

the **Workforce Counselor**



A publication of Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
501-682-1500 ♦ <http://dwe.arkansas.gov>

Mountain Home High School receives Ford Foundation Education Grant

Rick Delano, a representative from the Ford Motor Company Fund, traveled to Mountain Home in August to award a Ford Foundation Education Grant to their charter school career academies. Mr. Delano visited with Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Career and Technical Education Deputy Director John L. Davidson, and other staff members prior to the presentation to discuss Mountain Home's designation as a Ford Career Academy Innovation Community in a rural setting.

In 2003, Mountain Home High School implemented wall-to-wall career academies. The staff divided into three teams to create three groups: Architecture, Construction, Manufacturing and Engineering

(ACME); Communications, Arts and Business (CAB); and Health Science Human Services (HHS). The Mountain Home High School Career Academies encompass all 16 career clusters. Within the three academies, there are 14 programs of study.

Each academy also has several pathways.

Over a six month period in late 2005 and early 2006, Ford Motor Company Fund, in partnership

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(clockwise): Rick Delano, representing the Ford Motor Company Foundation; Marylene Tate, Program Manager, Office of Technical Assistance for the High Schools that Work program; Dick Burchett, Program Manager for the Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences; Raymond Henson, Program Manager of Career Guidance, Exploration & Preparation; Angela Heard, Administrative Assistant to Department of Workforce Education's Director Walker; Workforce Education Director Bill Walker; Public School Program Advisor Barbara Lensing of Career Guidance, Exploration & Preparation; Dr. Mary Ann Brown, Charter School Director, Arkansas Department of Education and Tanny Harper, from Career and Technical Education Funding.



Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker and State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities (SBWECO) Board Chairman Jack Justus discuss agenda items during the August 2nd board meeting held at the Rehabilitation Services division Corporate Hill office in Little Rock.

State Board approves guidelines

The State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities (SBWECO) voted to approve the department's guidelines for disclosure of information as required by Act 147, known as *Megan's Law*, at their August 2 board meeting.

The meeting was held at the Corporate Hill office of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division in Little Rock. The board received an explanation of the guidelines from Department of Workforce Education Deputy Director

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Director's Update

Training Tomorrow's Workforce Today

By William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Director
Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

I recently had the opportunity to visit with Dr. Steve Franks, former director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education and current chancellor at Southern Arkansas University Tech in Camden, during the **Calhoun (County) Ouachita (County) Business and Industry Training Consortium (COBITC)**. Human Resources directors from businesses and industries in the Camden area [Calhoun and Ouachita Counties] meet at SAU-Tech monthly to discuss the area's needs in employment, training, adult education and other issues of interest to the whole group. Accompanying me on the trip were Interim Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith and Director of Communications Reginald Jackson.

While there, we had an opportunity to listen and have an open and frank discussion with the consortium about the adult education and training needs in that part of the state. The needs there aren't necessarily uncommon with other areas of Arkansas. There is an

increasing realization across our state that businesses and industries in a wide range of fields face some difficulties hiring workers with the skills sets needed to perform certain job tasks.

In the 21st century economy, knowledge-based jobs requiring post-secondary and career and



(l-r): Former state Representative Robert J. White, Special Programs Administrator at SAU-Tech, Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, and SAU-Tech Chancellor Dr. Steve Franks meet August 8 during the COBIT Consortium at SAU-Tech in Camden during the groups monthly meeting.



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

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What You Should Know

Transition Services

Judy Smith, *Transition Director*



What Is Transition?

The term “transition services” means a coordinated set of activities for a student designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student’s needs, taking into account the student’s preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluations. (Sec 7 (37) of the Act).

The Arkansas Transition Program promotes the development and implementation of a statewide process for transition from school to adult for students in special education classes.

This is accomplished through training of public school staff, public and private service agency personnel, and development of regional interagency teams. The Arkansas Transition Project staff consists of a core state level staff, provided by the Special Education Unit and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s Rehabilitation Services division.

Eligibility Criteria

Arkansas public schools refer students using Rehabilitation Services division *Procedures on*

Referral criteria. Presently, student referrals typically will not be accepted for services as a Rehabilitation Services division client until their last year in school and then only when referred for Rehabilitation Services and determined to be eligible for agency services.

Rehabilitation services are available based on a *specific order of selection*; this policy states that people with severe disabilities have the first priority for services that require the expenditure of funds. Order of selection categories, in order of priority, are:

1. Individuals with the Most Severe Disabilities
2. Individuals with Severe Disabilities
3. Individuals with Non-Severe Disabilities Needing Multiple Services, and
4. Individuals with Non-Severe Disabilities.

Procedures for Referrals to Rehabilitation Services Division

In the fall semester of the senior year of an Arkansas high school student, their school submits a referral to the local Rehabilitation Counselor for Rehabilitation Services. At this time, the rehabilitation counselor begins working directly with the student and the student’s family. The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for students determined eligible for vocational

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rehabilitation services is developed and approved prior to the student leaving the school setting, and as early as possible during the transition planning process. Each school personnel making the referral to Rehabilitation Services is required to discuss the school's plans and the rationale for the referral with the student and his or her parents.

Students in grade 10, who are 16 years of age or younger, if determined appropriate, may be referred to the local Rehabilitation Services Counselor for Vocational Exploration. Students in this category are sent Rehabilitation Services information packets regarding agency programs and services.

Arkansas students with disabilities who are in grade 11 and one year away from their anticipated exit from public school may also be referred to the local rehabilitation counselor by their school, at which time they are eligible for assistance with their Vocational Planning.

**Future of
Transition Services**

Rehabilitation Services division personnel are aggressively involved with other agency partners in the development of a state plan for Transition Activities designed to enhance the opportunities for Arkansas's students with disabilities to become involved with the available services and support systems they need in order to successfully transition from high school to adult life. Some of the partners involved in this process are representatives of the Arkansas Department of Education, Abilities Unlimited, Empowerment Network Unlimited, Department of Human Services, Arkansas Blind Services, Arkansas Disabilities Coalition, and Social Security Administration. Most of these representatives are actively involved with the Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP).

Preliminary plans for the future of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division involve an

enhanced commitment to Arkansas's high school students with disabilities who are striving to plan for their future as educated, trained, and productive citizens. The short-term goal of the Rehabilitation Services division is to increase the opportunities for Arkansas's high school students with disabilities to access the resources and information available to them through ADWE/RS and its collaborative partners, and by making a commitment to increase the number of Rehabilitation Counselors (presently, there are only three) that commit 100% of their time on transition activities. The current 100% dedicated counselors and the additional counselors will devote their time to working closely with disabled high school students who are sixteen (16) years old and their families and schools, in an effort to develop the best individualized plans possible for each eligible student and to establish the steps necessary to help the students reach their goals as they transition from high school to adult life.

Greenbrier High instructor honored by NAAE



Patrick Breeding, an agricultural instructor at Greenbrier High School, has won the prestigious Region II Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award by the National Association of Agricultural Education (NAAE). Only six teachers across the nation are so honored. Breeding will formally be presented his award at the NAAE conference in Las Vegas in December when it is held in conjunction with the National Career and Technical Education meeting.

Breeding has taught at Greenbrier for 17 years, and previously taught at Guy Perkins and Enola. In his years of teaching agriculture, he has had 52 state farmers (the highest academic award) and over 25 Career Development Events (judging contests) teams that have won state championships.

Who is Buqitia Robinson?

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina roared into New Orleans and changed thousands of lives forever. One was Buqitia Robinson, a 22-year old, single mother of two small boys, who had just begun taking GED classes to prepare a brighter future for her family. Instead, their future suddenly became bleak in a matter of hours.

She initially planned to ride out the storm with her sons, immediate family members and friends, but soon witnessed the sheer power of Katrina firsthand. Her house and all the family's possessions were destroyed and everyone had to be evacuated from the home's roof. She found herself headed to Houston, Texas, with her family, where they stayed for two weeks.

When the family arrived in Houston, a church paid for bus tickets that would send them to Arkansas, eventually stopping in Russellville. Local churches helped the family find housing and living supplies. But those earlier dreams of

independence and making a better life for her family would take a little longer.

In November 2005, Robinson qualified for the Katrina Relief program through WIA, located at the Arkansas Workforce Center One-Stop in Russellville. She found a job at Arkansas Tech University and soon after began studying for her GED.

Although Robinson's first try at her GED fell just short of

passing and discouraged her from another attempt for several months, Pat Collins, Director of the Adult Education Center in Russellville, said she knew Robinson was serious about obtaining her GED because she was always on time and willing to work.

"We kept in phone contact with her," Collins recalls, adding, "We found out she didn't have any transportation, so I decided I would go and pick her up."

Robinson admits, "I wanted to show my children that it's never too late to do it all again if you don't succeed the first time."

Robinson also recounted how when times got rough for the family, her landlord told her, "Whatever you do, don't stop going to the WAGE Center." Her landlord allowed her stay rent-free for two months on the promise that she would keep on going.

She did keep going and Buqitia Robinson received her GED in March 2007. She's now working toward her WAGE certificate, which focuses on work skills in either industrial or clerical work. When she obtains that certificate, she plans to take nursing classes at Arkansas Tech. Learn how the GED tests can work for you. Visit <http://dwe.arkansas.gov> or call 501-682-1980.



Buqitia Robinson



Robinson is shown above working with Russellville WAGE (*Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy*) coordinator Jackie Harris.

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Department of
WORKFORCE
EDUCATION

GED

Learn how the GED tests can work for you.
Visit <http://dwe.arkansas.gov>
or call 501-682-1980

Career & Technical Education Teacher Assessment and Curriculum



Members of the Assessment and Curriculum staff are (l-r): Anita Morgan, Secretary; Keith Peterson, Public School Program Advisor; and Karen Chisholm, Assessment and Curriculum Program Manager

questions,” says Chisholm. “And we’ve made great strides forward in the past five years,” she continued.

“Five years ago, when assessments were completed with pencil and paper, we were able to do about 20,000 assessments a year and, because of the human element, we had an error rate of about 15%. Today, with online delivery, we have tripled the number of assessments we do and our error rate is minimal,” she said proudly. “Other positive changes over the past five years include the reports being done in-house with on-demand reporting, where in the past, it was vendor-dependent reporting. Also, assessments are now tied closely to the curriculum, where as before, it was not,” Chisholm added. “The new system is

One of the backbones behind the scenes of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s Career and Technical Education division is Assessment and Curriculum. It is the department’s job to maintain the standards and accountability in career and technical education high school offerings, something that is done through ongoing workshops and in-service trainings.

Much of what the Assessment and Curriculum section does is computer driven. Program improvements are the results of online evaluations that help educators see shortcomings and lead to improvements in frameworks.

“The online course assessment tool has two main goals,” according to project manager Karen Chisholm. “They are to give data in support of managing teachers’ needs and to provide data for Perkins IV funding evaluation and justification,” she said.

“The teachers are a part of the process, not only in evaluating the framework (or how a course is taught), but in developing the curriculum and test

more responsive to both educators and students and it’s pioneering among the states, not to mention the tremendous savings it has. It’s about 1/10th of the cost of what other agencies that do student testing spend,” Chisholm commented.

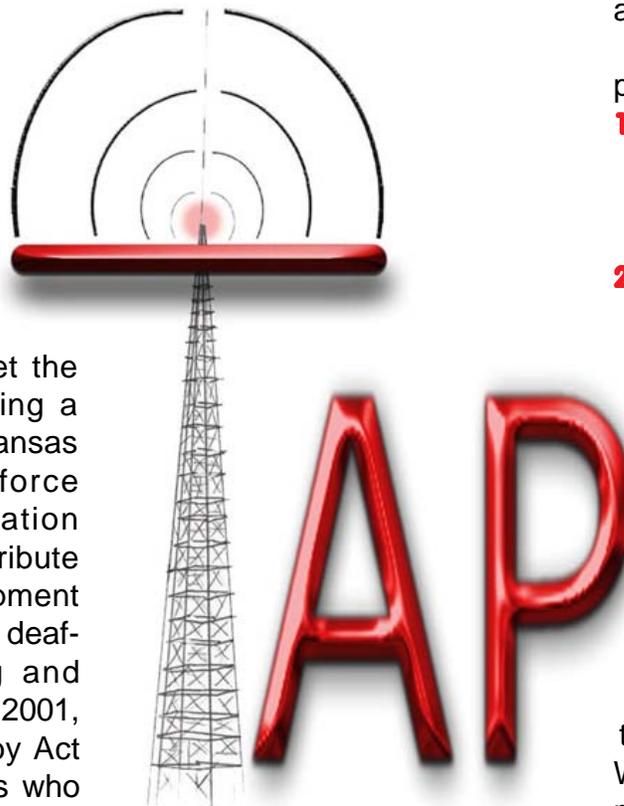
While assessments are mandated, training for the changes is not. However, teachers just beginning in the profession are “more accepting of the technology,” Chisholm says. “Younger teachers often have little, or sometimes no classroom experience, so they may take the in-service training several years in a row to fully grasp the concept,” she added.

The WE-Test website works in conjunction with the Perception software, a product of Questionmark Corporation. The Assessment and Curriculum office uses the authoring software to input assessment questions, and then loads them into Questionmark’s server. Students then can access the WE-Test Web site to enter and complete their assessments via customized software which was created by Chisholm and her staff.

Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Changes in effect in TAP rules and application

TAP, the Telecommunications Access Program, has been in existence for 12 years. The program began when Act 501 was passed by the Arkansas Legislature on March 1, 1995. This legislation set the guidelines for establishing a loan program under Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division to distribute telecommunication equipment to persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing and speech impaired. Then, in 2001, Act 501 was amended by Act 530 to include individuals who have a visual, physical or cognitive disability that impairs their ability to effectively access the telecommunications network.

The program was directed to promulgate procedures, regulations, rules and criteria necessary to implement and administer this program. This first



set of rules was promulgated and put into place in November of 2001 and, until July 26, 2007 had remained the same. On this date, TAP'S newly promulgated rules received the final stamp of approval. These new rules represent alterations in the field of technology over recent years

and TAP'S vision for the future. These changes will impact the program in the following ways:

- 1. Eliminates any language that restricts the program from distributing only landline phones.**
- 2. Expands the program to be able to distribute up to two primary devices per applicant.**
- 3. Simplifies the application process both for our customers and for TAP staff.**

However, even though the rules have been endorsed, the program will be cautious as to how and when the changes are implemented. With a staff of three, the Telecommunications Access Program served over 900 customers last year, which was a 25% increase from the previous year.

The first step completed was to restructure the application to demonstrate the simplification the program is trying to achieve. The program has now set the stage for the future, and is looking forward to being able to assist more Arkansans to achieve independence.

For additional information about the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division's Telecommunications Access Program, call 800-981-9693 (V/TTY) or 501-686-9693 (V/TTY).

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Perception software employs powerful data collection tools. The state level data is compiled, disaggregated and eventually used as a core indicator for generating Federal Perkins funding, in the revision of assessment/curriculum materials, and in deciding the types of professional development that is offered to teachers.

"It's numbers and it's data to a point, but more so, it is what we do with the data once we get it," Chisholm says. "That's the bottom line and in Arkansas, I think we've proven we've done a good job with what we've worked with."

Veterans Approving Authority Provides Educational Assistance to Arkansas's Veterans

There is a Norman Rockwell kind of image when one pictures a United States military member in your mind's eye. The image of that post-World War II veteran has changed with the times, but the circumstances many members of the U.S. Armed Forces face when returning home today are much the same. One consistent element, though, is the Montgomery G.I. Bill, a benefit that is an entitlement for America's military veterans.

The Montgomery G.I. Bill includes a compensation and pension provision, life insurance, health and pharmacy coverage, survivor benefits, educational stipends, vocational rehabilitation services and a burial benefits package. Many of these services are available for the rest of the veteran's life, except for the education package, which is only offered for 10 years following their discharge. The education portion of the G.I. Bill is what the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Veteran's Approving Agency works with.

The ADWE's Veteran's Approving Agency has the sole responsibility for approving all schools and training sites that wish to provide veterans' education and training. The Veteran's Approving Agency approves all public and private university, college, and technical/vocational school programs, so that a veteran can use his or her education benefits at that facility. In addition, the Veteran's Approving Agency is responsible for approval of on-the-job Training and Apprenticeship programs that are offered to veterans.

They also evaluate the curriculum, physical facilities, faculty qualifications, administration, policies and procedures of each school, or training program, prior to approval. Staff members annually conduct on-site visits to examine student records and application of policies and procedures. These visits are to monitor continued compliance with Veterans Administration regulations and to ensure the quality of the program that is offered to veterans.

Since 1947, the Veteran's Approving Agency has served as a clearinghouse for authorization of

what training programs and institutions will be covered by a veteran's G.I. Bill. Programs include courses at the traditional two- and four-year schools, to vocational programs like barber and cosmetology schools, truck driving schools, real estate training and courses to certify nursing assistants.

The G.I. Bill is considered to be the most successful entitlement program in United States history. Today, 94% of military veterans who go back to school on the Montgomery G.I. Bill use their benefits in either two- or four-year college programs. The rest utilize their educational benefits in vocational education, apprenticeships or on-the-job training programs.

Since the 39th Brigade of the Arkansas National Guard was activated for Operation Iraqi Freedom, ADWE's Veteran's Approving Agency Program Manager Sara Patterson says they have seen an increasing number of veterans using their Montgomery G.I. Bill when they return home.

"Our agency is seeing about 60% of military veterans, who return home from active duty, take almost immediate advantage of the educational portion of their Montgomery G.I. Bill. That's about three times as many who utilized the benefit before the war, back in 2000," she said.

"The Montgomery G.I. Bill for both the National Guard and Reserve forces is different than that of an active duty military member," Patterson added. "It is based on a formula. Part of how much money the member receives is based on how long the member served on active duty," she continued.

Since 9/11, Congress has passed legislation that determines how much a National Guardsman or Reservist qualifies for based on how long they were recalled to active duty for Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom and/or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Say for instance, a Guardsman or Reservist was recalled to active duty, but not recalled under Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom orders, that member may not be eligible for certain benefits at

ICAN

Rehabilitation Services Division's ICAN program has New Addition to its Website

The Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division's **Increasing Capabilities Access Network's (ICAN)** website has a new addition -- *Assistive Technology for All (AR AT4All)*. The free, online service can be used to list and find assistive technology for clients in Arkansas. Users can easily search for equipment available for loan, sale, demonstration or giveaway.

AR AT4All can be accessed two ways, by going to www.arkansas-ican.org and clicking on the *AR AT4All* button, or by going to www.equipment.arkansas-ican.org. The website has a quick-start guide that can assist users through the process of searching for a specific piece of assistive

technology, requesting an account and listing equipment. Individuals may list their own items for sale, trade or giveaway along with a picture of each item listed, if desired. The best news is the listing is FREE.

"One of our goals is to collaborate with other agencies and organizations around the state to provide them with a vehicle to list equipment available to customers and clients," said Cindy Young, Increasing Capabilities Access Network customer assistance coordinator. "With the new AR AT4ALL, Arkansans can visit the website and view equipment available from several different sources," she added.

AR AT4ALL provides almost 40 categories to browse through, including ambulatory devices,

children's equipment, environmental controls, ramps, vehicle lifts and wheelchairs.

ICAN loans equipment such as augmentative communication devices and adaptive keyboards for up to two weeks for evaluation, demonstration and for use when making a decision regarding a purchase. Hands-on experience with the product will facilitate and enhance evaluation or training associated with the device. Users may request loans of items via the website.

Long-term equipment loans, for up to 6 weeks, are available to provide temporary replacements when personal equipment is on order, in need of repair, or if someone has a temporary need for equipment after an accident or during an

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the same rate that one of their counterparts who served in support of one of these operations in the war on terrorism would be eligible for," Patterson went on to say.

"Providing the benefits of the Montgomery G.I. Bill is something this country does, in part, as a thank-you to the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces for their service and sacrifice fighting for our freedom and democracy," Patterson said.

It's a great way to say "thank you," and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Veteran's Approving Agency is here to serve those who served America so bravely and so well. For additional information on the services offered by the Veteran's Approving Agency, call Sara Patterson, Program Manager at 501-682-1808 or email at sara.patterson@arkansas.gov.



Veterans Approving Agency is staffed by (l-r) Kay Owens, Secretary; Sara Patterson, Program Manager; Robyn Berner, Public School Program Advisor; and Kristy Woods, Public School Program Advisor.

Dates to Remember for September - October 2007

- ☞ **National FFA Camp Directors Conference** will be held in Hardinsburg, KY on September 24-26th. Contact Marion Fletcher at (501) 682-2561 or at marion.fletcher@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District III Senior High Fall Conference** will be held on September 25th at the Pine Bluff Convention Center. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District III Middle Level Fall Conference** will be held at the Pine Bluff Convention Center on September 25th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District V Senior High Fall Conference** will be held at UCA in Conway on September 26th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District I Senior High Fall Conference** will be held in Jonesboro on September 27th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District II Middle Level Fall Conference** will be held in Jonesboro on September 27th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District IV Middle Level Fall Conference** will be held on October 1st at Henderson State University. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District IV Senior High Fall Conference** will be held on October 2nd at Henderson State University. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District I Middle Level Fall Conference** will be held on October 3rd at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District I Senior High Fall Conference** will be held on October 3rd at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **State Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee** will be held on October 4th at 4503 Hoffman Road in Little Rock. Contact Jonathan Bibb at (501) 682-1360 or at jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee** will be held on October 4th at 1315 West 2nd Street in Little Rock. Contact Jonathan Bibb at (501) 682-1360 or at jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **State Plumbing Licensing Committee** will be held on October 5th at the Freeway Medical Center. Contact Jonathan Bibb at (501) 682-1360 or at jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District VI Senior High Fall Conference** will be held October 5 at Ozarka College in Melbourne. For additional information, contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **State Electrical Apprenticeship Committee** will be held on October 5th at IBEW in Little Rock. Contact Jonathan Bibb at (501) 682-1360 or at jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **Career Guidance Workshop** will be held at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs on October 8-9th. Contact Ray Henson (501) 682-1616 or at raymond.henson@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **DECA Central Arkansas Officer Training/Fall Conference** will be held on October 10th at C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Ferndale. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **FBLA District V Middle Level Fall Conference** will be held at the University of Central Arkansas on October 12th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **DECA Northwest Arkansas Fall Leadership Mini Conference** will be held in Springdale on October 16th. Contact Jim Brock at (501) 682-1768 or at james.brock@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **Arkansas SkillsUSA Fall Leadership Conference** will be held at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith from October 22-24th. Contact Randy Prather at (501) 682-1271 or at randy.prather@arkansas.gov
- ☞ **80th National FFA Convention** will be held in Indianapolis, IN from October 24-27th. Contact Marion Fletcher at (501) 682-2561 or at marion.fletcher@arkansas.gov

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technical education training have grown as a share of total employment. In Arkansas, career and technical skill requirements are increasing every day as the technology used in today's workplace environment continues to evolve and grow.

We at the Department of Workforce Education recognize the needs some employers face, and are committed to raising the bar in our efforts to increase the level of career and technical education training for our students, to increase the number of GEDs offered through our Adult Education Centers, to increase the literacy levels of our citizens, and to effectively train Arkansas's workforce, at all levels, to boost their skills so that they can gain access to the jobs today's employers need filled to be successful.

What are employers in Arkansas looking for in today's workforce of the 21st century?

Meetings like the **COBIT** Consortium in Camden help give us insight to the needs of business and industry. Business and industry leaders' feedback is necessary to help us shape and craft the career and technical training needs for Arkansas's workforce. One of the outcomes of our meeting in Camden was the Department of Workforce Education's decision to move the administrative authority of the Calhoun County Adult Education site in Warren to the SAU-Tech Adult Education program in Camden (subject to the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities approval), with SAU-Tech taking full responsibility for the entire county's adult education needs. As a result, the area's citizens, businesses, and industries will be more conveniently served.

As we travel around the state, I look forward to meeting with similar groups to have discussions about how we can work together to improve the quality of life and the opportunities of many Arkansas job seekers.

I am committed to investing the time and the tools to boost the training provided to our citizens for the future of Arkansas's economy.

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for Career and Technical Education John Davidson before it approved the policy which fulfills the requirements of Megan's Law.

The guidelines pertain to the disclosure of information regarding sex offenders to school districts, adult education programs, career and technical education programs, and other vocational training programs under the oversight of the department.

The board's action opened the policies and procedures public review period for 30 days for both adult education and secondary technical centers. Following the public input period, the policies will be updated with any necessary adjustments or corrections.

The board also heard a presentation from Rehabilitation Services division Commissioner Robert Treviño and other staff members of the division regarding the recent Rehabilitation Services federal review, the 2007-2008 budget, the



SBWECO members Lucy Ralston of Fayetteville and Richard Smith of Tillar listen during discussions at the board meeting on August 2nd.

status of rehabilitation program operations and field services, and an overview of the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center's programs and services.

Board members in attendance were Chairman Jack Justus, Vice-Chairman Phil Taylor, Lucy Ralston, Robert McClanahan, Richard Smith, Kathy Scarsdale, and the Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.

HSRC Happenings

Employment Readiness Training Center assists Students with On-the-Job Skills

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division's Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center's Employment Readiness Training Center provides students an opportunity to enhance their knowledge of the work environment. Through the combination of work activities and classroom activities, trained staff are able to teach and demonstrate the skills and attributes employers find valuable in the workplace.

Work activities allow students to learn and practice basic expected employee work habits such as being on time, dressing for the job, and working well with co-workers. Additionally, programming focus is placed on work site issues such as organization and preparation, care of equipment and tools, on the job safety, and quality assurance and improvement.

Classroom activities engage students in self

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169th Commencement ceremonies held



Director William L. Walker, Jr.

Fifty-four graduates in 14 fields of study accepted certificates acknowledging completion of their Arkansas Career Training Institute studies during August 31 commencement services held at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. gave the commencement address. Walker encouraged the graduates to meet future challenges with determination and conviction.

"Learning is a process, not an

event," he said. "What the future holds is up to you. You can choose to stop here – with your certificate – and live a decent life. Or you can challenge yourself to continue your education – to open even more doors, to create more opportunities, to increase your earning potential. When your mind sets your course and your motivation carries you forward, what you learn along your path will determine your destination. And that is what has led you to this moment right now," he commented.

Certificates at the 169th Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center Commencement services were presented to:

Auto Collision Repair: Alvin Taylor, *Little Rock*; **Automotive Technology:** Brian Bolcao, *Mansfield*; Jesse Brem, *Mountain View*; Alex Johnson, *Eudora*; Justin Pfeiffer, *Huntsville*; Jon Rice, *Camden*; **Building Trades:** John Aldrich, *Fordyce*; Chad Charles, *Strong*; Jeremy Dyer, *Batesville*; Billy Meyers, *Siloam Springs*; Brandon Moore, *Pine Bluff*;

Benjamin G. Nagel, *Maumelle*; Kirk Stanfield, *Little Rock*; **Business Education:** Brian Dale, *Hot Springs*; Thorashia Harper, *Hughes*; Kalie Holt, *Hot Springs*; Patricia Mathis, *Hot Springs*; Sharonda Smith, *Waldo*; Sandra Towe, *Hamburg*; Ruby Williams, *Benton*; **Certified Nursing Assistant:** Jessica Henry, *Strong*; Andreana Johnson, *Crossett*; Jamaica Morgan, *Waldron*; **Cosmetology:** Chasidy Askea, *Little Rock*; **Environmental Systems Services:** William Flowers, *Little Rock*; **Food Service:** Tara Bryant, *Harrisburg*; Lisa Conner, *Forrest City*; Johnny Fisher, *Warren*; Terry Flick, *Malvern*; Dawn Johnson, *Hot Springs*; Kim Johnson, *Hot Springs*; Kevin Seamans, *Hot Springs*; Justin Springer, *Little Rock*; **Groundskeeping:** Matthew Harrell, *Jacksonville*; **Laundry:** Jeron Paige, *Little Rock*; **Non-Traditional:** Samuel Guilliams, *Gentry*; James Licari, *Willford*; Annette Neighbors, *Benton*; Michael Redit, *Hot Springs*; Leona Taylor, *Hot Springs*; Catherine Ward, *Booneville*; **Printing:** Bobbi Black, *Walnut Ridge*; Patrick Deshazer,

GRADUATION continued on page 20

ERTC continued from page 12

assessment exercises in conjunction with self-improvement strategies to assist in developing goals for work and life. Students are provided straightforward information regarding the essential skills necessary for successful job experiences and fulfilling, independent living.



The Employment Readiness Training Center is practical training with a “best practices” approach, instilling students with tools to assist them in being successful in the labor market.

Wing-Rep program valuable lesson in responsibility for students

The Wing-Representative program at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s Rehabilitation Services division’s Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center was initiated three years ago and continues to prove itself as a valuable tool for monitoring and supervising dorm life activities. It has been a worthwhile lesson for many of the Center’s students in teamwork and personal responsibility.

A typical dorm wing at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center may house 25-30 students and be staffed by a single houseparent who also may supervise up to three additional wings. Two Wing-Representatives assist the houseparent. Houseparents select each Wing-Rep, who is then trained by a sponsor on the responsibilities of the position. Selection is based on maintenance of his/her honor status; respect for his/her peers and those in authority; trustworthiness; a willing attitude; ability to lead by example; ability to handle an emergency; and ability to lead *without letting responsibility go to one’s head*.

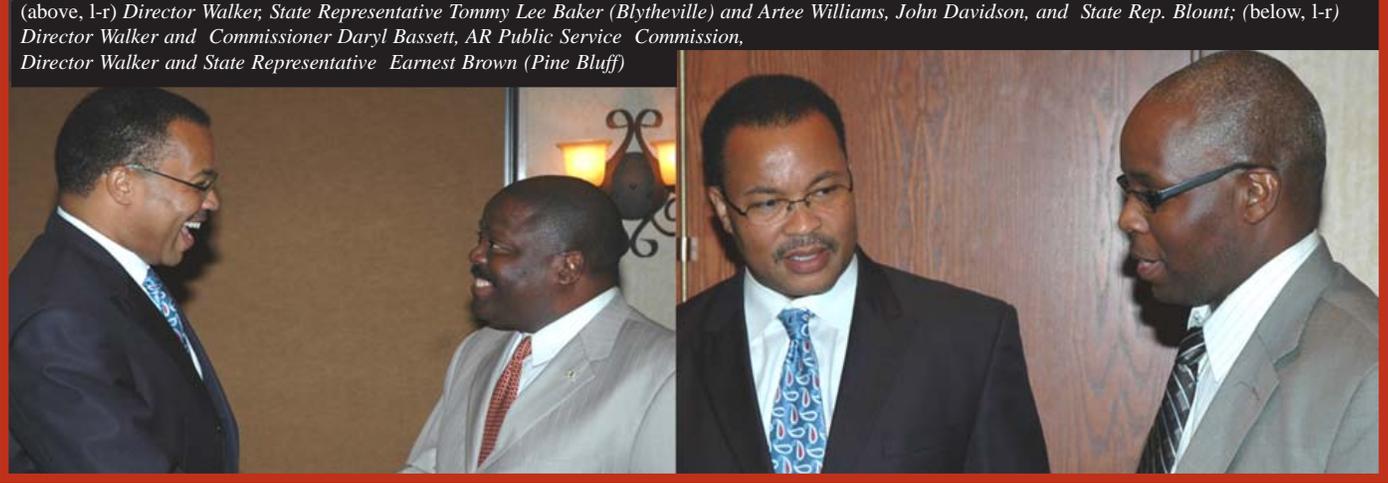
Wing-Reps report noteworthy incidents or complaints involving students, present reports to the Student Council, monitor dorm areas, and provide orientation to new students. They also meet with sponsors on a bi-weekly basis to discuss issues related to the job, to the general student population, and address training opportunities and needs.



Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center Wing-Reps

Front row, l-r: Terrance Morrison, Shuneka Simmons; Row 2: Lateesa Marshall, Ray Wheaton, Melissa Reynolds, Roberto Pineda; Row 3: Robert Hord, Robin Robertson, Wing-Rep Sponsor Hilda Green; Row 4: Michael Redit, Henry Bellis, Josh Marshall, Johnny Piersall, and Ryan Jackson.

The Wing-Representative program demonstrates another aspect of the HSRC mission to train individuals for meaningful employment. The students who accept the responsibility are not only learning a vocation, but through interaction and leadership in a group setting, are demonstrating the essence of being a valuable and productive member of society.





(above, l-r) State Rep. Baker and Director Walker, Artee Williams, Collette Honorable and Director Walker, Director Walker and Grover Evans, Rehabilitation Services division program administrator; (below, l-r) John Davidson and former state Representative Joyce Elliot (Little Rock), state Senator Jack Crumbly (Widner) and Director Walker, Director Walker and Dr. Charity Smith, Director of Academic Accountability, Arkansas Department of Education



Arkansas Legislative Black Caucus Retreat August 24 * Embassy Suites * Hot Springs



(above, l-r) Collette Honorable and Director Walker with state Representative Linda Chesterfield (Little Rock), John Davidson and Interim Deputy Director of DWE Adult Education division Jim Smith, Director Walker; (below, l-r) Director Walker, Dr. Charity Smith and John Davidson, Director Walker and Commissioner Treviño



Assistive Technology: What is it?

Assistive Technology is an all-encompassing term used for functional adaptive and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities. The term also refers to the process used in selecting which devices would be best for promoting independence for their users, enabling them to perform tasks they previously hadn't been able to do, or making it easier to accomplish those tasks they had great difficulty performing. Sometimes these tasks are barriers to basic daily life like bathing, cooking, or other skills many people take for granted in living independently.

Universal accessibility, or *universal design*, means greater usability, particularly for people with disabilities. One example is the curb cuts (or dropped curbs) in the sidewalk at street crossings. While curb cuts enable pedestrians with mobility impairments to cross the street with greater ease, they also aid parents with carriages and strollers, shoppers with carts, and travelers and workers with pull-type bags, not to mention skateboarders or inline skaters.

Modern day telephone equipment has made it possible for people with a hearing disability to use adapted equipment. Technology ranges from phones with internal amplifiers to text phones (TDD or TTY—a text typewriter that converts typed



characters into transmittable tones that convey a signal and transmit it to a receiving device).

Video relay services allow someone who uses sign language to communicate through a relay operator. It's done via a camera and the relay operator, in turn, verbally translates the message to a non-sign language using individual at the other end of the call. Another component of the video system is that it allows two sign language-speaking individuals to communicate with one another, using the system.

There are also devices that allow people with mobility impairments to use devices such as calculators and computers. It's

accomplished through speech recognition software that uses short commands to make the use of calculators easier.

Other areas of assistive technology include durable medical equipment. It includes products that assist people in sitting comfortably and safely; standing products and walking products that help people walk or stand with assistance (canes, crutches, walkers); wheeled products, like wheelchairs, scooters and walkers that help people move freely indoors and outdoors.

Adaptive devices for computers include screen magnifiers, screen readers, self-voicing applications and optical character recognition that converts a printed word into text—via a scanner. Some of these devices are hardware, others are software driven. There are also Braille translators called Braille embossers, that convert printed words to Braille.

Different kinds of audio devices help people with hearing loss. In addition to hearing aides, there's closed captioning, which is now standard on all television sets; video cassette recorders that can read and record subtitles, loop systems, door bell lighting systems and even fire alarms that, when placed under someone's pillow, vibrates when it detects smoke.

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

by Charles Brown
Department of Workforce Education
Chief Financial Officer



As one of the two chief finance officers for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, I generally have the reputation as a pessimist who is continually pointing out the need to conserve our resources and make do with less. While this remains true and is an inbred part of my overall conservative nature, I want to take this opportunity to point out a few of the accomplishments our agency has achieved since I came to this position some sixteen years ago.

The Department of Workforce Education became independent and combined with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services in 1997. From my standpoint, this event was extremely significant. The increased responsibilities and opportunities for service increased our visibility with the legislature and the administration. When Workforce Education was a division of another state agency, our interests were, at best, at the last of the list when it came to funding or priorities. In my opinion, this was not done with malice or intent, but through simple neglect. The other state agency had too much to do to pay very much attention to our career and technical education program needs.

When we became an independent agency, with a board dedicated solely to career and technical education/rehabilitation issues, we started to develop our own identity and secure our place at the table of decision makers. The agency has made an amazing leap in the quality of instruction that we ask our partners in the public schools and colleges to provide our clients. The emphasis on in-service to upgrade instructor skills has played a major role in this increased quality of instruction. Our agency personnel, who are employed as advisors and program managers, have remained consistently professional and dedicated to their areas of expertise.

Our agency has expanded the opportunity for

high school students to have exposure to high quality career and technical education programs. Each year we have been able to fund a number of new program equipment requests. These new programs are usually in areas we didn't think of as traditional vocational subjects in earlier years. Courses like robotics, pre-engineering, computer engineering, geospatial technology—these are a far cry from the traditional courses looked upon as typical vocational courses.

We have expanded the opportunities for Arkansas's students by partnering our career and technical education centers with many of the state's two-year colleges, and students can receive college credit as they pursue a course of study. In addition, the Department of Workforce Education's loan forgiveness program will help pay off a student's loan who go to college on borrowed money, complete a certificate program or degree in an approved field, and live and work in Arkansas in that field after graduation. That's a win-win for the student, the colleges, the agency and the state.

Funds for adult education programs have greatly increased during my tenure here, but not in a consistent manner. Early on, there was a large increase and then funding remained level for more than a decade. As a result, many of our adult education programs had to find ways to do more with less since costs of providing those services rose each year. The positive thing to remember through this time is that the Department of Workforce Education still serves our citizens without charge and still maintains a very high record of quality performance. During the last legislative session, our agency's efforts were finally recognized with a modest increase that we hope will set the stage for additional, much needed funding increases in the future.

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Western Arkansas SkillsUSA chapter commemorates founding

The anniversary of the founding of SkillsUSA was May 10, 2007. To commemorate the day, 12 members of the Western Arkansas SkillsUSA chapter used the occasion to give back to their community.

As part of the SkillsUSA National Week of Service, the students gave their time to the Crisis Center for Women in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The students prepared labels, made phone calls and placed signs in various locations around Fort Smith to promote the Center's annual fundraising event, "Dinner in the Vineyards," which was held on June 2.

The students were able to put into practice the soft skills they had learned in SkillsUSA meetings this year by communicating with Crisis Center staff, members of the community, and local business owners. Soft skills include using oral and written communication skills, practicing poise under pressure, and utilizing teamwork, all of which attract employers.

The participating students were:

Alma: Meredith McCabe, Van Buren High School.

Branch: Laci Self, County Line High School.

Cedarville: Trevor Godfrey.

Fort Smith: Chasity Huddleston, Southside High School.

Greenwood: Samuel Jones, Greenwood High School.

Mulberry: William Domer.

New Blaine: Staci Moore, Paris High School.

Ratcliff: Wade Atchley, County Line High School.

Rudy: Keshia Testerman, Cedarville High School.

Uniontown: Sharon Cloud, Cedarville High School.

Van Buren: Kelly Sharp, Alma High School; Kendra Tedford, Van Buren High School.

The Crisis Center for Women, a United Way participating agency, provides services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The center is responsible for providing services to Sebastian, Crawford, Franklin, Scott, Polk and Logan Counties in Arkansas and two counties in Oklahoma.

The Western Arkansas Technical Center at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith is an area secondary center serving a five-county area. WATC provides area high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to earn college credits in automotive technology, computer-aided drafting and design, criminal justice, early childhood education, electronics technology, engineering, graphic design, health sciences, information technology and welding technology.

SkillsUSA is a national organization for both high school and college students. The organization is designed to provide quality educational experiences for students enrolled in technical, skilled and service programs.

Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities program

A program targeted to a group of underserved citizens with disabilities has been launched by the Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division. The Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities program is under the guidance of Grover Evans, Program Administrator. The primary goal of the program is to increase the leadership qualifications for minorities with disabilities in Arkansas.

At a national conference for select attendees on the topic in Washington, D.C., in early July, Evans learned that Arkansas is in need of such a program. His excitement level is obvious



Darrell Stephens and Grover Evans

LEADERSHIP continued on page 27

Smith Named Interim Deputy Director for Adult Education



James H. Smith, Jr.

James H. Smith, Jr., manager of the Department of Workforce Education's Federal Surplus Property division (FSP), has been named interim Deputy Director for Adult Education by DWE Director William L. "Bill"

Walker, Jr. of our division," Smith admits.

Juggling two jobs doesn't leave Smith much time for family and it's a good thing he's dedicated. His late-August calendar was chock-full with an Adult Education Federal Review in Little Rock and a Federal Surplus Property National Conference going on simultaneously in Alabama. In his typical fashion, he split time between the two and even had time to receive acknowledgement of his job performance.

While at the Alabama conference, Smith picked up three national awards for Surplus Property. The first was the National Association of State Agency's of Surplus Property (NASASP) President's Award. Another was the Associate Member's Award for having the second highest number of associate members in the country. Associate members are groups or agencies who are clients of Federal Surplus Property. Smith also received the General Services Administration Special Achievement Award for outstanding performance. He said he only knows of one other who's received the award and that the award is a crown jewel for Arkansas Surplus Property to receive. He also said the awards are a tremendous recognition for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Federal Surplus Program.

Walker, Jr. Upon learning of his interim appointment, Smith said, "First I was honored to be considered for the job and second I talked to my wife and prayed about it."

"The director has empowered the Adult Education division to do better by pulling us together and raising the bar," Smith said. "I see Director Walker's challenge of raising the bar as an obtainable goal," he added.

Before coming to Workforce Education, Smith taught auto mechanics at Oak Grove High School from 1970 until 1983. When he joined Workforce Education, he did so as a Public School Program Manager for Trade and Industrial Education. He also served as Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA) Director. When Smith left VICA in 1993, he was the national president and served as a corporate board member. From 1993-1999, he was an Adult Education division Public School Program Manager, and from 1997-1999, he was the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) Director. Those years in Adult Education helped give Smith the background to qualify as Interim Deputy Director.

Ask anyone who knows Jim Smith and they'll say he is one who does not take his job lightly. He now considers his role within the agency as having "two jobs that demand 100%." Smith has burned lots of midnight oil since taking over as interim Adult Education head.

"I have great people working at Federal Surplus Property who know their jobs and I trust them to do it," Smith says. "I also have great people working in Adult Education and I empower them to do their jobs. Right now, the focus is on the Federal Review



Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker and Interim Director of Adult Education Jim Smith talk to the Adult Education Advisory Council members during their meeting at the Holiday Inn Presidential Conference Center in Little Rock on September 12.

Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities

One facet of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division is the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities. The Commission, composed of twenty-five members, meets monthly with the executive director on the third Thursday of the month to deal with issues that affect Arkansans with disabilities. Currently, there are only nine sitting members on the commission who advise Governor Mike Beebe on matters pertaining to disabilities.

Ida Esh't is the executive director. and a former member of the Commission, who resigned her membership when she was hired as the executive director almost three years ago.

One of the Commission's projects is as co-sponsor of the **Youth Leadership Forum (YLF)**. YLF is a weeklong conference on leadership and independent living skills presented to high school seniors with disabilities.

Another of the commission's programs is **Disability Etiquette Training**. Esh't conducts training



to various groups, especially those in the public sector. The workshop consists of a brief history of people with disabilities, a basic test on state traffic law when it comes to accessible parking, handouts that include facts individuals need to know when dealing with someone who has a disability (etiquette), and a brochure on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities.

Esh't uses various forms of interactive participation to drive her points home. *Arkansas passed a new Accessible Parking Law (Act 753) in 2007.* She gives participants facts on accessible parking from a first person perspective. One aspect that most people come away with that they didn't know is that the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities' share of monies that come from tickets written for illegal parking in accessible zones goes to fund college scholarships for students with disabilities.

For more information about the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities, call 501-296-1637.

GRADUATES *continued from page 12*

McGhee; Elizabeth Garner, *Batesville*; Andrew Kelley, *Little Rock*; Nikita McNeal, *Scranton*; Boyd Dale Padgett, *Hot Springs*; Alexander Peck, *Vilonia*; Stephen Story, *Sheridan*; **Sales & Marketing:** Louis Parton, *Hot Springs*; **Welding:** Lorenzo Duke, *Crossett*; Justin Hawkins, *Pea Ridge*; Shawn Sullivan, *Fayetteville*; Spencer Williams, *Little Rock*



photo courtesy of Bobby Jines

Front row: William Flowers, Chasidy Askea, Jeremy Dyer, Tara Bryant, Kevin Seamans; Row 2: Johnny Fisher, Bobbi Black, Sharonda Smith, Patricia Mathis, thorashia Harper, Catherine Ward, Samuel Gulliams, Leona Taylor, Jamaica Morgan, Annette Neighbors, Sandra Towe; Row 3: Patrick Deshazer, Louis Parton, Jon Rice, Alvin Taylor, Lisa Conner, Matthew harrell, Kalie Holt, Elizabeth Garner, Andreana Johnson, Jessica Henry, Alex Johnson, Andrew Keey, Dale Padgett, Justin Springer, Alexander Peck, Ruby Williams; Row 4: Nikita McNeal, Michael Redit, Benjamin G. Nagel, Justin Pfeiffer, Brian Dale, Brian Bolcao, John Aldrich, Chad Charles, Jeron Paige, Lorenzo Duke, Stephen Story

Students participating in Jobs For Arkansas Graduates (JAG) receive awards

Nine Jobs for Arkansas Graduates (JAG) students were recently honored for their “5 of 5” achievements in surpassing and exceeding the goal of their targeted outcomes during the 24th Annual National Training Seminar in Orlando, Florida.

The “5 of 5” award winners are: Cheryl Burns from Bald Knob High School; Dennis Butler from Batesville High School; Brenda Early from Cabot High School; Penny Graves from Dumas High School; Caron Morris from Fordyce High School; Sherrie Mays from [Little Rock] Hall High School; Brenda Butler from North Little Rock High School—West Campus; Sherrie James from Springdale High School; and Britt James from Springdale High School.

The criteria for achieving the goals included:

Graduation/GED Completion Rate: The goal is to achieve 90% completion of the 12 month post-graduation follow up.

Positive Outcome Rate: The goal is for 80% of the participants to successfully achieve a positive outcome by the close of the 12-month post-graduation follow-up phase. The JAG model includes full or part-time employment, post-secondary enrollment, or being in the military on a full time basis.

Employment Rate: The goal is

for 60% to be employed full- or part-time. Full-time is considered 35 hours or more per week; part-time is between 10 and 35 hours per week.

Full-time Jobs Rate: The goal is a 60% rate in full-time jobs (35 hours per week, or in two part-time jobs totaling 35 or more hours per week).

Full-time Placement Rate: The goal is for 80% of the graduates to be engaged full-time (full-time civilian employment, full-time military, full-time post-secondary, or part-time jobs with part-time, postsecondary enrollment by the close of the follow-up phase).

The National JAG Outstanding Specialist Award was given to five of the nine “5 of 5” award winners. They are: Cheryl Burns from Bald Knob High School; Dennis Butler from Batesville High School; Caron Morris from Fordyce High School; Sherrie Mays from [Little Rock] Hall High School; and Sherrie James from Springdale High School.

Jobs for Arkansas Graduates is part of a national organization that is comprised of state organizations that implement JAG model programs to serve in-school youth. This is done through three programs: the multi-year, the senior year, and dropout recovery. JAG graduates are prepared for the workforce and encouraged to pursue a post-secondary education while

working.

The JAG model has multiple sets of goals to achieve during the in-school phase where specialists are involved in personal, career, and leadership development skills. The follow-up phase continues for a year after successful completion of the program.

Arkansas has 41 programs in 37 different school districts. Five of the districts have multiple programs.

ICAN continued from page 9

illness. Items that may be borrowed include manual wheelchairs, shower benches and portable ramps. Loans of this type may also be requested via the website.

Equipment that has been donated to ICAN is available free to anyone with a need. Durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, and bedside commodes are available. Therapeutic equipment such as standers and gait trainers are also available for donation.

Website users may set up an account in order to request loans. For more information about AR AT4All, contact the Department of Workforce Education’s Rehabilitation Services division’s Increasing Capabilities Access Network staff at 800-828-2799 or 501-666-8868.

Client Service Comparisons

for Rehabilitation Services Field Offices in Hot Springs and Fayetteville

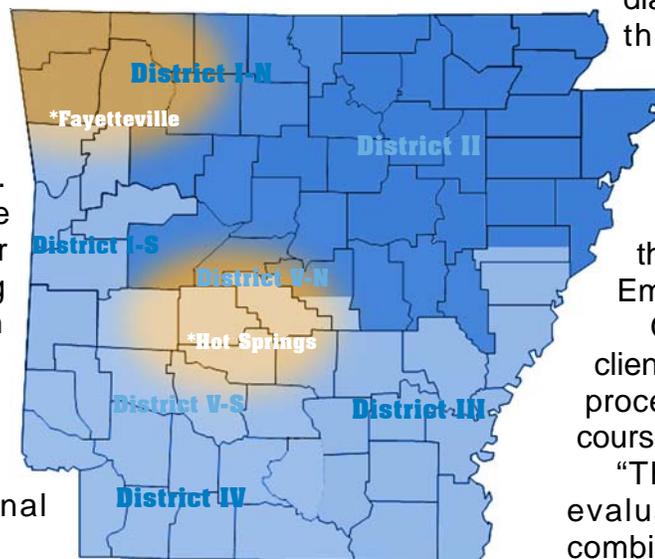
When a consumer contacts one of the 19 field offices of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division seeking assistance, there is a standard intake process to determine eligibility.

First, the individual is scheduled for an initial interview with a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. During the initial visit, the counselor and consumer establish rapport by discussing the consumer's rehabilitation needs and employment goals. Additionally, the counselor explains both their role and the responsibilities of the consumer in the vocational rehabilitation process.

For the initial determination of eligibility, the counselor and consumer complete a diagnostic assessment of the individual's disability. This will help determine if the extent of the condition is a significant impediment to employment or independent living.

Whenever possible, this assessment is completed when the consumer already has some existing medical reports, or other documentation, verifying their disability. Persons receiving Social Security disability benefits are presumed eligible, but additional information may sometimes be obtained to properly determine their program needs.

Whenever additional diagnostic information is needed, Rehabilitation Services counselors may arrange further evaluation with the Rehabilitation Services division's Rehabilitation Initial Diagnostic & Assessment



for Clients (RIDAC). RIDAC is comprised of a staff of vocational evaluators, psychological examiners, psychologists, and physicians. Another internal resource is the Learning Evaluation Center (LEC) whose staff provides educationally focused psychological and neuropsychological evaluation and services.

According to Ken Musteen, Rehabilitation Services division Deputy Director for Field Operations, "Once this information has been obtained, the counselor and consumer engage in the Informed Choice process. During this process, the consumer is informed of the

results of the diagnostic study and they can consider all the possible options and services that are available, leading to their goal of successful employment. Our counselors must have the professional expertise to interpret diagnostic data, convey it to the consumer in an understandable manner, and provide ongoing counsel and support to assist the individual in carrying out their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)."

Once the counselor and client have an idea of how to proceed, then they can set a course of action.

"The counselor takes the evaluation information and, combined with the information garnered from the interview with the client (called client choice), the counselor compiles information to make an informed choice," says District V-South District Manager Robert Sanders, whose area of responsibility includes the Hot Springs Field Office.

"Ideally, the client and counselor arrive at a final determination from either of the plans or a hybrid of the two," Sanders further explained. "The counselor often has to be part advisor, diplomat, and sometimes negotiator because the counselor wants what is best for the client. Ideally, the client will receive training and find a job on their

FIELD continued on page 23

Faulkner County Emergency Squad

uses Helicopter from ADWE FSP Donee Program to make Drug Bust

A helicopter provided to the Faulkner County Sheriff's Department from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Federal Surplus Property division was used recently in an investigation that helped seize 9,215 marijuana plants in a marijuana-growing enterprise operating in Van Buren and Independence counties. The more than **8,000 pounds of marijuana netted in the investigation made for a street value of more than \$5 million.**

Bill Hooten, Flight Operations Officer for the Faulkner County Emergency Squad, said, "These



plants were found deep in the woods.....and probably could not have been found without our helicopter and on-board spotters. Please convey the appreciation for the units because without the donated helicopters, these plants could have been on the streets or in the hands of local individuals.

Thanks for everything."

For additional information regarding the Federal Surplus Property Program, contact James Smith, Manager, at 501-835-3111 or log on to <http://dwe.arkansas.gov/fsp.htm>.

FIELD continued from page 22

own, but we are poised and ready to help them with placement if that service be needed," Sanders concluded.

Sanders went on to say, "In Hot Springs, it's not uncommon for us to see former clients return, especially some who have been through the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. Federal rules and regulations govern how we are to deal with all clients and give us specific direction on how to handle them."

"Regardless, in every case, after 90 days of successful, gainful employment, the optimum is for the case to achieve '26 status,' also known as a *successful closure*," Sanders added.

Things can be a bit different in Fayetteville, according to Carol Ethridge, the district manager for District I-North.

"While every office goes through the same process in qualifying a client, there can be few differences, say for instance, if you compare the Fayetteville and Hot Springs field offices," according to Ethridge.

"In Fayetteville, there could be a counseling issue if a client has never been away from home. If a client is scheduled to attend Arkansas Career

Training Institute (ACTI) as a student, that's an issue that the Hot Springs Field office wouldn't necessarily deal with because their client could stay at home and attend classes, where as a client from Fayetteville (or anywhere else in the state other than the Hot Springs area) would have to leave home. That could become an issue with clients from rural areas who have not had the life experiences of being away from home before," Ethridge said.

"For our office, it becomes a counseling issue to work through. In another instance, if the client needs multiple services, transportation is an issue and if we're not sure of their skill sets, the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center might be the best option. We have to be selective because each case has its own factors and what we want to achieve is the best outcome for the client," Ethridge concludes.

One final factor that differs between the two offices is that in Fayetteville, there may be more opportunities for placement of some clients in the building trades field because of the construction boom in the area. One point in favor of Hot Springs is there often are more seasonal employment opportunities because of the area's recreational appeal.

GRANT *continued from page 1*



Rick Delano, representing the Ford Motor Company Foundation, discusses the Mountain Home High School designation as a Ford Career Academy Innovation Community.

with Social Marketing Services, identified best practices shared by communities that have developed and sustained successful career academy networks. These best practices were set forth as a 12-point action plan to guide communities seeking to develop career academy networks.

The 12-Point action plan served as the foundation of the Ford Career Academy Innovation Community designation program, whose goal is to support communities that wish to increase the number of students learning in successful career academies and to help those communities sustain their career academy networks over time.

“By focusing on communities, rather than individual schools or districts, the FMCF believes that the power of business, civic, and

educational leaders can be harnessed toward shared objectives of workforce and economic development and improved educational outcomes,” said Mr. Delano.

The 12-Point action plan was helped shaped by observing how business and education worked together in diverse communities around the country, including Mountain Home.

The **12 Point Action Plan Indicators of Success** are:

1. Senior-level business/civic/education partnership establishes a career academy master plan.
2. New career cluster framework is used to prioritize career academy selection within the

master plan.

3. Community seeks out or develops academically rigorous advanced Career and Technical Education offerings and programs of study, following guidelines set fourth in Perkins IV (Federal funding for CTE).
4. Community employs career cluster entrepreneurs to rally and align business support.
5. Career academy evaluations support continuous improvement.
6. District centralizes all programs likely to involve business (magnet, choice, small learning community, career academy, and CTE operations) under one leader/department)
7. Perkins, SLC and grant funding are channeled toward launching new career academies.
8. Communities look to identify and collaborate with a growing list of state and national career academy supporters.
9. Community develops a career academy marketing plan to build awareness and support among parents, students, and business and within the education community and gathers data to support this plan.
10. Business leaders representing each

GRANT *continued on page 25*



(l-r): Deputy Director of Career and Technical Education, John Davidson; Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker; Program Manager of Agricultural Science and Technology Marion Fletcher; Director of Communications Reginald Jackson, and Public School Program Advisor Barbara Lensing listen attentively to Rick Delano (not shown) as he explains the designation of Mountain Home High School as a Ford Career Academy Innovation Community.

GRANT *continued from page 24*

prioritized career cluster constitute an ongoing Business Advisory Board to align business support for academies.

11. Successful communities understand, defend and fund career academy essentials.
12. Articulation plans cement post-secondary partnerships.

Of the 12 Indicators of Success, Mountain Home scored Distinguished in 9 and Proficient in 3.

Director Walker commended Mountain Home on their designation and the success of their program.

"I am very proud of the fact that Mountain Home received this national recognition," Walker said. "I hope that other communities in Arkansas will emulate the success in Mountain Home and use a format based on the great work done in that community to help develop and train their workforce, utilizing business and industry leaders to help shape the minds being educated for the workforce of the 21st century," he added.



Rehabilitation Services Commissioner visits West Memphis Office

Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division Robert Treviño talks with employees of the Rehabilitation Services field office in West Memphis during an August 29 visit. Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, Commissioner Treviño and Director of Communications Reginald Jackson met with counselors and staff to discuss recent events and client services in the Delta region.

Speaking with Commissioner Treviño (above, l-r) are West Memphis staff members Sandra Bush, Rehabilitation Assistant; Kimberly Yarbrough, Rehabilitation Counselor; Tameca Jackson, Rehabilitation Counselor; and Sheree Massey, Secretary.

Former Workforce Education Director and Rehabilitation Services Commissioner to head Nebraska Health and Human Services Division

John Wyvill, former Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director and Rehabilitation Services division Commissioner, has been tapped by Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman as the next head of the Nebraska Health and Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities. He will oversee the Beatrice State Developmental Center, a 24-hour care facility for those with developmental disabilities, as well as publicly funded community-based developmental disabilities services.

Wyvill served six years as Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services before being appointed as Director of the Department of Workforce Education where he served for 18 months.



Former DWE Director John Wyvill and SWEBCO Chairman Jack Justus



Director Walker visits Career & Technical Education Classes at Earle High School August 29, 2007

(above) Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, Myrtle Jamison, Earle High School Career and Technical Education Director, and state Senator Jack Crumbly, Superintendent of Earle, Arkansas schools, discuss Career and Technical Education Programs at Earle High during Director Walker's visit.



(above) Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker observes while Earle High School students Latina Luster and Earmaline Robinson receive cosmetology training from their instructor, Beulah Cox-Oliver.



(below) Director Bill Walker talks with Earle High School Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) students.

(above) Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, state Senator Jack Crumbly, and Commissioner Bob Treviño of the Rehabilitation Services division, talk with CTE instructors and students of the Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) class at Earle High School.



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Finally, the Department of Workforce Education does what it does on very few state dollars. Excluding salaries and matching funds, our operational budget in 1991 was \$1,264,000. In the current year it is \$588,000, a decrease of more than fifty percent. While misleading to some extent because of discontinued programs, the fact remains that no increase in operational funding has been received since 1991, yet the department's responsibilities have expanded significantly. Just think what gas and hotel rooms costs were in 1991 compared to today!

Our people do a fantastic job of serving the state. They are truly unsung heroes who should be applauded for their efforts.

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when he talks about the program.

"Our rough estimate is that there are somewhere between 100,000 and 150,000 Arkansans who could qualify for this program today," he said. "We are working with the Department of Education's Special Education section, the Department of Health Services and the Social Security Administration to identify them now. By the early fall, we should have a better defined, more finite number of those who qualify in the state. The underlying theme of this program is that no matter what the age, a minority with a disability can become self-sufficient, and that's awesome," Evans proclaims.

Evans' plan to get information about the program around the state will start in the schools.

"We are working with youngsters as young as the 6th grade, up through the four-year colleges and universities through their disability affairs offices to educate people about this program," Evans says. "We are working with all levels of government, with municipalities, legislators and county officials," he added.

In the business communities, Evans says Chambers of Commerce and civic clubs are avenues to spread the word about the program. He feels that the words "tax incentive" will open businessmen's ears so they'll be more willing to learn about the program and learn how it will affect their bottom line as well as the people involved with the program in their communities.

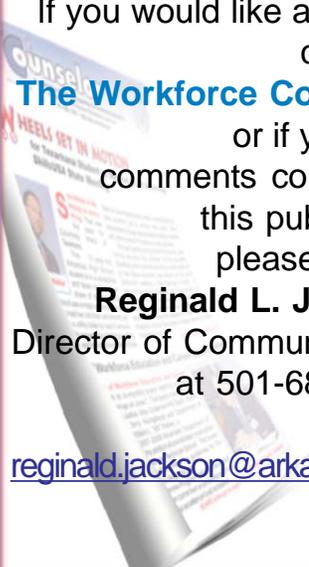
Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño says of the Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities program, "Governor Beebe has devoted his professional and personal life to ensuring that all Arkansans have a voice in their future. Because community leadership and advocacy are so very vital to the public's appreciation of the challenges that face people with disabilities, RSA has joined with our state's Vocational Rehabilitation program in developing the leadership capacity of people with disabilities. Through collaborative leadership, people across our state will not only have a voice in community decision-making, but will be an integral part of shaping our state's future."

Darrell Stephens recently joined the Rehabilitation Services division to work with Evans as Planning and Development Manager with the program. He formally worked for United Cerebral Palsy, as a caregiver working with a number of clients. Before working for UPC, Stephens was involved with at-risk youth at the Step-Up Support Center in Little Rock. There he ran an after-school program and a summer program for 40 at-risk youth.

For more information about the Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities program, contact Grover Evans at 501-296-1615 or Darrell Stephens at 501-683-6058.

Available Upon Request

If you would like additional copies of **The Workforce Counselor** or if you have comments concerning this publication, please contact **Reginald L. Jackson**, Director of Communications at 501-682-1500, or reginald.jackson@arkansas.gov

A stack of several copies of 'The Workforce Counselor' magazine is shown at the bottom left of the advertisement box. The top cover features the title and a photograph of a person.



Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

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