

March - April 2009

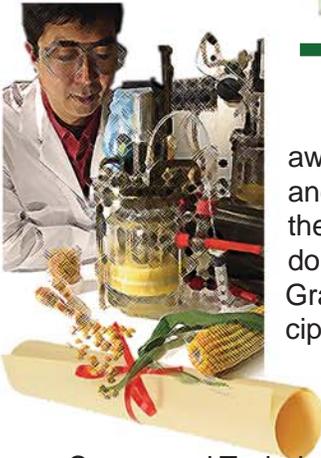


the Workforce Counselor

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



Department of Workforce Education Awards \$2.3 Million in Grants to 74 Schools



The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) has awarded 74 middle, secondary and post-secondary schools in the state a total of over \$2 million dollars in New Program Start-Up Grants. The schools are the recipients of 86 separate grants.

The agency awards the grants annually for schools to purchase equipment to create

new Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses or programs of study. Grant applications are competitively graded upon, among other things: program goals, student benefits, employment opportunities, school facilities, and course demand.

"The funding provided through this effort will assist Career and Technical Education programs in helping students achieve the skills they need to be successful in further post-secondary training or in future careers," said DWE Career and Technical Education Division Associate Director Roderic Duckworth.

The first of the agency's priorities when filling these grant requests included funding new Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) programs at alternative learning environments in order to emphasize career and technical components for special populations. JAG is a school-to-career program meant to keep young people in school through graduation and provide work-based learning experiences that will lead to career advancement opportunities or enrollment in a post-secondary institution that leads to a rewarding career. Twenty-nine JAG programs were funded through these New Start-Up Grants.

Second, the agency focused on Science,



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DWE Hosts Workshop on Recovery and Reinvestment Act

Arkansas schools will be receiving close to \$943 million under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division is hopeful those schools will use the funds for technology and equipment upgrades.

The Department of Workforce Education hosted a

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(Pictured above, foreground) Interim Administrator for Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) Judy Smith, DWE Director Bill Walker, Deputy Director for Career & Technical Education John Davidson, and ACTI Director of Maintenance Jimmy Hatmaker take a break during the meeting to discuss the workshop presentation.



Director's Update

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.
Director

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

2009 has proven to be one of the busiest first quarters ever in the history of our agency. With the Arkansas Legislative session in full swing and the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (more commonly known as the Economic Stimulus Act) by the United States Congress, we've been hard at work following legislation that affects the entire agency.

I have also been proactively working in conjunction with the directors of the other state agencies on the Governor's Workforce Cabinet to recommend to Governor Beebe which programs and projects should be given priority for money from the Stimulus Act. Our agency has hosted a workshop attended by Workforce Cabinet agencies and professional organizations to offer a better understanding of the legal obligations of Stimulus Act funding.

President Obama and Governor Beebe have made it very clear that we are to put our portion of Arkansas's share of federal Stimulus Act funds to work. We must ensure accountability and transparency in every way to remain accountable to you in our efforts to raise student career success, advance career readiness and improve career and technical education skills necessary for the 21st-century workforce.

Each of our agency's divisions – Career and Technical Education, Adult Education, and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services - have projects ready to go once the funding has been released. We clearly under-

stand that these are one time funds and we are prepared to invest every penny on programs and projects that will have a long lasting effect on career education and rehabilitation services once they have been exhausted.

The current economic crisis is beginning to have an impact on our state. We hear the news every day about how layoffs and plant closings are affecting citizens all over the state. We've seen a revised state revenue forecast and generally things seem to be tightening up. However, thanks to our strong governmental leadership, Arkansas hasn't been impacted by the current economic crisis as hard as other states, but we are beginning to see the effects.

In spite of the economy, I have high hopes that the budget we will receive from the Governor and state Legislature, and the funding we will receive from the Stimulus Act, will allow us to raise the bar even more for the citizens who need us the most. We will do our part to stimulate the economy by helping prepare more Arkansans to get the best career education and training available. Our agency is here to do all possible to make sure our citizens are the best trained for the high-tech, high wage, high demand fields of the 21st century. We are continuously working to make the Department of Workforce Education the best resource for career learning so that we can better assist Arkansas's citizens be more competitive in the global economy and close whatever achievement gaps may exist.



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

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

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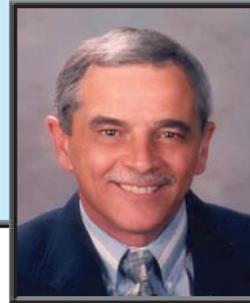
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Chief of Field Services

Ken Musteen Bids ARS Farewell after 38 Years of Service



The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division bid farewell to one of our longest serving employees on February 27. Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen retired from the agency after 38 years of service.

Musteen began his career at the age of 21 as a Recreation Aide at what is today the Arkansas Career Training Institute in Hot Springs. While there, Musteen said he was overwhelmed and inspired by the struggle and achievement of people searching for personal independence through career training. He said that insight provided him with the revelation he needed to pursue his professional career.

"My trek was charted by multitudes of people, navigated by mentors, teachers, colleagues, and of course, our disenfranchised charges ... seeking hope and direction along the trail to their dreams and destinies," Musteen said. "People shared their lives in various ways and gave [me] a moment of their time, entrusting me, encouraging me; thereby enabling me to stay the course upon which I had been directed. Each experience remains indelibly imprinted in my memory and eternally embedded in the depths of my heart."

Musteen said he drew as much encouragement from his co-workers as he had from his clients. Calling a career with ARS the road of "public service less traveled," Musteen said he and other ARS employees "share that remarkable road which is bordered with historic markers, framed by a landscape of beauty and full of bountiful rewards."

Musteen imparted these words to his fellow ARS and DWE co-workers, "As you continue along the trail, I pray that you are allowed to maintain your bearing on this mission with which you have been blessed. If so, may you marvel at all the miracles you see, savor the memorable moments of shared souls, and embrace all your encounters of enlightenment. Keep your compass true, and may God hold your hand and bless you all as He has me. Always give your best, and confront all the challenges and barriers. Hopefully you will survive and thrive, and God will smile upon you for a mission well done in guiding

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Arkansas Rehabilitation Association Thanks State Lawmakers during Reception March 11



State Sen. Shane Broadway (Bryant) and Arkansas Speaker of the House Robbie Wills (Conway) meet with Association members March 11.



ARA President Jim Quinn welcomes legislators and guests.



(l-r): Director Walker, ARA President Jim Quinn, ARA President-Elect Debbie Wooten, ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño, ARS Interim Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery



Debbie Wooten with State Representative David Cook (Randolph County).



State Representative David Rainey (Desha County) shares a moment with DWE Director Bill Walker.

Members of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Association (ARA) held a reception for state legislators on March 11 at the Capitol Hill building as a way of thanking the lawmakers for their service and dedication to disabled consumers in Arkansas. ARA also wanted to show the legislators appreciation for their support of the state's public Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program.

ARA President-elect Debbie Wooten said members used the event to further explain how the association and the VR program work. They also informed lawmakers about some of ARA's efforts in the state and elsewhere.



ACTI Supervisor Dr. Dawn Simpson and Commissioner Treviño with state Representative Pam Adcock (Little Rock).

"ARA works for the betterment of individuals with disabilities in the workplace," Wooten said. **"We help secure the appropriate funding for Vocational Rehabilitation programs through the National Rehabilitation Ad-**



(l-r) ACTI Dietary Services Director Jane Campbell, Admin. Asst. Vicki Wilson, and Food Production Manager Janey Hunter take a break from setting out delicious refreshments brought from Hot Springs where ACTI Culinary students prepared the fare.

ministration."

Wooten says she and several other ARA members had returned from a seminar

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Arkansas Association of Continuing & Adult Education hosts Legislators for Luncheon March 17

The Arkansas Association of Continuing and Adult Education hosted a special luncheon on March 17 to thank the state's legislators for their dedication in helping to improve the adult education system in the state.



DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker addresses legislators



DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith and Senator Hank Wilkins IV of Pine Bluff

of the state's employers in today's economy and understand how an educated workforce helps

Members of the Arkansas House of Representatives and Arkansas State Senate, along with adult education instructors from across the state, packed the Capitol Hill Building for a time to share ideas on the specific needs and funding issues of adult education in Arkansas.



Representative Tim Summers, Benton County

Conversation at the luncheon focused on how members of the state legislature can work with the Department of Workforce Education and adult education centers across the state to assist in helping meet the needs of business and industry and the needs of the adult education community.

The legislators are sensitive to the needs

businesses expand.

There has been great support in the current legislative session for House Bill 1257, which will help provide funding for those adult education teachers and classes necessary to meet the demand of the workforce by providing education to potential employees.



Ruth Ann Williams, Director of Conway Adult Education, and Senator Gilbert Baker of Conway

During the luncheon, the legislators were briefed on how DWE's adult education division is committed to supporting basic academic skill improvements, the Career Readiness Certificate program, WAGE, and GED credentials that improve an adult's opportunity to seek and gain employment.



Sen. Denny Altes (Fort Smith) and Rep. Richard Carroll (North Little Rock)



Director Walker greets Senator Paul Miller (Melbourne)



Charles Allen, Chief Administrative Office of the Arkansas School Systems of the Dept. of Corrections, with DWE's Program Manager for GED Janice Hanlon.

Agricultural Program Manager/FFA State Advisor inducted into Agriculture Hall of Fame

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) Agriculture and Science Program Manager Marion Fletcher, a 46-year education veteran, was inducted into the Arkansas Agriculture Hall of Fame on March 13 during a luncheon at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Little Rock. The Hall of Fame honors those who have made significant contributions to Arkansas agriculture, as well as community and economic development.

Fletcher has spent his professional life mentoring vocational agricultural students and members of the Arkansas Chapter of the FFA. He has been the state FFA advisor since 1989 and is also a member of the National FFA Board of Directors, serving as National FFA Treasurer.

"The life of Marion Fletcher has defined Arkansas agriculture education," DWE Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson said. "Through Marion's leadership during the past four decades, three generations of students have become today's and tomorrow's leaders.

"He has never accepted mediocre. He has held the bar high and has continued to push for greater excellence for both our students and our instructors," Davidson continued. "This excellence is recognized not only locally but nationally. Marion is the longest serving State Director of Agriculture Education in the nation. Marion is not only knowledgeable about agriculture education, but he excels in his knowledge and understanding of the political process that is so necessary to the success of agriculture programs and FFA chap-



Marion Fletcher (second from right) is congratulated by (l-r) state Representative Bruce Maloch (Magnolia), DWE Director Bill Walker, and state Senator Steve Faris (Malvern).

ters around the state."

Fletcher spent six years as an agriculture instructor, first at Desha Central Schools, then at Magnet Cove, before joining the Arkansas Department of Education as Area Supervisor of Agricultural Education, a post he held for 20 years. In 1989, he was named State Supervisor and Program Manager of Agricultural Education. The Vocational and Technical Education Division of the Department of Education was renamed the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education in 1997.

He is a life member of the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers Association. Fletcher's career also includes more than 20 years of helping young people show livestock as co-superintendent of the Arkansas State Fair Association, and as a member of the Arkansas Farm and Ranch Club, where he served as president from 1992-1994.

"Marion Fletcher is a legend," said Jack Justus, Chairman of the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities. "When

you see his red hair and the blue and yellow jacket, you know its Marion Fletcher. He is so deserving of this. It's an honor not only to him, but for his family and the profession he cares so much about."

Fletcher received the Arkansas "Boss of the Year" award in 1991 and the 35-year Service Award for Career and Technical Education in 2004. He's also received the Honorary American and Arkansas Farmer Degree from the FFA.

"To say his induction into the Hall of Fame is deserved is a major understatement,"

DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. said. "When you hear the name Marion Fletcher, you automatically think of FFA and agricultural education. He has shaped the lives of hundreds upon hundreds of students throughout the years and has made such a positive impact on Arkansas agriculture.

"We gratefully acknowledge and honor him for his many years of exemplary service, outstanding accomplishments, dedication, and unending generosity, and his vision and guidance to agriculture in the state of Arkansas. We thank him for his unwavering commitment and leadership to the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. I am very proud of him for receiving this honor."

The Agriculture Hall of Fame is sponsored by the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Arkansas Farm Bureau. Other inductees joining Fletcher included Paul H. Harvel, Justin Morris, Bob Spears and Collier Wenderoth, Jr.

DWE's Adult Education Division sees increase in number of GED Test Takers in 2008

Arkansas GED Statistics	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
# Taking Tests	7,915	8,202	8,053	8,179	8,747
# Passing Tests	6,687	7,017	6,635	6,906	7,443
Pass Rate	84%	86%	82%	84%	85%

The increase in layoffs and unemployment in the state led more of those affected to take the Arkansas General Educational Development (GED[®]) Test in 2008. In 2008, 8,747 took the GED test, up 568 from 2007. Of those, 7,443, or 85 percent, passed the test, an increase of 537 from 2007.

"We are very pleased that we had an increase in numbers in 2008," Arkansas Department of Workforce Education GED Testing Program Administrator Janice Hanlon said. "In light of so many people losing their jobs, and their need for more education, our Adult Education and GED Testing Centers have really worked hard to encourage people to come in and take the test. We can provide some of the training necessary for people to be successful."

Ongoing layoffs are causing ripple effects.

"Plants are closing all over the state. Some of those former employees don't have a high school education and our staff has been there to help," Hanlon said.

"The people who have been laid off or who have had jobs terminated see this as an opportunity to improve their skills so they can eventually find a job," DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith said. "I'm just ecstatic at our numbers from 2008 and I think we'll see even bigger numbers in 2009."

The state saw the highest pass rate in three years in 2008.

"We always have a high pass rate

in Arkansas," Hanlon said. "We can attribute that to several different factors. We require that a person take and pass a GED practice test before they take the GED test. We don't want to waste their time and ours if they are not prepared. But it boils down to our centers and our instructors doing such a great job preparing the individuals to take the test."

And instructors have had to deal with less than ideal circumstances, Smith said.

"Over the past 20 years, Adult Education has not received any significant increase in funding, yet the cost of living and teacher's salaries have skyrocketed," Smith said. "We have moved from full-time teachers to part-time teachers and that has made this task even more difficult."

"When we had money moved from our budget due to projected shortfalls, our agency made the decision to find money from other sources to put back for part-time teachers and paraprofessionals in order to reach the students we were designed to serve. Our programs have met the requests and I want to attribute the success and hard work to them."



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

Funding approved for facility upgrades

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs is receiving \$500,000 to make upgrades and improvements to the facility.

The funding was made available through Act 764 of the 86th Arkansas General Assembly which appropriated the money to ACTI from the state's General Improvement Fund. Director Bill Walker credits Governor Mike Beebe for his releasing of the funding to ACTI.

According to Interim ACTI Administrator Judy Smith, the funds are designated for major projects including replacement of the school's secondary electrical system, asbestos removal and replacement of the institute's boiler. Smith says ACTI is in critical need of electrical work.

"Once the secondary electrical system is replaced, the school will be safer and we'll be able to use more equipment," Smith said. "Right now, we have to limit the amount of electrical equipment we use at the same time because the system just can't handle it. That obviously limits some of the training we're able to provide and require. It ultimately slows down how we train our students."

ARS Associate Director and Chief Financial Officer John Wright says the agency hopes to use the services of the state Department of Correction (DOC) to save on a substantial portion of the labor costs of the repair projects. DOC helped DWE/ARS with a renovation project in the ACTI dorms last summer.

According to Smith, administrators have just begun the contract work to get the bid process started. She estimates

the renovation will begin in earnest during the summer 2009.

ACTI JAG Program first of its kind in the country

The staff and students at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs are gearing up to start a **Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG)** pilot program.

The ACTI JAG program will be the 39th in Arkansas, but it will be wholly different from the other 38 in the state. In fact, it will be the only one of its kind in the country.

"We are unique," said ACTI JAG Program Specialist Sandra Dunn. "There's no other organization like us in Arkansas."

Fifty-four percent of the students at ACTI are older than 19. So this will be the first program in the US geared toward adult students (those over age 18) with disabilities.

Considering that the target student at ACTI deviates from the average JAG student, some of the rules and requests for the ACTI program will deviate from the average JAG program.

During the first year of the pilot project, JAG staff members have asked ACTI instructors to recommend their top two students for inclusion in the program. Also, in the high school-based program, students are required to work 15 hours each week. ACTI has requested extra transportation so their students can work 15 hours weekly, but aren't required to do so considering the difficulty they may encounter.

"We're hoping to see 10 students as model participants and then see the ripple effect," said Dunn. "Companies know about JAG and we believe they'll offer to support the program in the form of grants, trips and





ACTI Administrator Lewis reflects on Wonderful Opportunities and Friendship with ARS

On January 31, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division's Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs ended an era. On that day, ACTI Administrator Barbara Lewis retired after nearly 34 years with ARS.

Lewis is a native of Pine Bluff and earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville and a Master's degree in Counseling from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia. Her tenure with ARS has included positions as vocational evaluator, field counselor, regional supervisor and Chief of Field Services.

As a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) and Administrator of the Arkansas Career Training Institute, Lewis was responsible for the overall planning, direction, management and coordination of the rehabilitation center's programs and services. The facility provides comprehensive rehabilitation services which include vocational training, employability and medical services to help people with disabilities obtain

employment. The rehabilitation center and hospital have approximately 260 employees and serve an average enrollment of 300 students.

"I will never forget the many wonderful opportunities, professional challenges, friendships and shared experiences with so many of you in my career with the agency," Lewis said. "I am going to miss everyone."

Of course, Lewis, herself, will be missed.

"I had the opportunity to work with Barbara Lewis for a number of years during her three decades of employment," said long-time ARS Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen. "I know she was an inspiration both professionally and personally for many people during that time. It's impossible to know how many lives Barbara truly touched and improved thanks to her work in the field program and at ACTI. But one thing is for certain, Arkansas is a much better place because of her and there are thousands of Arkansans who are leading brighter lives today because of the encouragement and leadership she provided."

Co-workers, friends and family joined together to give Lewis a proper goodbye on February 6 with a block party at ACTI. It was a bittersweet sendoff to one of ARS's most beloved employees and Lewis said she was touched by the sentiment and gift she received commemorating her years of service.

"I was overwhelmed by the beautiful trophy that was presented to me at my reception," Lewis said. "Your thoughtfulness and generosity is sincerely

appreciated. Thank you for attending and making my day so special."

ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño says it's impossible to know how many lives Lewis has touched over the years.

"So many things have changed in the world around us in the past 34 years that it's really difficult to keep track," Commissioner Treviño said. "But there's one thing that's remained constant, and that's Barbara Lewis' dedication, compassion and sense of caring. Because of that, countless Arkansans with disabilities have received the education and training they've needed to help them find jobs to lead independent lives. Barbara has definitely been a shining light in Arkansas."

Department of Workforce Edu-

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(top) Barbara Lewis, center, with ARS retirees Theodosia Cooper and Jesse Gatewood; (bottom) Lewis receives a retirement trophy honoring her years of commitment to ARS from ARS Commissioner Treviño and DWE Director Walker.



Lewis shares the stage with husband Edward, ARS Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen, and daughter Heather

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Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based courses of study. Some of these courses include:

- ◆ **Renewable Energy:** The Renewable Energy Technology program is designed for students interested in careers in renewable energy technology. It focuses on the practices, skills and knowledge necessary for employment in the numerous industries associated with the emerging field of renewable energy. Educational experiences will include a basic introduction to renewable energy technology as well as basic courses in safety instruction, basic electricity, technical thinking, and a basic mechanics course, as well as more advanced courses like biomass and feed stocks, bio-fuels, and process instrumentation.
- ◆ **Advanced Manufacturing:** This program area is designed to introduce students to the world of advanced manufacturing and establish a foundation upon which further studies in manufacturing might rest. Students will explore basic manufacturing materials and processes, tools, techniques, and produce some simple products.
- ◆ **Aviation Installation and Modification:** Aircraft Manufacturing Technology is designed to teach basic skills in aircraft completion. The program includes instruction in learning to read blueprints that detail the aircraft interior and are used as a guide for installing and finishing the aircraft interior. The main components of the training are cabinetry, sheet metal work, and upholstery. Students also receive fundamental instruction in the basic electrical, water, wiring, hydraulic and pneumatic systems of the aircraft as it relates to completion of the interior.
- ◆ **Natural Resource/Environmental Service Systems:** This program area explores natural resources (soil, water, air, forests, energy, minerals and metals, and wildlife) and develops the knowledge and skills to use them wisely. Other issues include outdoor recreation, careers, and the environment.

“Students will find that the careers they train for in the STEM programs of study have a high growth potential and will be in high demand,” said DWE Career and Technical Education Division Deputy Director John Davidson. “We really believe, through STEM training, students will be easily able to find employment in this time of economic difficulty.”

DWE New Start-Up Grants also funded the creation of brand new programs of study including Teaching and Training. Teaching and Training is designed to provide

students with knowledge that will help prepare them as future teachers. Upon completion of this course, a student should have a better understanding of the role of the teacher in the profession, understand developmental characteristics of learners, identify teaching strategies, be creative in lesson delivery, and understand historical and current educational issues, policies, and practices.

“Governor Mike Beebe has been quoted as saying that we live in a world where we compete not only with our neighboring states for the best jobs, but also with countries overseas, and if we want to survive in the global marketplace, we must be fully prepared to fill the jobs of the 21st century,” said DWE Director William L “Bill” Walker, Jr. “The only way for our state to remain competitive is to ensure that more Arkansans have a better education for a better quality of life.

“We, at the Department of Workforce Education, are very proud to award these various start-up grants each year to help schools throughout Arkansas purchase equipment for the creation of new, and the significant expansion of existing Career and Technical Education programs.

“It is only through education and creating new, vital and necessary courses and programs of study that Arkansas can ensure more students in our state will have access to high-skill, high-demand and high-wage employment. Our citizens can then be competitive among not only other states in the nation, but other countries around the world,” Walker added.

Below is a list of schools that received grants and the new programs of study or courses to be funded.

School	Program of Study/Course Name	Grant Amount
Argenta Academy (North Little Rock)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Arkadelphia High School	Banking	\$32,725.00
Arkadelphia High School	Web Design & Production	\$49,193.75
Arkadelphia High School	Teaching & Training	\$26,562.50
Ark. NE College Tech Center	Renewable Energy	\$127,500.00
Ashdown High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Benton High School	Child Care Guidance, Management & Services	\$21,717.50
Bergman High School	Career Communications – Audio & Video Technology	\$35,317.50
Bergman High School	Teaching & Training	\$24,777.50
Bigelow High School	Digital Communications	\$60,243.75
Blytheville Charter School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25

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School	Program of Study/Course Name	Grant Amount	School	Program of Study/Course Name	Grant Amount
Booneville High School	Natural Resources/ Environmental Science Systems	\$68,000.00	Mid-South Comm Coll Tech Center	Renewable Energy	\$127,500.00
Bryant High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Mid-South Comm Coll Tech Center	Warehousing & Distribution Center Operations	\$63,750.00
Carlisle High School	Medical Professions Education	\$38,960.60	Monticello High School	Management	\$26,137.50
Cedar Ridge High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Mulberry High School	Teaching & Training	\$20,655.00
Central High School (West Helena)	Banking	\$39,312.50	Murfreesboro High School	Digital Communications	\$60,243.75
Clary Academy	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	New Horizons Alt. Learn. Acad(Batesville)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Cross County High School	Career Communications – Audio & Video Technology	\$27,948.00	Nemo Vista High School	Animal Systems	\$12,027.50
DeQueen/Mena Tech Ed Ctr	Aviation Installation & Modification	\$53,432.70	Osceola High School	Biological Plant Science	\$48,399.00
Dierks High School	EAST/Workforce Technology	\$12,750.00	Paris High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Dumas High School	Hospitality	\$26,137.50	Paris High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
East Arkansas Secondary Ctr	Renewable Energy	\$127,500.00	Pea Ridge High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
El Dorado High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Pea Ridge High School	Teaching & Training	\$20,655.00
Elkins High School	Banking	\$32,725.00	Phillips Comm Coll Career/Tech Ctr (DeWitt)	Renewable Energy	\$127,500.00
Felder Alternative Acad. (LR)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Phillips Comm Coll Career/Tech Ctr (Helena)	Advanced Manufacturing	\$114,750.00
Fouke High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Phillips Comm Coll Career/Tech Ctr (Stuttgart)	Advanced Manufacturing	\$114,750.00
Gravette High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Piggott High School	Teaching & Training	\$23,247.50
Hackett High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Pottsville High School	Internship	\$13,515.00
Hamburg High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Pottsville High School	Teaching & Training	\$15,045.00
Hamilton Learning Acad. (LR)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Ramay Jr. High (Fayetteville)	Pre-Engineering	\$94,872.75
Hartford High School	Digital Communications	\$49,193.75	Rison High School	Banking	\$32,725.00
Heber Springs High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Rogers Heritage High School	Drafting & Design – Engineering CADD	\$64,090.00
Hot Springs High School	EAST/Workforce Technology	\$12,750.00	Rose Bud High School	EAST/Workforce Technology	\$17,000.00
Izard Co. Cons. High School	Digital Communications	\$49,193.75	Rose Bud High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Jessieville High School	EAST/Workforce Technology	\$12,750.00	Russellville High School	Pre-Engineering	\$94,872.75
Jessieville High School	Digital Communications	\$49,193.75	Shirley High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Jessieville High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	St. Joe High School	Digital Communications	\$39,291.25
Kirby High School	Digital Communications	\$49,193.75	Star City High School	Animal Systems	\$12,027.50
Lake Hamilton Middle School	Keyboarding	\$39,312.50	Strong High School	Construction Technology	\$21,717.50
Lakeside HS (Chicot Co.)	Hospitality	\$32,725.00	Success Achievement Academy (Jonesboro)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Lakeside HS (Garland Co.)	Child Care Guidance, Management & Services	\$21,717.50	Valley Springs High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25
Lakeside HS (Garland Co.)	Teaching & Training	\$24,905.00	Valley Springs High School	Internship	\$13,515.00
Lavaca High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Valley View High School	Consumer Services	\$32,300.00
JD Leftwich HS (Magazine)	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Van Cove High School	Teaching & Training	\$20,612.50
Lincoln High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	SEACBEA (Warren)	Computer Engineering	\$44,786.50
Malvern High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	White Co. Central High School	Teaching & Training	\$19,677.50
Mansfield Middle School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25	Wonderview High School	Animal Systems	\$12,027.50
Mid-South Comm Coll Tech Center	Machine Tool Technology	\$11,475.00	Woodland Jr. High (Fayetteville)	Pre-Engineering	\$94,872.75
			Yellville-Summit High School	Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates	\$15,491.25

ACT continued from page 1

meeting on March 5 in North Little Rock for state workforce cabinet agencies and professional education organizations to offer a better understanding of the economic stimulus package, the activities associated with it and the legal obligations of the funding.

The meeting was led by Washington, D.C., education attorney Michael Brustein who helped those in attendance navigate through the Act. Brustein has worked extensively on issues related to federal support of education and workforce development.

He's been recognized as one of the nation's leading experts on federal grants management and audit resolution.

"We invited Mr. Brustein here because he is one of America's foremost experts on education law, workforce education and education funding," said DWE Deputy Director John Davidson. "He's extremely knowledgeable."

"Our agency hosted Mr. Brustein's workshop because we know the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will lay the foundation in Arkansas for a generation of education reform," said Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.

"It will give schools more opportunities to embrace innovative new learning models and invest more in teacher quality initiatives. It will put cutting-edge technology into the hands of our students. It will also enhance their preparation for the expectations of business and industry while they're learning, and give them distinct advantages when it's time to begin a career."



Michael Brustein (left), a Washington D.C. education attorney, led the discussion and answered questions regarding the Recovery and Reinvestment Act as Dr. Phil Less, DWE Public School Program Advisor and others look on.

Davidson says the Career and Technical Education Division is moving to take a leadership position as Arkansas schools begin to formulate ideas on ways to spend their economic stimulus funds. CTE will be directly affected by how schools use their resources.

There are six specific categories in which schools can use their economic stimulus monies: special education, Title I, elementary and secondary education, adult literacy, building renovations, and Perkins activities. The CTE Division approves Perkins funding in Arkansas. The division has sent letters listing Perkins-approved items and activities to schools throughout the state.

"This is an easy-to-use activity," Davidson said. "We've sent Perkins-approvable forms to the schools, and we're going to let them choose what their needs are."

According to Davidson, the Career and Technical Education Division has an ongoing commitment to Arkansas's schools. He hopes the schools will choose to upgrade their

equipment. Currently, CTE has \$140 million invested in equipment in Arkansas's schools.

"That equipment has a life span of about seven years," said Davidson. "That means every seven years we have to replace all of the equipment. Instead of doing it all at once, we do it a little at a time. Right now, we have to spend about \$16 million each year just to keep up to date."

That's what the Career and Technical Education Division and the Department of Workforce Educa-

tion wants to do – provide students with the most up-to-date and technologically-advanced equipment available in order to prepare them for a career. Economic stimulus funds that will be made available through the Perkins Act can make that possible.

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

MUSTEEN continued from page 3



Musteen (above, center, c. 1973) with co-workers testing a new product for clients

those who have placed their trust in you.”

ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño says the entire agency is indebted to Musteen for his roles throughout the years as vocational rehabilitation counselor, field office supervisor, program administrator, and chief of field operations, as well as a public servant for his tireless service in the discharge of the public trust.

“His compassion, commitment, and expertise has helped thousands of Arkansans harness their capacity to live meaningfully and with purpose,” Treviño said. “His career serves as a hallmark of excellence, duty, honor, and compassion as a public servant. For that, the people of our state and his colleagues at ARS share a debt of gratitude to Ken and a wish for further fulfillment in the years to come. I am confident in my prayer for Ken’s continued success and his continued contribution to vocational rehabilitation services.”

Department of Workforce Education Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr. echoed Treviño’s sentiments.

“Ken Musteen will be deeply missed,” Walker said. “His selfless acts of time, commitment and dedication to each and every ARS client went far beyond simply doing a job. He knew there was an obligation to ensure we did everything to help our clients. With Ken’s attention to detail and outstanding work ethic, he was going to make sure the job was done 110 percent. No doubt about it. It’s something that’s always been embedded deep in his heart. We sincerely thank him for his outstanding service to our state and wish him and his family all the best during his retirement.”



Above, Musteen assists a student during Youth Leadership Forum 2007.



(above) Musteen was presented the Governor’s STAR award in 2000.



(back row) Musteen, DWE’s Dick Burchett, Randy Prather, Director Walker, and (front row left) ARS Commissioner Treviño with Texarkana student Courtney Ward and her family during SkillsUSA 2008.

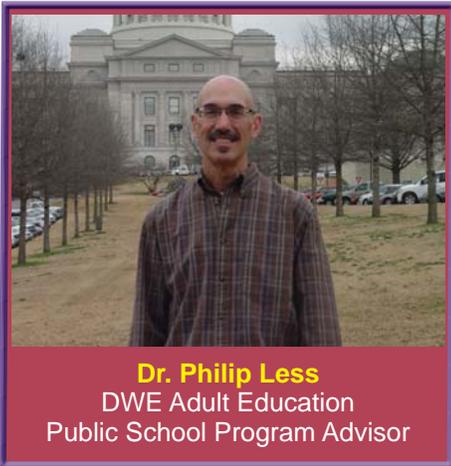


ARS Chief Financial Officer John Wright and Musteen greet Governor Beebe at the Governor’s Mansion in November 2008.



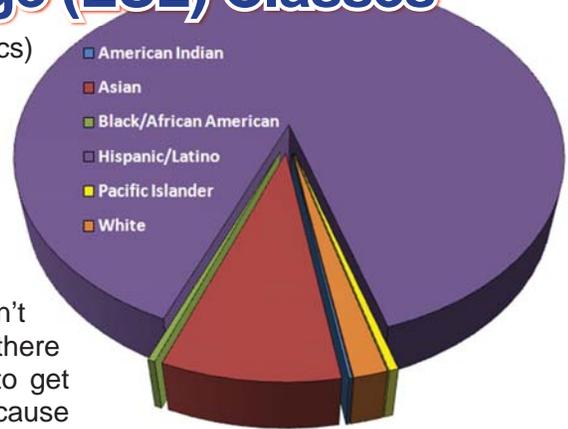
Above, Musteen joined in wishing luck to ARS retiree Roy Albert in August 2008.

Immigrant Growth in Arkansas creates more demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) Classes



and Civics Education (EL/Civics) grant.

Dr. Less said this grant is shared by 11 programs throughout the state that use the money to help ESL students learn to cope in their new communities. But the money for ESL programs doesn't stretch far enough. Less said there are waiting lists for students to get into some ESL programs because there aren't enough teachers to handle the demand.



ESL Student Demographics

Over the past two decades, Hispanic immigrants have been moving to Arkansas in record numbers — far surpassing U.S. Census Bureau projections. The resulting change in Arkansas's population has created new challenges for the state's workforce education programs, especially the Department of Workforce Education's Adult Education Division's English as a Second Language (ESL) program.

Dr. Philip Less, ESL state coordinator, said Hispanic enrollment in Arkansas's ESL classes has more than tripled over the past 12 years — from 1,665 students to 6,197 in 2008. Because of this growth, the ESL program has become a larger piece of the adult education pie with ESL students making up 16 percent of adult education enrollment. Twelve years ago, they made up less than five percent of the total enrollment.

But funding for ESL programs hasn't kept up with the growth. Besides getting a share of adult education funds, Arkansas's ESL programs receive about \$150,000 annually as part of a federal English Literacy

"The programs could use more money to hire more teachers," Less said.

For instance, Northwest Arkansas Community College in Rogers is the largest ESL provider in the state, serving more than 1,000 ESL students each year. And although it offers dozens of ESL classes a week, Less said it still has a waiting list each fall and doesn't have the financial resources to expand any further.

"The Hispanic population is a big part of who receives our services, but there are 97 native languages spoken in Arkansas," DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith said. "We have people in our ESL program from all walks of national origin. These are people who want to better themselves by earn-

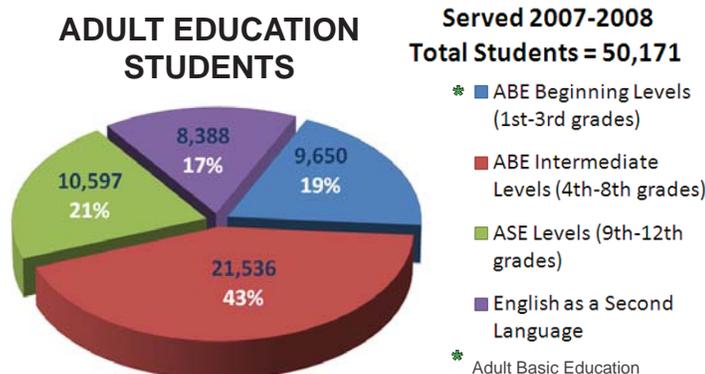
ing citizenship and improving their ability to speak English which will help them in many ways."

The Department of Workforce Education not only provides financial and technical assistance for ESL programs, but also professional development for adult education instructors. For the last eight 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 2008, 50 teachers from across the state met at the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center in Little Rock for the 8th Annual ESL Summer Institute. Less organized the ESL Institute, which focused on hands-on activities and strategies for teaching and

helping the ESL program meet the ultimate goal — to educate and help train Arkansans who need to learn English to help them on their road to success.

"With stronger English language skills," Less said, "they will become more effective workers, parents, and citizens in their communities."



Parks Named new SkillsUSA State Director for Arkansas

Jeff Parks has been named Arkansas State Director of SkillsUSA and is now charged with leading the organization and its over 6,400 secondary and post-secondary student and professional members.



Parks

Arkansas Tech University in Russellville in 2000 with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education. He began his career as a Music and EAST instructor in Viola, AR from 2000-2004 and then moved on to serve as Technology Coordinator at North Central Educational Services Co-op in Melbourne from 2004-2005. Before going to work for the Department of Workforce Education, Parks was the Computer Engineering instructor at the Area Career and Technical Center in Russellville from 2005-2008.

“Jeff was a logical choice to lead SkillsUSA,” said Department of Workforce Education Career and Technical Education Division Associate Director John Davidson. “He has the background and knowledge that’s so important in helping to lead one of Arkansas’s largest Career and Technical Student Organizations. He’s also aware of what SkillsUSA means to the students and how it can help them develop the leadership qualities that are necessary in the high-demand, high-skill, and high-tech economy of the 21st century.”

Parks is a graduate of Marshall High School and graduated from

“As the SkillsUSA director, it is my job to ensure that SkillsUSA students have the opportunities that they need to excel in our changing world,” Parks said. “SkillsUSA is the best organization that I have had the opportunity to be a part of. I only hope that I can continue the development of this organization and enhance our students’ abilities to succeed.”

Hewlett Packard works with Project Lead The Way to provide funding opportunities

Arkansas schools who have **Project Lead the Way (PLTW)** pre-engineering curriculum programs have an opportunity to earn a significant grant through a project funded by **Hewlett Packard**, called **HP Innovations in Education**.

Building on five years of experience with the HP Technology for Teaching grants program, HP recently announced this new grant opportunity. HP seeks proposals from school districts in the United States that are pursuing the use of technology to enhance academic success in secondary school (middle or high school) math and science. Each award, valued at more than \$270,000, will consist of equip-

PLTW continued on page 25

2009 COABE Award Winner an Inspiration for All

The **Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)** has selected Martha Cortes of Rogers as the Adult Learner of the Year for 2009. She will receive the award at the COABE convention in Louisville, Kentucky, in April. COABE is the premier national adult education association organized to advance national and international adult education opportunities for all persons.

The award, along with a \$1,000 education stipend, is given annually to a student who has overcome difficult circumstances to pursue adult learning, supported other adult learners, and managed significant adult responsibilities, such as those

related to family, community and employment.

Cortes was nominated for the award by Ben Aldama, Dean of Adult Education at Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC). The married mother of three is a student at NWACC and a full-time administrative assistant at the NWACC Adult Education Center.

She spoke no English when she first arrived in Rogers, following her husband from Durango, Mexico. Cortes enrolled in NWACC Adult Education ESL classes when she arrived in Rogers. Her first job was with the Rogers School District.

“I worked there three years, but working as a janitor just encouraged



Danny Sheffield, ESL Instructor at NW AR Community College in Rogers, Martha Cortes, and Dr. Becky Paneitz, President of NW AR Community College.

me to keep working on my English skills,” Cortes said.

CORTES continued on page 21

Parker takes on role of Program Planning, Development and Evaluation (PPD&E) Associate Director

Randy Parker was recently named Associate Director for Program Planning Development and Evaluation (PPD&E) for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division. His extensive background in the rehabilitation field began in 1974 and has included work as a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor as well as in a rehabilitation center and with grant projects.



Randy Parker

"My introduction to the field was in a day service center for children with developmental delays," Parker says, where his interest in serving in a "helping field" and working with individuals who happen to have disabilities began.

While employed at the Developmental Disabilities Services center, Parker completed a Master's degree in Rehabilitation for the Blind and was subsequently employed at Lion's World Services for the Blind in Little Rock for nine years, five of those years as Coordinator of Vision Services. He then served as a VR counselor for five years at the Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind where he received the Counselor of the Year Award.

Parker's employment with ARS began in 1995 with the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) assistive technology project where he worked on training, outreach, literature and marketing. He transferred to ARS Central Office in Little Rock in 1998 as Program Evaluation Specialist for then Assistant Commissioner Roy Albert, who retired last fall to take a job with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in Washington, D.C.

"I want to continue the tradition of excellence of PPD&E support to the agency," Parker says of his new assignment. "One of my main goals is to facilitate the development and implementation of a new case management software system. Counselors need a state-of-the-art system that will provide tools that save time and streamline case management documentation which will create efficiency, less paper work and more time for counseling.

"We want to expand Quality Assurance monitoring to improve client services; facilitate expansion and improvement of Community Rehabilitation Program service provision to clients through Supported Employment

and increasing employment outcomes in line with RSA recommendations. We also want to assist in the revision of the ARS Service Policy Manual that will facilitate counselor casework."

The PPE&E section of ARS is in a support role to the agency including Field Services, Arkansas Career Training Institute and the Central Office. The services provided include support to Commissioner Treviño, the Chief of Field Services and Finance, as well as reports and data that are required in order to receive state and federal

funding. The reports include the federally required State Plan, the Independent Living State Plan, and the Independent Living Annual Report. These plans are developed in collaboration with RSA and each of the components of ARS including Commissioner Bob Treviño, Field Services, Training, Finance and Human Resources. The Independent Living (IL) documents are developed in collaboration with the Arkansas IL Council, the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind, the Centers for IL and RSA. The purpose of the plans is to provide excellent services to our consumers, as well as meet compliance requirements with state and federal laws and policy.

The PPD&E section is also responsible for the statistical analysis and outcome performance reports to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) required in order to receive funding. The reports are compiled from the coding that our counselors and administrative assistants work on diligently as consumers move through their vocational rehabilitation plan to become employed or gain independent living. The status system and codes recorded in ARIMIS is the source for the required data reports. The data reports cover virtually every aspect of the case on each consumer and must be accurate and statistically correlate. There are over 16,000 cases in the system. The reports include the quarterly RSA 113 Cumulative Caseload Report and the annual RSA 911 Case Service Report.

Quality Assurance (QA) is another essential support function of PPD&E. QA includes case review and on-site monitoring. The purpose of case review is to monitor compliance with required policy and procedure to ensure the highest quality services to consumers.

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ARA continued from page 14

in Washington, D.C., just prior to the reception that helped them better explain their goals to state legislators.

Wooten said the ARA's four major position statements for the current General Assembly are:

- To express a need for additional qualified rehabilitation professionals.
- To demonstrate the necessity for maintaining existing Title I funding.
- To ensure existing revenue streams to Arkansans with disabilities remain intact by keeping executive waiver authority inactive.
- To make sure that the National Rehabilitation Administration Commissioner's position remains a presidential appointment.

Legislators, ARA members and guests at the reception were treated to food and drinks prepared by Culinary Arts students from the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs. ACTI Dietary Services Director Jane Campbell and Food Production Manager Janey Hunter were on hand for the service.



ARA officers: (back row) Past-President David McDonald; Board Member Freddie Smith; National Rehabilitation Association Representative to the Board Wayne Marsac; President Jim Quinn; (front row) Secretary-treasurer Mary Linn; President-elect Debbie Wooten; Vice-President Vicki Wilson.

Porter Named School Board Assn. Regional Director

Sandra Porter, Department of Workforce Education Associate Director for Workforce Training, was recently elected an Arkansas State School Board Association Regional Director for Region 8.

Porter has served as a member of the Bryant School Board for the past three years.

"It's an honor to be able to represent the school boards in Region 8," Porter said. "My teaching experience and my work at the state level



Sandra Porter

bring a great diversity in looking at school board policies."

Porter was a teacher for 25 years and has a Master's degree in vocational education from the University of Arkansas. She was named Arkansas Secondary Business Teacher of the Year in 1999.

She will serve a three-year term as a Regional Director.

"As a regional board member, I have been in the process of redefining the duties and responsibilities of school board members during the 2009 Legislative Session," Porter said. "The original law dates back to 1931 and is fraught with outdated definitions. We have tried to craft a bill that would address school board members in current times."

PARKER continued from page 16

The QA Team conducts on-site case reviews of cases for all counselors on a quarterly basis. Other types of cases reviews are provided including corrective action reviews, closed case reviews and exit reviews on each caseload that is vacated by a counselor. QA activities dovetail with the on-site reviews that RSA conducts periodically.

Other responsibilities in the section include development and training on policy and procedures for compliance with the Rehabilitation Act; cooperative agreements and contract development and monitoring; promulgation of state plans,

policy and procedure through the legislative council; community rehabilitation programs certification, contracts and monitoring; the ARS Youth Leadership Forum; client satisfaction surveys; and, client appeals and fair hearings are coordinated through the department.

PPD&E offers a variety of work that is challenging and gratifying. We pursue a teamwork approach and support our co-workers both in this section and throughout the agency. PPD&E is available for training and technical assistance regarding any of the areas of responsibility.

GOVERNOR BEEBE proclaims February CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION Month

Governor Mike Beebe greeted officers from Career and Technical Student Organizations around the state February 26 at the State Capitol in the Governor's Conference Room where proclamations were presented naming the month CTSO Month.

Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) is a student organization whose mission is to promote career opportunities in health care and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. HOSA's two-fold mission is to promote career opportunities in the health care industry and to enhance the delivery of quality health care to all people. HOSA's goal is to encourage all health occupations instructors and students to join and be actively involved in the HOSA Partnership.

HOSA provides a unique program of leadership development, motivation, and recognition exclusively for secondary, postsecondary, adult, and collegiate students enrolled in health care-oriented programs.

Arkansas boasts 1,558 HOSA members and 34 chapters.



DECA: DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.; Hannah Bushey, Vice President of Civic Consciousness, Stuttgart High School; Samantha Spicer, Vice President of Membership, Stuttgart; Marisa Shaw, President, Rogers Heritage High School; Governor Beebe; Savannah Valentine, Vice President of Communications, Alma High School; Richard Vines, Vice President of Finance, Fayetteville High School; and DWE State DECA Sponsor Jim Brock.

DECA is an international association of high school and college students studying marketing, management and entrepreneurship in business, finance, hospitality and marketing sales and service. DECA provides specific programs for the classroom teacher to use in student development and achievement. The principles guiding the association's programs are curriculum related career skills, workplace experiences, community service and the development of business leadership capabilities.

More than 1,700 Arkansas students count themselves as DECA members at 35 separate chapters across the state.

Once known as **Future Farmers of America, FFA** is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of secondary and post-secondary students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. The agricultural science education program is built on the three core areas of classroom/laboratory instruction, supervised agricultural experience pro-

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HOSA: Curt Cooper, Vice President, Tuckerman High School; Hunter Daniels, Secretary, Tuckerman High School; Jasmine Jackson, President, Tuckerman High School; Governor Beebe; Barbara Dimon, DWE HOSA State Advisor; Stacie Gunderman, Treasurer, River Valley Technical Center-Morrilton; Melissa Franchek, Historian, Cabot High School; Kellie Johnson, Parliamentarian, Quitman High School; DWE Director Bill Walker.



FFA: Front Row: State Representative Bruce Maloch from Magnolia; Justin Wiedower, President, Arkansas Tech University; Hayley Hogan, Secretary, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville; Nessie Early, National FFA Secretary, California; Governor Beebe; Katie Good, Northwest District Vice President, Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia; John Bearden, Southern District Vice President, Southern Arkansas University. Back Row: Cameron Jernigan, Eastern District Vice President, Arkansas State University-Jonesboro; Matt Wise, Reporter, Mountain Home High School; Bruce Lazarus, DWE State FFA Advisor; and DWE Director Bill Walker.



FBLA: DWE State FBLA Advisor Peggy Wakefield; Annie Ramsey, Treasurer, Vilonia High School; Maria McCallie, District V Vice President, Lonoke High School; Tyler Garrett, District I Vice President, Siloam Springs High School; Laney Ward, District III Vice President, Smackover High School; Governor Beebe; Michael Leonard, District VI Vice President, Flippin High School; Addie Kortan, President, Armored High School; Hunter Petrus, District II Vice President, Nettleton High School; Haley Petrus, Parliamentarian, Nettleton High School; and DWE Director Bill Walker.

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grams and FFA student organization activities and opportunities.

In Arkansas, there are 10,382 FFA members in 227 active chapters.

Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) is the largest and oldest business student organization in the world. A quarter of a million high school and middle school students, college and university students, faculty, educators, administrators, and business professionals are members of this organization preparing students for careers in business.

There are 387 FBLA chapters in the state boasting roughly 14,500 members.

Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) is the post-secondary cousin of Future Business Leaders of America. College and university students, faculty, educators, administrators, and business professionals have become members of this association that prepares students for business careers.

PBL has developed a unique value program that helps students, faculty, administrators, and business

professionals in developing leadership, communication, and team skills, and gives them the opportunity



PBL: DWE Director Bill Walker; DWE State PBL Advisor Peggy Wakefield; Derrick Cornell, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, North Arkansas College; and Governor Beebe

to meet and network with others at the local, state and national



SkillsUSA Secondary: *Front row:* Allison McJunkins, Secretary, Cossatot Community College-Nashville High School; LaShonda Thomas, Vice President, Southern Arkansas University Career Academy-Fordyce High School; Faith Blair, Treasurer, Cabot High School; Governor Beebe; Relda Steelman, Secondary State Officer Advisor. *Back row:* Jeff Parks, DWE State SkillsUSA Advisor; Hector Bello, President, Springdale High School; Tyler Tully, Reporter, Cave City High School; and DWE Director Bill Walker.



SkillsUSA Post-Secondary: *Front row:* Jeff Parks, DWE State SkillsUSA Advisor; Anthony McSperitt, Parliamentarian, Northwest Technical Institute; Governor Beebe; Niki Mitchell, Secretary, Ouachita Technical College; Sue Burris, Post-Secondary State Officer Advisor. *Back row:* Caleb Smith, Historian, Northwest Technical Institute; Andrew Chapman, Treasurer, Northwest Technical Institute; Matthew Martin, President, Northwest Technical Institute; and DWE Director Bill Walker.

CTSO continued from page 19

levels.

In Arkansas there are roughly 725 PBL members and 25 chapters.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of secondary and post-secondary students, teachers and industry representatives, working together to ensure America has a skilled work force. It helps each student excel. SkillsUSA is a national nonprofit organization serving teachers and high school and college students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including health occupations.

There are 382 SkillsUSA chapters and roughly 6,400 members in Arkansas.

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is a student organization aimed at promoting personal growth and leadership development through Family and Consumer Sciences education. FCCLA focuses on the multiple roles of family member, wage earner and community leader for members to establish life skills through character development, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal communications, practical knowledge and career preparation.

In Arkansas, there are 10,639 FCCLA members at



FCCLA: DWE Director Bill Walker; Heather Burroughs, Vice President of Public Relations, Hazen High School; Calley Conway, President, Beebe High School; Governor Beebe; Shanda Whitlow, Parliamentarian, Black Rock High School; and Kendra Woods, Treasurer, Izard County Consolidated High School.

359 chapters in high schools, junior high schools and middle schools across the state. According to the most recent data available from the national FCCLA organization, Arkansas ranks in the top ten nationally among other states due to its FCCLA membership figures.

CORTES continued from page 15

When Cortes had the chance to work part-time at the Adult Education Center, she jumped at it. The new job increased her work skills and her self-esteem. She soon became a full-time employee.

"Education really changes things, the way we think about each other, ourselves, and our country," Cortes said. "NWACC has changed my life, too. It has helped me to become a better student, employee, and person. After working here (at the Adult Education Center), I'm able to focus more on what I want to do, which is to teach."

She passed her U.S. Citizenship test in 2007, five months after she applied and today, speaks fluent

English.

"Citizenship means a lot to me," Cortes said. "It gives a person more rights, such as obtaining an education, getting a job and voting."

In October 2006, Cortes was named the Outstanding Paraprofessional at the Arkansas Association for Continuing and Adult Education Conference. The award further fueled her ambition. She frequently speaks publicly on behalf of the college and the benefits of learning English. Cortes will graduate from NWACC with an Associate of Arts this year. She plans to continue her education at the University of Arkansas, majoring in Education.

"Martha's changed over the

years," said Danny Sheffield, NWACC ESL Instructor. "Her views have expanded. She accepts the accolades coming to her in a very positive way, which influences others because now they know they can succeed as much as she has. Martha's success influences everyone, particularly those in the Latino community."

"This honor is long overdue," DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith said. "Anyone who has ever met Martha will see that she is a vibrant ball of energy. She is someone who makes you feel so excited just to spend some time with her. Our Adult Education program is so fortunate to have her come back and give back."

What?

**Youth Leadership Forum
for Students with Disabilities**

When?

July 6-10, 2009

Where?

University of Central Arkansas/Conway, AR

YLF teaches communication skills and rights under various disability laws to high school juniors and seniors. Through role play, they'll learn what rights and responsibilities they have as an employee in the workplace. Along with other skills needed to function independently in society, we'll teach about handling money, nutrition and offer other helpful, practical information. There is no cost to the students who are selected to attend.

Download applications from:
<http://www.arsinfo.org/default.aspx?id=58>

Deadline for submitting applications: May 15, 2009

If you have questions or need an application in an alternate format, contact **Carl Enna** at (501) 683-6962 or 800-330-0632 or email at carl.enna@arkansas.gov.



The YLF 2008 participants met Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe (back row, center) in the Governor's Conference Room during a visit to the State Capitol July 2008.

DWE and ADED Co-host Lean Manufacturing Program

A process that has led to increased efficiency in the manufacturing industry is expected to do the same in Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction in Arkansas.

Approximately 50 CTE professionals participated in the Lean Manufacturing instructional program during a two-day professional development retreat March

10-11 at the Airport Holiday Inn in Little Rock. The retreat was part of a joint effort between the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) and the Arkansas Department of Economic Development (ADED). It was aimed at creating a strategic economic development plan that will introduce teachers into the modern workplace. Lean was initially introduced in manufacturing to reduce waste and increase efficiency. The concept is now being used in education because of its success in manufacturing and because it makes classroom instruction more relevant.

Paul Mastro, retreat speaker and vice president of Little Rock pipe manufacturer George Fischer Sloane, says



Lean Manufacturing instructor and Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions project manager Bill Kraus explains the program's process as Deputy Director John Davidson looks on.

Lean helps people work smarter and not harder.

"We don't pay people in manufacturing to pick things up anymore. We pay them to think,"

LEAN continued on page 23



LEWIS continued from page 9

Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. agrees.

"Barbara Lewis has helped provide thousands of Arkansans with disabilities the tools to find rewarding careers," Walker said. "Along with the

dedicated instructors and staff at the Arkansas Career Training Institute, she has helped contribute to our state's economy and provided her students with the skills that are so vital to their independence. She will truly be missed."

And even though she's completed her employment at DWE and ARS, Lewis says her work isn't entirely over.

"Though I am retiring from the DWE/ARS family, I will continue to support the ideals and values of rehabilitation and service to people with disabilities," Lewis said. "I have been blessed beyond measure in my career. My zeal and en-



Lewis is congratulated on her many years of dedicated service by Judy Smith (right), who was named Interim ACTI Administrator upon Lewis' retirement.



ACTI Assistant Administrator Diann Blevins congratulates Lewis on her retirement and her plans for the future.

thusiasm of service to people with disabilities remains committed and strong. You will always be in my thoughts and prayers!"

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said Mastro. “We have to be competitive through innovation. We’ll never be able to pay \$2 an hour like some nations. But we can provide innovation and that will make good, high-wage jobs available. Lean keeps us competitive and gets everyone involved. It’s an educational tool.”

The CTE professionals attending the retreat were given a first-hand look at the Lean system in action when the group was divided into two teams for a manufacturing challenge. Team members were each given jobs and then created a mock assembly line to build circuit boards. In order to see how Lean Manufacturing increased efficiency, each team went through the process twice – once without the Lean principles, and then with them.

The differences were amazing. When the teams were operating without the Lean principles, there were very few completed orders, several mistakes, most orders were late and communication was unreliable. However, once the teams began working under the Lean system, it was the exact opposite. The teams were able to complete almost four orders each minute, without mistakes and on time.

The secret to the success of the system is simple, according to Bill Kraus, Lean instructor and Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions project manager.

“Lean, after all, just means the absence of waste,” said Kraus. “It all boils down to simply improving workplace efficiency, continually looking at ways to eliminate waste and always considering ways to



DWE’s CTE Program Manager for Accountability and Funding Mary Ellen Koettel and Career Guidance, Exploration & Preparation Program Manager Ray Henson work on an assignment.

move forward and improve.”

The retreat is part of a three-phase plan to bring Lean pilot programs to schools across Arkansas.

“These Lean innovations have applications in all of the career areas we’re trying to teach,” said Arkansas Department of Workforce Education CTE Division Deputy Director John Davidson. “Whether its restaurants, agriculture or anywhere else – they’re beneficial. We’re going to take this program across the state and bring it to 200 schools. It’s an efficiency model that eliminates waste. It asks, ‘What are you doing that doesn’t contribute to the end product?’”

Those who attended the retreat will take a tour of a manufacturing facility in the second phase of the plan. Seven-hundred-fifty high school students who have completed their CTE training will meet at the Arkansas State University Convocation Center in Jonesboro for a “Celebration of the Workplace” for the plan’s third and final phase before being introduced to the classroom next fall.

“The Lean program is exactly what Governor Mike Beebe wants to do with his Workforce Cabinet,”



Business/Marketing Technology Program Manager Jim Brock concentrates on his project.



Concentration was key for (seated, l-r) Rod Duckworth, Associate Director for Career and Technical Education, Jim Brock, Suellen Ward, Family and Consumer Sciences Education Program Manager, Ginger Fisher, Business/Marketing Technology Public School Program Advisor and (standing, in blue) Barbara Lensing, Career Guidance, Exploration, & Preparation Public School Program Advisor.

said DWE Director William L. “Bill” Walker, Jr. “Its on-the-job training. A lot of our students have been denied this. If we spread it out now, kids can see it and how they fit in to the big picture. This is good and exciting and the way we need to go. If we keep building and growing programs like this, the students of Arkansas will have an even brighter future.”



John Davidson
Deputy Director
Career and
Technical Education
Department of
Workforce Education

Senior Management Team SMT Update

Thirty five years ago when I began teaching, “Vocational Education” was a good word. Most Arkansas schools had three programs; **business**, **agriculture**, and what was then called **Home Economics**. The larger schools had expanded opportunities for students such as Industrial Arts or Health Occupations. DECA at that time was, and still is, one of our most popular work experience programs. Coordinated Career Education or CCE (later replaced by JAG) and General Cooperative Education or GCE (later replaced by internship) were the work experience for many rural or small school students.

Marion Fletcher was a young supervisor at the Department of Education and I was a new agriculture instructor at Sheridan. Times had just started to change and girls were beginning to enroll in my agriculture classes. At that time FFA was still the Future Farmers of America, FCCLA was the Future Homemakers of America, SkillsUSA was then VICA and FBLA was Future Business Leaders of America. I taught clusters, but there were fifteen, not sixteen. Clusters were how we explored the world of work and they were rarely mentioned after students left my career orientation classes. Vocational Education prepared students for an occupation in the world of work and many of our students going on to college became teachers following in the footsteps of their student organization sponsors.

Many changes have occurred since the first year I began. All, in their own way, have been good and have been for the benefit of our students. But change was not easy and it is still not easy. Many of the program names we once used have disappeared in title, but the foundations of these programs are still critical elements of our instruction and philosophy. While we rarely hear the title “Competency Based Education,” this program still has great impact today on our CTE curriculum. TECH PREP, once legislated on both the state and national level, is no longer around in name but continues through Perkins IV to demand academic attainment of the students in our programs.

Through the **National Cluster Project**, I believe we in the Arkansas Career Tech community still have

some very significant decisions for future change ahead of us. Career Clusters force us to look beyond our programs and determine what skills students need to be prepared for the workforce. We will at times be forced to give up some control as we work with both the Department of Education and Higher Ed. We will also be required to not only listen to Business and Industry, but to include them in those decisions of both curriculum and assessment. **Economic Development will and must be a required partner in all of our future program planning.** Many of these questions will take us out of our comfort zone. Future programs of study must be designed for the student, not for our department or our program areas.

To prepare for the whole student, we may be required to consider programs of study that cross CTE program or academic program lines. Crossing these program lines may also mean crossing some turf lines about who teaches the classes. We will be required to consider what academics are critical to the program of study and who should teach them. This is already being done with anatomy and physiology offered in the science department as a part of our medical program of study.

To meet future workforce needs, we will be required to consider new programs of study once thought outside our traditional programs. Through the cluster concept, everything a student takes in school should prepare them for the future. Welcoming nontraditional teachers into our CTE classrooms is already a challenge for many in our community, but I believe our numbers of nontraditional teachers will continue to grow. We must not only welcome them, but support and assist them to do their best job for our students.

Future CTE teachers will be nontraditional not only because they may not have come through the education teaching block, but also because they will teach new CTE career areas such as communications, arts, education, engineering or ROTC. Accepting new instructional techniques such as distance learning or web based instruction will also be a concept that the future

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CTE will require us to both endorse and adapt to best meet the needs of our students.

I am proud to be a member of the Department of Workforce Education staff. I am proud of the highly qualified Program Associates, Managers and Supervisors I work with. They are the best! I feel very comfortable that we will address these issues of the future and endorse change. If we respect the past and use it to build the future, we will not fail our students. As we address these future issues, our students will be better prepared to successfully join the future workforce.

ACTI continued from page 8

other funding.”

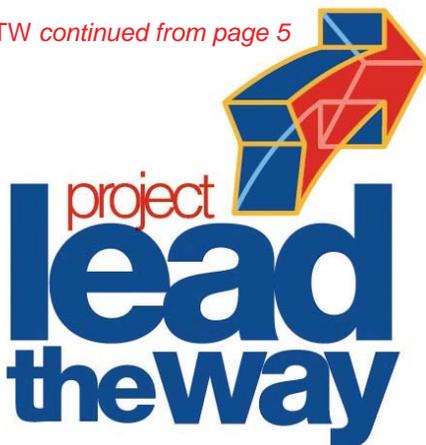
The ACTI JAG program was approved without any additional funding from the national level and is operating with a \$14,000 annual budget. This decision was made to make the program more inclusive and to allow the participation of students under age 18.

“We’re looking for interest,” said ACTI JAG Program Specialist Dr. Marty Driggers. “Students have to be interested.”

ACTI staff is moving forward to have all the pieces in place and is expected to have the JAG pilot program up and running in April. The school’s construction technology students are working on renovating classroom space and JAG officer elections are around the corner.

JAG is part of the national Jobs for America’s Graduates program. It is aimed at helping at-risk 11th-and 12th-grade students with multiple barriers to success in school through graduation. It also provides work-based learning experiences that will provide further opportunities for job, educational and personal growth after graduation. Governor Mike Beebe currently sits on the national JAG Board and will host the national JAG Board Meeting in Little Rock April 14th and 15th.

PLTW continued from page 5



ment, cash and professional development.

“A grant like this could offer a significant boost to Project Lead the Way programs in the state,” said Bruce Lazarus, Department of Workforce Education Program Manager for the Office of School Improvement. “Hewlett Packard is building an office in Conway and their organization offering an opportunity like this will be a great thing for students in our state. I encourage all of our Project Lead the Way schools to apply for this grant.”

Proposals that will be considered will describe how technology will be used to enable innovations in four areas:

🔗 **Leadership capacity** – creating a network of school administrators and key teachers who implement innovative approaches to curriculum, instruction, and the use of technology to enhance math/science learning.

🔗 **Digital Learning Environments** – using technology to fundamentally redesign the learning experience in ways that lead to increased student engagement and academic success; can include local and/or global service learning.

🔗 **The Secondary Student Design & Research Experience** – making math and science real and relevant by involving secondary students in design and research challenges that address real needs in society; can include local and/or global service learning.

🔗 **High-tech career awareness** – engaging administrators, teachers, and students in ways that increase awareness and interest in high-tech college degree programs and careers.

For over 10 years, Hewlett Packard has offered PLTW schools the opportunity to obtain computers, printers and other hardware at a discount.

PLTW schools have a great opportunity to obtain this comprehensive technology package and enhance their ability to deliver PLTW courses. The types of courses that HP recognizes as an outstanding curriculum that can be maximized by the technology and training included in this special grant opportunity.

“The industry involvement by Hewlett Packard with our programs is very impressive,” DWE Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education John Davidson said. “This announcement is an awesome opportunity for our pre-engineering programs.”



DECA Team Members from across the State Converge on Little Rock For Annual Conference

Nearly 400 students from across the state attended the **63rd Annual State DECA Career Development Conference** February 22-23 in Little Rock.

"The conference was great," DECA State Advisor James Brock said. "We had a great turnout and had some great competitors qualify for the National conference this summer in Anaheim, California."

The conference, themed "**Make Your Mark**," featured presentations from DWE state staff, state DECA leaders, and Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education Rod Duckworth. There also was a talent show, a silent auction, the election and installation of new state DECA officers, and nearly 80 competitive, career-oriented events.

"The students competing in the DECA conference are, without a doubt, among Arkansas's best and brightest," said Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. "This conference helped them hone their skills so they can go on to become the business and marketing professionals, and the community and civic leaders of tomorrow."

New state officers elected include President - Marisa Shaw of Rogers Heritage High School, Vice-President of Membership - Samantha Spicer of Stuttgart High School, Vice-President of Communications - Savanna Valentine of Alma High School, Vice-President of Civic Consciousness - Hannah Bushey of Stuttgart High School, and Vice-President of Finance - Richard Vines of Fayetteville High School.

Clair Mays of Arkadelphia received the Outstanding Advisor award. The team Sweepstakes Award was won by Alma High School.

There were 33 competitive events this year. Event finalists qualified to compete at the DECA International Career Development Conference scheduled for April 29-May 2 in Anaheim, California. The following students placed in their respective categories at this year's conference:



New State Officers: (l-r) Hannah Bushey, Vice-President - Civic Consciousness; Samantha Spicer, Vice President - Membership; Marisa Shaw, President; Savannah Valentine, Vice-President - Communications; Richard Vines, Vice-President - Finance; and DWE State DECA Advisor Jim Brock.

Accounting Applications- 1st : Brandon Dismute, *North Pulaski HS*; **2nd:** Ben Reynolds, *Bentonville*; **3rd:** Alex March, *Heritage HS*

Advertising Campaign-1st: Jared Blasengame, Megan Hiryak, Lauren Coit, *Stuttgart HS*; **2nd:** Carly Turner, Holly Loyd, *Bentonville HS*; **3rd:** Daniel Bryant, Jake Cogburn, *El Dorado HS*.

Apparel and Accessories Marketing- 1st : Caroline Kelley, *Rogers HS*; **2nd :** Alex Cook, *Rogers HS*; **3rd :** Emily Miller, *Joe T. Robinson HS*.

Automotive Service Marketing- 1st : Jason Papageorge; **2nd :** Austin Sangster, *Alma HS*; **3rd** Mackenzie Ingold

Business Law and Ethics Team Decision Making-1st : Kailey Kelly, Blair Bauer, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd :** Aditya Nair, Jonathan Guzman **3rd:** Meagan Brown, Jordan Gregory, *Alma HS*

Business One on One Pilot- 1st : Huston Reagan, *North Pulaski HS*; **2nd:** Shelby Farris, *Alma HS*; **3rd:** Brock Widders, *Alma HS*.

Business Services Marketing- 1st : Elizabeth Blankenship, *Stuttgart HS*; **2nd:** Bailey Thompson, *Joe T. Robinson HS*; **3rd:** C.J. Justus, *Harrison HS*

Buying and Merchandising Management Team Decision Making-1st: Daniel Beahm, Mitchell Mawby, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd:** Lacy Patterson, Kari Gregory, *Alma HS*; **3rd:** Brenda Garcia, Leslie Garduno, *Rogers HS*.

Community Service Chapter Team Event-1st : Alanna Wells, Karen Moreno, *Sylvan Hills HS*, **2nd:** Caitlyn Sears, *Alma HS*.

DECA Quiz Bowl-1st: March, Whittle, Macy, Jordan, *Rogers Heritage A*; **2nd:** Banwarth, Bakke, Hood, Harris, *Bentonville B*; **3rd:** Anderson, McAfee, Smith, Cowgur.

Entrepreneurship Participating Event Franchising-1st : Hillaree Horn, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Zakk Steward, *Harrison HS*.

Entrepreneurship Participating Event Independent-1st: Hillaree Horn, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Savannah Valentine, *Alma HS*; Zach Whittle, *Heritage HS*.

Entrepreneurship Promotion Project-1st: Christina Billings, Cassie Patterson.

Entrepreneurship Written Event- 1st: Cole Powell, Tyler Cox, *Bentonville*; **2nd:** Erik Ragsdale, Steve Reid, *Bentonville HS*; **3rd:** Miles Hutson, Faisal Khalaf.

Fashion Merchandising Promotion Plan-1st: Hana Kawasaki, Josephine Vang, *Bentonville*; **2nd:** Allie Morgan, Haley Hill, *Stuttgart HS*; **3rd:** Cassie Nolan, Alex Crain, *Springdale HS*.

Financial Analysis Team Decision Making-1st:Alex Gravelle, Dustin Corey, *Rogers HS*; **2nd:** Grant Higgins, Morgan Ryan, *Bentonville HS*.

Food Marketing Series-1st: Contessia Powell, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Macey Walker, *Springdale Har-Ber HS*; **3rd:** Zach Deakins, *Harrison*.

Hospitality Services Management Decision Making-1st: Samatha Spicer, Hannah Bushey, *Stuttgart HS*; **2nd:** Lauren Ashby, Talisa Hunt, *Springdale HS*; **3rd:** Amber Bailey, Shelia Ellis.

Hotel and Lodging Management- 1st: Caitlyn Sears, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Sarah Howerton, *Springdale Har-Ber HS*; **3rd:** Jordan Phillips, *Bentonville HS*.

Internet Marketing Business Plan-1st: Austin Mccollum, Hanna Johnson, *Bentonville HS*.

Internet Marketing Management Team Decision Making-1st: Matt Bakke, James Harris, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd:** Casey Lutat, Kelly Kahamyongsa, *Springdale HS*; **3rd:** Sam Clark, Ethan Hunter, *Heritage HS*.

International Business Plan- 1st: Emily Trolinger, Hannah Lewellen, *Bentonville*; **2nd:** Hunter Banwarth, Chad Hood.

Learn and Earn Project-1st: Sadie Munson, Kaisee Parrish, *Alma HS*.

Marketing Management- 1st: Arun Chawla, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd:** Kate Gantner, *Rogers HS*; **3rd:** Alanna Wells, *Sylvan Hills HS*.

Public Relations Project-1st: Ryan Medlock, McKenzie Ingold, Teryl Robinson, *Alma HS*.

Quick Serve Restaurant Management- 1st: Matthew Dean, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd:** Rebekah Langston, *Alma HS*; **3rd:** Malcolm Worsham, *Stuttgart HS*.

Restaurant & Food Management-1st: Oscar Morales, *Rogers*; **2nd:** Keely Sullivan, *Little Rock Central HS*; **3rd:** David Ray, *Harrison HS*.

Retail Marketing Research-1st: Scott Senia, Colby Barker, Britney Longfellow, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Julia Johnson, Kelli Porter, Victoria Neubert, *Bentonville HS*; **3rd:** Kenetria Johnson, Oliver Smith, *El Dorado HS*.

Retail Merchandising-1st: Cassie Patterson, *Alma HS*; **2nd:** Terrica Moore, *Little Rock Central HS*; **3rd:** Abbi Wolsenkoehler, *Bentonville HS*.

Scrapbook-1st:Alma HS; **2nd:**Oak Grove HS; **3rd:** Bentonville HS.

Sports and Entertainment Marketing-1st: Evan Geisen, *Heritage HS*; **2nd:** Chad Burris, *Alma HS*; **3rd:** Nathan Bennett, *Harrison HS*.

Sports and Entertainment Marketing Management Team Decision Making- 1st: Hunter Moblely, Sy Kirby, *Rogers HS*; **2nd:** Kayla Wilson, Lauren Tuminello, *Stuttgart HS*; **3rd:** Hayden Balch, Richard Champagne, *Bentonville HS*.

Sweepstakes Award-1st: Alma HS; **2nd:** Bentonville HS

Technical Sales-1st: Dessa Yates, *West Fork HS*; **2nd:** Josh Lock, *Stuttgart HS*

Travel and Tourism Marketing Management Team Decision Making-1st: Pressley Convington, Hannah Nilsson, *Bentonville HS*; **2nd:** Haden Lovelace, Ashleigh Alecussen; **3rd:** Allison Rasmusson, Becca Smylie, *Russellville HS*.



What You Should Know

Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC)

Dr. Mark Clark, Program Manager

The Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC) is a direct client service program within the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division's Special Programs section. It provides two basic kinds of services for ARS consumers upon referral by their vocational rehabilitation counselor.

Comprehensive Individual Psychological Evaluations – Evaluation services are individualized to answer referral questions and are available to assess a wide variety of problems related to academic and vocational planning. All referrals are made by agency vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors, and usually target specific diagnostic or functional ability issues for clients. Reasons that a VR counselor might refer a client for an LEC assessment are clarification of a diagnosis, documentation for accommodations, or provision of detailed client information related to strengths and challenges to assist with program planning. Evaluations assess global cognitive functioning, academic achievement, vocational interests, and behavioral and emotional concerns as related to academic or occupational planning. More specialized neuropsychological evaluations identify and clarify specific cognitive strengths and weaknesses that may serve as potential educational or occupational

barriers. All evaluations provide recommendations intended to help promote success in the academic or work environment. Professional staff members are trained in diagnosing cognitive disorders, learning disorders, attention disorders, pervasive developmental disorders such as Autism and Asperger's Disorder, and emotional problems such as depression and anxiety.

The LEC has recently added two new staff members trained and licensed to provide specialized neuropsychological assessment services. Those new staff members are Mark L. Clark, Licensed Psychologist, and David C. Boyd, Licensed Psychological Examiner. With the addition of new staff, LEC has recently adopted new goals of enhancing timely access to evaluations, and improving the turnaround time on reports. LEC has adopted

a maximum turnaround time of 30 days on reports.

Because of the many evaluation tools the examiner may need, testing generally must be done in the LEC Little Rock office. Following completion of the evaluation, there will be a feedback session with the VR counselor and the client for the purpose of discussing the results and making appropriate recommendations for success. Educating the client about the results of the evaluation is key to assisting him or her in working with the counselor to make an informed choice about academic and vocational goals.

Training Services – The training component of the program comprises two tracks; college preparatory training and training on a variety of topics related to hearing impairments. College preparatory training may include topics such as note and test-taking skills, memory strategies, accommodations, and more. Topics related to hearing impairments may include assistive technology, sign language, and more.

LEC staff members are housed at 26 Corporate Hill Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205. The Program Manager for LEC is Dr. Nicholaus Paal, and the Clinical Director is Dr. Mark L. Clark. For more information about LEC or to schedule an evaluation, call (501) 686-9686 or email pat.billingsley@arkansas.gov.



Joyce Scott, Program Planning Coordinator with LEC, leads a training workshop



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