

## WAGE™ Center Holds Open House

The Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) Center located at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff held an open house on Thursday, November 12, 2009.

WAGE is a work readiness program designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace.



*Pictured above: Ralph Edds, WAGE Coordinator; James Smith, Adult Education Deputy Director; Linda Kittler, Center Director; and Dr. Calvin Johnson, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.*



The Arkansas Department of Career Education funds the Adult Education Division. The Adult Education Division provides programs and services statewide.

## A Better Learning Environment Created at Fayetteville Adult Education

The Fayetteville Adult Education Center has improved service by creating an environment that promotes learning for the community.

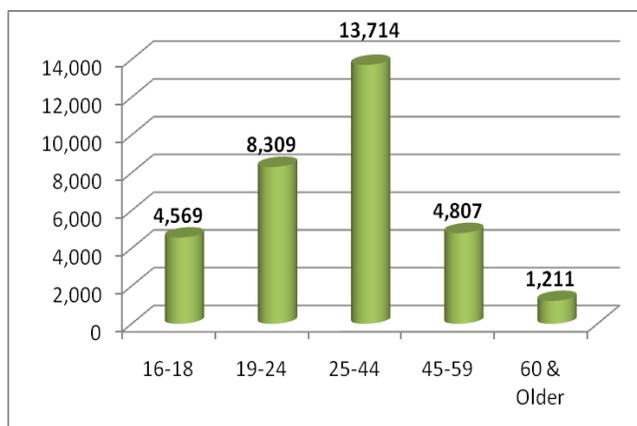
Since moving into their current location at 612 College Street in May of 2008, the number of students at the center has increased dramatically. Approximately 1500 were served and more than a thousand individuals enrolled last year for adult education services. Kathy Spigarelli, Director of Adult and Community Education, firmly believes that the school environment positively affects the staff, students, and services.

As a part of the Fayetteville School District, the center is the anchor component in a building that houses a number of district programs. The center's staff includes five full-time teachers, five part-time teachers, three paraprofessionals and several volunteers. "Regardless of anything else, everybody here does what's in the best interest of the student and center," says Spigarelli. "Everybody makes their decisions based on student need. And we work really hard."

Spigarelli encourages staff members to continue their effort of making the center one that students are proud to attend. The staff and the district demonstrate that they care enough to provide a great place for the community to learn.



*Above: Kathy Spigarelli; classroom and common areas at Fayetteville Adult Education Center.*



### 2008-2009 Enrolled Student Ages

**Total Enrollment=32,610**

*Source: Arkansas Adult Education Division Academic Year Report Card (2008-09)*

## Student Spotlight: Isaac Stites

University of Arkansas  
Community College at  
Batesville



Isaac Stites always had an interest in drawing, and early experiences got him interested in structures and remodeling. But his early schooling wasn't helping him clarify and achieve his dreams. In 11th grade he dropped out of high school and enrolled in the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville (UACCB) Adult Education/GED® Testing Program. Isaac was reading on a 4th grade level due to his dyslexia. He felt he could do better, but felt he had been stereotyped and "pushed through the system". In his Adult Education classes he had teachers who sat down and worked with him as he found an approach that worked for him.

After earning his GED credential, he was transferred to a full-time job where his supervisor encouraged him to get technical education so he could move into maintenance. This spurred him to begin college classes at UACCB. Now 19, his exceptional drawing skills have caught the attention of his blueprint/schema-tic reading course instructor.

Isaac says that he wrote essays for the first time in the GED program, and the process fascinated him. He continued developing his skills out of pure stubbornness--to show others that he can do it. His goal now is to pursue a degree in architecture and to use his talents for buildings and home remodeling. He plans to continue his education and earn a degree in drafting and design.

*-UACCB Campus Notes*

## A CENTER FOR WORKING FAMILIES

Dr. Blake Robertson, Vice President of Adult and Workforce Education announced that Ouachita Technical College (OTC) was awarded a \$70,000 two-year grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation. The purpose of the grant is to establish a new service delivery system bringing a network of agencies and programs together to help low-income families reach financial stability and move them up the economic ladder to self sufficiency.

OTC has written the grant in support of five of its programs, Ouachita Area Adult Education Center, Even Start Family Literacy Program, Career Pathways Initiative, TRIO Support Services, and Achieve the Dream Initiative in providing this information ladder. The community programs that OTC will be working with are: West Central Arkansas Career Development Center System, Arkansas Workforce Services in Hot Spring County, Central Arkansas Development Council - Community Action Agency, Southern Good Faith Fund, and Arkansas Department of Health.

"We want low-income families to know where they can go to receive assistance on how to tap into all of the services and support that these agencies offer," says Robertson.

In establishing this network of services, Ouachita Technical College and the community agencies will establish three service areas for these low-income families. 1) Employment/Education Services which will establish job readiness and job placement services, hard skills training, and career advancement and advising services; 2) Income and Work Support which will include access to public benefits with the help of CPI trained counselors, tax assistance, and student financial aid and scholarships; 3) Financial Services and Wealth Building which will include financial literacy classes, one-on-one financial coaching, and an introduction to other financial services.

### Johnson County Adult Education Program Host College/Career Day

The Johnson County Adult Education Center sponsored College/Career Day for students and prospective students on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Representatives from area colleges, military branches, and other employment service providers were present to provide information. Students were encouraged to develop contacts and imagine themselves taking the next step on their education or employment ladder.

*Pictured right: Students attending College/Career Day; Johnson County Adult Education instructor with students; and Sgt. Carlos Ayala-Pagan with Dr. David Hopkins. Clarksville School District Superintendent.*

