



# the Workforce Counselor

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



## DWE Hosts Joint Education Board Meeting at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion



Director of Department of Higher Ed. Dr. Jim Purcell, DWE Director Bill Walker, SBWECO Chairman Jack Justus, and Director of Department of Ed. Dr. Ken James meet during Joint Education Board Meeting.

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education hosted a joint meeting of the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities, the State Board of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Board at the Governor's Mansion on Nov. 3.

Board members and staffs from each of the three agencies joined in the annual event, which included an address from Gov. Mike Beebe, who stressed the importance each agency has in the state's efforts to educate and train people to enter the workforce and land high-paying, high-demand jobs.

"When I talk about education, I am talking about each one of you and then some," Beebe said. "We cannot forget adult education, workforce training and retraining, pre-K, K through 12, two-year institutions, technical colleges, four-year universities, and research universities that are trying to stimulate the 21st century economy that Arkansas needs

to have. The bottom line – the success or failure of where we go as a people is largely dependent on the work of the folks around these tables. The success or failure of Arkansas and her teachers is dependent upon education – every aspect of education."

The Governor said that while each agency has a vital mission, working together is necessary.

"It's is appropriate for these three boards, which are each distinct and diverse, but extraordinarily impor-  
*BOARD continued on page 7*



## Focus on Lucy Ralston

Member, State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities

It took Lucy Ralston three years to accept an offer from former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee to join the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities, but she had a good reason for waiting.

"I had a young child when Gov. Huckabee first asked me," Ralston said, "and I wanted to wait until I could give my entire focus on serving the board. The Governor wanted an Hispanic board member so

he was patient with me."

The desire to give her full attention to the board was an early indication of Ralston's dedication and commitment to providing the leadership to help make decisions the board faces.

"I wanted to be able to give my total focus so I couldn't accept the offer until the right time," said Ralston, who lives in Fayetteville and

*RALSTON continued on page 3*



Ralston speaks with Governor Mike Beebe during July Dedication Ceremonies of a new monument placing the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) on the National Historic Register.



## Director's Update

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

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

Unbelievably, another year has passed and we are on the eve of 2009. This is the time of year we look back on our accomplishments and make our resolutions for the coming year.

The senior management team and I set many goals for this year and accomplished several of them. We're continuing to look for ways to make our agency as effective and efficient as it can be for the citizens of this great state. We will continue to raise the bar every day in the work that has been done, the work currently being done and the work that will be done to serve the people of Arkansas.

Arkansas is fully immersed in the global economy of the 21st century. Our state's students and employees must be prepared for work in the competitive high-wage, high-demand, high-tech careers of the future. We're no longer competing with neighboring cities or states for our livelihood, but with other nations from every corner of the earth. Arkansans must be able to face tomorrow's workforce challenges of today just to keep pace!

As our agency prepares for the coming legislative session, we believe it is of utmost importance that the state invests more in workforce education so that our citizens can enjoy a greater quality of life in the 21st century. With our nation's current economic downturn, this session will be one of the most crucial

in our state's history. We believe Gov. Mike Beebe, working with the General Assembly, will provide the necessary funding to move our agency forward to increase adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and career and technical education funding levels for the citizens we serve, thereby helping to secure a strong and prosperous economic future for our state. We are preparing for the challenges that lie ahead and we'll continue to change and move forward to make our agency the best it can be for those whom we serve.

One of the real joys of the holiday season is the opportunity to express appreciation. I want to take this time to personally say "thank you" to the management and staff of each of the divisions of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Career and Technical Education and Adult Education - for your commitment and efforts in delivering quality service to our clients and the citizens we serve. It takes a very dedicated and committed professional to serve the public and I have great admiration for all the unique contributions that each of you continues to give to our agency.

Now that the holidays are upon us, may the joyous spirit of this beautiful time of year remain with

*DIRECTOR continued on page 3*



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

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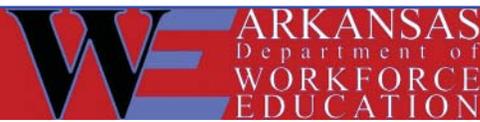
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whose child is now 14.

Ralston has certainly given her full effort in the six years she's been on the board, frequently making visits around the state to various conferences, meetings and Department of Workforce Education facilities.



"Being visible is very important to me," Ralston said. "That way I can be there for people to ask questions, for me to ask questions, and for me to see first-hand what is going on in the agency. I think it's crucial for board members to be knowledgeable about what is going on with the agency and its programs all across the state."

Ralston is a native of Bogata, Columbia. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish from Safacon College Famenino in Bogotá and a degree in Evangelism from YWAM Bible Institute in Elm Springs. She has served as a missionary in Mexico and Nicaragua and has worked as an elementary school teacher, bank teller and cosmetologist.

"I think it's very important to serve the community and do what I can to help the people of this state go to college, get an appropriate education and training and help improve our workforce," Ralston said. "I think it's important for all people to have the opportunity to get the education and training they need to be successful."

"Our director, Bill Walker, does a very good job," Ralston said. "I really like the way he has handled the agency since he has been here. He is a very intelligent person and has approached things in a different way that has helped us become more successful. I have been very happy with him and the way things have progressed."

**DIRECTOR** continued from page 2

you throughout 2009 and beyond. From our entire DWE family to you and your loved ones, our warmest wishes to you for a year of happiness and prosperity. **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!!**

*We Wish you Great Joy, Peace, Happiness and Prosperity this Holiday Season and throughout 2009. Season's Greetings from the entire staff of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education!!!*

# Arkansas Transition Program Utilizing **KUDER**<sup>®</sup> to assist Students making career decisions

**J**udy Smith, program coordinator of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Transition Program (ATP) says transition counselors now have access to the "greatest thing" they've ever been exposed to as far as education is concerned.

Smith is talking about the Kuder Career Planning System that provides Internet-based tools and resources that help students and adults achieve their educational and career planning goals. She and four transition counselors representing six Arkansas high schools now have Kuder in place as a way to assist students with disabilities make a smoother transition to higher education, the workplace and independent lives.

"We're now preparing students not just for graduation, but for what comes after," Smith said. "With Kuder, we can help determine what a student is best suited for."

Kuder, which has been established as a transition tool at Springdale, Springdale-Har-Ber, Pine Bluff-Dollarway, Little Rock-McClellan, Earle and West Memphis High Schools, can track a student's paid and unpaid work history, establish resumé information, organize scholarship opportunities, provide basic workplace skills and help show careers in which a student will

most likely be successful.

"It gives students who may lack a creative spark or have no idea what they want to do beyond high school a career direction," said Eddie Hansford, a transition counselor for both Springdale high schools. "It gives them a chance to investigate and explore career possibilities and it helps them with the organization they need."



**Judy Smith, Director  
Transition Services**

According to Smith, the system also provides assistance to students who think they've already laid out a career plan for themselves.

"Students can revisit the system over and over again," Smith said. "In today's world, there are fewer and fewer kids with long-term career goals. For those with goals that may be unrealistic or outside a student's skill set, it provides a Plan B. The biggest goal we have is helping kids find what they want to do."

Smith says on top of the counselors who have already received training – Hansford, Sheila Johnson (Dollarway), Carolyn Turner (McClellan) and Kimberly Clark (Earle, West Memphis) – she is requesting that the state's remaining transition counselors be involved in the next Kuder training when it is made available.

Smith says school superintendents have already shown positive interest in the program, but she's also trying to sell Kuder to the business and faith-based communities as a way to secure workplace opportunities for students. Her goal is to see that at least 10 students in Kuder communities have work experience by next year.

"Pastors and churches are a good place to start because they offer several paid and unpaid work opportunities," Smith said. "As word gets out, more and more people are seeking information about Kuder."

To learn more about the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Transition Program, call 501-296-1600 or 800-330-0632 or visit our website at [www.arsinfo.org](http://www.arsinfo.org).

## Transition Counseling Team



**Carolyn Turner**



**Eddie Hansford**



**Kimberly Clark**



**Sheila Johnson**

## Arkansas Youth Apprenticeship Program Prepares Students for Skilled Trade Occupations

**H**igh school students seeking a hands-on approach to learning a trade are getting just that through the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Youth Apprenticeship program.

Beginning at age 16, students are eligible to enter the program before entering the 11th grade. They must have a career plan and agree to a three- to five-year apprenticeship allowing them to experience

work in a chosen occupational cluster and eventually earn a certificate and/or journeyman license in addition to a high school diploma.

"Not all students are college-bound, and the Youth Apprenticeship Program gives students the opportunity to learn a skilled trade," said Sandra Porter, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Associate Director for Workforce Training.

Like the Adult Apprenticeship Program, the youth program is a structured training system designed to prepare students for occupations in skilled trades and crafts. Apprenticeship combines related classroom instruction with on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced workers.

"There are youth apprenticeship programs that have been very beneficial in getting apprentices a head start," Department of Workforce Education Apprenticeship Program Manager Jonathan Bibb said. "Youth apprentices get recruited in the 10th grade and start working in the 11th and 12th grade. They must be 16 years old, though, before they can work at a job site.

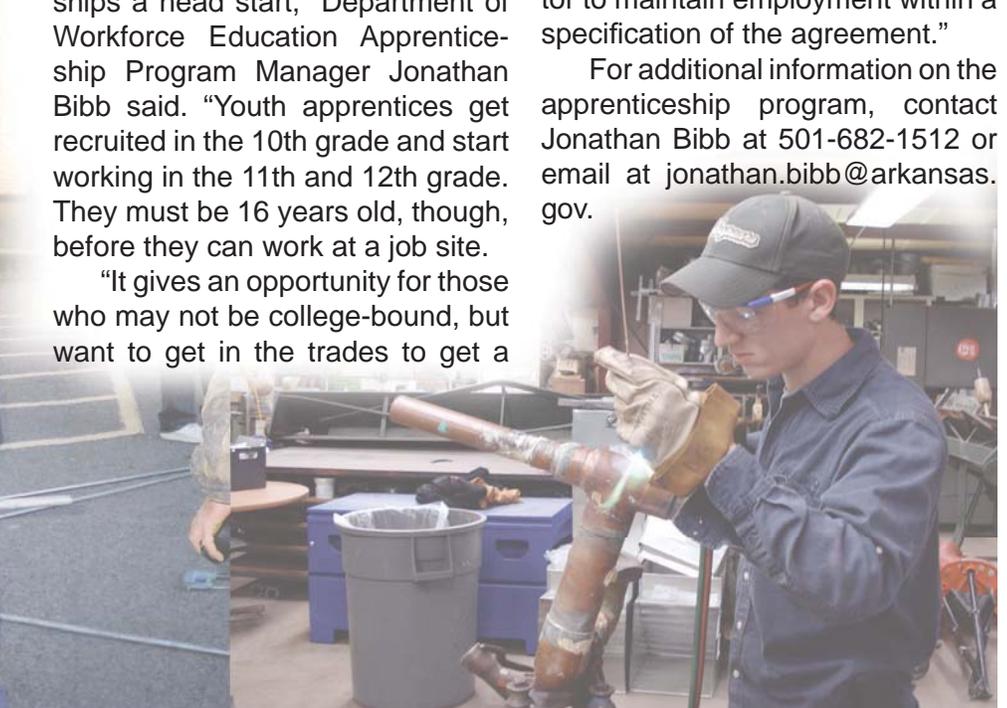
"It gives an opportunity for those who may not be college-bound, but want to get in the trades to get a

head start. With that said, it is not for your 'D' and 'F' students. Those accepted must attend school regularly and have a good GPA. They are interviewed to see if they are good students," Bibb added.

There are more than 800 apprenticeable occupations. A large percentage of participants are plumbers and construction workers, but opportunities are constantly expanding into new fields such as health services, energy, and textile occupations. The beginning wages for apprentices are approximately 50 percent of those earned by skilled workers, but are increased periodically as progress is made.

"The interesting thing about apprenticeship is that you are employed first," Bibb said. "Anyone in the program is employed and there is a contractual agreement between the applicant and contractor to maintain employment within a specification of the agreement."

For additional information on the apprenticeship program, contact Jonathan Bibb at 501-682-1512 or email at [jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov](mailto:jonathan.bibb@arkansas.gov).





# What You Should Know

## Small Business Enterprise Program

Robert Rubenstein, *Small Business Consultant*

**T**imes are changing and people with disabilities are moving with the times. The Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Small Business Program (SBP) is excited about the opportunity to promote independence for persons with disabilities as entrepreneurs.

The decision to pursue self-employment is not for everyone, but for those with an entrepreneurial spirit it can be a rewarding choice. Many Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division clients are seeking employment objectives that allow flexibility in work schedules, career choices, and provide adequate financial reward. Self-employment may provide a realistic employment alternative for those individuals. **The role of the Small Business Program is to assist the counselor in evaluating the client's decision to pursue self-employment as a viable vocational objective.**

Often times a client may want to start a business without having completed adequate research. The Arkansas Small Business Development Center provides workshops to individuals who have expressed an interest in starting their own business. (These centers are located throughout the state.) These workshops explain the reality of what it takes to operate a small business. The workshop topics include development of a business plan, financial resources and bookkeeping.

Feasibility Planning is an integral part of evaluating a business idea. The client will need to assess the feasibility of his/her business proposal. A good feasibility evaluation involves a detailed examination of financial, personal, and market realities. The feasibility assessment serves as an objective appraisal of the possibilities and potential barriers for the business and, ultimately, the client's ability to achieve the vocational goal.

At this juncture, clients are asked to provide copies of the following:

1. DRS-4 Application Form
2. General Medical Evaluation

3. Specialist report (if applicable)
4. Psychological/Vocational Evaluation (RIDAC) if applicable
5. Financial Resources Sheet
6. Completed "Small Business Plan – Simple Format"

### A successful small business will require:

- ➔ A practical plan with a solid foundation
- ➔ Dedication and a willingness to sacrifice
- ➔ Technical Skills
- ➔ Basic knowledge of management, finance, record keeping and marketing

The "Small Business Plan – Simple Format" is used as a tool to assist in the evaluation of the viability of a proposed business. This information along with the objective review of requested case materials provides the information needed to complete a "Small Business Assessment." After review of the case materials and the "Small Business Plan-Simple Format," reports are then forwarded to the rehabilitation counselor. The counselor and their district manager will make a decision regarding whether or not to fund the proposed business.

The Small Business Program can provide a realistic vocational goal for the client with entrepreneurial pursuits. Careful planning, thorough evaluation, and support can help clients achieve this goal.

All past referrals are appreciated and the program looks forward to the opportunity to assist ARS clients with their entrepreneurial pursuits. Information concerning resources for training is available through the Arkansas Small Business Development Centers, Business Financing, Plan Development, Technical Assistance and other self-employment strategies.

For additional information, contact **Robert "Bob" B. Rubenstein, M.R.C. L.P.C., at (870) 972-0025, or email at robert.rubenstein@arkansas.gov.**

**BOARD continued from page 1**



**Governor Beebe and SBWECO Chairman Jack Justus visit to discuss education issues prior to state board meeting.**

tant and actually cohesive from the standpoint of the total overall picture of responsibility in education, to come together and share thoughts with each other," Beebe said. "I commend the boards for working together to coordinate where we go as a people with a common thread and a common theme."

Each of the three department directors – DWE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Department of Education Commissioner Dr. Ken James and Department of Higher Education Director Dr. Jim Purcell – gave presentations.

Director Walker said, "In today's global economy, it is more crucial than ever to focus the state's resources on preparing our students to make sure they get the best education and career and technical training that will result in a great career and an even greater quality of life. I am convinced that with the continued leadership of Gov. Beebe, in partnership with the state Legislature, our state will invest more in workforce education so that our citizens can enjoy greater prosperity, health, wealth and wellness."

"Through strong leadership and vision, our agency continues to promote every avenue and opportunity to raise the bar for those who strive to take their rightful place in our

society by assisting them with meaningful career training, technical education and adult education for the 21st century."

Dr. James said Arkansas is facing three major challenges in education.

"We have to create smooth transitions from pre-K to elementary, middle grades to high school, and high school to college and careers," Dr. James said.

"We have to close the achievement gaps in racial/ethnic groups and gender, in urban/suburban locations and in income. And we have to align education systems in curricula and assessments, in school and college data and in accountability to the public."

During his presentation, Dr.

Purcell said that finding ways for more Arkansans to get a college education, or live the "American dream," is the goal of the Department of Higher Education.

"We are making progress with

**BOARD continued on page 8**



**DWE Director Bill Walker briefs Gov. Beebe prior to the joint education board meeting at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion.**



**John Wright, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Chief Financial Officer and Ken Musteen, ARS Chief of Field Services greet Gov. Beebe.**



**Gov. Beebe receives Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) 5-of-5 Award from JAG national president Ken Smith.**



**SBWECO board members prepare for joint education board meeting.**



**SBWECO members Martha Dixon and Richard Smith chat following board meeting on November 3rd.**

## Department of Workforce Education Awards Grant to Arkansas Baptist College



State Senator Irma Hunter Brown of Little Rock and DWE Director Bill Walker present a check to Arkansas Baptist College President Dr. Fitz Hill at the Delta Classic 4 Literacy football game at War Memorial Stadium in Little Rock.

**T**he Arkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) awarded a \$50,000 grant to Arkansas Baptist College (ABC) in Little Rock for the creation of programs at the school's *Literacy and Writing Center*. State Senator Irma Hunter Brown of Little Rock joined DWE Director Bill Walker to present the grant to Arkansas Baptist president Dr. Fitz Hill on November 8 at the Delta Classic 4 Literacy football game at Little Rock's War Memorial Stadium.

The Arkansas Baptist College Writing and Literacy Center aids students by providing individualized assistance to those who need help achieving success in the remedial coursework meant to prepare them for college courses and by making additional assistance available to those seeking to improve their reading and writing skills. The Center further provides training to students as peer counselors.

The Writing and Literacy Center will expand its services by implementing an online writing lab for students and community mem-

bers who want help, but may be unable to utilize its services during regular business hours. Center administrators say the lab will build a community of writers and peer consultants by emphasizing collaboration, independence and interdependence while providing guidance to clients for long-term reading and writing improvement.

"It's an honor to award these funds to Dr. Hill and to Arkansas Baptist College because of how much it will accomplish," said Director Walker. "The funds will help more students earn a college degree, it will give the peer counseling students a head start as they enter the workforce and it will benefit the community by increasing literacy rates among individual members. All of this combined will help prepare everyone involved for careers in the high-skill, high-wage, high-demand workforce of the 21st century. Ultimately, that is the goal of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education."

### BOARD continued from page 7

regard to growth in associate's and bachelor's degree areas," Dr. Purcell said. "What will we get for it? We will get greater volunteer activity in our communities, blood donations will be better, we'll have better social systems, someone will be less likely to be convicted of a crime, unemployment rates will decline and income will go up per families. Arkansas's greatest generation is at the schoolhouse door waiting for the opportunity to propel Arkansas into the global economy."

Other guests and speakers included Jobs for America's Graduates president Ken Smith and Southern Regional Education Board senior vice-president Dr. Gene Bottoms.

Smith discussed the success

of Arkansas's Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) program and presented a special honor to Gov. Beebe recognizing the state's achievement of JAG's highest honor – 5 of 5 Award status.

"We are so impressed with what is happening in Arkansas," Smith said. "Arkansas is among the leaders, not only in the terms of success, but also innovation."

Dr. Bottoms talked about the importance of graduating more students and what it takes to have them graduate and be prepared for college.

"We have to look at how we can strengthen guidance and advisement given to students and parents," he said.

Following the joint meeting,

the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities (SBWECO) held its regular meeting and approved program policies for Adult Education.

DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith recommended that the board approve the new and revised policies dealing with the operation of local adult education programs. The policies were updated to comply with the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act and the administrative procedures of the Department of Workforce Education.

Other board meeting topics included a report from Director Walker and a budget update from Charlie Brown, DWE Deputy Director for Finance.

## Former Tyson CEO Credits FFA roots for Career Success

**T**he man who helped build a small Northwest Arkansas chicken processing company into the world's largest meat producer **credits the lessons learned as an FFA member as the foundation for his company's leadership.**

Don Tyson, former CEO and chairman of Springdale-based Tyson Foods, and son of company founder John Tyson, said the national FFA organization, then known as Future Farmers of America, provided the introduction to production agriculture he later applied in his company.

It's the inspiration, leadership and desire he got from FFA that led him to honor the organization in his recent book, "I Refuse to Have a Bad Day." The book features a collection of research-based stories and information that identify the leadership qualities of Don Tyson, along with other for-

mer and current Tyson leaders.

The book was officially released during a reception in Springdale in September. More than 50 Tyson employees, FFA officials, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education



**Don Tyson talks with FFA members at his September book release reception in Springdale**

staff including Agricultural Science and Technology Program Manager Marion Fletcher, and FFA students from Springdale and Har-Ber High Schools attended the event.

"It's been fascinating to watch the role of FFA evolve over the years," said DWE Director Bill Walker. "Mr. Tyson attributing the foundation of his success as a world leader in agri-business to FFA is certainly a testament to the type of training students receive as members of a Career and Technical student organization.

"From its original purpose of preparing young men and women for a life as our nation's farmers to its function today in developing students for competent and assertive agricultural leadership, FFA continues to produce students who play a pivotal role in our nation's agricultural economy. Arkansas is among our country's leading agricultural producers and it's crucial that FFA remains strong in our state," Walker added.

## Arkansas SkillsUSA holds 2008 Fall Leadership Conference Oct. 28-29 at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith



**A**rkansas SkillsUSA held its 2008 Fall Leadership Conference Oct. 28-29 at the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith.

During the conference, 426 secondary students and 66 advisors representing 29 Arkansas schools had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills. Individual participants were assigned to clubs and partnered with students from different chapters or schools for competitive events. This arrangement was established to provide the students a unique setting to step out of their comfort zones and learn how to be team leaders and motivators.

"Emphasis was placed on a number of leadership contests," said state SkillsUSA advisor and Department of Workforce Education Skilled and Technical Sciences Program Manager Dick Burchett. "These competitions provide focused training in each area and help each and every student involved strengthen their leadership skills."

The contests covered Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Chapter Business Procedure, Extemporaneous Speaking, Prepared Speech, Job Interview, Quiz Bowl, Customer Service and Teamwork Lego Model Building.

The conference wasn't all-work and no-play for the participants. The Arkansas Army National Guard hosted a cookout that featured games and music. Instructors from Pulaski Technical College and the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith were also on hand for college information sessions which offered students an overview of each career area and an opportunity to have their questions about post-secondary education answered.

## DWE participates in Gov. Beebe's "Arkansas Works" 2008 Summit

**A**rkansas Department of Workforce Education (DWE) Director Bill Walker was one of five state agency directors featured in a video presentation during Gov. Mike Beebe's **2008 Arkansas Works Summit** in October.

This unprecedented meeting in Little Rock brought together over 1400 community leaders, educators and business executives from each of the state's 75 counties to reaffirm Arkansas's commitment to train and educate an adaptable workforce capable of competing for the knowledge-based jobs driving the new, global economy.

In the video, Director Walker discussed the Department of Workforce Education's role in helping build the state's workforce. He explained how the agency's three divisions – Career and Technical Education, Adult Education and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services – work to aid students and adults in getting the education and training they need to land high-skill, high-demand, high-wage jobs.

Following the video pre-

sentation, Gov. Beebe addressed the crowd to share his concerns on Arkansas's future in the global economy.

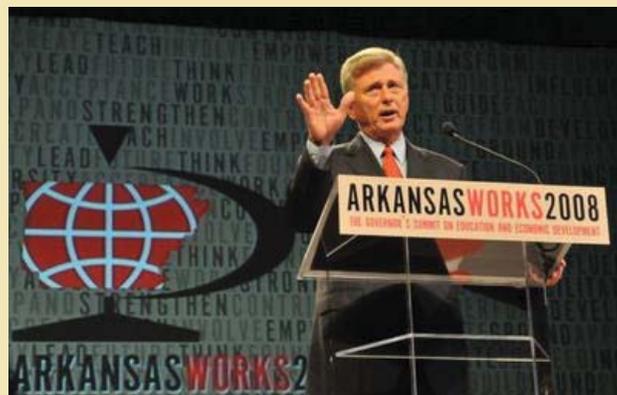
"Arkansas's workforce isn't fully equipped to compete in the 21st-century economy, and we must all work to change that, and we must start now," Gov. Beebe said during his address. "If we don't, our children and our children's children will struggle against a tide of poverty in a world that will have left them behind," Beebe said. "That danger is real; it is not inevitable.

"In a global economy ruled by knowledge and ideas, you don't need a big workforce, an enormous amount of time or a major influx of investment capital to create a

strong economy at home. All these things help, but above all, what you need is smart people who can use existing technology to innovate new technology. This is where Arkansas can shine."

Director Walker said the Department of Workforce Education is already hard at work helping to fill Gov. Beebe's vision of producing a well-educated and well-trained workforce via the DWE "Arkansas Promise."

"This conference was a great example of Gov. Beebe's vision and leadership in bringing together a cross section of community leaders from all across this state to begin a dialogue of how we can work together to improve the vast economic conditions we are all faced with," Director Walker said. "The governor's message of economic development and education being tied hand in hand was more clear than ever and our agency is raising the bar and doing all possible to prepare our state's workforce for the careers of the future."



(top) Governor Beebe speaks to community leaders from around Arkansas; (above left) DWE Associate Director of Career and Technical Education Rod Duckworth, DWE Deputy Director of Career and Technical Education John Davidson, Executive Director of Magnolia Economic Development Corporation Toby Stephens, DWE Director Walker, and DWE Associate Director for Workforce Training Sandra Porter discuss summit topics during a break; (above right) DWE Program Manager for Apprenticeship & Construction Training Jonathan Bibb, DWE Public School Program Advisor for Adult Education Paige Cox, and ARS' Arkansas Career Training Institute Supervisor of Admissions Cornelious Hollinshed answer questions at the agency's display booth.



**Ken Musteen**  
 Chief of Field Services/  
 Associate Director for  
 Arkansas Rehabilitation  
 Services Division  
 Arkansas Department of  
 Workforce Education

## Senior Management Team SMT Update

One of the results of the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's (ARS) mission of providing services to individuals with disabilities leading to opportunities for gainful employment is our annual report which lists the numbers of successful closures for each year. This report serves not only as a measure for evaluating ARS' progress in achieving one of our federal standards and indicators, but it also provides an opportunity for saying "well done" to all of those who have done an outstanding job for the year.

According to the data on hand, 2,447 individuals successfully completed rehabilitation services programs and became gainfully employed in 2008. This exceeds last year's number of successful closures. As is the case each year, ARS is pleased to acknowledge the various districts and the outstanding counselors for the year.

The numbers which also include post-employment cases are as follows:

**The top district for 2008 was District V-S**, which comprises the Hot Springs, Benton and Little Rock offices. *This district successfully closed 429 cases of individuals into employment.*

**District III**, which serves Pine Bluff, Helena and Monticello, came in a close second finding *successful employment in the cases of 408 individuals.*

**District IV**, which is comprised of El Dorado and Texarkana, had *371 successful closures.* This is remarkable considering that over the last two years the district experienced the retirement of one long-time counselor and the passing of another.

**District II**, which consists of Batesville, Jonesboro and West Memphis, *successfully helped 362 individuals find employment.*

**District V-N**, which serves Lonoke, Russellville, Conway and North Little Rock, *successfully closed 341 cases.*

**District I-N**, which serves Fayetteville and Harrison, ended the year with *339 successful closures.*

Rounding out the numbers was **District I-S**, which serves Booneville and Fort Smith.

The district *successfully closed 256 cases* as employed. It must be noted that this district also suffered the tragic loss of a counselor during this year.

**Congratulations and thank you** to each and every district manager, counselor and support staffer from across the state for their outstanding efforts. **Because of their service, over 2,000 Arkansans have achieved their dreams of becoming productive and independent participants and are now active members of the workforce.**

**The top five counselors for this year were:**

**Herb Pierce** of Pine Bluff with 94 successful closures, **Freddie Smith** of Texarkana with 75, **Amy Jones** of Fayetteville with 67, **Dwight Campbell** of Booneville, 60, and **Janna Clemmons** of Lonoke with 58 closures.

**Congratulations and well done** to these counselors and the support staff.

Although production numbers are an important part of our reporting process, it's also important to acknowledge and express the great pleasures of seeing the work of our staff in the customer service arena. This is particularly difficult to tangibly measure because the majority of customers we serve rarely express their thanks in writing. Their gratitude and appreciation is usually evident in the smiles of sat-

*SMT continued on page 12*

SMT continued from page 11

isfaction and glow of achievement on their faces. However, once in a great while, the staff is fortunate enough to receive written confirmation of their dedication and service.

Below is an excerpt of a letter ARS received regarding counselor Tameca Jackson of West Memphis. It's an example of what occurs every day in each field office, at the Arkansas Career Training Institute and every other program in ARS.

**Dear Tameca,**

***We love you. It is just that simple and absolutely true. From the first visit to the last time we met with you, we have always felt positive and that everything was going to be okay. I didn't know how to start this letter, so I thought I would just say how I feel about you. Cathie and Terry feel the same way I do, and even though our mother hasn't met you, she loves you too.***

***You have always been straight up and professional but, you show you care too, and not everyone has the ability to do both. I really appreciated your kindness when I called. You had to be too busy, but you never let me know it or showed impatience.***

***I can't imagine anyone doing a better job than you've done. We couldn't have asked for anything more and we will be happy to tell the world.***

Once again, thanks to everyone at ARS. This letter and each case closed sums up what the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division is all about.

## What is the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)?

**A**rkansas's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is sanctioned by Section 105 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to "give advice and work in partnership with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency/unit." In Arkansas, this unit is the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division.

The members of the Council are appointed by the governor and serve three-year terms, not to exceed more than two consecutive terms. The 15-member Council must represent the following:

- ◆ Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC);
- ◆ Parent Training and Information Center established under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- ◆ Client Assistance Program (CAP);
- ◆ A VR counselor who, if employed by the VR agency, is an ex-officio, non-voting member;
- ◆ Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP);
- ◆ Four business, industry, and labor representatives;
- ◆ Representatives from disability advocacy groups which include individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities, and representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves;
- ◆ Current or former VR applicants or recipients;
- ◆ American Indian VR program (if the state has one);
- ◆ State educational agency responsible for the public education of students disabilities;
- ◆ State Workforce Investment Board; and
- ◆ Director of the designated State VR unit, also ex-officio and non-voting.

The majority of the SRC members must be individuals with disabilities **and** not employed by the designated state VR agency.

### SRC Functions

Following consultation with the State Workforce Investment Board, the State Rehabilitation Council is required to:

- ◆ Review, analyze, and advise the VR agency regarding their performance related to the topics of:
  - ◆ Eligibility, including order of selection;
  - ◆ Extent, scope and effectiveness of the VR services;
  - ◆ Functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome.

SRC continued on page 13

*SRC continued from page 12*

- ◆ In partnership with the VR agency:
  - ◆ Develop, agree to and review state goals and priorities,
  - ◆ Evaluate the effectiveness of the program and submit annual progress reports to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Commissioner, and
  - ◆ Conduct a statewide needs assessment every three years of individuals with disabilities living in the state.
- ◆ Advise the VR agency regarding VR activities.
- ◆ Assist in the preparation of the State Plan, amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations.
- ◆ Review and analyze the effectiveness of and the consumer satisfaction with:
  - ◆ VR agency functions,
  - ◆ VR services provided by the VR agency and other entities, and
  - ◆ Employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals served by VR.
- ◆ Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and RSA on the status of VR services. This report will be made available to the public.
- ◆ Coordinate the activities of the SRC with the activities of other councils, such as the SILC, IDEA advisory panel, and the State Workforce Investment Board.
- ◆ Provide for the coordination and the establishment of working relations between the VR agency and the SILC, and
- ◆ Perform other functions that it determines appropriate and comparable to its other functions and is consistent with the purposes of Title I of the Act and its regulations.

In turn, **the state VR agency is required by the Act to work with the SRC on annual state goals and priorities** in order to submit an annual report of progress, to consult regularly with SRC on all phases of policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to VR services, and to aid in conducting a statewide needs assessment report every three years. In addition, the agency is required to transmit copies to the SRC of all plans and reports sent to RSA, all policies and information used by rehabilitation personnel to carry out the VR program, and all due process hearing decisions.

SRC meetings must be held at least four times a year and publicly announced, and be open and accessible to the public (unless there is a valid reason for an executive session).

### SRC Members

The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council currently has 19 members. They are Gregg Lawrence, Bronwyn Palmer, Ruth Pellow, Kyle Sharp, Mike McCreight, Lynn Carver, Travis Beebe, Bean Murray, Eric Treat, Freddie Smith, Staci Croom Raley, Eddie Miller, Dianna Varady, and Mary McClain. Representing the Governor's office is Sarah Agee, and from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division administrative offices are Ken Musteen, Chief of Field Services, Randy Parker, Interim Associate Director of Program, Planning, Development & Evaluation, Commissioner Robert Treviño, and Brooke Crain.

For more information on the State Rehabilitation Council, contact ARS Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen at 1616 Brookwood, Little Rock, AR, 72202 or e-mail at [ken.musteen@arkansas.gov](mailto:ken.musteen@arkansas.gov).

*Peace to all*



Through our jobs we help to fulfill the needs of our students, clients and customers. As the Season of Giving is upon us, let us not forget others in our communities who would also greatly benefit from our contributions...of time, money, or companionship. We CAN make a difference.

## Department of Workforce Education co-sponsors AWIB Conference in Little Rock

Approximately 2,000 people from across the state gathered in Little Rock October 29-30 for the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board's 2008 Workforce Conference.

Themed "**Charting the Course: Navigating Education, Employment and Economic Development**," the event featured messages from Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe and various state agency directors, including Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker. Participants also heard from an array of guest speakers and attended breakout sessions and workshops to gain ideas on how to help strengthen the state's workforce.

Keynote speakers included Norma Noble, Oklahoma Deputy Secretary of Commerce for Workforce Development, Joseph Carbone of The WorkPlace, Inc., an innovative workforce development board in Connecticut, J. Michael Norton from the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc., Maria Weidmark from the U.S. Department of Labor and Toyce Newton, Executive Director and founder of the Phoenix (Ariz.) Youth and Family Services, Inc.

"Only when we know that all Arkansans have the opportunity to live up to their full potential and make their own unique contributions to society can we truly say we are prepared for the challenges of the future," Beebe said during his address at the opening session of the conference.

Director Walker, Department of Higher Education Director Dr. Jim Purcell, Department of Economic Development Director Maria Haley, and Department of Workforce Ser-



### Charting the Course: Navigating Education, Employment and Economic Development



Ken Ferguson, Executive Director of AWIB, DWE Director Walker, President of the Arkansas AFL-CIO Alan Hughes and Governor Beebe.



Director Walker, DWE Deputy Director of Adult Education Jim Smith, ARS Commissioner Bob Treviño, DWE Deputy Director of Communications Reginald Jackson, and Associate Director of Career and Technical Education Rod Duckworth



Director Walker with Ken Ferguson, Executive Director of the AWIB

vices Director Artee Williams each stressed the importance of fulfilling Gov. Beebe's goals of achieving a strong, vibrant, well trained and well educated workforce in the state.

"Above all, the Governor's Workforce Cabinet all strive toward achieving Gov. Beebe's goal of making education services in Arkansas the best in the nation, preparing our state's citizens for the high-wage, high-demand and high-skill careers of the 21st century and making Arkansas the world's most attractive place to start and locate a business," Director Walker said. "By our agencies working together, we will make sure Gov. Beebe's vision becomes a reality and that, once realized, Arkansas will be the envy of both the nation and the world."

Kenneth B. Ferguson, Executive Director of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board emphasized the important roles each agency has to help properly educate the state's citizens, train them properly, and help draw the needed jobs to the state.

"Arkansas is home to a vibrant and talented workforce," Ferguson said. "We have citizens who are anxiously awaiting the opportunity to learn new skills, increase their current knowledge base, and demonstrate to their employer or potential employer that they can perform and exceed expectations. Their desires create the demand for organizations such as the Workforce Investment Board to provide job training, educational assistance and employer assistance."

The conference was sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, the Department of Workforce Services and Pulaski Technical College.

## Secondary Career Centers

### important for Economic Development in Arkansas Communities

**M**ore than 8,000 students are currently enrolled in secondary area technical centers across the state, and that number is growing thanks to Governor Mike Beebe's constant push to bring in new jobs and companies to Arkansas.

"The centers are becoming more and more popular," said Sandra Porter, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Associate Director of Workforce Training. "More and more high school students are leaving high school trained and ready to go to work right away and more students every day are taking

advantage of the concurrent credit where they get high school credit and college credit at the same time through these area center courses."

Sponsored by high schools, education service cooperatives and two-year colleges, secondary area technical centers offer career and technical education programs to high school students within a 25-mile radius. Area centers offer programs that are typically too expensive to maintain at a high school. Many smaller schools cannot afford to offer these programs, thereby limiting students' access to certain

programs.

There are currently 24 area centers in the state that service 177 high schools. During the 2006-2007 school year, 8,192 students were enrolled and 3,607 students earned 24,620 credit hours through the college-based technical centers, representing a tuition value of \$1.7 million.

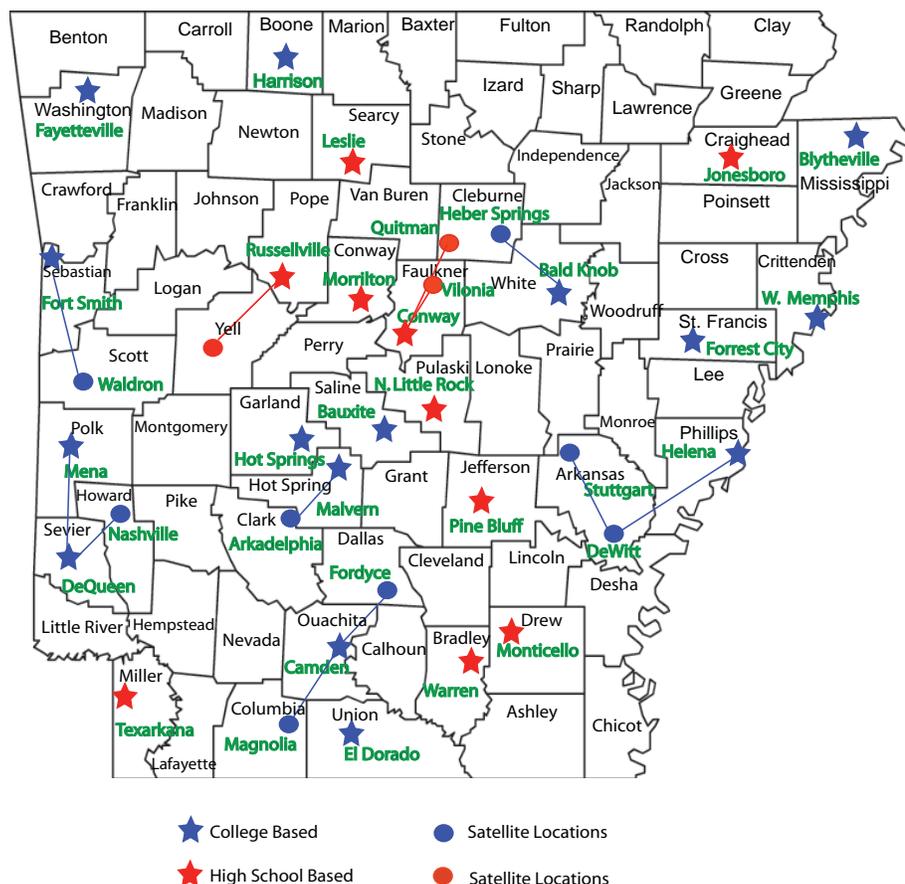
"These centers provide programs that schools can't afford to offer, but are very important for the economic development of each community," Porter said. "Each center offers programs and courses aimed to help train students based on what industries are in a certain area, so the students are getting the training they need to help them get a high-skilled job in their community."

Based on each community's ever-changing industry needs, the centers are constantly updating curriculum.

One example of a center serving an array of students is the Metropolitan Career-Technical Center in Little Rock. Serving students in schools from the Cabot School District, Little Rock School District, Pulaski County Special School District, North Little Rock School District and schools in Saline County, Metropolitan offers courses in 13 areas, including advertising design, auto body, welding, aviation technology, culinary arts, cosmetology, law enforcement and radio broadcasting.

"What these centers are offering is an extension of their school," said Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker. "More and more students are discovering how positive these centers are and how they can help prepare them for higher education and good jobs."

Secondary Area Technical Centers  
Service Areas Existing Centers



## Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. Honored during National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Several events were celebrated in October as the Department of Workforce Education's Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division joined with other groups and agencies to recognize October as **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. was honored on **National Disability Mentoring Day**, October 15, for the hiring of people with disabilities as a major portion of their Diversity and Inclusion program. ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño was joined by Ken Musteen, Chief of Field Services, and Rodney Chandler, District Business Relations Manager, to recognize the management of Wal-Mart's Hwy 10 West/Cantrell Road store in Little Rock. Representing the store was co-manager Steve Holmes.

Commissioner Treviño presented Holmes with a proclamation from Governor Mike Beebe that honored all Wal-Mart stores for the company's stand on diversity and its inclusion of people with disabilities.

"Wal-Mart embraces the concept of diversity to include more than age, race and gender," said Chandler during the brief presentation ceremony. "They include people with disabilities in their definition and they back that up with the number of people with disabilities they have on their team, not just in this one store, but system-wide."

Shane Scott, a student at Arkansas Career Training Institute in Hot Springs studying sales and marketing, came to the Wal-Mart Hwy 10 West store to spend a part of the day in the mentoring program. Wal-Mart associates Laquetta Harris, Shelli Donnely and Benjie Baker spent time with Scott, showing him first hand the Wal-Mart retail philosophy. Scott was accompanied by his ACTI business instructor, Jacob Bryant. ACTI students Jeremy Johnson and Michael Goshen spent part of their mentoring day behind the scenes learning about the goings on at the Wal-Mart store in Pine Bluff.

The Little Rock city government hosted a half-dozen student mentees who observed activities in Finance, Human Resources, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Inner-Governmental Relations and at the Little Rock Zoo. Two day-care centers, Treehill Park and Full Potential Child Development Center, also hosted students.

Leonard Boyle, Executive Director of the Arkansas Governor's Commission on People



Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño

with Disabilities, was pleased with this year's Little Rock event.

"Disability Mentoring Day was accepted surprisingly better than we anticipated," said Boyle. "Next year, we would like to see twice as many students and business entities involved."

"Along with the businesses that participated, I'd also like to thank ARS' Arkansas Transition Program (ATP) director Judy Smith and the ATP team of counselors for their involvement in making the day a remarkable success."

Disability Mentoring Day, "**Career Development for the 21st Century**," originated as a concept of the American Association of People with Disabilities. It promotes career development for students and job-seekers with disabilities through job shadowing and hands-on career exploration. With leadership, coordination and resource materials from AAPD, local communities around the country organize their own activities to bring students and employers together for information-

WAL-MART continued on page 17



(l-r): Steve Holmes, Co-Manager, Wal-Mart, Hwy 10/Cantrell location; Benji Baker and Laquetta Harris of Wal-Mart; Shane Scott, ACTI business and marketing student who spent part of October 15th being mentored by Wal-Mart staff; Shelli Donnely of Wal-Mart; Jacob Bryant, ACTI Instructor, and Rodney Chandler, ARS District Business Relations Manager

## GCPD's Boyle named 2008 PTC Outstanding Alumnus

**T**he Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division's Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities (GCPD) Executive Director Leonard Boyle was named Pulaski Technical College's 2008 Outstanding Alumnus in October at the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges state conference in Rogers.

Boyle enrolled at Pulaski Tech (PTC) in 1998, six years after acquiring a disability resulting from a lower lumbar puncture and multiple sclerosis that left him with partial use of his legs and in a wheelchair. He called the decision to return to school "frightening."

According to him, PTC Learning Assistance Center coordinator Rhonda Carroll and history teacher Johnny Dollar helped ease his transition.

"The developmental courses I took helped me learn what college courses are all about and what I had to do to make it through," he said.

After completing his Associate of Arts degree in 2001, Boyle completed internships at US Representative Vic Snyder's office and worked on the campaigns of Congressman Snyder and Gov. Mike Beebe.



Leonard Boyle

Boyle says he's been an advocate for those with disabilities since he first became disabled in 1992. Now he says serving as Executive Director of the Governor's Commission for People with Disabilities and as a liaison between state government and Arkansans with disabilities is his perfect job.

"Few people say they get to do a job that they love to do and they want to do," he says, "but I can."

Boyle's GCPD position and his recognition don't mark the end of his education. He needs only six credits to complete his bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) and hopes to attend the William H. Bowen School of Law at UALR.

"We are very proud of Leonard's accomplishments and for his selection as Pulaski Tech's Outstanding Alumnus," said Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker. "This is a great honor for him and his hard work and commitment to our agency and in the community are pivotal to the success of the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities."

### WAL-MART *continued from page 16*

al sessions about career opportunities and one-on-one mentoring with volunteers at public and private places of employment.

**Disability Mentoring Day** is officially commemorated on the third Wednesday of every October and is implemented in locations around the country and internationally throughout the year. It is designed to benefit from local creativity, with each community planning activities to best suit the interests and abilities of its students, job-seekers and local employers.

DMD is an opportunity to underscore the connection between school and work, evaluate personal goals, target career skills for improvement, explore possible career paths, and develop lasting mentor relationships. The program's history shows that students' and job seekers' participation in Disability Mentoring Day can result in an internship opportunity with the host employer and function as a first interview on the way to a part-time or full-time employment offer or even a firm on-the-spot job offer.

## Who Is Philip McClain?



- 1 Student with a disability
- 2 Russellville resident
- 3 GED graduate
- 4 Recent Arkansas Tech University student
- All of the Above

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# Dates to Remember

**January 9, 2009**

**Apprenticeship Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee:** Steel Workers Hall, 1315 West 2nd Street, Little Rock, AR

**Apprenticeship State Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee,** Local Plumber's Training Hall, 4503 Hoffman Rd. Little Rock, AR

**January 12, 2009**

**Opening Session for the Arkansas General Assembly;** State Capitol, Little Rock, AR

**January 28, 2009**

**Business & Marketing Education** - FBLA District III Senior High Spring Conference; Pine Bluff Convention Center, 500 E 8th Avenue, Pine Bluff, AR

**Business & Marketing Education** - FBLA District IV Senior High Spring Conference; Hot Springs Convention Center, 134 Convention Boulevard, Hot Springs National Park, AR

**Business & Marketing Education** - FBLA District VI Senior High Spring Conference; University of Central Arkansas, 201 Donaghey Avenue, Conway, AR

**January 29, 2009**

**Business & Marketing Education** - FBLA District II Senior High Spring Conference ASU College of Business, 103 Cooley Drive, Jonesboro, AR

**January 30, 2009**

**Arkansas FCCLA Executive Council Meeting** Luther Hardin Building, LR, AR

**January 30-31, 2009**

**Arkansas FFA Winter Leadership Conference;** Camp Councdale, AR

**February 2, 2009**

**Business & Marketing Education** - FBLA District I Senior High Spring Conference, Fort Smith Convention Center, 55 S 7th Street, Fort Smith, AR

**February 5, 2009**

**Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee,** Steel Workers Hall, 1315 West 2nd Street, Little Rock, AR

**February 6, 2009**

**State Electrical Apprenticeship Committee,** IBEW Hall I-30 and University, Little Rock, AR

**February 9, 2009**

**State Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee,** Local Plumber's Training Hall, 4503 Hoffman Rd. Little Rock, AR

**February 10, 2009**

**Dist.3 FCCLA Spring Meeting** Valley View High School, Valley View, AR. 2/10/09

**Dist.4 FCCLA Spring Meeting** UAPB, Pine Bluff, AR

**February 12, 2009**

**Dist.2 FCCLA Spring Meeting** Melbourne High School, Melbourne, AR

**March 2, 2009**

**Arkansas FCCLA Executive Council** Luther Hardin Building, LR, AR

**March 5, 2009**

**Arkansas Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee,** Steel Workers Hall, 1315 West 2nd Street, Little Rock, AR

**State Plumbing Apprenticeship Committee,** Local Plumber's Training Hall, 4503 Hoffman Rd. Little Rock, AR 3/5/09

**March 6, 2009**

**FFA Southern District Electricity, Mechanics, & Leadership Events,** SAU Magnolia, AR

**State Electrical Apprenticeship Committee,** IBEW Hall I-30 and University, Little Rock, AR

**March 12, 2009**

**FFA Eastern District Career Development Event** ASU, Jonesboro, AR

**March 19, 2009**

**FFA Southern District Career Development Events** SAU Magnolia, AR

**March 26, 2009**

**FFA Northwest District Leadership Events,** ATU Russellville, AR

**March 31, 2009**

**HOSA Spring Conference** Hot Springs Convention Center. Hot Springs, AR



# Arkansas Department of Workforce Education

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[www.arsinfo.org](http://www.arsinfo.org)

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