

the Workforce Counselor

A publication of Arkansas Department of Workforce Education
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Governor Beebe Addresses Workforce Education Staff at Joint Staff Meeting

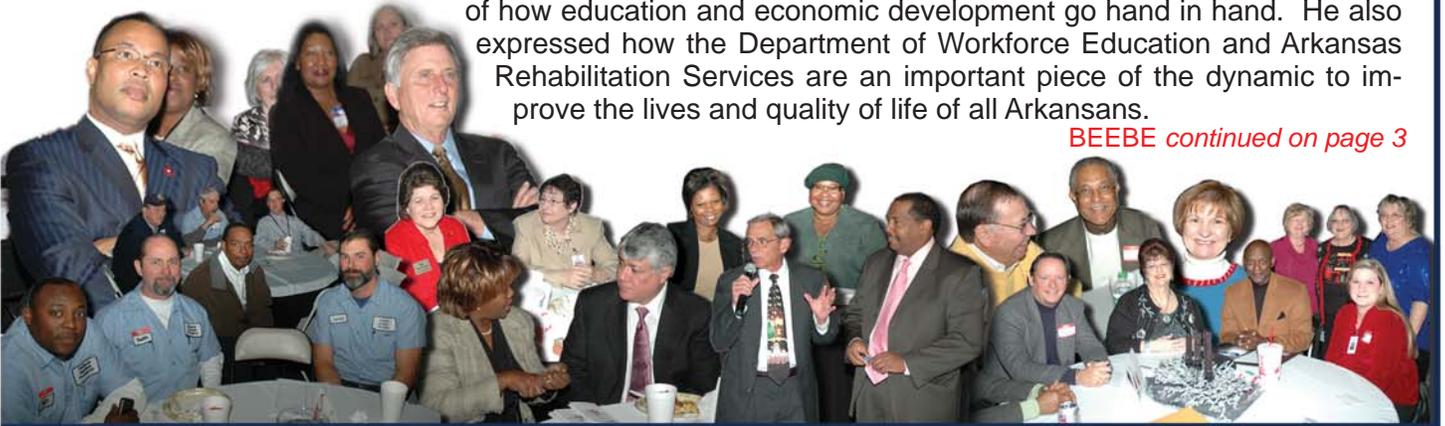
Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe was a special surprise guest speaker during the annual Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) staff meeting held Dec. 11 at Clear Channel Metroplex in Little Rock.

Gov. Beebe spoke to a packed auditorium of DWE employees, including personnel from all three divisions – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education – and expressed his appreciation for the work the employees do and how important they are to the success of this state.

“I know sometimes you don’t get the proper pat on the back for the work you do throughout the year,” Gov. Beebe said. “Well, I am here to say thank you, thank you, thank you.”

The governor further outlined his vision for the state with the staff and expounded upon his message of how education and economic development go hand in hand. He also expressed how the Department of Workforce Education and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services are an important piece of the dynamic to improve the lives and quality of life of all Arkansans.

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National Career Academy Coalition honors one of DWE’s own in Florida

Two Arkansas high schools and Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson were honored during the National Career Academy Coalition Developmental Conference Nov. 8-10, 2008, in Jacksonville, Florida.

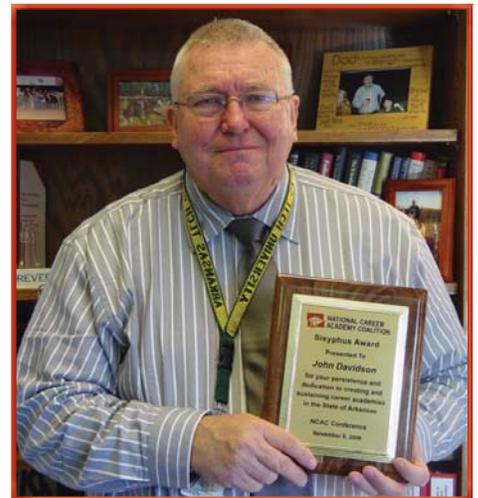
Mountain Home High School and Springdale High School both received Arkansas’s first national model recognitions for career academies while Davidson received a surprise award, the Sisyphus Award, given for his persistence in helping

to promote career academies in the Arkansas.

“Everything we got was a big deal,” Davidson said. “It was the first time we’ve had schools get national model recognition and to get two schools honored was just huge.”

Mountain Home High School received National Model Academy status for its Architecture, Construction, Manufacturing and Engineering Career Academy and its Health and Human Services Career Academy. Springdale High School received the national model honor

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John Davidson with NCAC award



Director's Update

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.
Director

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

With 2009 comes a new Arkansas legislative session, which is in full swing on Capitol Hill. As a former state Senator and state Representative, I know of the many challenging decisions each member will face.

Months ago, the senior management team and I began planning for the legislative session, and put together a White Paper and an Executive summary on our agency. Each document outlined how our agency and its three major divisions – Career and Technical Education, Adult Education and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services – intends to effectively and efficiently prepare Arkansans for the high skill, high wage, high demand careers for the 21st Century. We tried to lay out the facts as they are. They weren't just arbitrary documents that we put together. **The White Paper and the Executive Summary explains our agency's needs, issues and budget requests to keep those we serve competitive in the global economy.**

As you are well aware, our country and state are in the midst of an economic recession like none we've seen before. Budgetary issues for most state agencies are going to be very tight and we know that. But now, more than ever, par-

ticularly under the circumstances of our current economic crisis, it is crucial to focus more of the state's resources on preparing Arkansans to make sure they get the best education, training and options that will result not just in a job, but in a career and an even greater quality of life.

Governor Beebe understands that **education and economic development go hand in hand**. Workforce education is a very important component of that dynamic. Hopefully, through all of the economic circumstances and challenges we face, we will be able to collectively work together to push for adequate funding for the Department of Workforce Education.

We understand that we all have to tighten our belts and we're going to do that. But, I remain hopeful that during this legislative session, with the governor's continued leadership in partnership with the General Assembly, our legislators will take a broader look at the scope of our agency. Once they do, we believe they'll want to invest more into the Department of Workforce Education so that the citizens we all serve can enjoy greater prosperity and find meaningful roles in our state's economy as a result of our state leaders' commitment to their future.



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

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Director

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.

Deputy Director for Communications

Reginald L. Jackson

Contributing Staff

Adrienne Arnold
Ricky Harvey
Bart Haynie
Sandra Hubbard

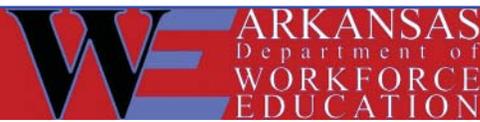
Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Three Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1083
501-682-1500
501-682-1509 fax
<http://dwe.arkansas.gov>

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Central Office

1616 Brookwood Drive
Little Rock, AR 72202
501-296-1600 (V/TTY)
800-330-0632 (V/TTY)
www.arsinfo.org





Department of Workforce Education

#3 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1500

<http://dwe.arkansas.gov>

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division

Central Office:

1616 Brookwood Drive
P.O.Box 3781
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 296-1600
Toll Free: 800-330-0632
www.arsinfo.org

Essex Place, Suite 207
1115 Waldron Road
Fort Smith, AR 72903
(479) 452-7131

715 West Sherman, Suite E
Harrison, AR 72601
(870) 741-7153

507 Cherry Street
Helena, AR 72342
(870) 338-2753

26 Corporate Hill Drive
Little Rock, AR 72205
(501) 686-2800

Arkansas Career Training Institute (formerly Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center)

105 Reserve
Hot Springs, AR 71901
(501) 624-4411

105 Reserve
Building 54
Hot Springs, AR 71901
(501) 623-4479

2920 McClellan Drive
Jonesboro, AR 72401
(870) 972-0025

Division of Rehabilitation Services Field Offices

501 West Arch
Searcy, AR 72143
(501) 268-6650

102 Park Street
Lonoke, AR 72086
(501) 676-4490

1670 White Drive
Batesville, AR 72501
(870) 793-4153

989 Highway 425 North
P.O.Box 450
Monticello, AR 71657
(870) 367-9669

The Professional Center, Suite 1
1226 Ferguson Drive
Benton, AR 72015
(501) 317-1390

1401 Main Street
North Little Rock, AR 72120
(501) 833-1490

P.O.Box 660
Booneville, AR 72927
(479) 675-3835

2703 West 28th Street
P.O.Box 2560
Pine Bluff, AR 71613
(870) 534-2404

Museum Plaza, Suite 3
1150 North Museum Road
Conway, AR 72032
(501) 730-9725

1010 North Arkansas
Russellville, AR 72801
(479) 890-5751

708 West Faulkner
El Dorado, AR 71730
(870) 862-5451

2807 East Broad
Texarkana, AR 71854
(870) 773-2807

One Corporate Square, Ste.150
4058 North College
Fayetteville, AR 72703
(479) 582-1286

210 Shoppingway
Boulevard, Ste. D
West Memphis, AR 72301
(870) 735-4725

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

December’s staff meeting was the first opportunity the governor had to address members of the entire agency. He previously addressed staff members at Arkansas Career Training Institute during the July 16 dedication adding Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center to the National Register of Historic Places.

The staff meeting also included progress reports from each agency division, the results of an employee survey recently given, and updates from DWE Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr. There also was a PowerPoint presentation featuring photos of employees at work taken throughout the year and an array of door prizes donated by staff members from across the state.

“I feel it is very important for our entire staff to come together, get to know each other better and get updated on what is going on with the agency,” Director Walker said. “We are a team working together for one common goal – to better the lives of the people of this great state – and it is important for us to have the time to gather, learn from each other and fellowship.”

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for its Engineering and Architecture Career Academy.

Both schools also received national certification status for other career academies.

“We have career academies in eight to 10 schools in the state, and to have two districts in the state have their academy recognized nationally is something to really, really be proud of,” Davidson said. “Our goal is to have every academy reach this recognition. Then we will truly know that we are really serving our students here in Arkansas.”

Davidson, who is a member of the National Career Academy Coalition Board of Directors, said his honor was a total surprise.

“I had no idea I was getting it,” he said. “I’m on the national board and they were able to keep it from me. It makes me feel good and I’m excited about the future of career academies in the state.”

“We are very proud of Deputy Director Davidson and the career academies at Mountain Home and Springdale high schools for the much-deserved national recognition they received,” DWE Director Bill Walker said. “Career Academies are a vital component to the educational success of our state, and I look forward to seeing the number of career academies grow.”

Long-time DWE employee Hervey Galloway retires after 35-year career

Hervey Galloway, a public school program advisor with the Department of Workforce Education's Office of Skilled and Technical Sciences, retired recently after wrapping up more than 23 years with the agency and more than 35 years in education.

Galloway's career path started during his time as a student at Pine Bluff High School where drafting was his favorite subject. Following his 1969 graduation, Galloway pursued his interest in drafting at the University of Central Arkansas where he earned his bachelor's degree in Industrial Education in 1973. In August of that same year, Galloway began a 12-year teaching career at the Conway Area Career Center as a drafting instructor. During his tenure at Conway, Galloway served on several statewide drafting course content committees.

In August of 1985, Galloway applied for and was selected as the Area Supervisor in the Trade and Industrial Education (now Skilled and Technical Sciences) office with the Vocational and Technical Education Division for what is now the Department of Workforce Education (DWE). In this capacity, Galloway was responsible for providing technical assistance to the Skilled and Technical Sciences programs for Arkansas's high schools, career centers and technical institutes. Those responsibilities included revising and updating course content, developing equipment lists and coordinating and revising end-of-course assessments.

In the area supervisor's position, Galloway also served as the State Secondary Director for the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (now SkillsUSA) for more than five years. Galloway takes particular pride in what SkillsUSA has become in Arkansas.

"I have watched the annual SkillsUSA Championships in Arkansas really grow," Galloway said. "I saw it transform from an event with several hundred students and instructors, to one that now includes more than 2,000 participants and requires the state's largest convention facility and more than 200 business and industry partners to make up its competition technical committees."

Galloway also had the opportunity to work on sev-



Left: Hervey Galloway (second from left) with his office mates (l-r) Ray Winiecki, Transportation Education Supervisor; Barbara Dimon, Public School Program Advisor; Lacey Wynes, Secretary; and Dick Burchett, Program Manager. Right: Galloway with retirement gift from colleagues

eral special initiatives and saw Arkansas become a lead state in the Career Cluster Initiative during his DWE career. He served on two national committees to revise the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute's (NOCTI) architectural and technical drafting tests and was on the state coordination team for the Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security career cluster.

Galloway says his career offered many opportunities to grow both personally and professionally.

"I have worked with some very fine people and consider that a blessing," Galloway said. "It was a wonderful voyage, but it was time to bring my ship back to the dock and step ashore."

He adds that upon thinking back on his years with DWE, he had the opportunity to meet and work with a number of both interesting and prominent people.

"During my time at Workforce Education, I have met and worked with two national SkillsUSA directors, a former director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, two Arkansas Governors, a future U.S. President, a future U.S. Secretary of State, three future presidential candidates, a future Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and even a Miss America," Galloway said.

DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. said he's grateful for Galloway's dedication and service to the agency and to Arkansas's Career and Technical Ed-

Galloway continued on page 5

Former SkillsUSA Director Guiding Force at Veteran's Approving Agency (VAA)

Randy Prather, the new program manager for the Department of Workforce Education's (DWE) Veterans Approving Agency (VAA), says his first few months on the job have been extremely smooth.

Prather, who spent eight years as a program manager in DWE's Career and Technical Sciences division and as state SkillsUSA director, took over the VAA program in August.

"It's been a lot of work," Prather said. "We've had a lot of training and different things that have kept us busy. I've learned a lot and have a lot to learn, but I've enjoyed the transition."

Prather said the key to the smooth transition has been because of the cooperation of the hard-working VAA staff and his own familiarity with veterans and their needs.

"As a veteran myself, I understand the importance of the work that we do," Prather said. "What we do is very important to a military veteran and I can really relate to that. I used my GI Bill to get an education, so I know firsthand that it's important to the people we serve. I take great concern and passion to help veterans. When my staff and I meet with veterans, I tell them I'm a veteran and they realize I know where they are coming from."

Prather, 56, is a 1970 graduate of Elgin High School in Elgin, Okla., and attended Central Oklahoma University in Edmond, Okla., on a baseball scholarship after passing on an opportunity of being drafted by the Cincinnati Reds organization as a third baseman/catcher.

From there Prather joined the United States Air Force where he traveled the world as an aviation mechanic. He served our country for 28 years, the last 18 years as a recruiter and liaison to the country's educational programs. After retiring from the Air Force in 2000, he joined the Department of Workforce Education to oversee SkillsUSA, a program he is still very passionate about.

"Leaving SkillsUSA was tough," Prather said. "It was one of the toughest career decisions I've ever made. But I realized how important it is to serve our veterans in this capacity."



Randy Prather

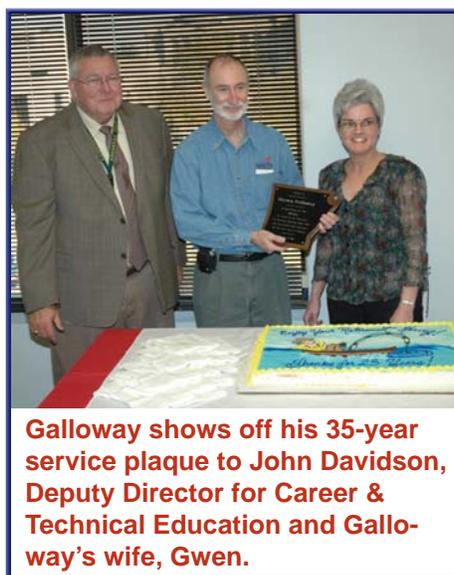
Galloway continued from page 4

education students.

"During his long and distinguished career, Hervey Galloway offered expert guidance and commitment to this agency and helped provide a top-quality education and better future for countless students in Arkansas," Walker said. "The CTE program in Arkansas is envied throughout the United States thanks to Hervey Galloway's hard work and his belief in what it can accomplish."

As for now, Galloway says his plans are simple.

"My wife and I are looking forward to a few more camping trips together and I may even get a little fishing in when the weather warms up," Galloway said. "I thank all the



Galloway shows off his 35-year service plaque to John Davidson, Deputy Director for Career & Technical Education and Galloway's wife, Gwen.

people I have worked with and worked for in providing me with all of the opportunities I've been given."

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 501-682-1701, or

reginald.jackson@arkansas.gov



What You Should Know

Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission

Glenda Williams, *Program Administrator*

The Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC) is a component of the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Special Programs that provides assistance to Arkansans who have been diagnosed with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) or who have received a kidney transplant.

To be eligible for services, applicants must be Arkansas residents. The applicant's treating physician is required to certify an ESRD diagnosis indicating the need for regular kidney dialysis treatments or provide verification that the applicant is the recipient of a kidney transplant. Applicants must meet an established financial needs test to be eligible for services. Documentation indicating whether an applicant has private health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, or has applied for such benefits is also required.

AKDC services are dependent on treatment status and benefit eligibility for other programs including private health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, etc. The AKDC is identified as a resource of last resort, meaning an applicant's other available benefits must be utilized prior to requesting the program to participate in payment.

AKDC program services include:

1. Payment for a limited number of prescription drugs (3 per month at this time). The AKDC has a restricted formula that requires clients to use existing prescription coverage first with the AKDC acting as a secondary co-payer regarding eligible drugs. The AKDC has a limited number of approved drugs, and approval is required before the program will participate in payment. The AKDC will only participate in the purchase of immuno-suppressant drugs as a co-payer.

- 2. Pre-transplant dental services.** Services are limited to infectious free dental care and require prior-approval with payment made consistent with the AKDC dental fee schedule.
- 3. Transportation assistance specifically related to obtaining treatment for ESRD.** Pre-certification is required. Remittance is made to the client consistent with IRS medical guidelines. This service has been placed on hold due to funding concerns.
- 4. In certain instances, medical services specifically related to ESRD during the Medicare three-month waiting period or when no other coverage exists.** Treatment requires prior approval.

The governor-appointed AKDC Board provides general oversight for the program. It is composed of 10 members, four of whom are physicians practicing within the field of nephrology, two members work in the area of hospital administration, two members represent the public at large, one member represents senior Arkansans, and the Commissioner of ARS, who serves as Secretary/Chief Disbursing Officer.

The Commission Board typically meets quarterly in March, June, September and December.

Program staff includes **Glenda Williams**, Program Administrator; **Marianne Hartsfield**, Administrative Assistant; and **Susan Adams**, Prescription Drugs Claims Processing Clerk.

The AKDC is located at **26 Corporate Hill Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205.** The telephone number is **501-686-2807.**



Brocato exemplifies value of hard work to earn better future

Doris Eliana Brocato knew moving to the United States from her native Honduras in 1996 would provide her family more opportunities for work and personal achievement. Upon initially settling in Torrence, California, Brocato worked two jobs to make ends meet and had no time for advancing her own education or training options.

After moving to Arkansas in 2004, Brocato began taking ESL (English as a Second Language) classes

at the Adult Education Center in Little Rock to improve those skills and then contacted the Career Pathways division of Pulaski Technical College (PTC). The Pathways' goal is to find and build the best steps toward a higher paying job for individuals. Brocato, meanwhile, was working in food service at the Pleasant Hills Assisted Living facility in Little Rock, and looking at a potential nursing career.

Brocato met with Career Pathways' counselor Karen Kennedy last August and voiced her interest in training as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). Following the interview and application phase, she enrolled and was successful in the endeavor which led to a better salary to help support her family. Brocato and her oldest daughter, Cindy, would often study together.

Kennedy cited a few areas of need and suggested Brocato return to the Adult Education center to improve her scores and to enroll in GED classes.

"Doris' skills were superior to what she would get out of more ESL classes," Kennedy said. "I knew she would benefit from the GED classes."

Brocato's determination, study and hard work resulted in the GED she received in December 2008.

"Last year was the best year," she says, listing her GED and CNA acquisitions along with the positive experiences she had at Pulaski Tech and its finan-



Doris Eliana Brocato

cial aid in finding the right education and career path. "We came here to make a better life, and there are so many opportunities here to do that."

"I am a true advocate of Adult Education," Kennedy explains. "It serves so many people in so many positive ways, and that's something to be proud of. Doris is a prime example. When someone has a goal, all of us, in our different areas of work – Adult Ed centers, PTC, Pathways, ESL

– come together to make sure everything's available to make it happen."

With the stability her GED provides, Brocato is ready take the next step. While continuing to work at Pleasant Hills, she now has more options to shape her future. She can, for instance, pursue her Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) licensing or choose to become a dental assistant.

Brocato's advice: "Learning English made my life better, and I would say to other Hispanics that they can learn, too. It wasn't just about getting a job or a better paycheck, but it made me feel so much better about myself inside. Because of what I learned, and because I kept trying, I can do more for myself and my family. That feels good and I wanted to prove to my daughters Nicole and Cindy that you can do anything if you try.

"If I can do it, then anyone can do it," Brocato added.

GED®

Learn how the GED tests can work for you. Contact the Department of Workforce Education Adult Education division at 501-682-1980, or visit us on the web at <http://dwe.arkansas.gov>

ACTI Happenings

173rd ACTI Commencement Ceremonies held December 17

Despite all its disruptions, a late-fall ice storm couldn't dampen the celebration at the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute's 173rd commencement service in Hot Springs on Dec. 17.

The graduating class, made up of 41 students from 25 Arkansas cities, participated in a revamped ceremony designed to include more pomp and circumstance. Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) Director of Vocational Instruction Dr. Dawn Simpson said changes were made to the commencement exercise to make it a more special experience for students, parents and faculty.

"These students have accomplished something extraordinary," Dr. Simpson said. "The faculty provides exceptional instruction and

our parents provide the necessary support that each student needs. Graduation is a special achievement and we want the graduation ceremony to reflect that."

In order to make the event more special, Dr. Simpson says efforts were made to make it more formal and traditional. Faculty members were dressed in robes and introduced during a procession at the beginning of the ceremony and seated together in a reserved section of the audience. Students each received green sashes – which recognized the green and white school colors – to wear over their robes to make them stand out from the faculty. There was even a system established to identify "honor graduates."

"We don't have a GPA system, but we wanted to recognize students who we could say graduated 'with honors,'" she said. "We gave

students who hadn't received any Behavior Incident Reports while at ACTI gold honor sashes."

According to Dr. Simpson, eight students earned "honors graduate" status. But she says that several others graduated with only one or two reports, and that indicates the outstanding character of everyone attending ACTI.

Even though the ice storm had little effect on the ceremony itself, it did cause a couple of noticeable absences. Dr. Simpson couldn't attend because of treacherous road conditions between her Little Rock home and Hot Springs. She credits her assistant Kathy Boggs and instructor Sandra Dunn for ensuring the smooth production of the ceremony while Dr. Simpson offered instruction and direction over the telephone.

The scheduled keynote speaker
GRAD continued on page 9



-- photo courtesy of Bobby Jines

ACTI Automotive Program Preparing Tomorrow's Technicians Today

Tomorrow's automotive professionals are training today at the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs.

Students interested in automotive-oriented careers can receive instruction and training in three different fields: auto collision repair, auto parts specialist and auto maintenance technology. Training lasts roughly between six months to two years depending on the field of study. However, there are no hard and fast time requirements affixed to a student's instruction since the students are allowed to work and learn at their own pace based on their abilities and aptitude. Some students complete their training more quickly than expected; others need a little more time.

The auto collision repair program prepares students to apply technical knowledge and skills to repair, recon-

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Students at work in Auto Maintenance Technology

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er, state Rep. Rick Saunders, was forced to stay home as well due to the weather conditions. National Park Community College President Dr. Susan Carder filled in as keynote speaker.

Dr. Carder discussed educational opportunities and encouraged the students to keep up with their training through the lifelong learning opportunities community colleges provide. As technology changes some students may require unforeseen training. She also congratulated them on their graduation making special note of their big accomplishment.

In the future, when students graduate from ACTI and achieve that big accomplishment for themselves, they'll participate in a commencement ceremony that's equally as big. And Dr. Simpson says more improvements are on the way to make the commencement even bigger.

"Our graduates are receiving a more formal, positive recognition

for their accomplishments," she said. "We're getting only positive feedback about the changes. The students really love what's going on and that's the best part. You can see the pride in every face."

Below is a list of December's ACTI graduates.

Auto Collision Repair: David Carter, *Hamburg*; Danzell Harrell, *Eudora*; Ray Wheaton, *Texarkana*.

Automotive Maintenance Technology: Christina Hicks, *Dardenelle*; John Warren, *Hot Springs*.

Business Education: Joy Garrett, *Hot Springs*; Brian Huston, *Pine Bluff*; Lukus Mitchell, *Grady*; Carol Tallent, *Fouke*.

Construction Technology: Laura Shelton, *England*; Tommy McBrier, *Little Rock*.

Cosmetology: Mandy Baker, *Hot Springs*; Freya Ferrell, *Hot Springs*.

Environmental Systems Services: Jimmy Arnold, *Holly Grove*.

Food Service: Derek Baird, *Low-*

ell; Steven Davis, *Gentry*; Thomas Drake, *Van Buren*; Jamar Hildreth, *Little Rock*; Demonta McCuiston, *Wynne*; Eva McGann, *Jonesboro*; Patrick Rideout, *Fordyce*; Brian Shannon, *Gentry*.

Laundry: Myra Dillon, *Mena*; Kristina Miller, *Little Rock*.

Medical Office Technology: Princinia Smith, *McGehee*; Christina Wheeler, *Hot Springs*.

Printing: Derrick Frierson, *Hot Springs*; Lindsay Greathouse, *Texarkana*; Xavier Kendricks, *Texarkana*; Seth Loy, *Mabelvale*; Frank McCarty, *El Dorado*; Frank Mueller, *Mountain Home*.

Sales & Marketing: Carolyn Justice, *Little Rock*; Jerren Sims, *Little Rock*.

Small Engines: Richard Fisk, *Hot Springs*; Brandon Hussman, *Rosebud*; Eric Tobias, *Sheridan*; Terry Williams, *Pine Bluff*.

Welding: Robert Hord, *Hot Springs Village*; Darius Taylor, *Hope*; Anthony Willis, *Hot Springs*.

Springdale High Teacher Named Teacher of the Year

Another Arkansas teacher has been recognized as one of the nation's best.

Springdale High School Jobs for Arkansas Graduates (JAG) teacher Britt James was named national New Career and Technical Teacher of the Year from the Association of Career and Technical Education during the organization's national conference in Charlotte, North Carolina in December 2008.

The JAG program helps students at risk of dropping out stay in school by offering them the opportunity to explore future careers and involving them with student organizations. JAG participants must meet at least two "at-risk" classifications that include pregnancy, poverty, low attendance rates and incarcerated parents.

"It's rewarding to help," James said. "You see kids that have so much potential but, for some reason, they're taking a different path."

James teaches skills such as managing credit, business etiquette and how to apply for college while encouraging them to join career-related student organizations in an effort to combat his school's nearly nine percent (9%) dropout rate.

According to James, JAG students find themselves with overwhelmingly adult responsibilities in low-income or single-parent homes and are often times not encouraged to pursue college or a career. He credits JAG, for which students receive credit for working during school hours, for giving those he teaches a sense of respect.

"They have to respect themselves before they can respect anyone else," he said. "I remind them that you've got to stay true to what your passion is."

James started teaching at Springdale as a substitute following his work as a radio announcer for the University of Arkansas women's basketball team. He eventually earned a non-traditional certification to get a full-time classroom job. James says the transition from substitute to full-time educator helped him connect with students.

On the first day of class, James provides his students with his cell phone number.

"They're always shocked when I do that," he said.

Students have called the number for job interview tips, help at home and occasionally, from jail.

"We'll listen to them, but we're not going to go pick them up," Sherrie James, Springdale JAG program director and Britt's wife, said.



Britt James

According to program tracking, which keeps up with students' progress for a year after graduation, as many as 95 percent of Springdale's JAG graduates are holding a full-time job, enrolled in college or have enlisted in the military.

Department of Workforce Education Deputy Director of Career and Technical Education John Davidson has high praises for James.

"The JAG program is an incredible success at Springdale High School and in Arkansas," Davidson said. "Britt James, with his dedication and commitment to his students, is a big reason why it has been so successful. He certainly deserves this award. He is one of many teachers involved with JAG who are helping to create brighter futures for students in our state who have the odds stacked against them."

Rep. Williams visits DWE



State Representative Darrin Williams of Little Rock met with Director Walker (above) on January 6 and toured the DWE offices before joining (below) ARS' Program Planning Development & Evaluation Associate Director Randy Parker (far left) and Commissioner Robert Treviño (far right) for a tour of ARS' Central Office.





Rod Duckworth
Associate Director
Career and
Technical Education
Arkansas Department of
Workforce Education

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

CTE: An Opportunity for All Students

Career and Technical Education (CTE) has changed a great deal since its earlier “vocational education” days. Years ago “vocational programs” focused mainly on basic technical skill training and did not reflect a connection to a career or the opportunity to possibly change careers at some point. Today, CTE provides all students who are enrolled in programs an opportunity to develop a clear understanding of a future career and the training that will be necessary to succeed in that area.

CTE covers a variety of challenging fields in diverse subject areas which are constantly evolving due to the changing global economy and constant updates in technology. Some of the career areas that students may enter through CTE include: Agriculture (farmers, animal scientists, turf grass specialists); Professional and Technical (automotive technicians, carpenters, electricians); Business and Marketing (entrepreneurs, financial officers, computer programmers and web design); Family and Consumer Sciences (management and life skills, executive chefs, hotel managers); Health Occupations (nurses, physical therapists, biomedical engineers); Public Safety and Security (EMTs, emergency management and response coordinators); and Technology (3-D animator, computer engineer, biotech-

nical engineer).

Arkansas is fortunate to have CTE programs in all 75 counties of the state. These programs represent a large range of the occupational opportunities available to students. The 2007-08 Arkansas enrollment data showed that there were 162,537 students enrolled in one or more CTE courses.

Our job at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education is to provide the necessary technical assistance and professional development opportunities to keep our instructors and programs current and strong. As new technology is developed in the world of business and industry, our CTE programs must keep up with this fast-paced technological change to ensure that our students are prepared for further post-secondary training or to enter into the workforce directly. However; many local CTE programs face challenges in finding the funding to keep our middle and secondary programs up to date with the latest equipment and technology. Thanks to our great resourceful CTE teachers across the state, Arkansas CTE continues to prepare students for post secondary education and successful careers.

Here are a few facts about CTE that you probably did not know:

- ▶ CTE graduates are 10-15%

more likely to be in the labor force, and earn 8-9% more than graduates of academic programs, according to a 2001 Russell Sage Foundation study

- ▶ A ratio of 1 CTE class for every 2 academic classes was shown to minimize the risk of students dropping out in a 2005 National Research Center for Career and Technical Education (NRCCTE) report
- ▶ Career and Technical Education (CTE) students enter postsecondary education at approximately the same rate as all high school graduates, notes a study by the Center on Education Policy and American Youth Policy Forum in 2000.
- ▶ Secondary students who graduate with a Career and Technical Education concentration are 2 ½ times more likely to be employed while pursuing post-secondary education than are “college prep” students, according to the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).

CTE can and does provide many opportunities for all students. The benefits for students who are enrolled in CTE are great. My work and the work of this agency is to continue to provide the necessary support to help our Arkansas CTE programs continue to be successful, which will in turn make our students successful.

Career Development Facilitators (CDF) Can Give Career Assistance to Students

In an effort to help relieve some of the stress and workload that high school counselors face on a daily basis, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) is leading an effort to train Career Development Facilitators to spearhead students' career guidance needs.

"We really think the system is broken, and we have got to have someone doing this job," said John Davidson, DWE Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education. "Our goal is to relieve some of the pressures on school counselors and give students someone to assist them in developing their career plans."

Funded by federal Perkins funds and supported by the Arkansas Department of Education, a Career Development Facilitator (CDF) is a new certification area which provides 18 weeks of training. Any counselor, teacher or staff member at a school can receive the training and the certification.

"Any school employee who wants to be certified will go through an 18-week online course," Davidson said. "Our first class in the state just completed and we will have about 18 new Career Development Facilitators."

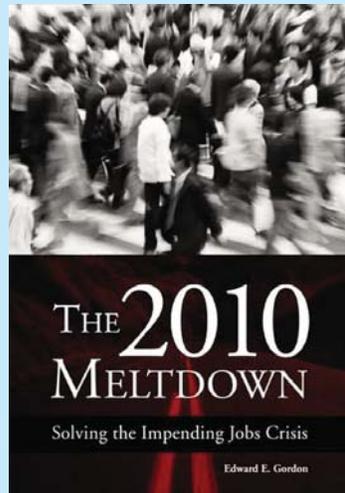
In the book *The 2010 Meltdown: Solving the Impending Job Crisis*, Phyllis Eisen, vice president of the Manufacturing Institute and executive director of the Center for Workforce Success, said that students are getting little or no career advice from high-school guidance counselors.

"It is criminal what we are finding in our high schools," she is quoted in the book as saying. "The K-12 education system is cracking from the lack of career counseling."

Davidson agrees and said DWE is committed to helping fix the problem.

"We will never really succeed in preparing for this 2010 crisis unless we fix the guidance system," Davidson said. "Over the next three years we would like to see every school in the state have someone trained as a Career Development Facilitator."

"I feel that the use of Career Development Facilitators in our state will help meet the diverse needs of high school students with different career interests and objectives," said DWE Director Bill Walker. "High school counselors working in conjunction with Career Development Facilitators can better prepare our students for more career opportunities by providing more career advice."



Blevins Named ACTI Associate Administrator



The Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs has a new employee on staff to assist with the day-to-day administration of the facility.

Diann Blevins started as ACTI's associate administrator November 3, 2008. Blevins is an experienced certified public accountant who worked for several years in hospital administration and for the state in the field of health education. She received a bachelor's degree in accounting from Arkansas State University where she has also worked toward a master's degree in business administration. She holds another bachelor's degree in psychology which she earned at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock.

Blevins says she enjoys helping those with disabilities obtain employment and working with what she calls "the greatest group of people in Arkansas."

"I get so much satisfaction from helping employees, peers, students and even upper management," Blevins said. "My goal is to help achieve the ACTI mission of assisting individuals with disabilities to become employed by providing comprehensive rehabilitation services."

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AUTO continued from page 9

struct and finish automobile bodies, fenders and external features. Students receive instruction in structure analysis, damage repair, non-structural analysis, mechanical and electrical components, plastics and adhesives, painting and refinishing techniques and damage analysis and estimating.

From beginning to end, auto collision repair training takes roughly 18 months, but students can opt to specialize in one specific area rather than learn the field as a whole.

"If we modified a student's training to only include refinishing, for instance, they can be done in eight months," said ACTI Master Instructor David Crossley. "A student can request the whole course or just a portion."

Crossley says regardless of the length of the training and the courses taken, every student gets something from their training.

"This really helps those who want to start life over and those who

want to create an independent life of their own," said Crossley. "You can really see a difference in the students from the time they start to the time they leave. They come in a little nervous, but when they complete their training, they know that they'll be able to find a good job. It gives them confidence."

While the auto collision repair program prepares students to work on the outer shell and appearance of cars, the auto maintenance technology program offers them instruction on how to deal with a car's engine and performance. The program prepares individuals to apply technical knowledge and skills to repair, service, and maintain all types of automobiles. Students learn about brake systems, electrical systems, engine performance, engine repair, suspension and steering, automatic and manual transmissions and drive trains, and heating and air condition systems.

"We teach our students how to do everything but major repairs," ACTI Master Instructor Wayne Thomas said. "It gives them the knowledge that they need to get a job, and there will always be jobs

available for anyone who knows how to fix a car. You'd be surprised how many people don't know basic maintenance on their cars – the simple, little things it takes to keep a car running day in and day out."

And the students are well aware that they are working toward something better for themselves.

"I like to work on cars and learn more," said Tabitha Stewart, a 19-year-old student from Conway. "I don't have a job yet, but I'll be working once I get the adequate training. If I wasn't doing this, I'd probably be living with my family in Alabama and doing little jobs for the rest of my life. I'm glad I'm doing this."

Considering Thomas' estimation that there are very few people who know how to do basic maintenance on their vehicles, it stands to reason that they're equally as unaware about the parts required to maintain and repair their cars. For that reason, ACTI offers training as an auto parts specialist. Students in this field learn everything they need to know about parts for motor vehicles – spare parts, replacement parts, accessories and other equipment for cars, trucks, and other vehicles.

As with every career field at ACTI, school administrators are working to secure national accreditation for automotive training.

"Once our students pass their tests and leave the Center with national accreditation," says Dr. Dawn Simpson, ACTI Director of Vocational Instruction, "they'll be able to get a job anywhere in the US."

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A Little Rock native, Blevins enjoys reading, tennis and playing with her grandchildren. Blevins and her husband Bruce both serve as pastors at Life Unlimited Church in Little Rock. Together they have a 21-year-old daughter, Elizabeth, who, along with son-in-law Andy, are the parents of a five-month-old daughter, Riley. Blevins also has a four-month-old granddaughter named Kalla from step-daughter Sarah and her husband Luis.

"She's a wonderful asset to the ACTI family because of her background, enthusiasm and out-of-the-box thinking," ACTI Administrator Barbara Lewis said. "I'm thrilled with her addition to the team."



Automotive Collision Repair Instructor Don Crossley and ACTI Director of Vocational Instruction Dr. Dawn Simpson discuss requirements for classes.



ARS's District V-N Raising the Bar to Serve the Clients of Central Arkansas

The Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's District V-North Manager Carl Daugherty is always at work trying to improve the services clients in the district receive. But to those unfamiliar, Daugherty's three-point improvement plan likely sounds more suitable for a hardware store than for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division (ARS).

District V-N has consistently been one of the top-producing districts in all of ARS – placing as the third-highest producing district in the 2008 fiscal year with 394 case closures and ending the 2007 fiscal year as the highest-producing district with 457 closures. Daugherty has a goal of 415 closures for the 2009 fiscal year with a plan he calls “sharpening the saw.”

Daugherty's plan includes a **heightened focus on more timely service** to the district's clients. ARS rehabilitation counselors have 60 days to determine whether a client is eligible for ARS service and 90 days to develop an employment plan for eligible clients. Daugherty says inadequate communication and a lack of dependable transportation can affect a client's ability to receive timely service. Considering that District V-N is one of the state's largest rehab districts and the only one with four field offices (**North Little Rock, Lonoke, Conway, Russellville**), these problems –

which Daugherty says can be easily solved in many cases – can lead to a large number of clients missing out on the services they need.

“We currently focus on taking in referrals, determining eligibility and then developing an employment plan for the clients who are eligible,” Daugherty says. “Right now, because of things such as communication and transportation, only about 80 percent of the clients we receive referrals for are determined to be eligible for an employment plan. We're going to do better focusing on not losing that 20 percent between determining eligibility and setting up an employment plan.”

The district is well on its way to providing timely services to its clients. Daugherty has long had an incentive program in place to motivate the district's 11 counselors. Counselors who end a month without any late cases earn a spot on the **Manager's Dean's List**. Those who make the most appearances in a year's time receive a special bonus.

The district also made one of its field offices more convenient and accessible last summer. The office, previously located on East Kiehl Avenue in Sherwood was closed and moved to 1401 Main St. in North Little Rock – a site that eliminates a big transportation problem for some clients.

“So far, the new location has been a big hit with everyone who uses the office,” said secretary La-Trinda Woodruff. “There's a bus stop right out front. That makes it a

lot easier for those clients who use public transportation to get to and from our office. It's much bigger, and there's just much more room for everyone to get around once they're inside.”



Carl Daugherty
District V-N Manager

This spring, Daugherty plans to make the community surrounding the North Little Rock office more aware of the work done there by holding a Community Awareness Picnic. Likely to be held in mid-March, Daugherty intends on inviting members of the community to the picnic which will include not only traditional food, drinks and games, but also speakers who will discuss and define disabilities, explain the limitations and abilities of those with disabilities, voter registration and disability assessment. Daugherty believes this picnic will not only introduce the office and its services to the community, but increase referrals.

Daugherty credits Department of Workforce Education (DWE) Director Bill Walker and ARS Commissioner Bob Treviño for securing the North Little Rock location and for the benefits it will provide to clients.

The second step in Daugherty's sharpening-the-saw strategy involves **increased interaction between the district's field offices and the Community Rehabilitation**

V-N continued on page 15



North Little Rock Field Office Staff (above left): Sonny Scott, Placement Specialist; Martha Strother, Counselor; Delena Stricklin, Rehabilitation Assistant; Latrinda Woodruff, Secretary; Julian Watson, Counselor; Lynda Olden-Barnes, Counselor; and District Manager Carl Daugherty. **Conway Field Office Staff (right):** Lisa Murphy, Counselor; Woody Carlisle, Counselor; Jayne Barkus, Counselor; Katy Morrison, Rehabilitation Assistant; and Connie Morrow, Secretary.

V-N continued from page 14

tion Programs (CRP) which helps find stabilization with the clients.

If a client is unsure what type of employment they'd like, CRPs work with clients to determine what career skills they have and deliver a report to the field offices to help the counselors develop a more comprehensive employment plan.

"This provides a good interaction with clients and counselors," Daugherty said. "Developing an employment plan isn't as challenging when we have this kind of resource, because we can see an in-

dividual's limitations and the areas in which they excel."

Finally, Daugherty wants to **increase the referral to employment plan development ratio**. A big factor in reaching this goal involves working more closely with the business community within the district.

"We're going to be working with businesses to communicate the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities," Daugherty said. "Some companies don't understand that there are benefits. They think that they have to

pay all of the costs associated with hiring individuals with disabilities. That's not the case at all."

According to Daugherty, the state helps companies pay for the accommodations necessary for those with disabilities to do their jobs and the state provides the business with a Work Opportunity Tax Credit.

It may sound like an improvement plan more suited for a chain of home improvement stores, but ARS clients in District V-N will benefit from "sharpening the saw."



Lonoke Field Office Staff (above left): Marti McGee, Secretary; Janna Clemons, Counselor; Ellice Scales, Rehabilitation Assistant; and Mamie Lee, Counselor. **Russellville Field Office Staff (right):** Renisha Rivers, Intern; Janis Taylor, Counselor; Peggy Hunter, Rehabilitation Assistant; Barbara Metcalf, Secretary; Tonya Brown, Intern; Brenda Chronister, Secretary; District Manager Carl Daugherty; Linda Rose, Counselor; and Kristen Allen, Intern; (not pictured: Jim Spragins, Senior Counselor; Toney LeQueiu, Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission Case Worker).

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) offers Assistive Technology for those in need

Staffers at the Department of Workforce Education’s Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division’s ICAN (Increasing Capabilities Access Network) program call it “one of Arkansas’s best-kept secrets.”

ICAN loans assistive technology (AT) devices to Arkansans with temporary or permanent disabilities on a temporary basis.

“We are your connection to Assistive Technology,” says ICAN program manager Eddie Schmeckenbecher. “Assistive Technology is any type of device or tool that helps people live, work, communicate and play more independently.”

ICAN includes the **AT4ALL (Assistive Technology for ALL)** database, which is a statewide assistive technology program.

“Arkansans of all ages, families, schools, agencies, and businesses can find the appropriate assistive technology to assist those with disabilities to become as independent as possible,” Schmeckenbecher said.



ICAN Technology Center



Low Vision
Black-on-Yellow Keyboard



Activities of Daily Living



Dragon Naturally Speaking

There is no age or financial restriction. ICAN only requires an Arkansas driver’s license or Arkansas picture ID for participation.

Listed below are the different services ICAN AT4ALL offers.

- ♿ **Loan Program.** ICAN AT4ALL has a wide range of devices that are available for loan to individuals and/or agencies. These can be used for a six week “try-out” to see if it is what the individual needs or wants. If it is not a good fit, another device can be borrowed. ICAN also loans devices to individuals who have a device that is being repaired.
- ♿ **Recycled Devices.** Anyone with devices that are in good condition can donate these items to ICAN AT4ALL. Once received into the clearinghouse, the devices are cleaned and put on the website to be donated back into the community.
- ♿ **Device Demonstration.** Those considering a specific type of device can contact ICAN AT4ALL for a demonstration of many types of devices.
- ♿ **Technical Assistance.** Knowledgeable staff members provide AT-related technical assistance to all callers.
- ♿ **Training Opportunities.** ICAN AT4ALL offers training in all aspects of assistive technology. Current training opportunities are listed on the website and can be tailored to particular needs.
- ♿ **Presentations/Exhibits.** Staffers provide presentations and exhibits about ICAN and the benefits of assistive technology at a variety of events.
- ♿ **Clearinghouse Tours.** The amount of AT at the ICAN Technology Center is amazing. Call ICAN for a tour.
- ♿ **Information & Assistance.** ICAN AT4ALL is a great resource for information about AT, funding for devices, accessibility guidelines, workplace modification and much more.

ICAN is funded by a federal grant and works very closely with Vocational

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Little Rock to Host National Jobs for America's Graduates Meeting

Arkansas will get to show off the success of its **Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates** programs April 14-15 as Little Rock will host the national Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) board meeting.

Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe, a member of the JAG National Board of Directors, invited Maine Governor John Baldacci, National JAG Chair, to hold the national JAG board spring meeting in Little Rock.

"JAG has two board meetings all year, one in the spring and one in the fall, so it's a big deal that they are coming to have their board meeting here," said Department of Workforce Education Associate Director of Workforce Training Sandra Porter. "It's really good timing since Arkansas was recently honored for 5-of-5 status and since our JAG programs have made such positive news lately. We are currently working with the Arkansas Department of Education to help introduce 25 new JAG programs in alternative learning schools across the state and that is very exciting."

The two-day event will begin April 14 with a tour of the Clinton Library and a reception and dinner at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion. The board meeting will take place April 15 at the Capital Hotel. Also on that day, board members will tour the Arkansas School for the Blind, which features the only JAG program in the

country at a blind school.

"We are excited that the national JAG board chose Little Rock for the site of its spring meeting," Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker said. "I am extremely proud of the success of the JAG programs here in Arkansas. I look forward to showing off the good work we have done, and also having a chance to show off Little Rock in the process."

Alternative Learning Schools slated for new JAG programs

Ashdown New Tradition	Ashdown
New Horizons ALE Center	Batesville
Blytheville Charter School	Blytheville #5
Bryant Alternative School	Bryant
Murmil Education Center	El Dorado
Fouke High School	Fouke
The Main Academy	Gravette
Star Acedemy	Hackett
Ashley County Learning Academy	Hamburg
Heber Springs High School	Heber Springs
Jessieville/Fountain Lake ALE	Jessieville
Success Achievement Acedemy	Jonesboro
Lavaca Middle School	Lavaca
Hamilton Learning Academy	Little Rock
Felder Learning Acedemy	Little Rock
J.D. Leftwich	Magazine
Malvern Learning Acedemy	Malvern
Mansfield Middle School	Mansfield
Baxter County Alternative School	Mountain Home
North Little Rock-West Campus	North Little Rock
Paris High School	Paris
Pea Ridge High School	Pea Ridge
Scranton	Scranton
Shirley High School	Shirley
Stuttgart	Stuttgart
Valley Springs High School	Valley Springs

ICAN *continued from page 16*



ONYK technology



Adaptive Switch

Rehabilitation counselors and many other organizations around Arkansas to assist people in living more independently. Many people whom the program serves only need assistive technology for a short period of time to recover from surgery or an accident. **ICAN AT4ALL** is the perfect place to look for assistive technology. For additional information, contact the staff at ICAN at 501-666-

8868, Toll Free at 800-828-2799 or visit the website at www.arkansas-ican.org.



Joint Staff Meeting * December 11, 2008
Governor Mike Beebe visits DWEI/ARS staff





Barbara McBeth Lewis
Associate Director/
Administrator
Arkansas Career
Training Institute
Arkansas Rehabilitation
Services Division

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

The Department of Workforce Education's **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI)**, formerly known as the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center, continues the tradition of building lives by helping Arkansans with disabilities live their dreams. **Our name has changed but our mission to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services is stronger than ever.** The dedication and commitment of the staff at ACTI makes it possible for so many Arkansans in need of our services to thrive and build their futures.

Whether it is a person with a brain injury, stroke, learning disability, orthopedic condition, spinal cord injury or emotional/behavioral disorder, at ACTI we see the faces, the daily struggles, challenges and rewards of so many Arkansans needing a second chance and an opportunity to rebuild their lives. Students benefit greatly from the array of medical services available at ACTI. Many students with limited academic and coping skills, or who have never been away from home, find a positive environment for social, emotional, psychological and vocational learning at ACTI.

The realities and dynamics of serving persons with disabilities are multi-faceted. The staff at ACTI is trained to meet the full range of individualized needs of students referred to us by ARS field counselors. **The goal at ACTI is to provide the skills necessary to assist as many students as possible to enter or re-enter the workforce.**

During the past year, many changes have occurred at ACTI. In addition to our name change, we received a complete renovation of our student dormitories with furniture provided to us by DWE's Federal Surplus Property. A special thanks for the hard work of the Maintenance and Environmental Services staff and Construction Technology students who helped put everything in place. A new wing for college students was created on the 3rd floor of the main building complete with internet access. And our library is currently under renovation and expansion.

Several programs were also added to the ACTI curriculum. The KUDER Career Interest Inventory was added to the student orientation program (CARS). The career readiness component of Key Train was added to our Employment Readiness curriculum. Increased emphasis has been placed on Adult Basic Education and employability skills preparation prior to a student's enrollment in a vocational training program.

Thanks to the support of Director Bill Walker, ACTI secured additional Perkins funds to allow us to purchase needed equipment to meet national certification requirements in Welding, Construction Technology, Printing and Automotive Technology. In addition, we are utilizing our existing resources to supplement Perkins funds to purchase equipment.

The Food Service program received certification in the Serv-Safe program and we are adding a Customer Service curriculum to the Sales and Marketing program. A SkillsUSA chapter and pilot Jobs for Arkansas Graduates (JAG) was added to the vocational training program.

The bar has been raised for our students as well. During the past year, there was a 50% decline in disciplinary discharges. The reduction is credited to the field counselors and the ACTI Admissions department in their efforts and screening of appropriate referrals. The coordinated efforts of the Counseling, Student Living, Recreation, Security and Employment Readiness departments, increased participation of the staff in the Behavior Enhancement program and increased student recognition for positive behavior has contributed to more students completing their programs and graduating from ACTI.

At ACTI, it truly takes a village to address the holistic needs of our students. ACTI has averaged a daily census of over 280 students during the past year as the demand for our services continues to grow. *ACTI has a wonderful and dedicated staff of professionals in all departments committed to carrying on the tradition of providing comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities.*



Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

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Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Three Capitol Mall
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201-1083
501-682-1500
501-682-1509 fax
<http://dwe.arkansas.gov>

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Central Office

1616 Brookwood Drive
Little Rock, AR 72202
501-296-1600 (V/TTY)
800-330-0632 (V/TTY)
www.arsinfo.org

Arkansas Career Training Institute
501-624-4411



Three Capitol Mall
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