

the Career Counselor 2016

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Student Organizations Meet to Win!



Spring Issue

A public information pamphlet
of the Arkansas Department of
Career Education

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Also in this issue: A special section highlighting client and student successes; start reading their stories on page 7. Cash named new CEWD Board member. Director 's Update. Events and activities. And more...!

Adult Education
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
Career & Technical Education
Office of Skills Development

Director's Update



Charisse Childers, Ph.D.

Our team is working around the state to provide the services and programs that prepare individuals with education and training to enter the workforce or improve the opportunities to obtain or advance in a career.

- ▶ **Adult Education** provides academic and job skills training for adult students and works with employers in all counties through the Adult Ed Centers around the state.
- ▶ **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** provides counseling, education, and job training to Arkansans with disabilities through the field offices around the state and at the Arkansas Career Training Institute in Hot Springs.
- ▶ **Career and Technical Education** serves schools and students enrolled in career and technical education. This division also includes the State Approving Agency for Veterans Training responsible for the approval of schools and training sites that provide veterans' education and training and the Law Enforcement Support Office (LESO) provides support and coordination of surplus equipment to law enforcement agencies in Arkansas.
- ▶ **The Office of Skills Development** aligns career and technical education programs with the skills needed by business and industry through industry training, workforce development, secondary centers, and apprenticeship programs.

Our goal is that when a student or client participates in any of our programs they can be assured that they have the skills for successful employment. We can achieve this when business and industry partners with our high schools, technical institutes, community colleges and rehabilitation services. Industry-coordinated, demand-driven programs and industry-recognized certifications will better prepare students and clients for employment.

Please contact our office for assistance or for more information. Your input is important as we are constantly striving for better coordination and cooperation between our agency and employers, training programs, and educators.

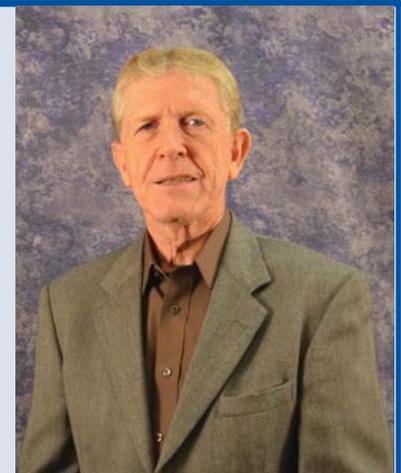
Jerry Cash Named to Career Education & Workforce Development Board

LITTLE ROCK – **Governor Asa Hutchinson** has named **Jerry Cash, Ed.D.**, to the Career Education & Workforce Development Board. He replaces Dan Serrano.

Cash, of Harrison, is retired from North Arkansas College as Vice President of Student Services. He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Arkansas State University. He received his Ed.D. Degree from the University of Arkansas. He has an extensive background in education, having served as a science teacher, a counselor, and dean of students.

"We welcome Dr. Cash to the Career Development & Workforce Development Board. He brings a wealth of knowledge to our agency and to our board," said Charisse Childers, Ph.D., Director of the Arkansas Department of Career Education.

Cash's appointment expires June 30, 2016.



Arkansas Featured in National Career and Technical Education Study

Today's CTE: A Dead-End Track, or a Path to the Middle Class?



The Fordham Institute, the nation's leader in advancing educational excellence for every child through quality research, analysis, and commentary in Ohio, recently released the study **Career and Technical Education in High School: Does It Improve Student Outcomes?**

This study expands upon a growing body of research that demonstrates the impact of well-designed CTE programs on graduation rates and future earnings.

The Arkansas Research Center

is to be commended for its work on this project and its contribution of CTE data in Arkansas. The ARC's findings contain data on demographics, enrollment, course taking, attendance, achievement, high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment, employment, and wages. It is supplemented with data from the National Center for Education Statistics, which adds information on school location (urban, rural, or suburban).

Fordham's latest study by the University of Connecticut's Shaun M. Dougherty uses data from Arkansas to explore whether students benefit from CTE coursework and, more specifically, from focused sequences of CTE courses aligned to certain industries. The study also describes the current landscape, including which students are taking CTE courses, how many courses they're taking, and which ones.

Dr. Charisse Childers, Director of the Arkansas Department of Career Education, participated on the national panel in Washington, D.C., to discuss some key findings.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOL:

DOES IT IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES?

EVIDENCE FROM ARKANSAS

89% OF STUDENTS HAVE TAKEN AT LEAST ONE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) COURSE IN HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENTS TAKE AN AVERAGE OF **4.9** CTE COURSES IN HIGH SCHOOL*

STUDENTS CAN CONCENTRATE BY TAKING A SEQUENCE OF THREE OR MORE CTE COURSES IN A PROGRAM OF STUDY ALIGNED TO A SPECIFIC CAREER AND INDUSTRY.

ROUGHLY THREE-QUARTERS OF STUDENTS WHO CHOOSE TO CONCENTRATE DO SO IN ONE OF THREE PROGRAMS OF STUDY:



BUSINESS
31%



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
25%



AGRICULTURE
18%

CTE

Drone Class Takes Students to Higher Heights



BEEBE – Just as soon as they took to the skies, drones became a thorn in the side for celebrities and a headache for the federal government to manage. A-Listers have called on state and federal lawmakers to ban the unmanned aerial systems – the formal name for drones – from invading their privacy. Paparazzi use the device to enhance their coverage of superstars, mounting cameras on the drones to get places they cannot.

Drones are a hot topic at Beebe High School, but not for celebrity gossip. Students are building them, programming them, and conjuring ways they can be used to better their communities.

“Drones have a lot of applications that are useful in our society other than just stuff that people do that can

get them in trouble,” said Hunter Orman, a freshman at Beebe High.

Orman said the class has heightened his interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics - a program area of ACE, Career & Technical Education) careers because of all the skills needed to build a drone. He has decided to study mechanical engineering after graduating from high school.

“Engineering is a lot about learning how to build things and learning how they work. That’s what we are doing with the drones – building them and designing them,” he said.

Getting students interested about STEM careers is exactly why this class was created, according to Chad Mercado, who teaches it. He said the idea started on a whim.

“My principal texted me one morning and said ‘What do you know about drones?’ Mercado recalled.

Mercado said he did not know a thing about drones, but Principal

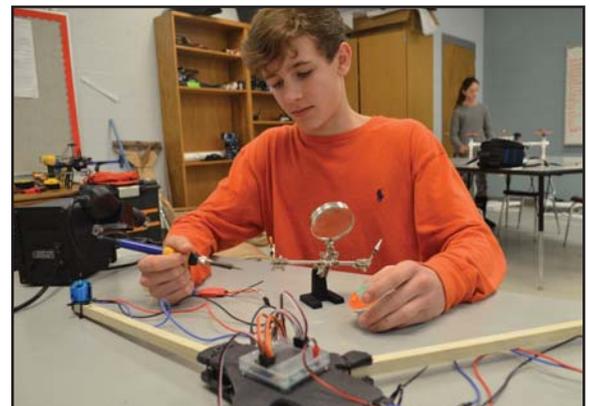
Mike Tarkington encouraged him to research ways to bring a drone class to students at Beebe High.

“The initial process was ‘Yeah, they’re cool,’ but we needed to figure out more. We wanted to know if there were educational opportunities that we can teach the kids so they can understand and apply skills to other subjects,” Mercado said.

The class, called Unmanned Aerial Systems I, started during the 2014-15 school year. The class introduces students to drones, the history behind them, and the safety regulations outlined by the FAA. Students also apply a variety of math and science skills to build drones.

The first year was such a success that school leaders added another level

DRONES continued on page 5



Computer Engineering Class Leads to Immediate Job Placement

LITTLE ROCK – What teenager wouldn't like a class that has all of the cool gadgets of today like cell phones, tablets, laptops, and computers?

In the computer engineering technology class at Metropolitan Career-Technical Center, an **Arkansas Department of Career Education**

Secondary Career Center in the Little Rock School District, students embrace the 21st century devices to serve as their textbooks. Replacing cracked phone and tablet screens and installing new operating systems on computers are just a few of the tasks in the teacher's lesson plans. The skills they learn also prepare them for the vast fields in ever-changing, ever-growing digital sphere.

"I've always been interested in computers. It started when I was thirteen," said Austin Whitfield, a senior.

Whitfield, who is homeschooled, is one of the students in the computer engineering technology



class with a strong interest in computers and would like to pursue it as a career. (Any student either homeschooled or attends one of the schools in Pulaski County are allowed to attend Metropolitan.) Since he started taking the class, Whitfield has done everything from building a computer to setting up a network.

"We do a lot of troubleshooting. Sometimes we see problems that we have not seen before. We sit around and figure out how to fix it," Whitfield said.

DRONES continued from page 4

of the class, Unmanned Aerial Systems II, which was implemented in the 2015-16 school year. Mercado is already building the curriculum for Unmanned Aerial Systems III, set to launch in the fall.

"I think drones will be like computers. Once businesses learned how to utilize computers, they became a social thing. The same thing will be with drones," said Mercado.

Elizabeth Moody, a freshman, said the class has helped improve upon her math and teamwork skills. It has helped her think about how drones can help her beyond high school as she pursues a career in the military.

"I want to take pictures of the land and the water to make sure everything is okay. Being afraid of heights, I can use the drones instead of going up there

myself," she said.

Beebe High is considered to be one of the first schools in the nation to offer a class on drones. As a result, many other schools across the state and country are looking at ways to implement a similar program.

"I've been to a lot of schools, a lot of bigger schools than Beebe High School. Knowing that other schools don't have a drones class but Beebe – of all places – does is quite impressive," Moody said.

Mercado said he is proud to know that he is preparing his students for rewarding and cutting-edge careers of the 21st century.

"These students may not ever fly a drone after this class, but they may become a programmer or a mechanical engineer because they have gotten the interest from this class," Mercado said.

ENGINEERING *continued from page 5*

The computers come from several places but mainly from the Little Rock School District's 46 schools. The technicians-in-waiting study the problem, declare a diagnosis, and then make the needed repairs. It is a collaborative effort to fix the computers. David Crawford, their lively teacher, leads the endeavor.

"I tell my students all the time that I think this is one of the greatest opportunities ever," Crawford said.

The computers are not just for classwork. After the students restore them to factory settings, they are re-entered into society. During the district's periodical Computer Power Days, students enrolled in Little Rock schools can buy a computer and monitor for no more than fifty dollars, depending on family income. Comcast also chips in to provide Internet service at an extremely affordable rate.

"It's the Little Rock School District's way of conquering the digital divide," he said.

Crawford pushes his students not only to learn how to fix computers and other technological devices, but he also encourages them to get national certifications in various computer programs. Many of his students complete his class with CTE certifications in Microsoft IT Academy and CompTIA Strata Fundamentals, two highly-revered certifications in the information technology world.

"You can't get a better feeling knowing that you've armed students with something that's actually going to take them somewhere. They can walk into a job, show the boss that certification, and get hired on the spot," Crawford said.

Possessing those certifications got Taitmon Lynch nearly hired on the spot. A 2015 graduate of North Pulaski High School and product of Metropolitan Career-Technical Center, Lynch was hired at uBreakiFix, an electronics repair store in North Little Rock,



Taitmon Lynch, an alumnus of Metropolitan Career-Technical Center, is now assistant manager at uBreakiFix in North Little Rock.

over the summer. Three months on the job, he became assistant manager.

"I got ahead big time by going to Metropolitan. We learned a lot of customer service skills. We would interact with people about their computers because we had to fix them. Customer service is one of the things companies are looking for," Lynch said.

Lynch earned his share of certifications while at Metropolitan. He said he daily uses those skills to repair the electronics that have stumped his customers.

Matthew Harp, the owner of uBreakiFix, applauded Metropolitan.

"It tells me they really get them ready for the job experience. We could use more people in this field, especially coming straight out of high school," he said.

That's reassuring for Donald Crain, who has a few months left in Crawford's computer engineering class. He does not know which area he will pursue after graduation. All he knows is he loves computers.

"In ninth grade, I pretty much developed an interest in computers so once that interest grew, I pretty much built my first computer at home – before I was ever affiliated with this program," Crain said.

The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand.
--Vince Lombardi

SPOTLIGHTING SUCCESS



Catherine Nicholson

GED® Diploma = A Lifetime of Opportunities

Catherine Nicholson dropped out of school in 1930, at age 16, to get married. Her father was a farmer and her family, as she says, “was poor as Joe’s turkey!”

Thirty-three years later, she earned her GED® after attending Little Rock **Adult Education**, and went on to work for the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration for many years.

Recently celebrating her 92nd birthday, Nicholson says that with the encouragement of her husband, Nick, she was self-motivated to earn her GED®. It turned out to be an asset, as well, in setting a good example for her family. She still finds use for the knowledge and skills she gained in earning her GED® 43 years ago and says it is an accomplishment she will always treasure.



Jacob Grigg

Agency Assistance Enhances Farmer’s Productivity

Jacob Grigg incurred a T5-6 spinal cord injury due to an ATV accident in July 2011. He lives and works on the family farm in Huntsville. The terrain of the farm greatly limits wheelchair access, and there are many chores that cannot be done from a seated position.

Through Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Jacob now has a motorized all-terrain wheelchair that can operate in both a seated and standing position. Now that he has the wheelchair, he is able to safely access and travel across most areas of the farm. Additionally, he is completing chores that he had previously been unable to accomplish due to the limitations of a standard wheelchair.

Deborah Washington *Perseverance Pays Off*

Deborah Washington came to ARS in January 2015 seeking assistance to obtain her CNA license. At the time, she was a 51-year-old single grandmother who had the task of raising her now 9-year-old grandson. Deborah expressed that she felt ARS was her last hope.

Deborah suffers from major depression, which was worsened by the death of her mother. At the time of the case intake, she reported that she had no real employable skills and by obtaining her CNA license, she would be able to help others. She often stated that “every time she tried to get back up on her feet she felt like she was knocked down again.”

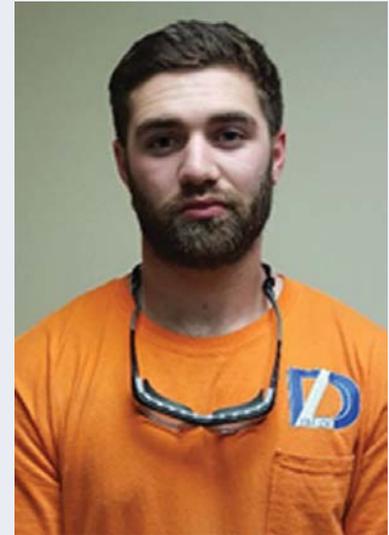
Deborah started the CNA program at Medlinc in July 2015. She often called with updates on how her classes were going and did not mind frequently popping in. Over the course of time, Deborah shared many moments of encouraging words and testaments of being faithful. Deborah learned firsthand how to transform her challenges into successes. She completed the program successfully and passed the clinical portion of the State Board exam on her first attempt, but unfortunately, she did not pass the written exam. Deborah was very discouraged and again had to be reassured that she had come too far to not succeed.

Due to her extraordinary drive, persistence, and commitment she successfully passed her CNA

licensure exam on her second attempt. Deborah is currently working as a CNA at Pleasant Valley Living Center. Today she continues to attribute her success to ARS.



Jarrett Brown *Apprenticing in Work, Life*



Jarrett Brown graduated from Rivercrest High and took the NUCOR-Yamato (Steel) internship. Six months into the program, he lost his left ring finger in

an accident. After recovery, NUCOR released Jarrett from the program but allowed him to finish the semester. Subsequently, he had various scholarships to other schools, but chose to attend Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC) and its Electrical Apprenticeship Program because it was local and he was a single parent.

Within three months starting to work at D&L, Inc., an HVAC company, he lost his son. Many asked what was he going to do at this point in his life. He chose to continue to work so that his son would know what he was accomplishing in his memory, as well as for his siblings who saw him as a role model. Jarrett is the oldest of nine children.

Jarrett continued to gain experience at work and in school. He is doing well in school and in the life experiences he is gaining. He gives many kudos to **Mr. Rick Sones** for being a great instructor and has enjoyed his classes tremendously. The HVAC classes have moved him along in the company, as well, and have ultimately resulted in promotions.

Jarrett is a student at ANC and looks forward to attending classes in the fall.

Heidi Rich

GED® Beginning of Path to Success for Single Mother

Heidi Rich is a 32-year-old single mother who has faced many struggles in life. Heidi dropped out of school in the 11th grade and has worked on her GED® off and on for many years. At one point, Heidi thought she wanted to be a cosmetologist and started classes for that but she eventually decided that was not her passion. Heidi began her search to figure out what she wanted to do. After becoming a mother to a beautiful little girl, Heidi realized it was time to do something with her life to become a better role model and provider for Jada.

In August 2015, Heidi was a Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) client and was sent to ASU Searcy to the Career Pathways Office by her case worker to work on her Career Readiness Certificate. Heidi told Career Pathways that she needed her GED® and she really wanted to become a welder. Career Pathways staff connected her to the Adult Ed center where she started the GED® program. They talked with Heidi about their Accelerating Opportunities (AO)

program where she could work on earning her GED® and take welding classes to earn a welding certificate at the same time.

Heidi was faithful at going to Adult Ed class every day. Last October Heidi was able to enroll in the AO program where she started welding classes full time. In December, Heidi received her CP (Certificate of Proficiency) in welding and then returned in January 2016 to start the last half of the welding program. Heidi earned her GED® in February and her TC in Welding in March.

Heidi and Jada have moved back to Northwest Arkansas, where she is looking to start her career in welding.



Joel Boykin

Staff and Client Find Answers in Teamwork

Joel Boykin, 23 years old, was born and raised in Crawfordsville, Arkansas and is the second to the youngest of eleven siblings. He was diagnosed with ADHD and Significant Learning Disability at an early age. He was enrolled in resource classes throughout his primary education and was occasionally in a self-contained classroom. Joel admits that he struggled academically but knew that one day he would overcome his challenges and contribute to society.

In 2010, as a senior in high school, Boykin applied for rehabilitation services.

“My original impression of Mr. Boykin was of an individual with charisma and confidence, yet it

was very clear that he was extremely dependent on his family.” reports District III Counselor **Aseelah Harrison**. “This was evidenced by his mother and older sisters being present during most of his appointments. Although Mr. Boykin’s family did support his decision to become independent, they were also fearful of an outcome that included his inability to becoming successful in the workforce.”

After intensive guidance and counseling by Harrison and careful contemplation by him and his family, Joel made the courageous decision to leave rural Crawfordsville to pursue training at Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs. Joel gained acceptance and began classes in January, 2011. He would eventually seek to study Auto Collision Repair.

Despite the various struggles, both academically

BOYKIN *continued from page 9*

and physically, Boykin overcame many of his obstacles to become very popular with all of his peers and with all of the staff. Not only did his skills increase while at ACTI, but his self-confidence was also improved due to his accomplishments.

Boykin successfully completed the Auto Collision Repair program, obtained his driver's license and graduated during the summer of 2013. With assistance provided by ACTI's business relations and counseling staff, he immediately obtained employment as a Material Handler at a local Wal-Mart in Hot Springs. Boykin eventually secured his very own transportation and residence.

Boykin's success and experiences are examples that illustrate his ability to believe in himself to overcome social pressures and his very own limitations. Throughout the vocational rehabilitation process, he remained assertive

and personally took on the responsibility of completing what he set out to do.

Today, Boykin continues to contribute to society and has maintained his independence. He is clearly a success. ARS is honored to have assisted Joel Boykin as he moved through the VR process.

Mr. Boykin is truly an example of teamwork, perseverance and dedication. He was served by the field program, ACTI and the Business Relations division in order to become gainfully employed. He deserves all of the success that he is currently experiencing. The staff of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services can be very proud of the work that was done with Boykin.

-- Everett Adamson, District Manager



Victoria Maloch

*Past National FFA Secretary
Continues on Path to Success*

Victoria Maloch, National FFA Secretary 2014-2015, was named a 2016 Truman Scholar, becoming the second Arkansas FFA officer in five years to earn this honor! She currently attends the University of Arkansas.

Named after U.S. President Harry Truman, the Truman Scholars Association was created to sustain, empower, and strengthen a commitment to public service in all its forms through intellectual, personal and professional development.

The Harry S. Truman Scholarship is awarded to college juniors with exceptional leadership potential who are committed to careers in government, nonprofit or advocacy sectors, education or elsewhere in public service.

Elena Oseguera *Learning the "Business" of Success*

Elena Oseguera is a senior at UALR who is deaf, majoring in Business Administration Management, and also works full-time at Arvest Bank in various capacities: correspondence, records management, property preservation, and foreclosures. Elena came to **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services'** Little Rock Field Office seeking financial assistance with tuition and textbooks.

Elena's goal is to help break down all forms of communication barriers. She has gained extensive knowledge of how to readjust and how to make accommodations in the business world through the courses offered by UALR, especially in the College of Business. She is willing to teach anyone willing to learn the communication techniques to create a better working environment for all.

Elena will receive her bachelor's degree this summer, and she hopes it will help her employment prospects at the bank. Although balancing work and school for the past 10 years has been a challenge, she is assured it has been worth it to receive her degree.



Rebecca Aguilera

*DECA paves way for
Big Apple Adventure*



"Growing up in Arkansas, I was so excited to win a DECA Scholarship to Berkeley College in New York! DECA is a great organization that exposed us to the fundamentals of business. Berkeley takes it to the next level with great relationships with many corporations and networking opportunities that can be a great career advantage."

Rebecca Aguilera
Marketing Communications

Alex Livingston

*Project SEARCH Grad
Makes Workplace Impression*



Alex Livingston, a PC/LAN Technician in the Information Services Department at Washington Regional Medical Center (WRMC) and a client from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, has received the *Washington Regional Honors 2015 Employee of the Year* award. Alex is known for his technical and computer skills as well as being able to solve complex system issues across the WRMC campus.

As Employee of the Year, Alex received \$2,500, an engraved clock to commemorate the occasion, a week's paid vacation, gift certificates, and a reserved parking spot throughout 2016. He was employed two years ago after completing the Project SEARCH program located in Fayetteville. Fayetteville's Project SEARCH is a collaboration between Life Styles, Washington Regional Medical Center, and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services.

Project SEARCH instructor **Victoria Magdefrau** (pictured above, with Alex), and Life Styles' Employment Services Coordinator, **Christina Maples**, could not be any more proud of Alex's accomplishments. His counselor (and now current District I Manager) Amy Jones saw that Alex would be a good candidate for the program and is thrilled with his current and future success. Alex is a leader to the past and current students that follow his footsteps and does a tremendous job building rapport with the students. Alex credits his success to Project SEARCH and his mother, **Tesse Livingston**.

Sandi Wright

*SEARCH Leads
to Employment*

Sandi Wright (far right), a Project SEARCH intern at Arkansas Children's Hospital, was recently hired by ACH as a Patient Care Technician in the Cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit!



Sara Romine

Adult Education and SEARK College Student Poised to Become Children's Advocate

There are times in which a success story is a journey transitioning to a much nobler and greater cause. Such is the case with **Sara Romine**.

At the age of seven, Sara lost her sense of hearing. She attended public schools, but subsequently enrolled at the Arkansas School for the Deaf. At seventeen, she and her mother left Arkansas and moved to Texas.

Due to various unfortunate circumstances, Sara's mother became unemployed, causing the family to live in a twelve foot camping trailer with no air conditioning, no heat, and no water. At one point they lived in a tent, and heated water on a hot plate. Sara's mother was unable to help her, and Sara began home schooling herself, studying and sleeping in a nearby library.

Upon returning to central Arkansas she discovered that the one year gap of non-attendance in a traditional school was preventing her from graduating with her peers from a public high school. Sara decided to pursue her high school diploma. She began college classes at SEARK (Southeast Arkansas College) in Pine Bluff, promising the college that she would obtain her GED. During the day she attended the College of the Ouachitas Adult



Education Program in Sheridan and her evening hours were spent at SEARK.

Sara said that the instructors at Sheridan were true encouragers, going above and beyond with genuine words of praise. Because American Sign Language is a language entirely in itself, the curriculum was adapted and modified for her.

Her success in obtaining her Arkansas High School Diploma

was due to several factors. Her dedication and the dedication of those involved in her journey made this possible.

Sara's dream, which is rapidly becoming a reality, is to become an Registered Nurse. She has made definite plans and arrangements to minister to hearing impaired children throughout the globe. Currently at SEARK, she has a 3.4 GPA. Because her mother was a Hospice caretaker, Sara realized her success is for a greater cause. Her success story is ongoing.

Because of those who helped Sara on her journey she will be able to greatly change and enhance the lives of hearing impaired children all over the world. She and those children thank the instructors, the paraprofessionals, and all the kind hearts who tirelessly work to change one life at a time.



Jarari Felton *ACE-ing Success*

Jarari Felton was recovering from a battle with cancer in May 2015, when he met with District III/West Memphis counselor **Asselah Harrison**, who referred him to ARS Business Consultant **Jacqueline Balti**. Due to his health issues, his employment search had been challenging.

FELTON continued on pag 14



Preston Howard

Shaving Away Obstacles

Preston Howard came to **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** on January 14, 2016, asking for assistance with barber supplies and booth rent.

Several years ago, Howard was employed at Razor's Back Barbering and Styling Team and had a good clientele. Unfortunately, he had a car accident that required putting pins and rods in his leg.

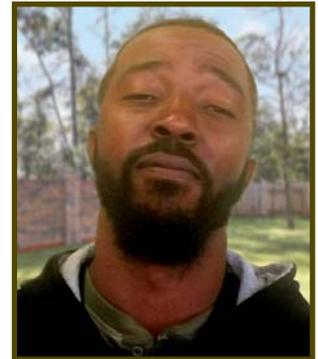
During this time he had to quit his barbering job and lost much of his clientele. Luckily, his leg healed and he could start work again. Without a strong clientele and supplies, he was unable to make any money.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services provided Howard with financial assistance with supplies and booth rent. Because they were able to assist him, he began to build his clientele, have supplies to make money, and save money for future expenses.

Michael Brown

"Can't" Wasn't an Option

When **Michael Brown** visited Little Rock's **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** field office in January 2015, he wanted to pursue ownership of a small business. As a result of a gunshot wound, Michael had to overcome paralysis. This forced him to suffer from nerve damage. He struggled writing his business plan but continued to persevere. Due to his extraordinary drive, determination, and commitment, he successfully completed his business plan and is now the proud owner of Central Arkansas Landscaping.



Nivia Landon

A Home of Their Own

After a year of unsuccessfully looking for work, **Nivia Landon** came to **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** hoping to get the help she needed. At the time, Nivia and her daughter were living with her mother. She



needed to work so she could take care of her child and provide a home of their own.

Nivia's ARS counselor referred her for job placement services with ARS Business Relations Representative (BRR) **Denise Wilson**. There were some stumbling blocks with which she had to contend. One of those was a lack of transportation, so Nivia needed a job that would be

close to her home in Searcy. She also preferred work in restaurant or fast food because she had experience working in the food industry.

Nivia checked out the job leads, filled out applications,

went to interviews, and was soon hired by Popeye's Chicken in the job of Food Prep. Her experience and dedication as an employee soon paid off. By mid-October, she had been promoted to Shift Manager.

Nivia recently returned to the ARS office to tell her counselors: "I got my own place to live and reached my goal of providing a home for me and my child."

FELTON *continued from page 12*

Prior to meeting with Jacqueline, Jarai had attended Arkansas Rehabilitation Services's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs and completed the Offset Printing program, as well as Crowley Ridge's HVAC program.

When Jacqueline met with Jarai, he was interested in working as an appliance repairman. She was able to provide him with job leads to Delta HVAC and Sears. Although he applied for both, those jobs did not pan out.

Jarai did not give up. Working together toward securing employment, he and Jacqueline spoke often and Jaari always followed through on job leads by completing applications.

In August 2015, Jarai was hired full-time at an ACE appliance store in Marion as a paint sales associate. He has received training by the company and is now considered an expert in residential/commercial paint products. His health has improved and he is able to work with no issues.

Jacqueline has visited Jarai on the job and he is doing well and he loves his job. Recently Jarai took the time to call Jacqueline to thank her, Asselah, and ARS for helping him gain valuable skills, along with achieving competitive and integrated employment.

Wesley Wilson

Change in Career Plans No Detriment to Success



Raised in Emerson, Arkansas, **Wesley Wilson's** passion from an early age was animals -- showing pigs from age six at fairs, starting to ride horses around age 10 and getting his first cow a couple of years later. His goal at the time was to be a veterinarian. Then, just shy of age 17, he dove into a pool and hit his chin on the bottom, causing a spinal cord injury and paralysis. Returning his senior year to school after his hospital stay, Wilson graduated as class valedictorian.

Having to change his future plans, Wilson decided if he couldn't be a vet, he could teach others in order that they could reach their own goals. Today, he enjoys his job as a tutor for local high school and college students. For Wilson, it has been a dream to earn money and to help others succeed in their studies.

Wilson's idea became reality after he contacted the Small Business Program of **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)**. Wilson presented his business plan to the division, and the process began to help him secure what he needed to launch it.

"I was very amazed at Wesley's passion, his desire to help others, and his motivation to keep pushing," said **Jeff Jackson**, who oversees the ARS Small Business Program.

Wilson, who uses assistive technology, received a computer, software, and access equipment to help jumpstart his business. His business is growing as he tutors multiple students throughout the week. He is also giving back by serving as an advisory board member for the **Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)**, an ARS program which provides assistive technology equipment, information, and training to Arkansans with disabilities to help them live more independently.

ACE Board Member and Business to be recognized in Washington DC as the Top Small Business for 2016 for Arkansas

Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet, the head of the U.S. Small Business Administration, recently announced that Gina and Wade Radke from Galley Support Innovations are the Small Business Persons of the Year winners for Arkansas. On May 3rd the Arkansas SBA will recognize the Radkes during a luncheon at Embassy Suites in Little Rock.

Gina Radke was appointed to the Arkansas Department of Career Education's Career Education and Workforce Development Board of Directors last summer where she is committed to helping build a stronger Career Education Department and to shining a light on all of the opportunities that ACE provides Arkansans. In addition to their duties as CEO and COO, the Radkes serve internationally,



nationally and in Arkansas as leaders on numerous industry specific and non-profit boards.

According to the SBA Administrator, these small business owners represent the best of the best and showcase daily their entrepreneurial spirit and what it takes to be successful in today's evolving and competitive business environment.

Galley Support Innovations

(GSI) is a designer and manufacturer of interior hardware for planes, trains and yachts that is located in Sherwood, Arkansas. In 2005, the Radkes purchased the product line of a struggling interior hardware business started by Wade's grandfather years earlier in California. Soon after the purchase, they moved the company to Sherwood, Arkansas. In the past 10 years, through the leadership of the Radkes, GSI's annual sales have grown 238%, making it a multimillion dollar company. In 2015, GSI expanded its manufacturing facility by 8,300 square feet to accommodate the exponential growth in sales. Also, in 2015, GSI received the 2015 Governor's Award for Excellence in Global Trade in the small manufacturer category.

McDonald Honored for Civic Contribution

Congratulations to Career Education & Workforce Development Board Vice-Chairman **Hugh McDonald** for receiving the **William Rector Award for Distinguished Civic Achievement**, presented by *Fifty for the Future*.

The award recognizes people who made significant contributions to Little Rock and Pulaski County. McDonald is the President and CEO of Entergy Arkansas.

Recipients of the awards choose a non-profit to receive a \$2,500 donation. McDonald selected The Watershed Human and Community Development Agency. Watershed has fed nearly 3 million people since 1978.

The donation will help to fund Watershed's new kitchen.



Pictured right: Entergy Arkansas President and CEO **Hugh McDonald** (right), wife **Michelle**, and **Rev. Hezekiah Stewart**, Watershed's Executive Director.

→ ACE a Proud Sponsor of **“Be Pro Be Proud”** ←

The State Chamber/AIA (Associated Industries of Arkansas) has announced the launch of a new initiative, **“Be Pro Be Proud,”** to bring a new generation of **pride, progress** and **professionals** to Arkansas’s skilled workforce. The Arkansas Department of Career Education is pleased to partner with the State Chamber’s efforts to draw more workers into technical fields by promoting job training programs.

The “Be Pro Be Proud” initiative targets many key audiences, including **high school and nontraditional students, current skilled professionals, legislators, parents, teachers, career coaches, and employers.** Research conducted prior to the development of the campaign indicates that *82 percent of companies regularly have positions they are unable to fill with qualified workers.* Furthermore, 44 percent of average, entry-level salaries for these open positions start at or above \$31,000.

The “Be Pro Be Proud” initiative is using a mobile tractor trailer unit to travel the state and visit companies, schools, and events to showcase skilled trade professions and to broaden awareness of their impact on the state’s workforce. The mobile workshop is an engaging tool that will provide information about training resources, currently available positions and



Above: A Cabot High School student checks out the Be Pro Be Proud welding simulator during the SkillsUSA competition in Hot Springs.

Below: Career Education and Workforce Development Board Chair Michael Garner at a CNC (Computer Numeric Control) booth.



descriptions, skills needed, and how to start the process of starting a skilled professional career. The initiative will market 12 professional fields such as welding, computer programming, and truck driving in an effort to help fill an estimated 60,000 job openings in Arkansas.

The “Be Pro Be Proud” mobile unit was spotted at SkillsUSA Champions at Work competition on April 12-13 at the Hot Springs Convention Center. **BeProBeProud.org** also serves as a content hub for young professionals to learn more and for employers to actively engage students.





The Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission hosts **Chain of Life Awards**

The Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission, a program of **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**, recognized eleven people for their life-saving

donations at the annual **Chain of Life Awards** ceremony, which took place in Little Rock March 9. Always an emotional event, the ceremony serves to recognize and show appreciation to living kidney donors for their contribution. Many of the “heroes” donate their organ to a family member or friend, while some have given to complete strangers.

Gina Reves of Batesville donated a kidney to her husband, **Lynn**. He had lived with kidney disease for more than twenty years, but it was much later before the couple noticed the effects. Reves said she knew she had to step in and help her best friend, to whom she has been married for 23 years. They are the parents of two sons.

“After going through the testing process, we received the results and we found out I was a very good match. I always felt in my heart during this process that I would match. I had a lot of faith. I watched him suffer for years and I told him I was going to make him better,” Reves wrote in a statement.

Cynthia Baker-Smith, program director for the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission, said, “We look forward to this heartwarming ceremony each year. This is our grand opportunity to salute those who gave a life-saving donation. This shows that there are still good people in our state and across our nation.”

Also recognized were (near right photo): **Sameh Abul-Ezz, M.D.**, (right, with award namesake **Bob Abbott**), who oversees the kidney and kidney-pancreas transplant program at UAMS; and (far right photo) **Kathleen Nichols Robinson**, (right, with AKDC Board Member **Kathy Pierce**), a retired renal care nurse from Stuttgart. Both received the *Bob Abbott Distinguished Service Award*, presented to people who have made substantial contributions to the kidney patient community in the state of Arkansas.



Gina Reves (second from right) with (l-r) AKDC board member **Mark Winslow**, her husband **Lynn**, and AKDC Program Director **Cynthia Baker-Smith**



L-R: Donors **Orlando Martinez, Maumelle**; **Grace Kirkpatrick, Emmett**; **Margie Masters, Bald Knob**; **Gina Reves, Batesville**; **Rachel Green, Hope**; **LaTonyalyn White, Pine Bluff** (accepted award on behalf of her brother-in-law, **Isaac Woods of Racine, Wisconsin**); **Michael Stewart Jr., North Little Rock**; and **Donald Harris, Prescott**.



FORDHAM *continued from page 3*

Key findings include:

- ✓ Students with greater exposure to CTE are more likely to graduate from high school, enroll in a two-year college, be employed, and earn higher wages.
- ✓ CTE is not a path away from college: Students taking more CTE classes are just as likely to pursue a four-year degree as their peers.
- ✓ Students who focus their CTE coursework are more likely to graduate high school by 21 percentage points compared to otherwise similar students (and they see a positive impact on other outcomes as well).
- ✓ CTE provides the greatest boost to the students who need it most—particularly boys and students from low-income families.

Due to many decades of neglect and stigma against old-school “vo-tech,” high-quality CTE programs are not a meaningful part of the high school experience for millions of American students. It’s time to change that.

You may ask “Why Arkansas?”

The study explains that it is focused on Arkansas for several reasons:

First, it is one of just five states that links education and workforce data so that questions about the efficacy of secondary CTE can be addressed.

Second, it recently overhauled state policies to improve career readiness and to align CTE programs with the labor market.

Third, per capita income is among the lowest in the nation, and residents stand to benefit both educationally and economically from effective CTE programs.

While no single state is truly representative of the United States as a whole, as a racially and geographically diverse state facing a number of common economic and social challenges, Arkansas can serve as a useful and practical test case for examining CTE.

BENEFITS OF CTE COURSEWORK

JUST ONE ADDITIONAL CTE CLASS ABOVE THE AVERAGE MEANS A STUDENT IS...

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| 3 PERCENTAGE POINTS | 1 PERCENTAGE POINT | 2 PERCENTAGE POINTS | \$28 PER QUARTER |
| MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL | MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN A TWO-YEAR COLLEGE | MORE LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED AFTER HIGH SCHOOL | BETTER COMPENSATED IN THE YEAR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL |

BENEFITS OF CONCENTRATION

STUDENTS WHO CONCENTRATE IN A SINGLE PROGRAM OF STUDY ARE...

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| 21 PERCENTAGE POINTS | 1 PERCENTAGE POINT | 1 PERCENTAGE POINT | \$45 PER QUARTER |
| MORE LIKELY TO GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL | MORE LIKELY TO ENROLL IN A TWO-YEAR COLLEGE | MORE LIKELY TO BE EMPLOYED AFTER HIGH SCHOOL | BETTER COMPENSATED IN THE YEAR AFTER HIGH SCHOOL |

...COMPARED TO SIMILAR STUDENTS WHO TAKE THE SAME NUMBER OF COURSES BUT DO NOT CONCENTRATE.

BENEFITS FOR TYPES OF STUDENTS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |
| LOWER-INCOME STUDENTS who concentrate are 25 percentage points more likely to graduate from high school than identical students who do not concentrate. | STUDENTS WHO EARN COLLEGE CREDIT IN HIGH SCHOOL see twice the boost on initial college enrollment from additional high school CTE coursework. | MALE STUDENTS who concentrate are 22 percentage points more likely to graduate from high school, and earn \$89 more per quarter, than identical male students who do not concentrate. | STUDENTS WHO CONCENTRATE IN STEM, IT, AND HEALTH SCIENCES are more likely to graduate from high school and receive a greater wage benefit than students who concentrate in other areas. |

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>STATES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer CTE courses aligned to skills and industry-recognized credentials in high-growth industries, and encourage (or require) high school students to take them. Systemize “CTE for all” by offering courses that are appealing, relevant, and available to all types of students at all types of schools. Advise students taking multiple CTE courses to concentrate, especially in programs that prepare them to enter high-growth industries. | <p>FEDERAL:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reauthorize the Perkins Act and increase federal support for high-quality, labor-market-aligned CTE. |
|--|---|



For more, read the full report at edexcellence.net

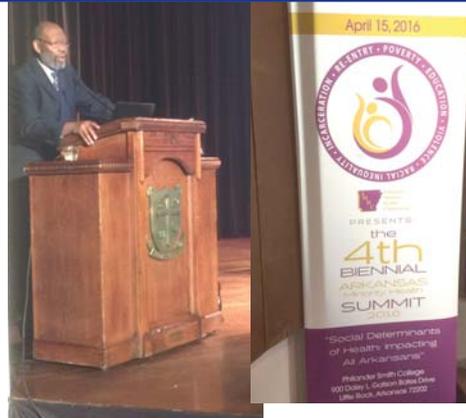


Beginning with the class of 2014, Arkansas implemented “Smart Core” which requires that high school students complete six units of “career focus” coursework in addition to their academics. CTE courses can fulfill the requirement, as can electives such as art, music, world language, or AP courses. (Whether a class counts toward the requirement is determined by a student’s guidance counselor based on his work aspirations.) Our data include all students entering ninth grade in 2008 and 2009, who were not subject to Smart Core, and students entering ninth grade in 2010, who were.

Snapshots of Activities and Events
ACE Staff and Students Put In a Busy Spring



State FFA Secretary Will Clark selected as congressional intern for Representative Steve Womack



4th Biennial Arkansas Minority Health Summit



**ARS Community Connections
Batesville**



**ARS Community Connections
Jonesboro**



ACTI Culinary Students add fun (and ears) to the Easter season



Adult Education Advisory Council Met at National Park College

Steve Clayton, Chair; Bill Ritter; Marsha Taylor; Ben Aldama; Nancy Whitmire; Dr. Trenia Miles; Bridget Bullard; Dr. Charisse Childers; Kathryn Rasure; Janice Hanlon; Dr. Gary Udouj; Nancy Leonhardt; Dr. Debbie Faubus-Kendrick; and Richard Seymour.



ACE's Career & Technical Education group touring the Caterpillar plant in North Little Rock



2016 Annual Black Expo
 ClearChannel Metroplex, Little Rock
Sean McIntire, Leonard Boyle, Cynthia Baker-Smith, Linda Morgan, Lynn Franquemont, Kathy Edgerton, Elice Scales, Gaye Jones-Washington, and Valencia Butler.
 Not pictured: Niketa Nash.



FFA members visit Heifer in Little Rock March 21

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CAREER EDUCATION

Career Education and Workforce Development Board

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Charisse Childers, Ph.D., *Director*; **D. Alan McClain**, *Commissioner for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **Kathi Turner**, *Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education*; **Trenia Miles, Ed.D.**, *Deputy Director for Adult Education*; **Lorna Claudio**, *Chief Financial Officer, Department of Career Education*; **Kathy Edgerton**, *Director of Communications*; **Joseph Baxter**, *Chief Financial Officer/Associate Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **Carl Daughtery**, *Chief of Field Services/Associate Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **Jonathan Bibb**, *Administrator/Associate Commissioner, Arkansas Career Training Institute, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **Sonja Wright-McMurray**, *Associate Director for Career and Technical Education-Special Programs*; **Linda Morgan**, *Associate Commissioner for Access & Accommodations, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **Robert Treviño**, *Associate Commissioner, Program, Planning Development & Evaluation, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services*; **DeCarlia Smith**, *Human Resources Administrator*

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(870) 862-5451 * TDD (870) 862-4002

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Assistive Technology at Work (AT@Work)

(501) 683-0719

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)

(501) 666-8868

Stay At Work/Return To Work

(501) 683-6052

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Deaf & Hard of Hearing (SDHH)

(501) 324-9521 * TDD (501) 686-9421

TAP (Telecommunications Access Program)

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(501) 682-1115

Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences

(501) 682-1271

State Approving Agency for

Veterans Training and Education

(501) 324-9473

Career and Technical Student

Organizations contacts

FFA (Agricultural Education)

(501) 682-1598

DECA/FBLA (Future Business Leaders of

America/PBL (Phi Beta Lambda)

(501) 682-1768

FCCLA (Family, Career and Community

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(501) 682-1115

SkillsUSA

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HOSA (Health Occupations Students of

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TSA (Technology Students of America)

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