



the Career Counselor

A publication of Arkansas Department of Career Education
501-682-1500 * <http://ace.arkansas.gov>



ARKANSASWORKS Expansion Unveiled



Governor Mike Beebe announces the expansion of Arkansas Works at a joint meeting of the state's boards of education held at Pulaski Technical College. Pictured with the governor are (left to right) Dr. Ed Franklin, director of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges; Ken Ferguson, director of the Workforce Investment Board; Artee Williams, director of the Department of Workforce Services; Bill Walker, director of the Department of Career Education; and Randy Zook, executive director of the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

A major expansion of Arkansas Works, an initiative to coordinate education, training and economic development in Arkansas, was unveiled November 9 by Governor Mike Beebe at the annual joint meeting of the Board of Education, Board of Career Education, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board. Members of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, including Department of Career Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., accompanied the Governor at the podium.

The Arkansas Works expansion is aimed at helping unemployed and underemployed Arkansans find career training and educational opportunities. One of the many tools available through Arkansas Works is the College and Career Planning System, an online information resource that will help Arkansans locate jobs that fit their interests and help

businesses find qualified candidates to meet their workforce needs. Every Workforce Development Center in Arkansas has personnel prepared to assess job seekers and help them connect with jobs and industries that lead to satisfying careers.

"As communities work hard to attract new business, the State will help ensure that a qualified workforce stands ready to fill those jobs," Beebe said. "The world is quickly changing, and Arkansas must accelerate its pace to create careers for our citizens. This effort has something to help every Arkansan, whether you need a job, want to find a better job or want to shift to a new career."

In January 2010, Arkansas Works will be expanded further with the placement of 43 career and college coaches in 21 of the state's poorest counties. Schools in these counties have been targeted to receive special assistance in an effort to improve the graduation and college-going rates, particularly among students from low-income families. The career and college coaches will work with middle- and high-school students to help them learn about college and career options and to improve their preparation for success in education and employment.

"This has been a significant undertaking, and we have developed partnerships in the poorest 21 counties to provide support services and assist with career planning, job searches and career training efforts," Director Walker said. "We are now more prepared than ever to provide leadership and resources to serve the diverse and changing career educational needs of all Arkansas youths and adults."

"To me, this is all about giving access to the American dream," Arkansas Department of Higher Education Director Dr. Jim Purcell said. "I believe this initiative helps people with the American dream at the point in their lives when they need help the most ... and that is

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ARKANSASWORKS



Director's Update

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.
Director

Arkansas Department of Career Education

Unbelievably, another year has passed and we are on the eve of another decade. This is the time of year we look back on our accomplishments and make our resolutions for the coming year.

The senior management team and I set many goals for this year and made great progress toward accomplishing them. We're continuing to look for ways to make our agency as effective and efficient as it can be for the citizens of this great state. We will continue to raise the bar everyday in the work that has been done, the work currently being done and the work that will be done to serve the people of Arkansas.

With our economic future still uncertain, we are preparing for the challenges that lie ahead, and we will continue to change and move forward to make our agency responsive to the needs of those we serve.

Arkansans of all ages now have a wonderful new tool to help them plan for careers in Governor Beebe's Arkansas Works program that the Department of Career Education led the way in developing. You can read more about the November rollout of Arkansas Works in this issue of the newsletter.

Arkansas Works will help students prepare for the workforce and education beyond high school by placing career coaches in some of our state's poorest counties.

Our state's students and employees must be prepared for work in the competitive high-wage, high-demand, high-tech careers of the future. We're no longer competing with neighboring cities or states for our livelihood but with other nations from every corner of the earth. Arkansans must be able to face tomorrow's workforce challenges of today just to keep pace!

Another milestone for our agency, one that emphasizes our new way of doing business, is our name change to the Department of Career Education. This name change, which became effective in July, clearly defines the important work of our agency, which is preparing the people of our state for careers—one person at a time, one career at a time. Every individual is important to the economic success of our state, and every individual deserves the opportunity to realize career and life success. Our new name reflects our commitment to that ideal.

One of the real joys of the holiday season is the opportunity to express appreciation. I want to take this time to personally say "thank you" to the staff of each of the divisions of the Arkansas Department of Career Education—Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education—for their commitment

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Arkansas Department
ACE
of Career Education

the **Career**
Counselor

A public information pamphlet of the Arkansas Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division.

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Department of Career Education Adds Associate Director for Arkansas Works

Sonja Wright-
McMurray re-
cently joined the
Department of Career
Education as associate
director for the Arkan-
sas Works program.

"I am looking forward to working with our partners across the state to make a difference and improve the quality of opportunities and life for Arkansas youth and adults," she said.

Wright-McMurray was born in Goldsboro, North Carolina, and came to Arkansas after her father's retirement from the United States Air Force in 1984. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology and a master's degree in higher education administration from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She also earned a master of science degree in rehabilitation counseling from Drake University.

Wright-McMurray began working as a career instructor with the Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) program at the University of Arkansas in 1996. After completing her master's degree at the University of Arkansas, she worked for the University of Central Arkansas as a project coordinator for career services and cooperative education in 2001.

In 2002, Wright-McMurray moved to Des Moines, Iowa, where she was employed by Simpson College as an academic advisor for the Upward Bound program. In 2004, she was promoted to director of Upward Bound at Simpson College. Wright-McMurray returned to Arkansas in 2007 as director of Minority Student Services at UCA.



Wright-McMurray

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enhanced career exploration, knowing the possibilities for the future; in greater preparation of college; and then finally connecting their collegiate education to the Arkansas workplace.”

The Governor’s Workforce Cabinet will lead the public-private Arkansas Works partnership. The Cabinet includes the Arkansas Department of Career Education, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, as well as private partners such as the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges and the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

“We all know Arkansas must be ready for the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing global marketplace, and that a highly-skilled and competitive workforce is the most critical factor in ensuring our state’s economic future,” Director Walker said. “Arkansas Works can help us get there by providing our citizens with up-to-date and relevant information on jobs available here in our state and how to prepare for those jobs.”

Arkansans can access services through a new Web site, www.arworks.arkansas.gov, or by calling 1-866-ARWORKS (1-866-279-9677).



Above left, ACE Deputy Director John Davidson (right) answers questions about Arkansas Works, along with Department of Education Deputy Commissioner Dr. Diana Julian (left) and ACE Associate Director Sonja Wright-McMurray. Above right, Gov. Beebe talks to the media about Arkansas Works during the rollout announcement at Pulaski Technical College. Pictured with the governor (right to left) are Workforce Cabinet members Maria Haley, executive director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission; Artee Williams, director of the Department of Workforce Services; and Dr. Ed Franklin, director of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges. Right, Director Walker is interviewed by members of the press.



Above, Deputy Director John Davidson (right) talks with Jerry Guess of the Camden Fairview School District during an administrators’ meeting about Arkansas Works. Above right, Sue Jeffers of Blytheville High School talks with Dr. Alfred Hogan, superintendent of Turrell School District (left), and state Senator Jack Crumbly of the Earle School District before the meeting. Right, Director Walker, Deputy Director John Davidson and Associate Director Sandra Porter discuss an Arkansas Works question with ADE Deputy Commissioner Dr. Diana Julian.



At left, ACE Deputy Director John Davidson and Director Walker discuss plans for the expansion of the online career planning system (Kuder), which is currently used in Arkansas public schools. A multi-agency team customized the system for Arkansas. **Journey**, Kuder’s adult component, is available to all Arkansans.

FFA News Around the State



U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln received an **Honorary American FFA Degree** during the organization's National Conference in Indianapolis in October in recognition of her ongoing commitment to youth through agricultural experience and education.



Unable to attend the national conference, Senator Lincoln (pictured below, center) accepted the award November 24 from Arkansas FFA Southern District Vice President Mollie Dykes and ACE Program Manager for Agricultural Science and Technology Marion Fletcher.

Prairie Grove FFA Records an Arkansas First

Prairie Grove High School FFA recorded a first for Arkansas when it won the prestigious Livestock Judging event at the 82nd annual FFA National Convention this October in Indianapolis.

The four-member team of Nikolas Birchfield, John Coffey, Cheyenne Moyer and Kallie Sullivan won the gold medal. Approximately 40 teams competed, with

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State FFA Members Help Peers in Time of Need

Members in career and technical education student organizations share a special bond with one another. That bond was evident when members of the Lincoln chapter of FFA lent a much-needed hand to a group of FFA officers from Missouri who found themselves in need of help while traveling to the organization's national convention in Indianapolis.

The Lincoln students held true to the FFA motto which includes "living to serve." Below is a letter Missouri FFA Association Advisor Terry Heiman sent to Lincoln School Superintendent Dr. Frank Holman discussing the "kindness and caring" of the students."

Dear Dr. Holman,

We recently returned from the National FFA Convention and wanted to share with you and your [School] Board the example of kindness and caring exhibited by your students and [FFA advisor] Mr. Kevin Barenberg.

While traveling to the National FFA Convention a group of the Missouri State FFA Officers

had a vehicle break down on I-70 in Illinois. On the side of the road with evening approaching is not the picture [we] want for young people. But because of the caring of Mr. Barenberg our State Officers arrived safely with a renewed spirit because of the kindness your students exhibited. Mr. Barenberg stopped, inquired how to help, then his students assisted in making the vehicle road worthy, followed the vehicle to a car dealership in Terre Haute, Indiana, and took the Officers on to Indianapolis.

Our State Officers could not stop talking positively about the experience and how great the folks from Lincoln FFA treated them.

Your school and community are to be commended for the values and actions exhibited by the Lincoln FFA members and Advisor.

*Sincerely,
Terry Heiman, Advisor
Missouri FFA Association*

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Members of the Prairie Grove High School FFA Livestock Judging Team are (left to right) **Nikolas Birchfield, Cheyenne Moyer, Kallie Sullivan and John Coffey.** Advisors for the team are **David Hays and Clint Hale.**

Prairie Grove winning against teams from states that have traditionally dominated the competition.

“Traditionally there are some dominant states and we’re usually not one of them,” Department of Career Education Agricultural Science and Technology Public School Program Advisor Bart Draper said. “Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas—states which are really livestock-oriented with great college programs—usually win the event. It was a surprise. The Prairie Grove team was really prepared.”

Other top finishers from Arkansas at the FFA National Convention included Alpena High School, which took first place in the Agriscience Fair; Greenbrier High School, which won third place in Dairy Foods; and Lincoln High School, which won third place in the Poultry contest.

Arkansas finishers at the 2009 FFA National Convention:

Ag Communications — Prairie Grove: Silver Emblem Team; Gold Individual: Britton McClelland, Skyler Teekel; Silver Individuals: Hannah Coffey, Cately Perry, Webb Pierson;

Ag Issues — Ozark: Bronze Emblem Team;

Ag Mechanics — Gurdon: Bronze Emblem Team; Silver Individual: Brock Neatherly; Bronze Individuals: Jerrod Corbit, Kaitlyn Dickerson;

Agriscience Fair — Alpena: Environmental Science Division I Winner: James Rose;

Agronomy — Shirley: Silver Emblem Team; Silver Individuals: Danielle Berry, Gwen Bradley, Taylor Burgess, Cory Ward

Creed — Springdale Har-Ber: Silver Emblem: Amanda Bacon;

Dairy Cattle — Gurdon: Bronze Emblem Team; Silver Individual: Haley Harris; Bronze Individuals: Wes Boulden, Kyle Sanford;

Dairy Foods — Greenbrier: Gold Emblem Team (Third Place Team Overall); Gold Individuals: Kayla Copeland (Fourth

Individual Overall), Stephanie McElroy (Eighth Individual Overall), Jessica Nichols; Silver Individual: Amber House;

Extemporaneous Public Speaking — Ozark: Bronze Emblem: Katie McGehee; **Farm Business Management** — Lincoln: Silver Emblem Team; Silver Individuals: Mike Norton, Chris Reeves, Zach Turner; Bronze Individual: Candice Robinson

Floriculture — Vilonia: Silver Emblem Team; Silver Individuals: Aneasa Forsberg, Will Fritts; Bronze Individuals: Tia Ameen, Heather Hall;

Food Science — Lincoln: Gold Emblem Team: Third Place Team Overall; Gold Individuals: Jessica Johnson, Randi Jo Reed, Danuel Smith; Silver Individual: Reilly Thurow;

Forestry — Hermitage: Gold Emblem Team: Fourth Place Team Overall; Gold Individuals: Bradley Hankins, Michael Hoskins, Santos Martinez, TJ Sullivan (Ninth Individual Overall);

Horse — Rogers: Gold Emblem Team; Gold Individuals: Jacqueline Bowen, Shelby Hampton; Silver Individual: Morgan Bowen; Bronze Individual: Janae Wilson;

Livestock — Prairie Grove: Gold Emblem Team: First Place Team Overall; Gold Individuals: Nikolas Birchfield, John Coffey (Third Individual Overall), Cheyenne Moyer (Sixth Individual Overall), Kallie Sullivan

Meats — Har-Ber: Silver Emblem Team; Gold Individual: Dillon Garr; Silver Individuals: Justin Bacon, Jaret Smith; Bronze Individual: Sean Hill;

Nursery Landscape — Greenbrier: Gold Emblem Team; Gold Individuals: Jarrett Alexander, Joseph Black; Silver Individuals: Sarai Bartolotta, Ashley Lewis;

Parliamentary Procedure — Greenbrier: Silver Emblem Team;

Prepared Public Speaking — Lake Hamilton: Bronze Emblem: Mollie Dykes;

Poultry — Lincoln: Gold Emblem Team: Third Place Team Overall; Gold Individuals: Amanda Cox (Second Individual Overall), Ryan Napier (Ninth Individual Overall), Cassy Ramsey (First Individual Overall), Ellie Morales

State Fair Highlights Work of FFA Members



FFA students from across the state were again a key part of the success of the 2009 Arkansas State Fair and Livestock Show. Victoria Maloch of Magnolia shows off her cattle (top row middle) and Blair McMahan and Jaci Simmons of Taylor High School pose with Grand Champion Market Lamb, "Bettie," along with Johnny Lofton of Arkansas Farm Bureau (top right). Capital City Christian Academy students Natalie Dodson (front) and D.J. Dodson (back) test out the magnifier exhibit at the FFA Children's Banyard (middle row left). FFA students Cody Tackett of Greenbrier High School, left, and Julie Ann McMillian, right, pose with Grand Champion Steer, "Snoop," which was bought by Darrell Desgranges (middle row center). Contestants show off their prize hogs (middle row right). Mollie Dykes of Southern Arkansas University readies her hog in the swine barn (bottom row left).

AAMRC Hosts "Christmas in Lonoke"

Members of the Arkansas Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (AAMRC) held a festive holiday get-together at the Golden Years Manor Nursing home in Lonoke December 13. They brought with them caroling, inspirational messages and gifts of blankets and socks. (Below, right and center: Barbara Nolen and Carolyn Turner pass out the items).

AAMRC members posing for a group photo (below left) include (left to right) Darrell Stephens, Carolyn Turner, Barbara Starks, Tammy Stokes, Darlene Owens, Ellice Scales and Barbara Nolen. They received a warm welcome and an invitation to return.





What You Should Know

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)

Eddie Schmeckenbecher
Customer Assistance Coordinator

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) is “moving and shaking,” to coin a term from the past. We have been acquiring equipment for nearly every disability. It is exciting to see the new Assistive Technology (AT) equipment arrive; it is like Christmas time for us. Once we receive new AT equipment, we enter it into the computer for inventory, label it and put it on the shelves for display. Usually, within just a short time, the shelves have been “picked clean.” Some people might consider this a bad thing, but we look at it as Arkansans getting the AT equipment they need to do their daily routines, school or work.

One area that has been of a particular interest to the ICAN staff is the Low-Vision Room. We have been acquiring new AT equipment for the past few months. The new equipment ranges from a whole host of magnifying glasses (3X to 12X) to EZ readers to independent living aids.

We are very pleased with the interest the Low-Vision Room and the new equipment are generating in the community. Various programs, including the University of Central Arkansas’s AT classes and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock’s Deaf/Blind classes,

are visiting to see the new technology available. We have also had teachers from Arkansas School for the Blind look at the equipment, and individuals from different parts of the state visit the Low-Vision Room. Most of these individuals acquire some type of technology on loan for themselves or their clients.

We also serve individuals; for example, a woman recently came to the Low-Vision Room to explore her options and tested equipment for more than two hours, examining every magnifying glass we had.

The second area that has been enhanced is the Hearing Loss section. The ICAN staff talked with several deaf and hard of hearing individuals to get their ideas regarding the best technology to meet the needs of deaf or hard of hearing consumers in the state. As a result of their input, we ordered several assistive technology items that they suggested, ranging from flashing door knockers to vibrating alarm clocks to assistive listening devices.

Since we received this equipment, we have had several deaf and hard of hearing consumers use it for evaluation and short term loans. For example, Coun-

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ICAN Equipment includes (1) Flexible Arm Magnifier 1.7X; (2) various in-stock devices such as talking watches, talking ID caller, Braille compass, Big Button TV Remote; and (3) Primer Magnicam.

Arkansas Students Get Jump on Careers with Mentors

Arkansas celebrated this year's Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) by sending high school students to work.

"Disability Mentoring Day is a large-scale national effort to promote career development for students and job seekers with disabilities through hands-on career exploration, on-site job shadowing and ongoing mentoring leading to internship and employment opportunities," said Leonard Boyle, executive director of the Arkansas Governor's Commission for People with Disabilities (GCPD). "Local DMD activities are coordinated by a national grassroots network of DMD coordinators who connect local organizations, employers, supporters and advocates across the country. The Arkansas Governor's Commission partners with Pulaski Technical College's Disability Services Offices to conduct this project each year."

DMD is recognized nationally on the third Wednesday of every October – this year on October 21 – in conjunction with National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño said the state has a moral obligation to give people with disabilities the skills they need to find employ-



Justin Milton, a senior at Little Rock's McClellan High School, learns firsthand about city government operations from Little Rock City Manager Bruce Moore (right).

ment and live independently. During a Disability Mentoring Day celebration at the state Capitol rotunda, Treviño said disabled individuals in Arkansas want to work and are not content to live solely on disability benefits, which places them living below the poverty line and segregated from mainstream society.

"We must advocate for...disability rights not only because of economic purposes, but because of how it defines us as Americans," Treviño said. "[Disability] knows no color, age, race, or creed. It has affected so many people regardless of income, degree, or social standing. It's likely that each and every one of us will be affected by some form of disability."

This year, 21 mentors assisted 26 students. Little Rock-McClellan High School senior Justin Milton was among three students who shadowed Little Rock city officials.

"I don't want to have to rely on my parents for my whole life, or be stuck working at Burger King," said Milton. "I'm interested in the law and I want to be a lawyer. I can get a head start on that here, so that's what I'm doing."

The GCPD's goal was to expand the Mentoring Day Program by making it a statewide effort this year. Some of the businesses that participated include Little Rock City Hall, Cotham's in the City, South Arkansas Regional Health Center, J.C. Productions, the Governor's Office, E-Stem Charter School, Congressman Vic Snyder's Office and Wal-Mart on Baseline Road in Little Rock, as well as many others around the state.

Disability Mentoring Day began in 1999 as a White House initiative to increase the national profile of Disability Employment Awareness Month. Today, Disability Mentoring Day supports more than 20,000 students and job seekers with disabilities each year in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and 23 countries worldwide.

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selor Jim Spraggins of Russellville had a student at Arkansas Tech University who needed an assistive listening device (ADL) for his classes. Since the student benefitted from the ADL, the school purchased one. Research has shown that ADLs often work extremely well for students with learning disabilities by blocking distractions and helping the students focus

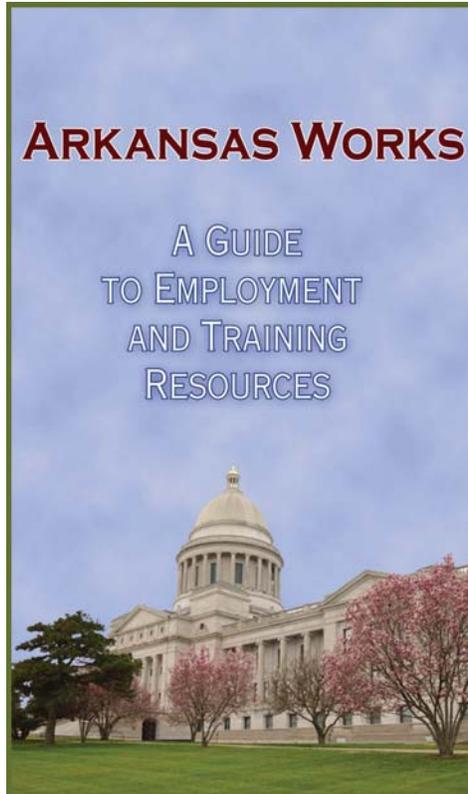
what the teacher/professor is saying.

Again, it is exciting to be involved with ICAN and see the new AT equipment come in and then go out on loans. We still enjoy watching the faces of the consumers leave with big smiles on their faces, saying, "We are so glad to find ICAN and keep up this great work!" We tell them... "We will!"

WORKFORCE CABINET BOOKLET TO AID AGENCIES

A 48-page booklet designed to help the employees of the Workforce Cabinet agencies better assist the citizens of the state will soon be distributed in various state offices. The booklet, entitled *Arkansas Works: A Guide to Training and Employment Resources*, will also be posted on the Web and will be accessible from any of the agencies' Web sites.

The idea for the guide originated with Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., who envisioned the guide as a reference source about the various education and training services offered by Workforce Cabinet agencies. Director Walker's idea for the guide was embraced by Workforce Cabinet agency directors, who provided information about their agencies' programs and ser-



vices. Also in the guide is a section featuring frequently asked questions (FAQs) relating to education and training opportunities, job searches, filing for unemployment and expanding or starting businesses.

"This book is a perfect example of the agencies within the Workforce Cabinet working together to help better serve Arkansans," Director Walker said. "This book will be used by each agency to help make sure the citizens of this state are exposed to the educational and career services to help them meet their needs."

The guide contains information from ACE; Department of Workforce Services; Department of Higher Education, including Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges; Department of Education; Arkansas Economic Development Commission; and Arkansas Science & Technology Authority.

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and efforts in delivering quality service to the clients and citizens we serve. It takes a very dedicated and committed professional to serve the public, and I have great admiration for all the unique contributions that each staff member continues to give to our agency.

Now that the holidays are upon us, may the joyous spirit of this beautiful time of year remain with you throughout 2010 and beyond. From our family to you and your loved ones, my warmest wishes to you for a year of happiness and prosperity.

We Wish you Great Joy, Peace, Happiness and Prosperity this Holiday Season and throughout 2010. Season's Greetings from the entire staff of the Arkansas Department of Career Education!!!



At the Delta Classic 4 Literacy football game November 7, Director Bill Walker presents a ceremonial check for \$60,000 to Dr. Fitz Hill (right), president of Arkansas Baptist College, for establishment of a GED center on the ABC campus. With Director Walker are University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff cheerleaders (left) and Grambling State University cheerleaders (right), including his daughter Alyson, who is standing next to Director Walker.

Recognizing Our ACE Staff



ARS Names Three New District Managers



Murphy



Adamson



Rose

New district managers for three ARS districts have been announced by Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery. Everett Adamson is the manager of the new District VI, which includes the Helena and West Memphis field offices; Lisa Murphy now manages the District V-North office, which includes the Lonoke, Conway and North Little Rock offices; and Linda Rose now oversees District I-South, which includes the Fort Smith, Booneville and Russellville offices.

“All three of our new managers came from the field program,” Daughtery said. “It’s nice to do that because they have worked for many years in the division, are familiar with the programs, and have excelled at serving our clients. It shows a commitment we have for individuals who have performed well.”



Marion Fletcher (above), program manager for ACE’s Career and Technical Education’s Agricultural Science and Technology department, received an award in recognition of 40 years of membership and service to the National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education at the NASAE Awards Banquet in Indianapolis.

ARS Administrative Specialist Receives Award for Visually Impaired



Tauny Chaffin (middle) celebrates her Consumer of the Year selection with (left-right) Lynn Luther, president of the Little Rock Founders Lions Club; Matt Lyles, vocational rehabilitation counselor for the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB); Arkansas Rehabilitation Services District Manager Robert Sanders; and DSB Director Katy Morris.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Administrative Specialist Tauny Chaffin was recently presented a local Consumer of the Year Award by the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind (DSB). Chaffin, who works at the ARS Little Rock field office, accepted the honor during the Little Rock Founders Lions Club meeting on December 9.

Only 11 people in Arkansas receive the annual Consumer of the Year area award, which is given to individuals who are blind or severely visually impaired and who have worked closely with DSB to manage their rehabilitation plans, gain marketable skills and secure good jobs. An overall state winner is selected from the area honorees.

“When Mrs. Chaffin began receiving services from DSB, she was a homemaker,” Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Mary Douglas said. “She fully participated in the development of her [rehabilitation] plan and in turn actively par-

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New ARS Chief of Field Services Striving for Excellence in Program

In the months since Carl Daughtery was named chief of field services at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), he has made it a priority to visit as many field offices as he can, familiarize himself with the staff of each, and begin an open line of communication he hopes will help the division continue to be strong and productive.

"So far I've been to 12 of the 19 field offices," Daughtery said. "I hope to complete the rest of the visits by spring. My goal has been to sit down with each of the offices' staffs, talk to them, find out the expectations of me and the division, and be an open ear to their concerns. I want them to know that I'm their voice on the senior management team.

"All of the visits have been very warming. I'm excited about the energy level."

The Field Services Division of ARS continues to serve Arkansans in big numbers. Daughtery said approximately 15,000 citizens are served at field offices across the state. A new field office was recently



Carl Daughtery

added in the Helena-West Memphis region to help serve Arkansans in that area.

"One thing that I am really pleased about is the fact we're determining the eligibility of 96 percent of clients from the time they are in the application status," Daughtery said. "That shows the quality of the counselors and staff we have in our offices."

Daughtery said that since he's been in charge of the division, new counseling positions have been added and will soon be filled in Fayetteville, Texarkana, El Dorado and Pine Bluff.

The future for the division is exciting, Daughtery said.

"I've received some strong support from [Arkansas Department of Career Education] Director [Bill] Walker and Commissioner [Robert] Treviño," he said. "My top two priorities are providing excellent service to our clients and making sure the field staff has the tools to provide that service."

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participated in implementing the goals outlined in the plan to achieve an employment outcome."

Chaffin was born blind and was diagnosed with open-angle glaucoma.

"I would like to thank DSB for the services that have been provided to me. Without God, counselors, co-workers, supervisors, friends, relatives and teachers, I would not be as successful as I am today," Mrs. Chaffin said. "DSB has provided training, job placement, independent living skills and, in the past, assistive technology equipment in order for me to be able to do my job."

ARS Field Counselor Appointed to State Rehabilitation Council

Deborah Wooten, an Arkansas Rehabilitation Services vocational field counselor and current president of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Association, was recently appointed by Governor Mike Beebe to the State Rehabilitation Council. Wooten's term began October 1, 2009, and expires February 1, 2012.

Wooten has been a field coun-



Deborah Wooten

selor for 18 years and has been very active on the state, regional and national levels. She is past president of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Counseling Association, past president of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association and past president of the Southwest Region National Rehabilitation Counseling Association.

SkillsUSA Members Learn Leadership Skills at Officer Training

The comments from students who attended the October 22 SkillsUSA Chapter Officer Training at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith read like rave reviews of a blockbuster movie.

"You guys were amazing," wrote one participant. "I had a blast. You really taught us the value of leadership."

Another student called it a "life-changing experience," and yet another wrote that some of the activities "shed light on real life."

During the training, SkillsUSA members participated in four interactive sessions aimed at improving their leadership skills and preparing them to become officers within the organization. The sessions included "Market Madness," a NASDAQ Stock Exchange simulation; "Sensational Improvisation," an extemporaneous speaking and debate exercise; "Etiquette Experts," a lesson in manners in professionalism; and "Community Building," a team-building activity.

"On top of increasing leadership skills, each session was a team-based activity," said SkillsUSA State Advisor Jeff Parks. "That's important. In order to be an



State SkillsUSA Advisor Jeff Parks (far right) discusses the responsibilities of leadership with a group of workshop participants.

effective leader and chapter officer, the students have to be able to work with others in a team setting."

Arkansas Department of Career Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. agreed with Parks' sentiment.

"Leadership is an intangible quality that gives these students the vision they need to do things confidently and have others trust and follow them confidently," Walker said. "The students already have

leadership skills because of their SkillsUSA membership, but the chapter officer training has solidified those skills and will make them stronger leaders."

Following the training, the attendees completed anonymous surveys about the day's events. One student's rave was indicative of the thoughts of the vast majority of the other participants.

"I really enjoyed coming to SkillsUSA," the student wrote. "It was something new for me, and it helped me get to know more people who have the same interests as I. I enjoyed it and can't wait to come back. It made me look at things differently and I learned a lot. Thank you."

Top-Producing Districts Recognized at Joint Staff Meeting



Some special awards were presented to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services field programs at the Department of Career Education/Arkansas Rehabilitation Services joint staff meeting in December. Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery praised all the field staff for a job well done in 2009 and awarded plaques to the three top-producing districts—District V-S, District II and District III. District V-S was recognized as the third highest-producing district; District III was recognized as the second highest-producing district; and District II took top honors as the top-producing district in the state.

Pictured left to right are District V-S Manager Robert Sanders, District III Manager Sterling Hughes, Daughtery, District II Manager Christie Bartlett, and ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño.

Two Arkansas Business Teachers Named Best in the South

Two business education teachers from Arkansas were recognized as the year's best by the Southern Business Education Association (SBEA) during the organization's 83rd annual convention in Huntsville, Alabama.

Angie Hutson, who teaches business education at Paris Middle School, was named Junior High/Middle School Teacher of the Year. Siloam Springs High School business and computer teacher **Lisa Hotsenpiller** received the Secondary Teacher of the Year award.



Angie Hutson



Lisa Hotsenpiller

Hutson has served the Arkansas Business Education Association (ABEA) in various leadership roles and served as the business education representative on the Arkansas Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Board. She has earned numerous awards for her teaching, including ABEA Middle School Teacher of the Year and McClellan High School (Little Rock) Teacher of the Year.

"Angie has always shown compassion for her students when teaching on both the high school and middle school levels," said Jim Brock, program manager for business and marketing technology for the Department of Career Education. "She remains active and in and out of the classroom with activities such as FBLA, professional organizations and civic organizations. Angie is very deserving of this award."

In her 15-year teaching career, Hotsenpiller has earned awards that include the 2007 Teacher of the Year honor from Arkansas ACTE and the 2006 Secondary Teacher of the Year award from ABEA. She was also named Teacher of the Year at Siloam Springs High School in 1997.

"Lisa has always been great to work with," said Brock. "If you need something done with classroom curriculum, student organizations, or professional organizations, she is one of the 'go-to' people who will get the job done. Lisa always puts what is best for her students first, and tries to make sure they get the best education possible."

Arkansas Plays Prominent Role at National Career Academy Conference

Representatives from two Arkansas high schools, along with Department of Career Education Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson, had prominent roles at the 13th Annual National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC) Conference held November 1-3 in Philadelphia.

Davidson, a NCAC board member, had two spotlight roles at the conference, which celebrated the 40th anniversary of career academies. In the opening session, Davidson was part



of a three-person reaction panel that discussed a briefing paper on career academies written by Betsy Brand, the executive director of the American Youth Policy Forum. He also moderated a session on career academies as seen through the eyes of an administrator.

Representatives from two Arkansas high schools, David Kellogg of Springdale High School and Dana Brown of Mountain Home High

School, also led sessions during the conference. Springdale and Mountain Home high schools have earned national recognition for their model career academy programs.

"Arkansas has been a recognized leader in the career academy movement and we were able to have two presentations from Mountain Home and Springdale," Davidson said. "Both of these programs were started from grants from our department and both are recognized as national models."

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

Jim Smith
Deputy Director,
Adult Education Division



First of all, I want to offer a special thank you to all of the adult education administrators, instructors and support staff for all they do every day for the thousands of adults they serve in the adult education program. They all strive for the success of all of their students. Arkansas is a national leader in basic academic skills improvement, and this success is a direct result of this dedication.

The Arkansas Department of Career Education's Adult Education Division has engaged Advantage Communications, Inc., to develop and implement a marketing campaign for adult education in the state. This project will provide television, radio, cable, printed materials and other communications to inform Arkansans about basic adult education skills classes.

Research provided by Advantage Communications indicates that **70 percent of respondents to a survey the company conducted were unaware that adult basic academic classes were offered free of charge.** These classes are funded by Arkansas tax dollars and have proven to be an excellent investment for the state. Every dollar invested in adult education returns an additional 46 percent as a result of the increase in salaries earned by adult education students. Because adult education pays off in increased salaries for individuals

and increased tax revenues for the state, the Adult Education Division has adopted a new motto: **"Learn More. Earn More."**

It is important to remember that every building has a cornerstone that serves as the foundation for the building. Place that cornerstone incorrectly, and every other stone will be affected. But, if you start out with a cornerstone that is square to the building's design, every other stone will fit properly and an impressive new building will become a reality. The same is true for the adult who receives a "second chance" when he or she enters an adult education program to improve his or her academic skills. Adult education provides that important cornerstone so that the student can improve his or her skills and earn a General Educational Development (GED®) credential and an Arkansas High School Diploma. With a GED, the individual has the opportunity to pursue additional postsecondary education or training such as apprenticeship training, vocational certificate programs, associate degree programs, baccalaureate programs and even graduate degree programs.

In the past 10 years, 69,448 adults have earned a GED. Of that number, 49,470 adults who earned a GED were between the ages of 16-24. This group will make up the workforce for the next 40 or more years, and it is absolutely critical

that these young workers have the skills they will need to adapt to the many changes they can expect to see in the workplace during the course of their working lives. Studies indicate that a GED graduate can earn an additional \$8,900 per year above what a high school dropout can expect to earn. When you consider the benefits not only to the individual, but also to the state, it is obvious that the return on investment makes the tax dollars spent on adult education a wise investment in Arkansas's future.

The mission of the Adult Education Division is to reset and square each educational cornerstone so that those Arkansans who need a second chance have the opportunity to prepare for successful careers. Every county in Arkansas has adult education services to help Arkansans who want to improve their reading, writing or math skills; learn English as a Second Language; earn a GED credential; acquire basic computer skills; or improve their chances to earn a Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) or a Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) Industrial, Clerical or Employability Certificate.

For more information contact visit the Adult Education Division website at <http://ace.arkansas.gov> and review the heading Program Information.

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

Robert P. Treviño
Commissioner,
Arkansas Rehabilitation
Services Division



After his victory over Pharnaces, Julius Caesar is said to have entered the Roman Senate and uttered the immortal words “Veni, vidi, vici - I came, I saw, I conquered.”¹ In one sense, he was no doubt proclaiming Rome’s superiority over its adversaries. In another, he was engaging in a form of fundamental strategic planning. Rome’s destiny was to conquer all the world and thus perpetuate its place as one the world’s greatest civilizations.

Strategic planning has progressed far beyond ancient Roman conquests. In the 21st century, we utilize complicated methods of data analysis and planning strategies to achieve economic and social benefits for our society. Back in September, the Arkansas Department of Career Education’s leadership team spent a few days engaged in intense discussion and reflection in an effort to determine the agency’s goals for the upcoming year. Setting goals is not as easy as it may seem. It requires substantial thought, data analysis, cost benefit analysis, performance analysis, benchmarking and honest assessment of the agency’s current resources.

For Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, we set out a number of long- and short-term goals. Chief among them are three pri-

mary aims:

- ▶ **First**, consolidation of ARS offices in Little Rock into one building wherein we can function as a more cohesive unit and better serve our customers’ interests
- ▶ **Second**, the successful implementation of stimulus funding awarded to the agency through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The U.S. Department of Education/Rehabilitation Services Administration awarded nearly \$5.8 million in funding targeted toward increasing the division’s capacity to provide vocational rehabilitation services to Arkansas residents. Additionally, Governor Mike Beebe graciously awarded the division \$3.64 million toward the renovation of the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs.
- ▶ **Third**, an 8 percent increase in the number of clients successfully served in the coming year.

Only three months have elapsed since our meeting, and I am very proud to declare that our division is well on its way to realizing our goals. We recently completed the final arrangements toward the consolidation of our division offices here in Little Rock. In a few

months, the Central Office will relocate to 525 W. Capitol Avenue across the street from the federal courthouse. Special Programs will ultimately join us there once their current lease expires.

Additionally, the division has selected the firm of Jameson Architects P.A. as the design professional for the ACTI renovation. Soon, we will complete the process for selecting a general contractor, and we expect renovation activity to begin in early spring 2010 with completion by the summer of 2011. This is all being made possible because of the generosity and consideration of Governor Beebe and his commitment to excellence in service to Arkansans living with disabilities.

Finally, ARS will be acquiring a state-of-the-art case management system for our counseling program both in the field and at ACTI so that we may better serve our clients through efficient case management and 21st century technology. New laptops will enable counselors to enter data directly into the system regardless of their location. Built-in time management efficiencies will enable our counselors to devote more time to the most important component of vocational rehabilitation – counseling the people we serve.

TREVIÑO continued on page 17

1. **Julius Caesar**, Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*

First Group of Arkansas Students Earn Construction Certification

The first round of Arkansas students to successfully complete the core curriculum of the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) has been announced by the Department of Career Education's Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences. The Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences is an NCCER Accredited Training Sponsor.

The NCCER is a not-for-profit education foundation affiliated with the University of Florida and created to develop industry-driven standardized craft training programs with portable credentials.

Each student will receive a transcript and a wallet-sized card to certify that he or she has achieved national standards in the following areas: Basic Safety, Introduction to Construction Math, Introduction to Hand Tools,

Introduction to Power Tools, Introduction to Blueprints, Basic Communication Skills and Basic Employability Skills.

"Employers will be able to view the student's credentials via the NCCER Automated National Registry," said Skilled and Technical Sciences Program Manager Dick Burchett. "This certification signifi-

cantly increases the student's employability."

Sixteen students at Mountain Home High School have completed the entire NCCER program. Their instructor, Owen Carpenter, holds NCCER Master Trainer certification.

The following Arkansas schools currently have NCCER accreditation – Arkansas Career Training Institute; Russellville Area Career and Technical Center; Greenwood High School; Mountain Home High School; Waldron High School; and the Camden, Fordyce and Magnolia sites of the Southern Arkansas University-Tech Career Academy. Accreditation is pending for 33 additional schools in Arkansas.

For more information on NCCER certification, contact the Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences at (501) 682-1271.



TREVIÑO *continued from page 16*

Our goals are ambitious and achievable. Rome was successful because the Romans married strategic planning with the mightiest military force in the world at one time. ARS will be successful because we married strategic planning and technology with the finest vocational rehabilitation professionals of all time. Working together we can make the aspiration of Governor Beebe and Director Walker a reality: "... our state is truly a better place because we served." May God bless you and your family this Holiday season.

Van Buren Construction Students Lend a Helping Hand and Heart

Students in construction classes at Van Buren High School and sewing classes at the Career Center have built and decorated a playhouse to help fund the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) of the 20th Judicial District, which includes Faulkner, Searcy and Van Buren counties. Proceeds from a drawing for the playhouse will be used to fund CASA, which advocates in court for abused and neglected children.



ACTI Happenings

Governor Beebe Addresses ACTI's 176th Commencement Ceremony

The 176th graduating class of the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) was treated to a very special keynote speaker during its commencement exercises at the Hot Springs Convention Center December 16 – Governor Mike Beebe.

The graduating class included 46 students from 29 Arkansas cities who received career certificates in 15 different fields.

The governor told the graduates that the commencement was a significant achievement and challenged them to do something significant with their lives.

"It's a commencement, which means to start, not to end. You have accomplished a milestone that is reflective by this ceremony that you should be very proud," Governor Beebe said. "It's easy to quit, lie on the couch, do something illegal. It's easy to let someone else worry about tomorrow. What's hard is to accept responsibility for your own future and accept responsibility that you want to make a difference. It's a giving back on your part and this day forward you will continue to give back."

The ceremony likewise marked a number of firsts for ACTI commencements. It was the first time Governor Beebe had addressed a graduating class and presented career certificates to each graduate. It was the first time a commencement service was held away from

the ACTI campus and the first time a Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) student from ACTI graduated.

Emily Nylund, a cosmetology student, made history during the service when she became the first student to graduate from ACTI with JAG certification. The JAG program was started at the school last year.

ACTI Director of Vocational Education Dr. Dawn Simpson said this ceremony stood out.

"This one I believe is as special as the others, but in some ways more special to us because the governor was able to take the time to come," Simpson said. "It was even more special and the students were excited that the governor, Director Walker, and Commissioner Robert Treviño were all here. Having it at the convention center also made it a very special ceremony. We spent a lot of time revising the program.

The students put a lot of work in it."

Department of Career Education Director Bill Walker encouraged the graduates, saying, "This day is just another step in life's journey, so while you should be proud of all that you did to get here today, you can't quit yet. Whatever your dreams are, you must keep going."

The graduates not only put their hard work into the ceremony, but they put plenty of hard work into their education. Now, they're ready to go to work.

"This just feels terrific. I couldn't ask for a better feeling. I know this is a great accomplishment," said honor graduate Ricky Nelson of Murfreesboro. "During my time here I had good instructors and the training was fun. I am looking forward to starting my own screen printing business."

The following is a list of students

ACTI continued on page 19

176th ACTI Graduating Class



--photo courtesy of Bobby Jines

ACTI continued from page 18

who received career certificates during ACTI's 176th commencement services:

Auto Collision Repair

– Chris Becker, *Pearcy*; *Cameron Burris, *Camden*; *Corey Hall, *El Dorado*; Chris McCoy, *Hot Springs*; *Chris Tisdale, *Midway*.

Automotive Maintenance Technology

– Whitney Ashcraft, *Bryant*; Brent Long, *North Little Rock*; Carl “Rusty” McMahan, *Rison*; Robert Rollins, *Bearden*; Jordan Weems, *Ward*. **Business Education** – #Mary Badger, *Mena*; Rose Knight, *North Little Rock*. **Certified Nursing Assistant** – #Melanie Briggs, *Huntsville*; Mychael Brown, *Buckner*; Magan Lambert, *Smackover*. **Construction Technology** – Dal Amos, *Waldron*; Justin Wood, *Grapevine*.

Cosmetology

– *Brianni Clark, *North Little Rock*; #*Anita Dorman, *Lavaca*; @Emily Nylund, *Hot Springs*. **Environmental Systems Services** – Cory Brooks, *Little Rock*; #Timothy Davis, *Hot Springs*; @Joyce Dowden, *Bruno*;



Governor Beebe is joined by ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño (far left), ACTI Administrator Cissy Rucker and Director Bill Walker.



Tassel Time!

Loid Lassiter, *Hot Springs*; Royal Reynolds, *Malvern*; James Sears, *Pangburn*; Dustin Wood, *Grapevine*.

Food Service – Matthew Daughtery, *Benton*; #Mytresha Dorn, *Pine Bluff*; Nathaniel Henderson, *Little Rock*; Stacey Joyce, *Hot Springs*; #Cynthia Ramsey, *Hot Springs*; Kimberley Smith, *Hot Springs*; Elizabeth Ware, *Fort Smith*; Linda Williams, *Hope*. **Medical Office Technology** – Shafaye Mooney, *Hope*. **Nontraditional** – Justin Henson, *Malvern*.

Outdoor Power Equipment Technology

– Doug Efrid, *Hot Springs*; Calvin Scott, *Helena*. **Printing** – Owen Bledsoe, *Little Rock*; Andrea Foshee, *Bull Shoals*; #*Brandi Martin, *El Dorado*; #Ricky Nelson, *Murfreesboro*; Brian Keith Sanders, *Benton*. **Sales & Marketing** – Vickie Fortner, *Stuttgart*. **Welding** – #@Michael Smith, *Fort Smith*.

* – SkillsUSA member

– Honor graduate

@ – Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates student

State Curriculum Conference Gives Teachers a Glimpse of Education's Future

The directors of Arkansas's Workforce Cabinet agencies joined Governor Mike Beebe in laying out their plans to improve education as a means of creating a well-trained workforce for the state during the Arkansas Curriculum Conference November 6.

Gov. Beebe praised the efforts of the assembled educators along with those of Arkansas's lawmakers for the significant improvements our state's schools have witnessed recently.

“Everyone wants to talk about excellence in education. But, it will take each of us: parents, educators, and legislators – all Arkansans – to combine our efforts and achieve that excellence,” Gov. Beebe said.

Department of Career Education Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr. emphasized the importance of

rigor and relevance in career and technical education (CTE) courses, as well as the necessity of integrating academics and CTE.

“For example,” said Director Walker, “a CTE student in an agriculture program learns the relevance of good writing skills by keeping detailed records on the livestock that he or she raises. The student in a construction trades class learns that geometry indeed has a practical application when it comes time to frame a house.

“We know that for many students, making academics relevant to the real world is the key to learning. Once students see the application of what they are learning in the classroom to the real world, learning becomes more meaningful, and when learning is meaningful, it is easier,” Director Walker said.

Germany Named ACE Director of Communications

Deborah Germany, who has been with the Department of Career Education (ACE) for 26 years, was recently named deputy director for communications.

Germany, an Arkansas native, joined ACE in 1983. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in English in 1975 and a master of arts degree in American literature in 1977 from the University of Oklahoma. She also earned a master's of applied psychology in 1999 from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

"I'm looking forward to the challenge. Our three divisions are doing wonderful things, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to help tell the story," Germany said.

During her tenure with ACE, Germany has served



Deborah Germany

twice as communications director, the position she now holds, and as organizational development manager. She has served as an adjunct English instructor in two-year colleges in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas and also worked in the financial aid office at the University of Oklahoma. Prior to moving home to Arkansas in 1983, she worked two years as a newspaper reporter in Shreveport, Louisiana.

"Deborah leading our communications department was a natural fit," ACE

Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. said. "Her background and knowledge of our agency, her passion to serve Arkansans and her strong leadership skills will help the communications department continue to be a valuable part of our agency."

ACTI Graduate's Future Includes Work, Education

reprinted from A.O. Employment Services' Weekly

Joy Garrett lives up to her name as a customer service representative serving AT&T customers. ***As part of Disability Awareness Month, Joy was recognized recently by her employer, Sykes Enterprises of Malvern--along with the Arkansas Department of Human Services Employability Project, Malvern Chamber of Commerce, and Ouachita Technical College--for her recent completion of a nine-week intensive course that certified her to be an AT&T customer service representative.***

After graduating from ARS' Arkansas Career Training Institute with studies in general business, Joy began her job search and was referred to AO Employment Services by an employer that was downsizing.

Joy's job search was guided by AO Employment Services in areas

such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and research on local employers. Everyone who worked with Joy felt that Sykes, an inbound call center, was a good match.

The services provided to Joy were funded through her Social Security Ticket to Work.

She has now completed her employer-sponsored training and is working full-time with benefits that include medical, dental, vision, life insurance, 401k and paid vacation! She plans on continuing her education and will



Pictured front row left - right: Kelli Hernandez, Sykes HR manager; Joy Garrett; Nicky Thornton, president of Malvern Chamber of Commerce. Back row left - right: Jim Scarbrough, AO ES job developer; Dr. Barry Ballard, president of Ouachita Technical College.

be attending Ouachita Technical College this spring where she will pursue an associate's degree.

So, for you AT&T customers, the next time you dial 611, you may be talking to an AO client, Joy!!

Arkansas Continues National Leadership in JAG Program



Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr., Deputy Director John Davidson, Associate director Sandra Porter and Jobs for Arkansas’s Graduates Program Manager Marylene Tate joined Governor Mike Beebe at the November 19 Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) National Board Meeting and Luncheon in Washington D.C. Governor Beebe, who serves as JAG’s national vice chairman, co-chaired this national event.

“It’s overwhelming to have Governor Beebe on the national JAG board,” said Tate. “He understands what this programs means for at-risk youth in Arkansas and in the country. Everyone involved with JAG knows he’s going to do everything to ensure that the program and the students who are involved in it succeed.”

During the board meeting, the JAG Foundation recognized corporate donors for their financial support including a generous \$500,000 contribution from Wal-Mart to JAG’s efforts nationwide. Governor Beebe and Miss America 2009, Katie Stam, recognized Wal-Mart representatives for its generous donation with a plaque to hang in the corporation’s Bentonville headquarters.

During the National JAG Board meeting in Little Rock in April, JAG Board President John Baldacci, who is the governor of Maine, and Ken Smith, JAG president and CEO, said the Little Rock board meeting was the best that they had ever attended. As a reminder of the Little Rock Board Meeting, National JAG was presented a souvenir from Director Walker and

Governor Beebe – a collage of framed photographs and a large photograph of one of the signs hung from lampposts throughout downtown Little Rock welcoming National JAG to the city of Little Rock.

Arkansas JAG is presently collaborating with the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board to secure funding for JAG workforce readiness programs. Arkansas JAG is also working with the Department of Education to expand the number of JAG programs in the state. Presently there are 75 JAG programs in Arkansas with new applications for more programs in the works.

“JAG has been an undeniable success in Arkansas,” said Director Walker. “We’re extremely fortunate to have Governor Beebe sitting on the national board. JAG’s national motto is ‘A nation without dropouts.’ Considering the hard work of everyone involved in the program and Governor Beebe’s leadership, I can realistically see JAG leading to an Arkansas without dropouts.”

JAG is a school-to-career program implemented in 700 high schools, alternative schools, community colleges and middle schools across the country and United Kingdom. JAG’s mission is to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities or to enrollment in a postsecondary institution for further education and training. The national JAG network is continuing to grow and has expanded recently into the United States Virgin Islands.



Left to right: Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe, JAG President and CEO Ken Smith and ACE Director Bill Walker during the presentation of souvenirs from the National JAG Board Meeting held in Little Rock in April.

Middle Schoolers Display Career Plans in Poster Contest



Judges Ray Henson and Barbara Lensing study submitted posters

More than 50 seventh- and eighth-grade students from across Arkansas have offered up a dazzling look into their futures.

The students were all participants in a statewide poster contest themed “A Look into My Future” and sponsored by the Department of Career Education (ACE) and Arkansas Career Orientation Teachers Association. In their illustrations of careers ranging from art to teaching to engineering to forensics, the students used paint and paper, crayon and cardboard to present their career goals.

Once a competition open to only Career Orientation students, the poster contest has now been widened to also include students from Workplace Readiness, Workforce Technology, Internship, Keystone and Senior Seminar classes.

Five judges rated the entries based on five criteria: following guidelines (20 points), neatness (10 points), creativity (10 points), spelling and grammar (10 points) and depiction of career (30 points).

The 10 highest-scoring entries will be displayed at next summer’s career guidance conference. Teachers of the winners will receive the awards to present to their winning students.

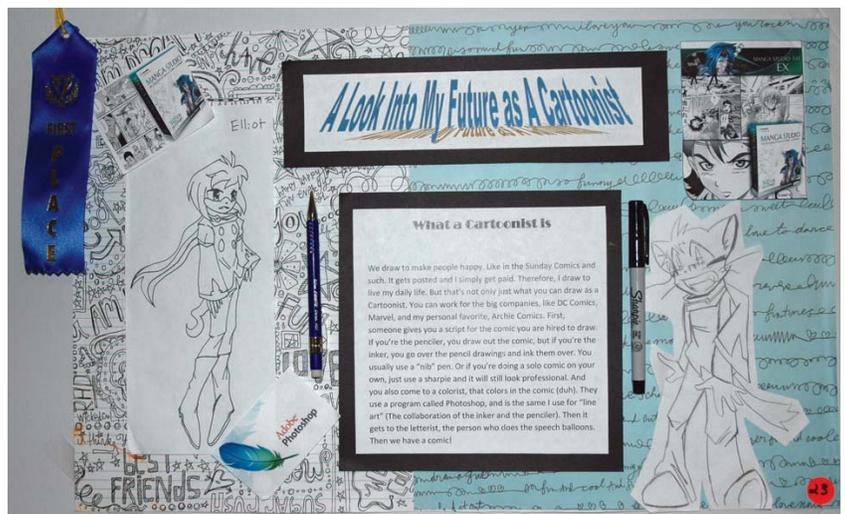
The following is a list of the top 10 finishers:

Student	School	Career	Teacher
1. Laura Batch	PottsvilleJHS	Cartoonist	Amy Rust
2. Ashlee Deffenbaugh	Coleman JHS (Van Buren)	System Analyst	Linda King
3. Hannah Kilburn	Sheridan MS	Teacher	Robin Lowery
4. Brendon Diotte	Sheridan MS	USAF Test Pilot	Robin Lowery
5. Victoria Torres	Cabot JHS	Actor, Producer, Director	Carl Hendrix
6. Alex Davis	Sheridan MS	Neonatal Nurse	Vicki Strong
7. Stephanie Bell	Stuttgart JHS	News Reporter	Donna Chadick
8. Noah Spear	Coleman JHS	Forensic Scientist	Linda King
9. Ali Depner	Carl Stuart MS (Conway)	Forensic Pathologist	Tammy McCollum
10. Clayton Barnes	Sheridan MS	Montana Hunting Guide	Vicki Strong

The first-place finisher receives a \$30 Wal-Mart gift card. The second-place finisher receives a \$20 Wal-Mart gift card, and the third place finisher receives a \$15 Wal-Mart gift card. The students who finished in fourth through 10th places receive \$10 Wal-Mart gift cards. The gift cards are provided by the Arkansas Career Guidance Association.

This contest is one of two poster contests held each school year. One is held during the first semester, the other is held during the second semester.

ACE staff Ray Henson, Barbara Lensing, Dave Fisher, Devry Rhodes and Valerie Spivey were this semester’s judges.



Laura Batch's winning poster



ACE Staff Gathers to End 2009 on Festive Note

Department of Career Education (ACE) employees from all three divisions gathered December 10 at Clear Channel Metroplex in Little Rock for the agency's annual joint staff meeting, which included a morning full of informational presentations, recognitions and a little holiday fun.

"We like to be able to bring together our employees from all over the state for a time of fellowship and a time to update everyone on various aspects of the agency," ACE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. said. "It's always an enjoyable event."

Staff heard updates from the Employee Relations Committee and the Succession Planning Committee.

Rodney Chandler, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) staff development manager, offered updates on the employee survey, staff focus group meetings and supervisor training sessions.

Randy Parker, ARS associate director for program planning, development and evaluation, provided an overview of his committee's work on succession planning for the agency.

"The ACE succession plan will not prepare employees to succeed to specific positions, but rather it will prepare them to lead," Parker said.

Other reports at the meeting included updates from the three divisions and the Arkansas Career Training Institute.

ARS Chief of Field Services **Carl Daugherty** laid out goals and accomplishments of the field services program, including the addition of a new district, increase of new counselors across the state and successful statistics from the past year.

Randy Prather, program manager for the Veteran's Approving Agency (VAA), updated the staff on each of the CTE programs, as well as the new Arkansas Works program that is expected to benefit secondary students in 21 of the state's poorest counties.

He also praised Dick Burchett, program manager for skilled and technical sciences, for his years of service to the agency. Burchett's retirement from ACE is effective December 31, 2009.

"I learned a lot from Dick and feel privileged to have worked for

him," said Prather, who worked as a public school program advisor in the Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences until his appointment as VAA program manager.

Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) Administrator **Cissy Rucker** thanked her staff for the hard work in transitioning since her arrival. She also mentioned the importance of working together to continue to make ACTI the successful training facility and hospital that it is.

"I am honored every day to be the administrator at ACTI," Rucker said. Rucker is in her fourth month as ACTI administrator.

The final report was from Adult Education English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Manager **Dr. Philip Less**, who said adult education enrolled 32,610 students and served 51,295 students during the past year. (Students are considered enrolled if they receive 12 hours of instruction; students who require less than 12 hours are classified as served.)

"Forty-one percent of adult education students improved two or more grade level equivalents in reading, language arts, or math during the year," Dr. Less said. "And 38 percent of ESL students improved at least one ESL proficiency level."

Dr. Less also pointed out that 7,433 adults passed the GED Tests during the year (85 percent pass rate); 5,402 students who were unemployed at the time they enrolled in an adult education program obtained employment within three months after exiting adult education; and 707 adults earned Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) certificates.

In addition to the reports, attendees were also treated to several special performances. ACTI employee **Mary Willingham** and **Katie Bishop**, daughter of ARS District II manager Christie Bartelt, sang, and **Jermaine Layton**, the godson of Angela Heard, Director Walker's executive assistant, provided musical accompaniment on the keyboard.

A number of lucky staff members won door prizes contributed by agency offices and presented by "Santa Claus," played this year by Apprenticeship Program Manager **Jonathan Bibb**. The event concluded with Senior Management Team members leading the staff in singing "Frosty the Snowman."

In the end, the event turned out to be a fun, festive and functional finale to 2009.



Director Bill Walker; Randy Parker, ARS associate director for program planning, development & evaluation; and ARS Commissioner Bob Treviño lead a group sing-along of "Frosty the Snowman."



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