro and a technologist at Methodist University Hospital in Memphis, in addition to serving as adjunct professor of Clinical Laboratory Science at ASU. She currently resides in Brookland with her husband, Perry, and four children.



Audrey Skaggs is pictured with her Distinguished Alumnus award.

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Film Preview to Highlight Special Observance

BRTC will host a special event focusing on the World War II Japanese American camps in south-east Arkansas in recognition of 'Fred Korematsu Day' on Wednesday, January 30. The event, which is open to the public, will be held from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in the Community Conference Room of the Gaines Technology Center.

Organized by Dr. Jan Ziegler and Dr. Charlotte Power, the observance will feature a special film screening preview of "Relocation: Arkansas" and will include a presentation by the filmmaker, Vivienne Schiffer of Houston, Texas. Schiffer's mother, Rosalie Gould, is a former mayor of McGehee, near the site of Rohwer Relocation Center in Desha County. Gould is a longtime advocate and activist in efforts to preserve the two Arkansas camps. She is also known for her tireless efforts to preserve and make available to visitors and researchers a substantial collection of art and other artifacts from the camps.

"I know many people are aware of the Japanese American expulsion from the West Coast and their imprisonment in ten 'relocation centers,' including the two in Arkansas, in the wake of Pearl Harbor" said Ziegler. "However, probably only a few people know of the role played by Fred Korematsu, who refused to go to the camps in violation of his constitutional rights. His story is an amazing one,"

Ziegler added.

Korematsu's case was appealed all the way to the Supreme Court, and in 1944 the Court ruled against him, arguing that the incarceration of Japanese Americans was justified due to military necessity. However, the case was re-opened some 40 years later after the discovery of key documents showing that Japanese Americans had committed no acts of treason to justify mass incarceration. These documents had been concealed previously from the Supreme Court. Korematsu's conviction was overturned in a federal court in 1983. This overturn is considered a pivotal moment in civil rights history, according to the Fred T. Korematsu Institute for Civil Rights and Education.

He continued to work to educate people on the importance of speaking up to fight injustice until the time of his death in 2005. Korematsu was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by then-President Bill Clinton in 1998.

"We are looking forward very much to this event," said Power, BRTC History instructor. "It is especially fitting for my Arkansas History students, because there is this very important Arkansas connection through the camps to this chapter of our nation's and our state's history."

Both Power and Ziegler give high praise to the

preview video, which includes footage of Rohwer Relocation Center as it exists today and as it existed when it opened to some 8,500 exiled Japanese Americans in 1942.

The preview also includes clips of former President Bill Clinton, Skip Rutherford of the Clinton School, David Strickland, head of the Butler Center for Arkansas Studies which now houses the Gould Collection from the camps, and shots of many pieces of art and artifacts in the collection.

Especially poignant, Ziegler indicated, are interviews with former internees at the camps.

This is actually a short film previewing a much more detailed documentary film currently under production, according to Ziegler.



Fred Korematsu

(Photo by Shirley Nakao, courtesy of the Korematsu Institute)

TOP Developed to Assist Students in Transition to College

In the fall, BRTC's Adult Education Department implemented the Transition Opportunity Program (TOP) - a newly developed program, designed to make the transition for the incoming college student as smooth as possible, according to Peggy Weir, Director of Adult Education. "Whether from high school or the workplace, or any other place," said Weir, "students will be able to brush up on math, computer, writing and study skills to help ease their transition into college."

TOP was developed specifically with the newly enrolling student in mind. "It is possible for an individual who has taken the COMPASS and scored into remedial coursework to retake the COMPASS and test out of some of the remedial work," Weir explained. "The impact of this could be significant because of the potential savings for the student of both time and money." The retest of the COMPASS would have to be completed prior to enrollment in college coursework.

Services from TOP are also available to currently enrolled college students that would want to

improve their academic skills. A student in a science, business or automotive technology class, for example, could use the services of TOP to improve writing skills for writing class papers. Or, the student may need to sharpen math, reading or computer skills to help with their coursework. Perhaps the student just needs to work on study skills or time management. TOP will work on any of these with the student. Instructor Jean Wilson is coordinating the efforts of the program.

"The Adult Education Department is conducting the training and support, with structured classes for computer literacy and basic math skills, on the Pochontas campus," explained Regina Moore, Director of Distance Education at BRTC who assisted in the development of TOP. "Also offered, essentially, is a walk-in clinic for students who need help with any subject including time management, study skills, and reading and writing skills."

"Many industrial companies in our area have closed, will be closing or have had significant layoffs," noted Moore. "Because of this, BRTC

has and is expecting many students under TAA (Trade Adjustment Assistance) who have had no computer experience or have been out of school for many years. Often these students struggle and require additional support to help with the transition to college. We are excited about this new program and hope to have many students participate."

For more information on TOP, contact Weir or instructor Jean Wilson in the Adult Education Department at 870-248-4130, or email Wilson at jean.wilson@blackrivertech.org.



Jean Wilson, Instructor



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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

During spring inservice, Dennis Jones, President of National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and a nationally recognized consultant/expert, gave us a presentation on why the Arkansas higher education institutions must change if we are to serve the state's needs.

As evidence, he pointed to Arkansas's ranking of 2nd in the number of jobs that require only a high school degree, to our state's rank of 9th in high school dropouts and 47th and 51st in the number of

jobs that require a bachelor or graduate degree. That is NOT good news for our state's future.

Statistics prove without a doubt that what Arkansas is doing currently will neither meet the national average nor will it attain the goals set by the president and our governor to keep jobs and businesses in Arkansas. Our failure as a state to be willing to sacrifice to make necessary changes is part of the problem.

Higher education as currently practiced by many institutions is also part of the problem...but, provided we make significant changes, higher education is also the primary player if Arkansas is to succeed in the future.

What does this mean for Arkansas community colleges? What changes will be necessary to ensure colleges can succeed in an environment where such forces are at play? Jones stated, "Regardless of specifics and motivation—the focus of accountability has shifted from access to success." He went on to explain changes in instruction that must occur, and noted that student services now play a more critical role than ever.

Jones insisted a successful a community college must be willing to break with certain traditions.

For example, the core functions need to be facilitation of student learning and certification of that learning—not the delivery of content. Curriculum must be streamlined with fewer choices.

Competencies are the new focus. Courses are directly linked to career pathways. Academic calendars and schedules must be constructed to meet student needs, including night and weekend options, allowing students to complete programs and courses in less time than the current antiquated model.

The heartening news is that many community colleges have been doing these things for years if not decades. This gives us good resources to utilize as BRTC continues to move in this direction. Yes, some BRTC faculty have been phasing in implementation of these concepts the last few years. Others are ready to join in and help with the needed acceleration of implementation.

Student Services is on the cusp on implementing some major changes to expedite our effort to significantly enhance student success. We continue to work hard to implement needed changes, because our goal is to have each one of our graduates say "Thanks to BRTC...I have work to do."