



## DWE/ARS Communications join to promote departmental vision



DWE Director Walker

**T**he first of many anticipated changes have come about with the merging of the communications departments of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. The new team is being headed up by Reginald

L. Jackson, who replaces Mari Sereberov, who left the agency in April. Joining Jackson in Communications at the Workforce Ed building at #3 Capitol Mall are Carl Enna, Sandy Hubbard, Trina Harris and Holly Beason.

Part of DWE director Walker's vision is to brand DWE and ARS "as one family, one voice" and one

key component of the transition is the communications merger. "By combining the strengths of our various units, we can better serve the citizens in a way that's meaningful to their lives," Walker said. "There will be more changes coming as time, opportunities and facilities allow. They all will be for the betterment of our clients - the citizens of Arkansas - and, as I think you will see, for our employees, too," Walker continued.

Confirmed by Gov. Mike Beebe, William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., was sworn in as the 10th director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education on March 16, 2007.

An Arkansas native, Mr. Walker has a rich background in business and public service. In addition to majoring in business at Philander Smith College and the University of Arkansas - Little Rock,

[COMMUNICATIONS continued on page 2](#)

## Loan Forgiveness funding approved

(Little Rock) The Loan Forgiveness program, approved to continue in the recent legislative session but, through an oversight, not funded, has been revived with post-session approval to use existing fund balances.

The Arkansas Technical Careers Student Loan Forgiveness program, originally became law in 1999. In this past legislative session, lawmakers approved its appropriation but somehow, when funding was voted upon, it was omitted. The program got new life when lawmakers okayed the program's financing by the use of existing monies.

"I have to give special credit to Governor Mike Beebe for his support on this and to (State) Representatives Pam Adcock, Mike Burris, Bill Abernathy, Lamont Cornwell, Randy Stewart, Tommy Lee Baker, Billy Gaskill and Johnny Hoyt who took the lead and pulled this back up through the cracks," said Bill Walker, Director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. DWE oversees the program and Walker was one of the sponsors of the original bill establishing the program in 1999. The Loan Forgiveness program is directed at education in specific, high technical fields that are in demand in the

[LOAN continued on page 2](#)



COMMUNICATIONS continued from page 1



Reginald Jackson

he has started and managed two successful businesses.

Mr. Walker began his public service when he was elected as a justice of the peace on the Pulaski County Quorum Court. He then served eight years in the Arkansas House of Representatives and eight

years in the state Senate. He most recently served on the Arkansas Parole Board.

Mr. Walker and his wife, Sharon, have one daughter, Alyson.

Jackson comes to DWE from the Arkansas Secretary of State's office where he served for 9 1/2 years as public information officer. He also worked in public relations and marketing for the Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission and the Arkansas Federal Credit Union during his career. He is a Public Affairs Officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve and currently holds the rank of Lieutenant.

LOAN continued from page 1

Arkansas workforce. "It's a contractual agreement," says Walker, "that allows a student one year's loan forgiveness in return for one year work in that specific field in Arkansas. There are some other criteria but that's the specifics of the program. It's a win-win, for students and for Arkansas businesses," Walker said.

Most of the programs are related to advanced manufacturing (engineering, engineering technology, CAD/computer aided drawing), Computer and Information technology, and Bio-Medical fields.

A work-group comprised of staff from two and four year colleges, higher education, economic development, the Department of Workforce Services and the Department of Workforce Education are evaluating the fields and will present their findings to the DWE Board in the next several months.

The recent legislative session also approved a provision for a separate Loan Forgiveness Program for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. It is not related to this program.

# H·A·P·P·Y June 2007 Birthday

- |                        |                            |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 6/1 Donna Havens       | 6/14 Robbie Bradley        | 6/25 Shannon Gitchel |
| 6/3 Karen Anderson     | Susan Koonce               | Lance Warbrouck      |
| Jerry Stewart          | 6/15 Emily Roberts         | 6/26 Malcolm Alred   |
| 6/4 Carrie Woodall     | 6/16 Clay Herren           | Ralph Forbes         |
| 6/6 Gary Johnston      | Marty Lynch                | 6/27 Stephen Allen   |
| Barbara McDaniel       | Emmett Newborn             | 6/28 Dianne Smith    |
| 6/7 Cynthia Dye        | 6/17 Donald Crossley       | 6/29 Barbara Roach   |
| 6/8 Rita Lillard       | 6/20 Arleen Curtis         |                      |
| 6/9 Judy Pultz         | 6/21 Kathy Mansker         |                      |
| John Westfall          | 6/22 Sharron Lloyd         |                      |
| 6/10 Christina Magness | 6/23 Lee Beasley           |                      |
| 6/11 Ida Esh't         | Sophia Freeman             |                      |
| 6/12 Carl Enna         | Bonnie O'Boyle             |                      |
| Kimberly Yarbrough     | 6/24 Gaye Jones-Washington |                      |
|                        | Sandra Trotter             |                      |

**the Counselor**

**DWE Director**  
William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.

**ARS Commissioner**  
Robert P. Treviño

**Director of Communications**  
Reginald L. Jackson

**Contributing Staff:**  
Carl Enna  
Sandra Hubbard  
Trina Harris  
Holly Beason

**A public information pamphlet from  
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**  
1616 Brookwood  
Little Rock, AR 72202

*Providing opportunities for  
individuals with disabilities to  
work and lead productive  
and independent lives.*



# What You Should Know

## Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC)

Dr. Susan S. Holt, Program Director

Over 5 years ago, the Learning & Evaluation Center (LEC) was begun as a pilot project to improve college success rates through consumer education, individualized college prep, and appropriate higher education accommodations for vocational rehabilitation consumers with learning disabilities.

Assessments have been useful in identifying disabilities including autism spectrum disorders, hearing loss, bipolar disorder, and cognitive disorders, as well as specific learning disabilities that are usually the focus of assessment.

LEC is a direct client service program within the Special Programs section of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitative Services and provides three kinds of services for DWE/ARS clients who are referred by their vocational rehabilitation counselors. The types of services are: 1) Individual Psychological Evaluation, 2) Training Services and 3) Deafness Counseling Services.

**Individual Psychological Evaluation** – Evaluation services are individualized to answer referral questions. All referrals are made by agency vocational rehabilitation counselors and usually target specific diagnostic or complex functional ability issues for clients. Some reasons why a vocational rehabilitation counselor might refer a client for an LEC assessment are clarification of diagnosis, documentation for accommodations in postsecondary educational settings or for licensure/

certification exams, or provision of detailed client information related to strengths and challenges for an individual to assist with program planning.

Psychological evaluations may cover intellectual functioning, broad academic achievement, specific academic achievement through diagnostic reading, math, and written language tests, language tests, including phonemic processing and foreign language aptitude, visual-motor tests, vocational interest inventories and behavior assessments. In addition to these general areas of assessment, the LEC provides neuropsychological evaluations and specialized evaluations for vocational rehabilitation clients who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Training Services** – College preparatory classes are available for clients who are referred by their vocational rehabilitation counselor and who have received an LEC individual psychological evaluation and feedback. College prep is provided through a growing summer session group class or individually in the home vocational rehabilitation field office throughout the year.

The first summer class to assist college-bound vocational rehabilitation clients with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders was conducted at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC) in the summer of 2006. A second session is being developed for summer 2007. Training on topics such as cultural awareness, communication, and assistive technology to aid hearing is available

LEC continued on page 4

LEC continued from page 3

for ARS staff and for employers who hire people with hearing disabilities. Training is also available for DWE/ARS staff who work with people with learning disabilities.

Beginning and intermediate sign language training is provided to DWE/ARS staff and to the community in order to increase accessibility for consumers who are deaf. This section of LEC can also provide consultation and training to DWE/ARS staff and the public on learning disabilities.

**Deafness Counseling Services** - Supportive individual counseling by a vocational rehabilitation counselor who is fluent in American Sign Language is provided to vocational rehabilitation clients who are deaf or have significant hearing loss if referred by their vocational rehabilitation counselor. Psychiatric consultation or medication management may also be provided for vocational rehabilitation

clients who are deaf and who are seen for counseling.

Psychiatric services are specialized for deafness and are contracted and paid for by the vocational rehabilitation counselor. When requested, the counselor also consults with HSRC staff concerning mental health needs of deaf students at the Center. The LEC counselor assists with referral to community mental health centers for consumers whose mental health needs exceed the scope of the LEC outpatient program. The LEC counselor also assists with community accessibility for people who are deaf, coordinating with other staff support services such as access to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.

For additional information about the Learning & Evaluation Center, contact them at 26 Corporate Hill Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205, at (501) 686-9686 for telephone/tty, or email at [ssholt@ars.state.ar.us](mailto:ssholt@ars.state.ar.us) or [plbillingsley@ars.state.ar.us](mailto:plbillingsley@ars.state.ar.us).

## Arts Festival held in Little Rock



The **Therapeutic Recreation Arts Festival** was held at Little Rock's Clear Channel Metroplex on May 4th. The purpose of this annual festival is to give individuals with special needs, as well as their non-disabled peers, an opportunity to enrich their lives by encouraging creativity and exposing them to new experiences in art.

The Therapeutic Recreation Arts Festival also promotes education in the arts for people with disabilities, and provides a time to socialize and make new friends.





# AT Avenue

Successful Employment through  
Assistive Technology

## Learning Disabilities and Assistive Technology An Overview

*submitted by* Barbara Gullett  
SEAT Program Administrator

**J**eff struggles to form each letter of the words on his tablet. Renee' looks at her checkbook to spell her name and address on a job application. After his son falls asleep, Robert slams the third-grade reader shut in frustration because he can't read it to his child or himself. Marie just received the wrong change at the grocery store, but she cannot tell because she can't count fast enough. Ben, late again for another job interview, drives around anxiously in search of office building number 215, or is it 251? Barb's mind drifts away to many other places as she tries again to concentrate during the staff meeting.

**What do each of these folks have in common?** *Learning Disabilities.* Learning disabilities are professionally diagnosed difficulties with reading, writing, listening, spelling, or math. People

with learning disabilities have trouble taking in information and processing that information accurately to the brain. Assistive technology offers powerful tools for individuals with learning disabilities by providing remedial or compensatory support on the job, in the classroom, as well as in their home. Because of the wide range and unique nature of different learning disabilities, appropriate diagnosis is a necessity.

The simplicity and availability of low-tech devices should not be overlooked. Inexpensive color highlighters, for example, can help individuals with reading difficulties distinguish words that appear the same. High-tech devices, such as an optical character recognition (OCR) system, provide a means of entering text or printed material directly into a computer by use of a scanner. Once the text has been

scanned into the computer, it can be read back to the user by means of a speech synthesizer. Another useful accommodation is a speech recognition system, which operates in conjunction with specially equipped personal computers. Such programs enable the user to dictate to the computer, converting oral language to written text.

Technology in itself is not the answer to all problems faced by people with learning disabilities. The first step is to identify the specific learning deficits and the best avenues for accommodations through the *Learning & Evaluation Center (LEC)*. Then **Successful Employment through Assistive Technology (SEAT)** will focus the device(s) that can best assist the individual in achieving his or her rehab goals. The fit must be right for the greatest chance of success.

## Statewide Employee of the Month

### Bloodworth receives Connie Gross Leadership Award

**J**onna Bloodworth, front office receptionist in the Fayetteville office for the past five years, can claim ownership of two honors this month. Along with being named May's Employee of the Month, she also received the annual Connie Gross Award at the 2007 Support Staff Conference in April. The latter distinction is given to an ARS Support Staff who exhibits the dedication, commitment, and positive outlook which the late Connie Gross exemplified during her years with the agency and throughout her battle with cancer.

"Jonna is one of the most dependable employees in our office," says District Manager Carol Ethridge. "She is always willing and able to fill in and pick up the slack for whoever needs it. On the rare occasions that she's out, her absence reminds us of

how much hard work she does in this office," she added.

"I was quite honored to be nominated for the Connie Gross award," said Bloodworth. "Like Connie, I've had quite a few challenges the last few years personally, but if I let myself dwell too much on the bad stuff, then the good things can't shine through," she added.

Bloodworth has never let limitations from cerebral palsy defeat her, and in her own words, "just about anything that could happen the last five years has happened," including her husband's life-threatening accident, nursing him back to health, and the many changes that had to be faced with her recent divorce. "All along," she added, "my friends at the Fayetteville office were beside me every step of the



**Jonna Bloodworth**

way. I work with a fantastic group."

Not that she required more challenges, but Bloodworth, a mother of three and grandmother of five, has taken on the role of foster parent through the Arkansas Support Network, whose goal is to encourage independence and to ultimately help special needs individuals live on their own.

## Kuykendall reflects on 39 years of ARS service

**W**hen July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 comes, it will officially end the Darrell Kuykendall era with Arkansas Department of Workforce Education/Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. Kuykendall called it "the best job he ever could have had. We get to help people help themselves," he said.

"When I came to work for ARS January 2, 1968 (for \$4,730 a year as he remembers), I can remember sitting in my office with one of my first clients wondering just how was I going to help this fellow," he said. "I employed the theory of Carl Rogers, noted counselor theorist of the time, in having empathy (not

sympathy) for my clients, a genuiness and treating them with warmth. Those aspects plus the Golden Rule, was all I needed...and I was raised by the Golden Rule so that one wasn't hard to follow," Kuykendall maintains.

On the day the DWE/ARS family mourned the loss of El Dorado co-worker Butch Barnes, Kuykendall reflected emotionally about how Barnes and secretary Judy Duffy had played such a significant role in his retirement party only days before. The pair had orchestrated letters of appreciation for Kuykendall from Senator Mark

*KUYKENDALL continued on page 7*

## HSRC names Wilkie Employee of the Month

**M**edical Laboratory Technologist Sheri Wilkie is a native of Hot Springs and a graduate of Lakeside High. She received an Associates of Applied Science/Medical Laboratory degree from Garland County Community College and immediately began working in St. Joseph's lab as well as the Hot Springs Village lab. She began working at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center in 1984 as an EKG Tech.

"I really love it," Wilkie says about her job. "I like the people I work with, and the interaction we have with our patients...I'm a people person. I know we are playing a small part of making an 'important' difference in helping people, and that's very rewarding.



**Sheri Wilkie**

Wilkie does clinical lab work for both in-house patients as well as vocational clients.

"Sheri runs the lab with expertise and is a perfectionist in all her work," comments one of her colleagues. "She is the best supervisor an employee could have because she knows how to work with staff in a positive manner... She is always positive, has a smile, and faces her day with the utmost optimism."

A positive outlook continues at home, where Wilkie and her husband of almost 25 years, Jerry, enjoy raising daughters Jade, 16, and Emerald, 9, both of whom are already expressing interest in following in their mother's footsteps to pursue a medical career. Wilkie also likes antiquing, riding motorcycles, horseback riding and gardening.

*KUYKENDALL continued from page 6*

Pryor, Congressman Mike Ross, Governor Mike Beebe and Jeanne Patterson, President of the National Rehabilitation Counseling Association. Each saluted Kuykendall for his years of service to his fellow man and the direct and indirect impact he had on thousands of people with disabilities and their families.

When Darrell's retirement becomes official, he'll go home to his wife Francis and begin to make more plans for life after DWE/ARS. They surely will include time carved out for their son Paul, his wife Martha and



**Kuykendall** with El Dorado's "Darrell Kuykendall Day" plaque

their soon to be two year old son, Andrew. Already on Grandpa Darrell's "to do" list is building a sandbox and some yard toys for his grandson.

Darrell is planning to do some traveling, too. Alaska is on the horizon for the Summer of 2008.

One thing is for sure, during those late summer evenings, rocking on the porch with his grandson on his knee, Darrell will never run out of stories to tell about those he's helped over the last 39 years. At the tender age of 2, Andrew might not understand but one day he will.

## Rehabilitation Services Administration team visits Arkansas

**A** team from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), the federal Department of Education funding source for Arkansas Department of Workforce Education/Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, completed a week-long on-site review of our program in mid-May.

The eight members of the RSA team split-up to accomplish several goals. Those included meeting with vocational rehabilitation counselors and managers to evaluate the DWE/ARS vocational rehabilitation (VR) program; a review of vocational rehabilitation case records; and a consultation with the State Independent Living Council (AIRC) and its administration. The AIRC consultation included members of the Department of Health and Human Services Division of Services for the Blind and a meeting with Independent Living Center directors. Also, individuals from the RSA team talked with clients of both the DWE/ARS vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs in an effort to learn from consumers how services could be improved.

As RSA team leader Melodie Johnson put it, "this is not a gotcha visit. The goal of this visit is procedural

evaluation and the offer of technical assistance to insure compliance."

The team visited several DWE/ARS locations including DWE/ARS field offices in Little Rock, Hot Springs and Helena. The selection of those sites gave RSA a look at the contrast in regions in which clients are served, from a rural office (Helena) to a mixed rural/small urban office (Hot Springs) and the heavily urban field office (Little Rock). Members of the team also received a tour at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

Every three years DWE/ARS, the Division of Services for the Blind and the Arkansas Independent Living Council are responsible for writing a state plan for Independent Living, as a roadmap for how independent living services are to be delivered during that period. The 3-year plan is a collaborative effort among the three agencies, as well as the four Centers for Independent Living, since all are involved in the delivery independent living services in Arkansas. The Centers for Independent Living are located in Fayetteville, Hot Springs, Pine Bluff and Little Rock.

## ARS mourns passing of El Dorado counselor Barnes



"Butch" Barnes

**A**lgon T. "Butch" Barnes, Counselor in the El Dorado field office, passed away in his sleep Tuesday, May 22, 2007. Barnes was the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' Statewide Employee of the Year in 2006 and had been an employee of the agency for more than 6 years.

Prior to coming to work for Arkansas Rehab, Barnes worked for the Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District where he was Director of Field Services for a 12 county area. He discovered the counselor opening at DWE/ARS, a job he often referred to as the job "that's just right for me. I'd rather

be doing this than supervising other people," Butch explained. "I feel now like I'm giving back," he added.

Earlier this year, he received his Certified Rehabilitation Counselor certificate. Barnes received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Arkansas-Monticello. He received his Masters degree in Counseling from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in May 2006.

The California native also held a claim to fame as the youngest County Clerk in Arkansas once upon a time. He became County Clerk in Calhoun County at the age of 22, after being an administrative assistant in the county clerk's office.

Barnes is survived by his wife Cindy and their son Christopher. Butch Barnes was 52.



# 20 Questions

## Getting to know Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker

1. **Where were you born?**  
Little Rock, Arkansas
2. **Your favorite memory about growing up?**  
Several memories – too many to name one
3. **Favorite Color**  
Navy Blue
4. **Pick a number, 1-10.**  
**Any significance to this number?**  
1 – always striving to be #1
5. **Pick one, sleep late.....get up early?**  
Get up early
6. **All-time favorite TV show?**  
*Dallas, Gunsmoke, the series 24*
7. **If you could eat anything w/o fear of calories or cholesterol....what meal would you want?**  
Dinner
8. **Favorite pig-out food?**  
Soul Food
9. **Best dessert?**  
Peach Cobbler, Strawberry Shortcake, Vanilla Shake
10. **How do you like your coffee?**  
Don't drink coffee
11. **Car or truck?**  
Car
12. **Hardtop or convertible?**  
Convertible
13. **Hobbies**  
Reading, traveling and exploring business opportunities
14. **Favorite sport?**  
Basketball
15. **Favorite season of the year?**  
Spring – not too hot – not too cold
16. **Favorite self-indulgence?**  
Prayer and meditation
17. **Favorite restaurant**  
Benihana
18. **Do you read your horoscope? No**  
**What sign ? Scorpio**  
**When's your birthday? October 24**  
**Do you think you fit your astrological sign? Yes**
19. **If you knew then what you know now, would you do anything differently?**  
Yes, some things
20. **What would your friends say is your strongest character trait?**  
Faith & Determination  
"If money were no object, I would..."  
...eliminate poverty in the world  
**Looking back, who was/is your biggest influence in life?**  
Parents – mother and father



## Rolling Out the Red Carpet

providing award-winning services for people with disabilities

ARS/ARA/ARAN Spring Training Conference ★ May 23-25, 2007

**A**rkansas Rehabilitation Services, the Arkansas Rehabilitation Association, and Arkansas RehabACTION Network once again presented a Spring Conference that gave attendees an array of educational options, a chance to reconnect with old friends, and an opportunity to recommit to the proud profession of rehabilitation.

On the following pages, we present some of the highlights of the 2007 conference: **“Rolling Out the Red Carpet -- providing award-winning services to people with disabilities.”**



### ARCEA/ARCA Counselor of the Year Award

Last year's recipient, Sharron Lloyd (far left), presents 2007's award to **Nina Webb** of the Hot Springs local office.

### Rehabilitant of the Year Award

**Jennifer Biggers** (right) of Hampton, who also holds the title of Ms Wheelchair Arkansas, took a moment to thank her long-time counselor, the late Butch Barnes.



### AARSS Support Staff of the Year Award

AARSS President Arleen Curtis (far left) presents this year's award to **Jody Gladden** of Monticello.

### Employer of the Year Award

Freddie Smith (near right) presents plaque to Barbara Knight, Administrative Assistant with award-winning Employer of the Year **Tim Parker Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep**



### AARL Legislator of the Year Award

Counselor Debbie Wooten (far left) presents plaque to **Rep. Pam Adcock**, of Little Rock. Also receiving this award was Senator Terry Smith of Hot Springs, who could not be present.

### President's Award

**Terry Stevenson**, HRD Director (right), received President Vuletich's award for his invaluable help during the past year.



### JPD Placement Person of the Year Award

Counselor Roger Lee (far left) presents plaque to Placement Specialist **Laura Kimbrell** of Jonesboro.

### Passing of the Gavel

**Barry Vuletich** (far right), 2006-07 ARA President, passes the gavel to 2007-08 President **David McDonald**





## Rolling Out the Red Carpet...



## ...for Scholarship



Worsham



Dickerson



Jackson



Shell



Johnson



Peterak

### Lewis Urton Scholarship Award

**Mary "Janie" Worsham** of London is currently enrolled at Arkansas Tech University majoring in Rehabilitation Science, having completed 85 hours toward her major and holding a cumulative GPA of 3.315. Worsham's future plans are to attend UALR to obtain a Masters in Social Work.

### Commissioner's Scholarship Award

**Kathy Dickerson** of Fort Smith is currently enrolled full time at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the Vocational Rehabilitation graduate program. Following a vehicle accident in 1984 and having been served by Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Dickerson has stated that her future goal is helping individuals with disabilities and that ARS has been her inspiration to succeed.

### Vincent H. Bond Scholarship Award

**Carolyn Jackson** of Fort Smith is currently enrolled full time at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling program, having maintained a 4.0 GPA as an undergraduate. Jackson is also a recipient of ARS services following a serious automobile accident in 2006 which further inspired her choice of career.

### Harold E. Thomas Scholarship Award

**Hollie Shell** of Jonesboro is currently enrolled as a full time graduate student at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro, pursuing a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, stating that her goal is to become a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC). Shell is currently working with and receiving services from the Division of Services for the Blind and it is her goal to con-

tribute to society since she has benefited from others in the field.

### Thirland "Danny" McKissic Scholarship Award

**Wanda Johnson** of Pine Bluff is currently enrolled in her junior year at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff majoring in Rehabilitation Science. Johnson states her future goal is to receive her Bachelor's degree in order to work towards attaining a Masters degree in the rehabilitation or related human services field.

### E. Russell Baxter Scholarship Award

**Amanda Paterak** of Russellville is currently enrolled as a senior in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, having completed 36 hours in her major and maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She states that she has a strong desire to work in the rehabilitation/assistive technology field.



Harper

### AARSS Scholarship Award

**Thorashia Harper** of Hughes maintained the highest GPA in Business Education Office Assistant studies at HSRC/ACTI of all applicants for this award. Harper is scheduled to complete her training in August 2007 but is working to finish ahead of schedule.

### AAMRC Scholarship Award

**Rosalyn Taylor** (no picture available) is a senior at Hot Springs High School with a 3.2 GPA and plays an active role in her community, from blood drive volunteer to Relay for Life activist. Taylor plans on attending the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville in the fall.



**Conference Scenes:** workshops and speakers educated (above) while lighter activities helped renew friendships(below).



-- photo collages designed by Trina Harris



## Commissioner recognizes Bloodworth selection

It's never too late to celebrate excellence! Jonna [Seeger] Bloodworth (far right), winner of this year's Connie Gross Leadership award (see page 6), was unable to attend the annual ARS Support Staff Conference in April, where she was announced as the 2007 recipient of the award.

Commissioner Treviño, however, was determined to afford Bloodworth the public recognition the selection merited, and presented her with the award certification during the ARA Spring Training Conference Awards Banquet Thursday evening, May 24.



## What's News?

**Barbara Nolen**, secretary in the Chief of Staff's office, has two reasons to celebrate.

Granddaughter **Gabrielle Jones** will graduate from North Little Rock High School and has received a four-year athletic scholarship in basketball to Jackson State University (Mississippi). "Gabby (as we call her), is 6'4" tall and is also a 2007 Arkansas Scholar," says Nolen.

Granddaughter **Brittany Jones**, a ninth grader at Hall High School who is on an 11th grade level, will attend the *Future Leaders Summit - People to People*, this summer at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

### Welcome to the World!

**Isabella Crane** was born April 27 to Central Office's HRD Specialist **Brooke Crane** and her husband **Ron**. Isabella entered the world at 8 lb., 8 oz., 23 1/4" long, and with a full head of hair!



**Isabella Crane**

**Cheers and high-fives for Jamaal Anderson!** Saturday, April 28, was a very memorable day for **Glenn** and **Karen Anderson** and their son, **Jamaal**. That was the day the National Football League (NFL) conducted its annual draft at Radio City Music Hall in New York City. In Little Rock, family and friends gathered at the Pinnacle Room on the top floor of the Peabody Hotel for Jamaal's Draft Watch Party. Three televisions were set up for the occasion.

Everyone's eyes were glued to the TV sets once the NFL Draft began. With the 8<sup>th</sup> pick in the first round, the Atlanta Falcons selected Jamaal. The entire floor erupted in tears, laughter, hugs, high-fives, and hand-waves as his name was announced. It was a momentous and exciting occasion and everyone was beaming with pride.

Later that afternoon, Jamaal and his family (Glenn, Karen, his sister, Danielle, and her daughter, Nia) were flown to Atlanta for a press conference that was held at the Falcon's corporate headquarters and training facility. Pictures and a video clip of the press conference can be found on the Falcons website ([www.atlantafalcons.com](http://www.atlantafalcons.com)).

Congratulations to Jamaal and the Anderson family!



-- photo courtesy of the Atlanta Falcons

Pictured l-r: *Josh Franklin (family friend), Karen, Jamaal, Glenn, Danielle and Nia.*



**Jason Craig** (left, with trophy), son of secretary **Sandra Craig** in Monticello, is shown celebrating his 1st Place win in the Hobby Stock Division at the Monticello Speedway on May 5. Congratulations, Jason!

**Kelly Gladden Griffin**, daughter of **Jody Gladden** in the Monticello ARS Field Office, received her

Master of Arts in Teaching degree from the University of Arkansas at Monticello on Friday, May 11. Griffin is shown in her cap and gown (right) with her proud mother.



## Deepest Sympathies

Our thoughts are with Chief of Special Programs **Sue Gaskin** and family on the death of her husband, **William Joseph**, May 15, following a courageous struggle with cancer.

**Tony Thomas**, brother of **Wanda Thomas**, Rehabilitation Instructor Supervisor with Deaf ACCESS, passed away May 14. We extend our sympathies to Wanda and family.

Central Office Administrative Assistant in HR, **Caprisha Williams**, and her family are mourning the loss of her grandmother, **Pernella Williams**, who passed away at age 94 on May 16. We send thoughts and prayers to the Williams family.

## New Employees

**Dianne Sugg**  
HSRC/

Administrative Assistant

**James Patterson**  
Fort Smith/Counselor II

**Enma (Nena) Frazee**  
HSRC/  
Food Service Worker I

**Cynthia Dye**  
HSRC/RN

**Joseph Butler**  
Fayetteville/Counselor II

**Rodney Woodard**  
HSRC/Security Officer

**Charles Bradley**  
Gatewood Center/  
Vocational Instructor I

**Stephanie Cook**  
HSRC/Security Officer

## Welcome!

## Judy Smith Joins DWE/ARS as Transition Services Director

**F**ormer Arkansas lawmaker Judy Seriale Smith has joined the Department of Workforce Education/Arkansas Rehabilitation Services as Transition Services Director. Smith comes to ARS from the Arkansas Minority Health Commission, where she had served as executive director since March 2002.

"Mrs. Smith comes to our agency with a wealth of experience in organizing and managing services for minorities and youth, especially in the Delta region of Arkansas," said Deputy Commissioner Ken Musteen.

Smith's community involvement includes working with children up through teens. In recent years, those efforts have been focused around minority health issues and promoting healthy lifestyle choices for all Arkansans. Under her leadership, the Arkansas Minority Health Commission conducted one of the most comprehensive studies in health disparities, when they initiated a hypertension program in three Delta counties and developed and promoted the Eating and Moving for Life program in several counties.

Smith's professional life has been dedicated to public service. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work from Grambling State University (in three years), Smith served 18 years as executive director for Arkansans for Drug Free Youth in Camden. The organization is a non-profit, substance abuse and violence prevention group, targeted to the youth of Ouachita County.

In 1990, Smith defeated a 24 year incumbent for a seat in the Arkansas House of Representatives and served there until 1998 when she left because of term limits. While in the House, Smith was Deputy Majority Leader and served on numerous committees, chairing the House Public Health, Welfare and Labor's subcommittee on Human Services.

She is the recipient of numerous awards, both local and on a statewide basis and, in 1992, was selected to travel to Japan as a delegate with the American Council of Young Political Leaders.



Judy Smith

# HSRC Happenings

Spring Open House welcomes public school personnel

**H**SRC/ACTI held an informal spring Open House April 19 and 20, 2007, with special invitations sent to high school personnel around the state as part of the Center's continuing efforts to educate the public regarding its programs and services.

The spring Open House was designed for school administrators, teachers, counselors and parents to inform them of HSRC/ACTI services. Over 100 people attended the event. The event was an informal opportunity to share with school personnel and parents how the day to day operations of the Center work.

A large percentage of the Center's population includes

students with disabilities transitioning from high school to post-secondary education. Several HSRC programs, including employability skills training, behavioral enhancement, and independent skills training and social skill development focus on meeting the needs of this population of young adults ages 17 to 21 years. The initiatives and programs offered at HSRC support federal and state school transition initiatives.

"The Center's focus is to prepare students with not only vocational training but with the "soft skills" that will contribute to success and longevity on a job," said Barbara Lewis, HSRC/ACTI Administrator. "It will also allow

them to live independently," she added.

The Center continues to provide tours to many groups and schools on a regular basis. Future plans are to hold an annual Spring Open House specifically for school personnel and families. HSRC/ACTI will continue to host an annual Open House in the fall in conjunction with National Employment of Persons with Disabilities Awareness month.

The Center has worked to provide up-to-date information to the ARS field staff regarding the various training programs each month. Over the past quarter, the Center has highlighted updates in Business Education, Environmental Services, Food Services, and Printing.

