

# the Workforce Counselor



## DWE Career & Technical Education Division hosts first manufacturing conference

**W**omen in manufacturing is a non-traditional concept that is seeing growth, in part, because of Perkins IV guidelines in Career and Technical Education. In support of that direction in Arkansas, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education hosted a special conference November 13 through November 14 in Little Rock entitled **Manufacturing: A New Vision, Women Mentors Can Change the Future.**

The goal of the conference was to show schools statewide how they can better equip students, particularly women students, with the necessary skills to compete for high-skill, high-wage, high-demand manufacturing jobs in Arkansas.

Department of Workforce Education Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson, said the conference was sponsored by the Department of Workforce Education to assist schools.



**Manufacturing: A New Vision/Women Mentors can change the future** (l-r): John Davidson, Deputy Director for Career & Technical Education; Karen Thompson, Keynote Speaker; Dr. Dawn Tirado Simpson, DWE Public School Program Advisor; Peg Walton, Keynote Speaker; and William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Department of Workforce Education Director

"Schools have to make Perkins IV indicators, and one way they do it is to support non-traditional

**CONFERENCE** continued on page 4

## Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities hosts Awards



DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., and Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe

**T**he Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities used the occasion of October being **National Employ People with Disabilities Month** to host its annual Business Leadership Awards Luncheon October 8 in the Grand Hall of the Arkansas Governor's Mansion. The criteria used for the Commission's annual awards luncheon are that businesses hire, retain and promote individuals with disabilities.

This year, the Commission added awards for two individuals who have made a difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities in the business community.

Governor Mike Beebe addressed the gathering and was joined by Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., and Ida Esh't, Executive Director of the GCPD, during the awards presentation.

### Honored for their contributions to Arkansans with disabilities were:

- 🏆 Large Business Employer of the Year - **Kroger Supermarket** in the Heights, Little Rock;
- 🏆 Medium Employer of the Year - **Kohl's**, Chenal Parkway store, Little Rock;

GCPD Awards continued on page 27

# Director's Update

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

Director

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education



**A**s the end of the year approaches, the Senior Management Team of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education is busily preparing our agenda for 2008. Since I became director of this agency, the SMT has aggressively been meeting monthly, and sometimes weekly, on how we can do a better job, improve our services and raise the bar.

We come together at a defining hour — when the decisions we make may at times be difficult, but necessary to for us to grow and succeed as we carry out the vision and mission of Governor Mike Beebe. Over the next several months, on issue after issue, we will plan for and structure this agency with a deep commitment to become more

efficient and more effective, to help build a better Arkansas for our children, grandchildren and those yet unborn.

Our senior management team and I enter 2008 with great endeavors currently underway, and others that we are in the process of initiating. We started early to develop our legislative agenda for consideration by the Governor's administration. Our first priority is to look within our agency and to all of the current resources available, to make sure that we are utilizing them in the most effective and efficient way. We must work to streamline and avoid duplication within our agency and ultimately, within state government.

For far too long, this entire agency has been under funded. We will inform and request an adequate increase in our funding levels to sufficiently and adequately serve more Arkansans. With better funding, our agency will be able to spread more opportunity and hope for Arkansans to get better training for their careers. Arkansans will be better prepared for the jobs of the future. Our rehabilitation counselors will be able to provide more assistance to our clients. Increased funding for our agency will also mean we'll have a better trained and educated workforce so that Arkansas will be more competitive to

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

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# What You Should Know

## Disability Management/Return-to-Work

Jim Moreland, Administrator

In the public and private sectors of business today, leaders and managers are under constant pressure to perform or to produce more, with less. The private sector has been required to become more competitive, more accountable and more productive. On the public sector side, there is a continual focus on sound financial and human resource management practices, because there is little likelihood of significant increase in funding, or the availability of additional personnel. The formula, on both sides, is to learn to do more, with less.

One area that should be a focus for employers is to find ways to reduce, manage or control the costs associated with health and disability in the workplace. These costs should not be viewed as “fixed,” as such costs can be “controlled” and even reduced with the implementation of an effective disability management program. Disability management has been defined as a “Pro-active, employer-based approach developed to (a) prevent the occurrence of injury and disability, (b) intervene early for disability risk factors and (c) coordinate cost effective restoration and return to work.” (Haback et. al.)

In reality, disability management is both effective human resource management and good vocational rehabilitation practice. Disability management is not a new concept, having been in private industry for over 30 years. While slower to emerge in the public sector, more and more public employers are implementing elements of an effective disability management program.

Disability management programs are effective in mitigating the costs of both occupational and non-occupational illness and injury. Elements of effective disability management programs include *safety*, *wellness* and *employee assistance programs* and, where illness or injury is present, *early identification*, *early intervention* and *early-return-to-work*. Safety programs

focus on the prevention or occurrence of illness or injury. Effective safety programs provide training, routine inspections and accident investigation and focus on making sure employees are adequately trained and equipped to complete work assignments. Wellness programs focus on the health and well being of the employee and his or her family. **Employee assistance programs** (EAP) provide case management, information and short-term counseling to employees and their families.

Once the illness or injury is present, an employer must consider *early identification*, *early intervention*, and *early-return-to-work* to mitigate costs. Early identification involves identifying early on those individuals who have experienced illness or injury that will result in extensive medical care and/or extended absence from work. It may be necessary to assign a case manager or rehabilitation professional early on in the treatment and recovery process to ensure quality, yet cost effective, care and treatment as well as to expedite the return to work process. Early intervention includes the initiation of a variety of case management and stay-at-work and return-to-work efforts as soon as possible after the actual or potentially disabling event occurs. It involves communication among the employee, employer, physician(s), rehabilitation specialist(s) and claims administrator. An early-return-to-work program is designed to assist an employee who is recovering from illness or injury in his/her return to the workplace. **The objective is to provide a safe and gradual return of the ill or injured employee to regular, full time employment.** By using transitional employment, the employee whose condition is stable enough to endure some work activity is returned to the workplace and assigned specific work tasks he/she can perform, taking into account physical and/or emotional

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW *continued on page 4*

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

*continued from page 3*

restrictions.

**Why should employers consider early identification, early intervention, and early-return-to-work?** Studies show that only one in two newly disabled workers who remain on disability 5 months or more will ever return to work. If the same population is followed out to 24 months only 1 in 5 ever return to work.

At present, *reducing workers' compensation costs inside state government is the primary focus of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' Disability Management Program/Return-to-Work (DM/RTW) Program.* Such costs have increased from approximately \$9,191,000 for state fiscal year 2004 to \$11,048,000 this most recent fiscal year. While the rising costs of medical services and prescription drugs can account for a significant part of this increase, a lack of effective utilization of early return-to-work/stay-at-work practices also comes into play. The DM/RTW Program's long-term partnership with the Public Employees Claims Division (PECD) of the Arkansas Insurance Department in this effort remains. Over the last couple of years the Health and Safety Division of the Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission has become part of this effort. The DM/RTW program has the lead role regarding implementation of early return to work programs for state agencies. Services provided to agencies include early return to work program policy and procedure development, program implementation, and program evaluation. The DM/RTW program also assists agencies with the development, implementation, and monitoring of

transitional employment plans for individual employees who experience illness or injury. The PECD is responsible for processing workers' compensation claims for all state agency/institution employees. The program is administered consistent with state rules and regulations regarding workers' compensation with an effort to ensure that any state employee who experiences occupational injury or illness receives the medical services they need and other benefits they are entitled in a quality, cost conscious manner. The Health and Safety Division of the Workers' Compensation Commission works with other state agencies in implementing effective safety programs. The program assists agencies with program

implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Upon request, the program can also provide training to agency staff regarding hazard identification and accident investigation.

If you have questions regarding the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' Disability Management/Return-to-Work Program please feel free to contact Jim Moreland, Program Administrator, at:

### **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**

#### **Disability Management/ Return-to-Work**

Telephone: 501-686-2806

Fax: 501-686-2831

26 Corporate Hill Drive

or e-mail:

[jdmoreland@ars.state.ar.us](mailto:jdmoreland@ars.state.ar.us)

Little Rock, Arkansas 72205

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## CONFERENCE *continued from page 1*

programs," Davidson said. "The conference was designed to help them achieve those indicators."

The conference focused on the new vision for manufacturing that has opportunities for women. Traditionally, people think of manufacturing as factory line work but there are other career areas including medical and high tech fields.

"Manufacturing careers include quality assurance, inventory control, logistics, health and safety. People don't usually associate these with manufacturing, thinking of it only as the traditional assembly line concept," said Dr. Dawn Tirado Simpson, coordinator of the manufacturing conference.

Simpson went on to explain about the conference's concept. "It's helping open the doors of manufacturing to non-traditional students and there's federal money available for promoting the idea," she said.

She said teachers received a complete guideline and program notes to take back and implement in their classrooms. A former classroom teacher herself, Simpson lauded the guideline and said that it had functional step by step directions on how to utilize the resources along with the information itself.



## Get your GED at PCCUA year-round



-- photo by Marla Clark

*Amanda Myers (left) is enrolled in college classes after recently obtaining her Arkansas High School Diploma through the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. Myers is shown receiving assistance from her instructor Gwen McGhee, Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas Dean of Adult and Developmental Education.*

**E**ach day at Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas (PCCUA) finds adults, many of whom were reluctant to go back to school, working toward achieving their Arkansas high school diploma.

GED graduates say they feel a remarkable improvement in how they feel about themselves. They are motivated to learn when discovering as their level of education increases, so will their level of income.

According to the 2000 census, 57.8% of Phillips Countians ages 25 years and over do not have a high school diploma. This does not include the number of adults age 18-24 who do not have a high school diploma. These adults have an opportunity for educational growth by participating in adult education activities.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) classes are offered through PCCUA. Adult Education classes are free and available to anyone over the age of 17, who has not completed high school. Adults have the opportunity to acquire skills necessary to pass the General Education Development (GED) test and receive their diploma through the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education.

Gwen McGhee, PCCUA Dean of Adult and

Developmental Education, said, "It is very common for adults to feel nervous about going back to school, especially if they have been out of school for some time. When they get here, they find that our instructors give them all the support, skills and encouragement they need to obtain their high school diploma."

The ABE component is designed to allow adults to gain basic literacy skills in reading, language, math, computer literacy, and workplace literacy. The ASE component is designed to allow adults to gain reading, English and math skills necessary to pass the GED test. Both components of the program incorporate life skills and counseling services necessary for the growth and development of the adult learner.

Classes are open for enrollment at any time at the Adult Education Department at PCCUA or any of its satellite centers, which are located at Westside Elementary School, Marvell High School and Elaine High School.

"The overwhelming majority of jobs today require a high school diploma," said McGhee. "When you gain your Arkansas high school diploma, you invest not only in yourself, but also in the future of your children. For those who want to continue investing in their education we help them make the step into college classes."

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## Director, Staff Members, and Legislators meet to discuss RSA report with HSRC Staff

**A**rkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr., Rehabilitation Services division Commissioner Robert Treviño, and Barbara Lewis, Administrator of the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, met with administration and staff members from the Rehabilitation Center for a meeting and discussion outlining Rehabilitation Services Administration’s (RSA) recent state monitoring report. The on-site visit was conducted this past May and covered every administrative function of the agency. The meeting was a chance to provide HSRC staff with relevant information about the agency’s successful performance and to begin dialogue on ways to craft our future together in vocational rehabilitation in the 21st century.

The discussion was led by Rehabilitation Services division Deputy Commissioner Roy Albert, regarding the Rehabilitation Services Administration’s (RSA) findings in its monitoring report. Under the new federal state monitoring design, one-third of the vocational rehabilitation programs in the country receive a monitoring visit every year to ensure that each state is in substantial compliance with its state plan as presented to the U.S. Department of Education/Rehabilitation Services. This was the first time the federal agency had implemented this approach and Arkansas was picked to participate in the first round.

In late September, RSA issued its formal report for Arkansas. In the case of the Rehabilitation Services Division, RSA stated the agency met or exceeded performance measures in all key areas. This outcome is very important given the high standard RSA uses to measure each state’s performance. However, RSA did note that Arkansas is slower than other states to address the changing paradigm regarding delivery of services. The predominant national model encourages states to maximize the use of case service dollars in the local communities. In comparison, Arkansas has historically used case service dollars in a more bifurcated fashion spending part of our funds to purchase local services and part of our funds to provide comprehensive rehabilitation services at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

The paradigm has shifted and so has the expectation of the agency’s federal partner. As the Rehabilitation

Services Division continues into the future of its VR program, RSA will encourage the division to continue to identify opportunities which emulate the national model.

Following the presentation, Director Walker addressed staff members about future plans and the direction of the Center. “The Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center is a cornerstone of the community here. Each employee has made significant contributions to provide quality service to those who seek out and use our facilities. We appreciate the job you have done and for your service to the state of Arkansas,” he said.

Walker went on to elaborate that it is not in the agency’s plan to close the Center. “The Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center is not closing. We do want to redefine and refocus some of the programs we have here. We are evaluating the role of the hospital. We are looking at the option of turning the hospital into either an infirmary or a clinic. Currently, all options are on the table as far as what the best use of the facility will be,” Walker explained.

“We have a plan to create a Center of Excellence here so that students from all over the state can come and get the best career and technical education training anywhere in the state,” the director said. “We want to certify these programs so that when a student graduates, they can take their certificate anywhere in the country with proof and confidence that they have received the best training in the career they’d like to pursue,” he added.

Following Director Walker’s presentation, state Senators Terry Smith (Hot Springs), Steve Farris (Malvern), state Representative Bill Sample (Hot Springs) and Sarah Agee, Governor Mike Beebe’s liaison to the Department of Workforce Education, made brief presentations to staff members. They expressed their support and thanks to the staff at the Center for the job they’ve done over the years and each pledged their continued support of the direction of the Department of Workforce Education and the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

Senator Terry Smith was positive about the meeting’s outcome.

“I thought it was a very productive meeting but it doesn’t matter what I think; it’s what the employees think,”

**HSRC Meeting continued on page 7**

state Senator Smith said. "I had several employees come to me after the meeting and express that they thought it was a very good session. It put some rumors to rest and opened the lines of communication. I'm very hopeful that there will be more of these kinds of meetings to help keep those lines of communication open," Smith concluded.

Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center administrator Barbara Lewis called the meeting very positive. "It gave our staff members and the Hot Springs area legislators a review of the Rehabilitation Services Administration report and it helped set the record straight for all of the Center's staff," Lewis said. "This meeting put everything on the table and provided accurate information to the staff from all levels of the agency's management, from the director and commissioner on down through the Senior Management Team. It also gave the staff the opportunity to ask questions and offer input from those on the front lines," she said.

Many staff members said it gave them great satisfaction that Director Walker and the agency's management team took the time to address staff

members regarding the future and the direction of the Center. The meeting clearly evidenced a collective commitment to the future of HSRC and its important role in vocational rehabilitation.

"Overall, we must still continue to raise the bar in how we serve our customers and our clients," said Director Walker. "Our agency's success is not judged by one particular division. We are all one unit, one family, with one vision and one voice. We must all succeed in how we do business and in how we serve the citizens of our state," Walker concluded.



Rehabilitation Services Division's Deputy Commissioner Roy Albert, Commissioner Bob Treviño, and DWE Director Walker answer questions



State Senator Steve Farris of Malvern

State Representative Bill Sample of Hot Springs



Director Bill Walker and Governor's Liaison Sarah Agee

HSRC Administrator Barbara Lewis and Director Bill Walker



State Senator Terry Smith of Hot Springs



Listening from the audience: Director Bill Walker, Governor's liaison Sarah Agee, Representative Bill Sample and Senators Terry Smith and Steve Farris

# Webb receives National Counselor of the Year Award

**N**ina Webb, Senior Counselor based in the Hot Springs field office of the Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division, was named Counselor of the Year by the National Rehabilitation Association's (NRA) Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (RCEA) division during their annual training conference held in Tucson, Arizona.

As recipient of the Arkansas 2007 Counselor of the Year Award, which she accepted at the Spring Training Conference in Hot Springs, Webb attended the national conference in Arizona in early September, to receive her award. The theme of this year's event was, "Building Community: Rehabilitation through Partnerships."

Webb joined DWE's Rehabilitation Services Division as a Placement Specialist in 1988, which required traveling throughout 10 assigned counties to make contact with her clients. She quickly established herself as one of the most productive placement specialists in the state by the number of people she was able to put to work. She was recognized in 1990 as Placement Specialist of the Year.

Nominated by her fellow counselors and support staff for the Counselor of the Year award, Webb was cited as "client-centered and professional... a real asset to the office, she is a great team player and project partner...she is the consummate rehabilitation counselor, working with the most difficult and demanding clients with professionalism, fairness and heart. She is a stellar example of what a Rehabilitation Counselor should be."

Barbara Lewis, director of the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, was instrumental in Webb's hiring and has witnessed her dedication over the years. "Ms. Webb is an advocate for people with disabilities and she will not hesitate to challenge systems and processes to allow for greater outcomes and possibilities for people she serves," Lewis says. "She



*Dr. Lynn Boza (right), president of RCEA Division of NRA, presents Nina Webb Counselor of the Year award*

is outstanding in her personal commitment to serve people with disabilities, outstanding in representing her values and ethical standards in her professional and personal life, and [is] an outstanding human being," Lewis concluded.

Leon Massey, Executive Director of Community Services Office, Inc., an agency that serves low-income households in an effort to enable them to become more self-sufficient, officially nominated Webb as Counselor of the Year. According to Massey, Webb is not one to rush to judgment when advising or working with a client, but will "listen and rely upon her training, experience and her innate gift of understanding mankind before making a decision."

Webb is a top producer of successful closures in District V-S, demonstrating the work ethic that she pours into her job. District Manager Robert Sanders recommended Webb for this award based on her exhibition of professionalism, expertise and exceptional work ethic. "She is one of my best and most consistent producers each year," Sanders states.



The Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services Division's Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen congratulates Webb on her honor during the department's full staff meeting in Little Rock October 3.

## 2007 English as a Second Language Summer Institute held



**Teachers as Students:** ESL workshop participants gather to learn

**W**ith an increasingly growing immigrant population in Arkansas, free and accessible English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for adults are becoming a necessity for many people and for the industries that employ them. In the 1999-2000 program year, 3,270 immigrants were enrolled in free ESL classes in adult education centers, literacy councils and businesses in Arkansas, comprising about 8 percent of the total number of adult education learners. In the 2006-2007 program year, 5,455 ESL students were enrolled, expanding ESL to 17 percent of all adult learners in the state.

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Adult Education division provides not only financial and technical assistance for ESL programs, but also professional development for adult education instructors. For the past seven summers, ESL instructors

from across the state have converged for an intensive, multi-day workshop to learn the most up-to-date methods for teaching ESL students. During the summer of 2007, 50 teachers from cities across Arkansas including Siloam Springs, DeQueen, Monticello and Blytheville, met at the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center in Little Rock for the **Seventh Annual ESL Summer Institute**.

Dr. Philip Less, ESL Coordinator for the Department of Workforce Education's Adult Education division, organized the ESL Institute which focused on hands-on activities and strategies for teaching. The trainer for the institute was Laurel Pollard, an educational consultant from Tucson, Arizona. Ms. Pollard has written four highly successful and practical books for ESL teachers: Zero Prep, Zero Prep for Beginners, Now You're Talking and Yours for the Asking.

The topics that were covered during the July 23 through July 26

workshop included: *effective interaction routines, student motivation and retention, building classroom community, multi-level options, helping students take charge of their own learning, learning outside the classroom, working with low beginning students, vocabulary and reading activities and stress reduction activities for teachers and students*. Ms. Pollard also shared many resources with the participants, including Out and About by Hemmert and Kappa, and sections from her newest book, Wow! Stories from Real Life, which she co-authored with Dr. Natalie Hess, who was the 2006 summer institute trainer.

For further information about the Adult Education ESL Summer Institute or teaching English as a Second Language to adults, contact Dr. Philip Less at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education at 501-682-1970.

### 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](mailto:reginald.jackson@arkansas.gov)

# HSRC Happenings

## Arkansas Career Training Institute Students participate in Habitat for Humanity Project

**S**tudents from the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center's Building Trades program are participating in building a Habitat for Humanity house in Hot Springs. Building trades is one of the vocational skills offered by the Arkansas Career Training Institute at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division's Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

Building trades instructor Danny Bradley has been working with the students at the house since July. The group has been working three days a week gaining valuable,

first-hand, on-the-job training and experience.

"This Habitat for Humanity house is projected to be a five-month project from start to finish and most of the work is being done by our building trade students," Bradley said. "Plumbing and electricity are governed closely by building codes, so those elements are not being done by us, but the students have seen the process from the beginning, clearing the land and building the forms for the foundations. That is a tremendous advantage for them because they see how everything comes



together," he commented. "For instance, in the foundation stage, the plumbing has to be roughed in so they get to see the things that typically are hidden from view after the house is finished."

Much of the framing and wall building portion is rough carpentry as compared to more refined work as building cabinets. Bradley says the group will do both.

"We build the furniture for the dorms at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, so our people have the skills to do finish carpentry, too," Bradley remarked.

One might think that building trades technology such as air driven nail guns are used to build the Habitat for Humanity house.

"To the contrary," Bradley said. "We use the old fashioned method of a hammer and nails. Anyone can pull a trigger, but swinging a hammer is becoming a lost art. You also can't go as fast with a hammer as you can with a nail gun and that helps keep quality under control. The students are more focused on what they are doing when they use a hammer. It also allows them to go at such a pace that I can observe them and crew members working on other elements, without anyone getting too



**Program Participants (l-r):** Darryl Taylor, Tim Maxie, Michael Bolton, Doyle Hill, Brenton Johnston, Chris Middleton, Jeremiah Upchurch, Laura Shelton, Sarah Crain and Lawrence Stringer. Kneeling in front: instructors Danny Bradley and David Morrow

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Laura Shelton concentrates on the job at hand

far ahead. If something is done wrong, they have less to tear out and re-work.”

The students are still keeping up with their classroom studies and while the classroom studies are a necessity, the on-the-job training experiences the students are invaluable.

“This hands-on work experience gives our students a distinct advantage when they apply for jobs in the building trades field,” Bradley concluded.



Instructor Danny Bradley oversees the work of Brenton Johnston and Tim Maxie

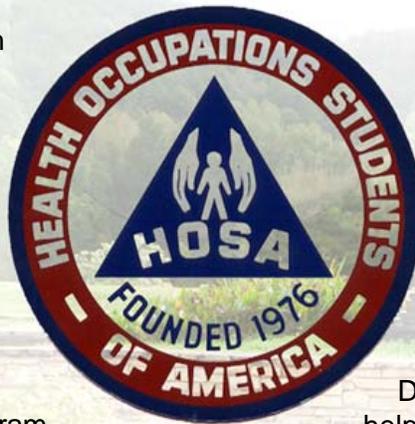
## Health Occupations Students of America Meet for Fall Leadership Conferences

**A**pproximately 200 Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) student leaders met for their annual Arkansas Fall Leadership Conference October 3 at the Ferndale 4-H Center in Little Rock and October 25 at the Jones Center in Springdale. Both events targeted those in leadership positions or aspiring to be future leaders in HOSA.

Barbara Dimon, Public School Program Advisor for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences division, said while the events are the same, they are held at two different venues as a matter of convenience for those who attend.

HOSA is a national student organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in health care and to enhance the delivery of quality health care. Arkansas has approximately 1600 HOSA members in 35 high school chapters.

“A student has to have an interest in some aspect



of the medical profession to be a member of HOSA,” Dimon commented. “It helps them refine their goals and dreams of an education in a medical field while still on the high school level.”

“The goal of the leadership conferences is to develop quality students into leaders who want to dedicate their lives to one of the many vocations in the field of health care,”

Dimon explained. “The conferences also helped them learn team-building skills, self-confidence and trust that are so necessary in today’s workforce.”

“The students received an overview of the day and then were divided into groups of 20. They participated in a ropes course that’s designed to achieve the aforementioned goals. After they concluded the exercise, they met with staff who explained what skills they’d learned and helped them tie together how all the day’s activities related to leadership,” Dimon concluded.

## Raising the Bar: working together to find solutions

**T**he Department of Workforce Education and Rehabilitation Services Division held its second All-Staff meeting Thursday, October 4, at the Clear Channel MetroPlex in Little Rock. Prior to the meeting, the State Board of Workforce Education & Career Opportunities met and later joined the crowd in hearing from DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Rehabilitation

Services Division Commissioner Robert P. Treviño, and state Representative Linda Chesterfield. Other activities included presentation of retirement awards, recognition of board members and guests, an overview of several Rehabilitation Services Division programs such as Successful Employment through Assistive Technology

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(clockwise from top left) DWE Director Walker with Jack Justus, Chairman of the Board of State Workforce Education & Career Opportunities; Board members Richard Smith, Kathy Scarsdale, and Robert McClanahan; State Representative Linda Chesterfield addresses staff members; members of the Senior Management Team -- Barbara Lewis, Pam Harris, Sue Gaskin, Roy Albert, John Davidson, Jonathan Bibb and Lee Griffith; employees turn their attention to Director Walker speaking; members of DWE's Federal Surplus Property Department; Director Walker with Rehabilitation Services Division's Karen Adeeb-Anderson and Barbara Nolen; and staffers from the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. Center: Director Walker speaks to the statewide audience on the agency's mission and future.



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(SEAT), Rehabilitation Initial Diagnosis and Assessment for Clients (RIDAC), Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC), the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and the recently instituted Leadership Development for Minorities with Disabilities program.

The meeting for Rehabilitation Services field staff continued Friday, October, at Philander Smith College in Little Rock. Discussions covering subjects from the 2007 Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Monitoring Report, to Transition and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) allowed speakers and audience members alike to voice concerns and ask questions regarding particular issues of their geographical and professional areas.

During this day of workshops and group meetings, the announcement of the year's top producing offices and counselors was made (see list at bottom). Congratulations to all for their hard work and dedication.

**The next DWE/ARS Staff Meeting will be held December 13 at the Clear Channel MetroPlex in Little Rock.**

## State Board Meets

**T**he State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities (SBWECO) voted to approve the transfer of administrative authority of the Calhoun County site currently under Warren Adult Education to Southern Arkansas University Tech at their October board meeting at the Clear Channel Metroplex in Little Rock. The board also approved revision to the special policies and procedures for secondary technical centers.

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

The board received information from James Smith, interim deputy director of adult education, concerning the federal state review for the adult education section. The review was conducted August 20 - 24, 2007.

Lee Griffith, Associate Director for Workforce Training, gave the board a history of the Technical Institutes, Vocational Technical Schools and Secondary Technical Centers five-year enrollment.

Director Walker closed the meeting by announcing that the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services division would conduct a district managers meeting November 15 and 16. The meeting was for managers to come together to help shape the vision of the division and effectively serve the people of the state. Mr. Walker announced the agency's Manufacturing Conference held November 13 and 14, and announced the agency's partnership with Governor Mike Beebe

BOARD continued on page 15

## Successful Closures Announced

At the Rehabilitation Services Division's fall training conference, held October 5 at Philander Smith College in Little Rock, districts and individuals were honored for their achievements of successful closures for the past year.

**Overall Statewide Successful closures: 2328**

### Top Districts

District V-N	<b>429</b>
District III	<b>379</b>
District II	<b>371</b>
District V-S	<b>358</b>

### Counselors with 40 or more closures

<b>Janna Clemmons:</b>	Lonoke
<b>Freddy Smith:</b>	Texarkana
<b>Herb Pierce:</b>	Pine Bluff
<b>CaseLoad 701:</b>	El Dorado
<b>Sandra Strain:</b>	Batesville
<b>Amy Jones:</b>	Fayetteville
<b>Debbie Wooten:</b>	Searcy
<b>Felix Eason:</b>	Little Rock
<b>Linda Rose:</b>	Russellville
<b>Don Wallace:</b>	Helena
<b>Jayne' Barkus:</b>	Conway
<b>Michael Johnston:</b>	Batesville
<b>James Quinn:</b>	Fayetteville
<b>Larry Seifert:</b>	Fort Smith
<b>Joe Butler:</b>	Fort Smith
<b>Leslie Hooks:</b>	Monticello

### Top Counselors

<b>Janna Clemmons:</b>	
Dist. V-North/Lonoke:	94
<b>Freddy Smith:</b>	
Dist IV:/Texarkana:	90
<b>Herb Pierce:</b>	
Dist II/Pine Bluff:	69
<b>CaseLoad 701:</b>	
Dist IV/El Dorado	60
<i>( 701 was handled by several counselors due to death, retirements, etc.)</i>	



Janna Clemmons



Freddy Smith



Herb Pierce

## Governor announces GO! Opportunities Grant

**T**he **GO! Opportunities Grant** is another tool for high school graduates and those in Adult Education programs with financial need to pay for college.

The program, which was introduced by Governor Mike Beebe in August, is billed as the first state-funded college grant program in Arkansas “based solely on financial need.” The grant is also available to those who have completed the General Education Development (G.E.D.) test in Arkansas if they are between 16 and 18 years of age.

“I want to make sure that higher education is available to every willing and eligible Arkansas student,” Governor Beebe said during a press conference announcing the program. “This grant provides financial assistance to thousands of students who otherwise may not have had the opportunity to attend college.”

Janice Hanlon, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s General Education Development Program Manager, says information on the program has been mailed out from the Department of Workforce Education to all the Adult Education program managers in the state for them to pass along to any student they have who qualifies.

The **GO! Opportunities Grant** provides \$1,000 a year for fulltime (at least 12 credit hours in the first semester and 15 hours in subsequent semesters) Arkansas students who are entering their freshman year in college. Students who are enrolled part-time with at least 6 credit hours are eligible for \$500 a year. All **GO! Opportunities Grant** recipients must certify they are drug-free and maintain a 2.0 grade point average.



Governor Mike Beebe

### Other requirements are:

- ▶ Must be a U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident Alien
- ▶ Have an adjusted gross family income that does not exceed \$25,000 a year with an additional \$5,000 per year for each additional child
- ▶ Applicants and their parents must be Arkansas residents and have maintained that status for the previous 12 months

**GO! Opportunity grants** are only available to first time college freshman and can be used in conjunction with other federal financial aid grants such as PELL Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants Academic Competitiveness Grant and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grants.

For more information about the **GO! Opportunities Grant** and application deadlines, please visit [www.adhe.edu](http://www.adhe.edu) or call 1-800-54-STUDY. For information on any of the other aforementioned grants and to apply for them, go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## Governor’s Commission on People with Disabilities promotes Mentoring Day

**S**ix students participated in the annual Disability Mentoring Day October 17 in conjunction with **Employ People with Disabilities Month**. The Department of Workforce Education’s Rehabilitation Services Division’s Arkansas Governors Commission on People with Disabilities joined national forces to promote the hiring practices of local businesses in celebration of National Mentoring Day.

The Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center and the University of Arkansas CURRENTS joined in with the endeavor where they provided six students and coordinated with five Hot Springs businesses. The students were matched with employers in their field of study.

Sara Crain worked with Farrell-Calhoun Paint Store; Freya Ferrell was mentored at Dazzlin’ Divas Hair Salon, Anthony Poe was mentored at the Arlington Hotel, Tracy Neighbors did so at the Austin Hotel and Marzeah Divsalar and Annette Allen, both were mentored at St. Joseph’s Hospital.

At the end of a long but rewarding day, all the students and employers who participated felt that the experience had been worthwhile.

## MAX Teaching Seminar conducted to Enhance Student Literacy Skills

Several members of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Career and Technical Education and Adult Education Divisions attended the **Literacy Connections for All Teachers Demonstration Classroom Project** conducted at Springdale High School November 6 and November 7. The two-day seminar was held to observe Springdale administrators, teachers and literacy coaches as they discussed and demonstrated the **MAX Reading and Writing teaching concept**. **MAX** is an acronym that stands for **Motivation, Acquisition and Extension**, the three steps of the teaching framework to help students better learn their subject matter and improve their literacy skills.

According to Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education, John Davidson, the seminar provided an opportunity for educators to observe their peers utilizing high yield instructional strategies that increase student learning and engagement.

"Demonstration classroom teachers provided observers with resources, tools, content-specific applications and support for a number of instructional categories and on specific instructional strategies," Davidson said.

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., addressed the gathering of about 200 educators from school districts across the state. Walker told the group that the focus of programs like MAX learning should always be to develop better methods of teaching to prepare students for the workforce of the 21st century.

"We have the potential to do so much more to prepare our students, the next generation," Walker said. "We need to always raise the bar in how we prepare and educate our students to ensure we raise student literacy skills and literacy rates around the state."

Director Walker also said he wanted to host Literacy Connection seminars in various locations in the other 3 congressional districts around the state demonstrating the MAX Teaching with Reading and Writing concept to train career and technical education teachers how to enhance student literacy skills and levels.

In the MAX model, literacy is defined as the ability to read, write, speak, listen and think such that a student



The MAX Teaching Seminar, held November 6-7 in Springdale, included talks by (l-r) DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Springdale Schools Superintendent Dr. Jim Rollins, and DWE Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson.

is able to process information and ideas in ways that are useful to self and to society. The MAX teaching method provides opportunities for students to better learn their subject matter and improve their literacy skills. The essential goal of teachers who use the MAX teaching framework is to create classrooms in which all students are expected to participate in rigorous and challenging studies.

*BOARD continued from page 13*

concerning the **GO! scholarship** which offers students who graduate with a GED a chance at a scholarship to continue their education.

Finally, Director Walker elaborated on the creation of a Center of Excellence at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. He wants to transform the facility into a state of the art center of excellence for all children to be able to attain career and technical training.

The next meeting of the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities will be on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. at Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, 1616 Brookwood in Little Rock.

## Governor Beebe Addresses Adult Education Group

**T**he Arkansas Association of Continuing and Adult Education in conjunction with the Arkansas Literacy Council held a two day conference at the Wyndham Riverfront in North Little Rock October 25 and 26. Governor Mike Beebe was the keynote speaker at the gathering.

Beebe talked about the important role that adult and vocational education plays in the formulating the backbone of economic growth in Arkansas. Most of the attention in Arkansas has been on K-12, but education should be a “cradle to the grave” process, Beebe told the gathering of professionals and volunteers who work with students and adults to improve the students basic skills and workforce skills.

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr. and Interim Deputy Director for Adult Education James Smith were also in attendance during the Governor’s speech.

“I know what you do,” Beebe said. “You work with many who didn’t make it through the system the first time. We don’t want to abandon them.” He said those working in all levels of education should strive to turn Arkansas into a place others want to emulate.

The governor justified educational spending for preschools, saying it would pay long-term benefits. “If the state doesn’t spend the money now for preschool, we will pay for it in lost productivity and remediation later on. If the taxpayers don’t want to pay for preschool for the right reasons, they should pay for it because it saves us money in the long run,” he said.

In the last legislative session, lawmakers provided \$111 million for preschool education, which fully funds preschool programs for children at 200% of the poverty level.



**Governor Beebe** speaks at the Arkansas Association of Continuing and Adult Education Conference October 25 at the Wyndham Hotel in North Little Rock

The state’s two-year colleges “open the door of access”, for students who can’t afford 4 year schools or those who are interested in more technical fields, according to Beebe.

“Business and industry looks to the two year colleges for the training they need,” Beebe said. The state needs to be able to tell businesses looking to relocate to Arkansas, “we’re going to train your workforce.”

“The Governor has made it very clear that we must be more proactive in addressing the needs of adult education in our state,” Director Walker commented after Governor Beebe’s speech. “The Department of Workforce Education is following Governor Beebe’s lead in raising the bar to educate, train and prepare those in the state needing our department’s services in adult education and career and technical education to meet the needs of business and industry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

## AACAE provides forum for adult and vocational education discussion



(above) **DWE Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr.**, is flanked by **Bobbie Sanders** (left), outgoing president of AACAE, and **Sandra Miller**, incoming president. Miller works at Ozarka College in Melbourne.

(below) **Jim Smith**, interim deputy director for adult education at the Department of Workforce Education, talks with **Bobbie Sanders**, the outgoing president of the Association of Continuing and Adult Education. Sanders works at the LR Adult Education Center.



*UPDATE continued from page 2*

adequately serve existing companies while drawing additional businesses and industries to our state.

We are working to improve and change the current funding formula for our Adult Education programs. At best, our current funding formula needs to be improved. We will develop a funding formula that will support and assist good and successful programs.

We are also planning to create a Center of Excellence at the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center. The ultimate goal is for this center to be a state of

the art facility. The students who attend the Center of Excellence will graduate with the highest quality of training in career and technical education.

Back in September, the senior management team met during a retreat to develop initiatives and goals for our agency. Since that time, different management committees have been meeting to discuss: 1) the **realignment** and re-structuring

of our divisions; 2) a **succession plan** to prepare our agency for retiring baby boomers and to position our agency for success in the future; and 3) a **co-location** plan to bring all of our Little Rock Workforce Education and Rehabilitation Services offices under one roof as one family.

These are but a few of a long list of proposals, ideas and goals our agency is working on. We will continue to raise the bar for those who we serve and do it as one unit, one family, with one vision and one voice.



## Rehabilitation Services Counselors

work with Supported Employment to provide opportunities for Clients

One of the important factors that impacts a group of Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services Division clients is Supported Employment. Both Marva Dansby and Carl Daughtery, district managers in southwest Arkansas and central Arkansas, respectively, tout the program as a key element in providing client services.



Marva Dansby



Carl Daughtery

"Individuals with significant disabilities often benefit from having a bundle of services at their immediate disposal," said Dansby. "Supported Employment affords ready access to appropriate services while maintaining a continuity of services for the clients and fostering a successful outcome. Through Supported Employment initiatives, Rehabilitation Services Division counselors and clients benefit from the streamlining of case management processes that characterize the uniqueness of Supported Employment. Transportation is an example. In southwest Arkansas, we continue to experience a shortage of transportation networks for people with disabilities. This is a complicated issue for our rehabilitation counselors when they have limited resources for such a vital part of a rehabilitation plan.

"The impact of inadequate transportation is greatly reduced through partnerships with those providers who have advanced transportation systems incorporated into their Supported Employment programs. Supported Employment is a crucial part of providing and arranging for services that meet the needs of our customers."

Her central Arkansas counterpart, Carl Daughtery, agrees. "In our Conway office, we work closely with the Faulkner County Council for Developmentally Disabled. They run our sheltered workshop program," he said, "and we couldn't get along without them."

Robert Wright of the Faulkner County Council for Developmentally Disabled, works closely with Lisa Murphy, a Conway rehabilitation counselor, and they

both agree that Supported Employment provides a necessary service.

"We have about 10 to 15% of our clients that Supported Employment is just perfect for. These are severely disabled individuals who need intensive support to gain or sustain employment," Murphy said. "The clients receive job coaching and we {rehabilitation counselors} receive

monitoring reports coming back to let us know how the clients are functioning at the workplace. To us, that's invaluable."

"We've had some clients working in the same job in Supported Employment for up to 10 years," Wright said. "Then there are others, typically younger people, who have difficulty finding their notch, many times because of their youth. We do job readiness with them to help find what best suits them and sometimes that takes more than just one try."

Job readiness is a vital part of Supported Employment. The clients learn self-esteem and build self-confidence during this process.

"We work with them on how to write a resume' and conduct mock interviews," Wright says. "We talk about more than just working for a paycheck. We talk about the social and psychological importance of having a job, the social interactions that occur at work and the affects that has on an individual's life. We also discuss the responsibilities that an employee must do to keep a job, like being on time, adhering to a dress codes and even personal hygiene."

"In Supported Employment, we deal with clients who have had life-long disabilities and those with recently acquired disabilities," Daughtery said. They have separate issues to deal with and we handle each on their own merits. We want all of our clients to know, we're here to help them learn and sustain a life-long career, not just to get a job."

## Arkansas FFA members Participate in Blue Jackets Bright Futures Conference in Indianapolis

Over 53,000 Future Farmers of America members from across the country descended upon Indianapolis, Indiana, October 24 through 27 for the 80<sup>th</sup> Annual FFA National Convention. About 1,500 of those attending came from Arkansas, according to Department of Workforce Education's Agricultural, Science and Technology program director Marion Fletcher.

Fletcher was joined by other members of the Department of Workforce Education team, including Deputy Director of Career and Technical Education John Davidson, DWE Associate Director of Workforce Training Lee Griffith, Director of Communications Reginald Jackson, Public School Program Advisors Bruce Lazarus, Dr. Ann Horne and Bart Draper.

Deputy Director Davidson addressed members of the National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education, who held their national meeting during the FFA convention. DWE Public School Program Advisor Bruce Lazarus is the association's national president.

Arkansas students came away from the FFA Convention with two national winners. Ashley Smith and Maggie Good, both from Alpena High School, won top honors.

Ashley won the Silver Medal in Zoology Division II and Maggie won First Place in Engineering Division I.

"Eleven Arkansas FFA students won over \$8,500 in scholarship money too," remarked Fletcher, who is the FFA's national treasurer. "In all, there was over \$200,000 in scholarship money awarded to roughly 300 students."

Also during the convention, Lazarus and Chuck Tucker, of the Arkansas Farm Bureau, were each presented with an Honorary American FFA Degree, the most prestigious honor bestowed upon non-members by the group.

One of the convention's keynote speakers has strong ties to Arkansas. Conway native and former State Superintendent of Schools Ray Simon was one of the keynote speakers at the convention.

While in Indianapolis, Simon had a chance to talk one on one with students from Conway High School, where he served as superintendent before moving up to the state's top Education job. Today, Simon is Deputy Secretary of the United States Department of Education in Washington.

Fletcher says the convention's Career Show is a great showcase for Businesses, Industry and

Education, in showing support for the FFA program.

The Career show is set in an exhibit hall with hundreds of booths where attendees can get everything from information to product samples. Additionally, there were competitions in 19 different career development areas that drew students from all over the nation to the competition. Arkansas finished with two top rankings when Ethan Vickers and Mike Norton finished first in Forestry and Food Science Technology, respectively. In all, Arkansas had five top 10 finishes out of 90 entries.

"It's not all fun and games, either," Fletcher says. "A couple of groups of Arkansas FFA members did community service work on two of the days they were in Indianapolis. It's a chance for them to give something back. Some worked on a Habitat for Humanity House and another group helped on a home

*FFA continued on page 22*



DWE Director of Communications Reginald Jackson with Nikki Robertson of Glenrose High School at the Agriscience Award luncheon



Marion Fletcher



Bruce Lazarus



John Davidson



(above) Hailey Erwin (left) is interviewed by FFA member Monica Coker of Southern Arkansas University at the 80th National Future Farmers of America Convention.



(above) Jason Davis, FFA member from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, talks to a gathering of FFA attendees.



(above, l-r) FFA's National Treasurer Marion Fletcher, Deputy Secretary of the US Dept. of Education Ray Simon, and FFA delegates from Conway, where Simon once served as Supt. of Schools.



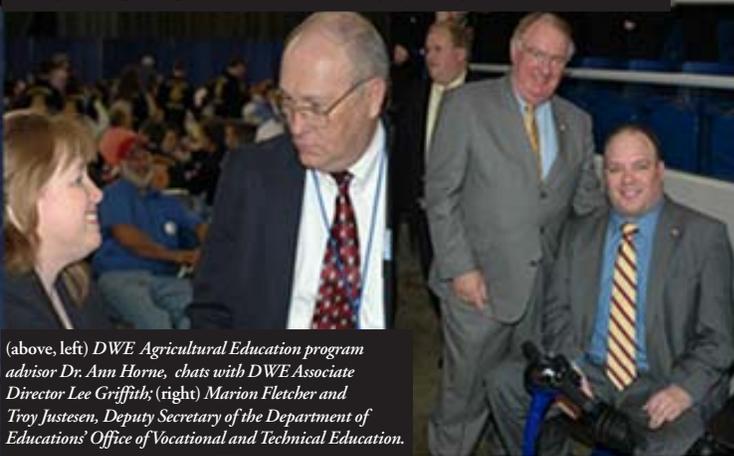
(above) Ashley Smith and Maggie Good of Alpena High School, Arkansas's two national winners in Zoology and Engineering, respectively.



(above, l-r) AR FFA President Zac Coffman; Chuck Tucker and DWE's Bruce Lazarus, honorary FFA Degree recipients; and state FFA secretary Ryan Haley



(above) A group of Arkansas FFA delegates gather



(above, left) DWE Agricultural Education program advisor Dr. Ann Horne, chats with DWE Associate Director Lee Griffith; (right) Marion Fletcher and Troy Justesen, Deputy Secretary of the Department of Educations' Office of Vocational and Technical Education.



(above, l-r) Maggie Good and Ashley Smith, both of



(above, left) DWE's Agricultural, Science & Technology program director Marion Fletcher chats with Ray Simon; and (right) DWE Associate Director Lee Griffith speaks with public school program advisor Bruce Lazarus



(above, left) DWE's Marion Fletcher, U.S. Department of Education Deputy Secretary Ray Simon, and DWE Deputy Director of Career & Technical Education John Davidson; and (right) the Arkansas FFA voting delegates



(above, l-r) FFA event competition in horticulture...



... in small engine repair...



... and in food service.



Alpena, pose beside their National Award winning display.



(above) DWE Deputy Director of Career & Technical Education John Davidson (right) speaks to the National Association of State Agricultural Educators (NASAE) during the convention.



## Students attend SkillsUSA fall leadership conferences

A pair of SkillsUSA Secondary Fall Leadership Conferences were held in October for students across the Arkansas. One conference was held October 9 and 10 at Pulaski Technical College in Little Rock, while the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith hosted the second conference, October 23 and 24.

During the leadership conferences, secondary students from across Arkansas had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate leadership skills. According to Randy Prather, Public School Program Advisor, break-out sessions included a session on chapter business procedure, extemporaneous speaking, prepared speech, how to perform during a job interview and a practical application with a Quiz Bowl.

The Army National Guard sponsored both conferences with an awards luncheon, climbing wall and football toss among the activities.

SkillsUSA also held a post-secondary Fall Leadership Conference on October 31 through November 1 in Hot Springs. Post-secondary state officers were elected and attendees participated in identical break-out sessions that were offered at the secondary conferences.

**The Arkansas State SkillsUSA Conference will be held at the Hot Springs Convention Center April 15 through April 16, 2008.**



**Randy Prather**

## Ms. Wheelchair America Visits the Natural State



**M**s. Wheelchair America, **Alana Wallace** of Chicago (above), made a recent visit to Arkansas that included her meeting Governor Mike Beebe and other leaders of the Arkansas disability community.

Ms Wallace visited Arkansas to join Ida Esh't, executive director of the Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities, for a joint presentation

on the universal design concept to the Arkansas Apartment Association, using a model at the River Cliff apartments. The River Cliff Universal Design Apartment is the first of its type designed for persons with disabilities who are employed full-time and pay the market rate value.

Several members of the Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities were on hand at the open house. The design concept does not exhibit the apartment as one that has an institutional feel. Instead, in being compliant with the American's with Disabilities Act, the renovated home has state of the art appliances, fixtures and cabinets that are user-friendly for everyone.

Wallace's visit included stops at the Secretary of State's office and the Treasurer's office in the Capitol; the Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center, Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Miracle League field (for people with disabilities) where she hit a home run.

*FFA continued from page 19*

restoration project for a needy Indianapolis family, working with some fencing," Fletcher said.

The National FFA Organization is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

**FFA is not a "club."** The agricultural science education program is **built on the three core areas of classroom/laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience programs and FFA student organization activities/opportunities.** Students between the ages of 12 and 21 who are enrolled in a systematic course of instruction in agricultural education are eligible for membership through their local schools.

## Senior Management Team

# SMT Update

by **Lee Griffith**  
Department of Workforce Education  
Associate Director  
of Workforce Training



In 1997, when the legislation was passed to create the **Arkansas Department of Workforce Education**, the challenge was to determine our mission. The planners, after much thought and discussion, identified five distinct functional areas within the agency. Those are **Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, Finance, Rehabilitation Services**, and **Workforce Training**.

The **Workforce Training** section is made up of a variety of service areas. The postsecondary technical institutes provide occupation-specific training to citizens seeking job skills after high school. Students receive training in any one of many different areas including auto service technology, construction technology, cosmetology, computer aided drafting and welding, to name a few. Students receive intense, hands-on training in addition to related math and communications skills to support the skill training. The technical institutes also provides a vital service to the business and industry community by providing customized training to industry.

In addition, the technical institutes offer **Adult Education** to citizens who have not yet completed high school. It is possible for someone to enroll as an Adult Education student, earn their GED and continue on to earn a technical certificate.

The **secondary technical centers** are similar to the technical institutes except they provide technical training to high school

students. The secondary technical centers are sponsored by high schools, education service cooperatives and community colleges. A secondary technical center provides skill training to students from multiple high schools. As these secondary technical centers have evolved, many are now operating on college campuses, and as a result, these students earn both high school and college credit. The typical high school student enrolled in a college based technical center will earn an average of 15 to 20 hours of credit. In school year 2006-2007, over 3,600 students earned 24,600 credit hours while they earned their high school credit. That is a \$1.6 million value, or to put it another way, it equates to 200 bachelors degrees.

Another facet of Workforce Training is **Adult and Youth Apprenticeship programs**. The Adult Apprenticeship program connects the worker through the Department of Workforce Education to the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training in the U.S. Department of Labor. In this program, workers begin work at entry level, working at least 2,000 hours per year, and also attend 144 hours of classroom instruction. The program takes four years to complete resulting in a craft license. Plumbing, electrical, and carpentry are the most common apprenticeship programs operating, but other areas come and go as labor needs demand.

The Youth Apprenticeship program operates in a similar fashion

as the adult program, but in the youth program, students receive classroom instruction while in high school and gain their work experience at a slower rate.

**The State Approving Agency (SAA) for veterans** provides service to veterans by insuring that schools, apprenticeship programs, etc., meet Veterans Administration standards. Veterans may use their educational benefits in "approved" programs. The SAA staff also provides direct assistance to the veterans by helping them receive their benefits and resolve problems. This unit operates under a contract with the Veterans Administration.

**The Governor's Dislocated Workers Task Force** was created in the early 1980s to provide rapid response services to workers who have lost their jobs as a result of plant closures or layoffs. The staff goes to the work site and provides information, performs assessments, and counseling services to individuals. The task force in partnership with the Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Department of Economic Development, and Department of Labor uses mobile labs to go into a community and assist people as they struggle with the loss of their job. The goal of the task force is to help these people return to work and get training/education for a new career.

Each of these areas will be addressed in future columns.

## General Educational Development gives Arkansans a Second Chance

**T**he Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Adult Education section held a series of four, in-service training sessions for General Educational Development (GED) test examiners. These required regional conferences were held at strategic locations around the state to discuss local issues and national initiatives regarding the GED testing program.



**Janice Hanlon**

Janice Hanlon, Department of Workforce Education GED Administrator, explained that the GED testing program is administered by the American Council on Education, and they require annual conferences to keep test examiners up-to-date on the latest issues and potential changes in the testing program.

The GED tests are designed to certify a high school level of academic knowledge and skills. The test consists of the content areas of Language Arts, Writing, Social Studies, Science, Reading, and Mathematics.

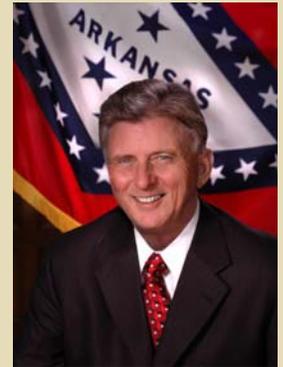
Currently, according to Hanlon, there are two main issues impacting the GED testing program both nationally and on the state level. "Nationally, high school dropout rates and immigration are two major factors that increase the number of individuals who need to take GED tests," she said.

In the United States, 600,000 to 700,000 candidates have taken GED tests yearly since 2002. Approximately 70% earn their state's high school credentials or diploma by passing the GED test and meeting the eligibility requirements set by their state, territory, or province. Arkansas traditionally has a pass rate that exceeds 80%.

"Earning an Arkansas high school diploma makes an individual more attractive to employers including industries that offer quality, higher paying jobs," Hanlon added. "Improved graduation rates provide for savings in Medicaid and other government expenditures over

## Governor Proclaims Adult Education Week in Arkansas

**A**rkansas Governor Mike Beebe proclaimed September 23 through September 30, 2007, as Adult Education Week in Arkansas.



In issuing the proclamation, the Governor cited the Adult Education section of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, which annually supports classes and services for more than 75,000 adults throughout the 75 counties in the state.

The declaration also highlighted the programs that serve the diversity of students, including those with learning disabilities, physical and emotional difficulties, as well as those who are in family literacy classes or are getting their education while in one of the state's correctional institutions.

The proclamation also cited the General Educational Development (GED) program that tests students who want to earn a high school diploma, the English as a Second Language (ESL) program, workplace classes that are available through the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy™, (WAGE™) program along with furthering educational, personal, job, and family-life goals that can be achieved through adult education.

a person's lifetime because GED graduates are more self-sufficient and less dependent on social programs. Passing the GED test and obtaining an Arkansas high school diploma promotes access to higher education, better paying jobs and the achievement of personal goals."

## PROCLAMATION

### TO ALL WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME—GREETINGS:

**WHEREAS:** Democracy is based upon an educated citizenry, in which people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds have access to education in order to become self-sufficient, actively participating members of society; and

**WHEREAS:** Adult Education provides learning opportunities for citizens who have not obtained high-school credentials, who have not mastered basic skills before graduating from high school, or who are non-native English speakers; and

**WHEREAS:** The Adult Education section of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education annually supports classes and services for more than 75,000 adults throughout the 75 counties of the State; and

**WHEREAS:** These programs serve a diversity of students, including those with learning disabilities, physical and emotional difficulties, as well as those who are in family literacy classes or correctional institutions; and

**WHEREAS:** Adult Education works cooperatively with local, state, and federal agencies to meet the goals and needs of these sometimes underserved Arkansans; and

**WHEREAS:** Adult education offers classes in basic reading, writing, and math; in preparing for the General Educational Development (GED) test to earn a high school diploma; in learning English as a Second Language (ESL); and in furthering educational, personal, job, and family-life goals; and

**WHEREAS:** Workplace classes are available through the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) for developing work skills, including basic computer literacy, problem solving, and communication;

**NOW, THEREFORE,** I, Mike Beebe, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim the week of September 23 through September 30, as

### ADULT EDUCATION WEEK

Across the State, and I encourage my fellow citizens to support and participate in the services and benefits offered by adult education, and to recognize the special efforts and dedication of Arkansas's adult educators who prepare individuals for productive employment and enriched lives.

**IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF,** I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 18<sup>th</sup> day of September in the year of our Lord 2007.

## Skilled and Technical Sciences Employee's Dedication and Service will be Missed

It is hard enough to fill the position of one employee when he or she leaves a job, but when that one person does two jobs well, the task becomes an even tougher one. That's the task that now faces the Department of Workforce Education's Skilled and Technical Sciences and the Apprenticeship and Construction training divisions with the departure of Michael Haynie.

September 6 was Haynie's last day at the Department of Workforce Education due to a medical condition.

His supervisor in Apprenticeship and Construction Training, Jonathan Bibb, called him a great asset.

"As a master plumber, Michael was able to build some bridges between education and the industry," Bibb said. "Specifically, he was involved with plumbing licensing in the apprenticeship program. It will be a monumental task to replace him."

Haynie came to the Department of Workforce Education over two years ago after a 30 year career as a master plumber.

"I came here because I believe in the program and wanted to do what I could to improve it because the apprenticeship program is great way to get an education," Haynie said.

In splitting time between Apprenticeship and Construction Training and Skilled and Technical Science, Haynie's value was quickly apparent.

Dick Burchett, Program Manager for ADWE's Office of Skilled and Technical Science, agrees that replacing someone with Haynie's experience will be tough.

"Michael did so much for us in the construction education skills area; he was the experience we turned to for answers to our questions," Burchett said.

Program certification is a priority with Perkins IV and in construction



Michael Haynie

trades, the process is close to completion. The Skilled and Technical Sciences program is working to get all construction-related curriculums certified by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER).

"When a student earns that certification, it gives them automatic recognition for completing a top notch program," Burchett added. "Michael's knowledge and his being a wealth of knowledge got us to the point in the certification process where we can

take over for him and finish the job. We will miss him dearly and wish him well."

"Michael's talents and skills were a great asset to our agency and we valued the contributions that he made," said Director Bill Walker. "We will certainly miss him and wish him the best on his recuperation."

### FBLA members raise money for MOD's Change for Babies Campaign

The Arkansas Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) organization has received national recognition as *the top money raising chapter for the March of Dimes with a 2007 collection topping \$83,000!*

Within the state, Nettleton High School FBLA was the number one local chapter in the nation that raised the most money with a total of over \$20,000 in donations.

Arkansas FBLA members recently participated in the March of Dimes "Change for America's Babies" Workshop in Little Rock. FBLA local, mid-level, and senior-level presidents and advisers from all over the state met for a day of recognition, training, and leadership, promoting the mission of the March of Dimes.

Speakers from the March of Dimes on the state and national levels told the students of the many great things March of Dimes is doing to help babies.

In the past, the focus was on preventing birth defects. The mission of the March of Dimes today is geared towards education and the prevention of premature births.

Anyone can participate, as an individual or as a group, in the "Change for America's Babies" campaign by collecting coins. It is estimated that \$10.5 billion in loose change sits idle in American households. The "Change for Babies Campaign" challenges students and FBLA members to come up with creative ways to collect the change and donate it to the March of Dimes.

GCPD Awards *continued from page 1*

- 🏆 Small Business Employer of the Year Award - **Coldwater Creek, Little Rock**;
- 🏆 Gregg Hering, General Manager of **The Peabody Hotel, Little Rock**, received the Community Excellence Award; and
- 🏆 Rusty Gartrell, Media Specialist with the **North Little Rock Police Department**; received the Community Service Award.

Also in attendance at the luncheon were Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services Division Commissioner Robert P. Treviño and Ms. Wheelchair America, Alana Wallace of Chicago.

**The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities** is a program of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Rehabilitation Services Division. If you have a business in your community who does an outstanding job of hiring, retaining and promoting people with disabilities, please contact the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities at 501-296-1600.



**Business Leadership Awards Luncheon**

**Top row:** Director Bill Walker shakes hands with Little Miss Wheelchair Arkansas Katie Mayberry; Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Bob Treviño and Governor's Liaison Sarah Agee; Director Walker, Rusty Gartrell, and Governor Beebe.

**Middle row:** "The Hands of Celebration" singers from The Academy at Riverdale; Director Walker and Governor Beebe presenting a Kroger representative the Large Business Employer award; Director Walker and Governor Beebe presenting a Coldwater Creek representative the Small Business Employer award.

**Bottom row:** Director Walker and Governor Beebe with Community of Excellence award winner Gregg Hering; Director Walker and Governor Beebe presenting a Kohl's representative the Medium Business Employer award



# Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

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