September 2011

the Career Counselor

A publication of the Arkansas Department of Career Education
501-682-1500 ▪ http://ace.arkansas.gov

Staff, Students, Department Administrators Celebrate ACTI SkillsUSA Participants

ACTI SkillsUSA contestants, instructors and administrators.

SkillsUSA chapters at high schools and postsecondary institutions across Arkansas have had a successful year and represented the state very well at the national SkillsUSA competition held this summer in Kansas City. But one SkillsUSA chapter in particular has overcome its own set of challenges and exceeded expectations. That chapter is at the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs, formerly known as the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center.

According to the national SkillsUSA organization, only 2 percent of all chapter members nationwide ever qualify to compete at the national level. This year, the three-year-old ACTI SkillsUSA chapter sent four students to the national competition after they won their state competitions.

ACTI's Sara Newcomb brought home the school's first-ever national title by winning a bronze medal – third in the nation – in the screen printing competition. Her teammate Charlie Graves placed fourth in graphic communications, and Kristy Fincel placed in the top 10 in the nursing assistant competition. Their teammate Rocky Stone placed 12th out of 22 competitors in extemporaneous speaking.

"Considering that our students are not only competing against college and postsecondary students from all across the country, but that they are facing competitors who do not have to overcome any type of disability while demonstrating their skills, I believe, is truly amazing," said Dr. Dawn Simpson, director of vocational training at ACTI.

"Our students proved – as they do every day – how capable they are and that their disability does not

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Davidson Honored at Surprise Fete

Friends and Colleagues Praise a "Career of Service"

John L. Davidson retired in June after 38 years of service to education in Arkansas. For the past 11 years, Davidson served as the deputy director of career and technical education for the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE). He's been a teacher, an innovator, an advocate and a leader – and so much more. John Davidson's impact on career and technical education in Arkansas and the nation will be felt for decades to come.

A native of Arkansas, John holds an associate's degree in science from Arkansas Tech University and a bachelors' degree in agriculture, a master's degree in voca-

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Director's Update

William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.
Director
Arkansas Department of Career Education

This summer has brought a mix of emotions here at the agency. ***We've celebrated the national successes of the SkillsUSA chapters at Arkansas's secondary and post-secondary institutions.*** You'll see an impressive list and pictures of gold, silver and bronze medalists and dozens of top 10 finishers in this newsletter. I was proud to congratulate the Arkansas contingent (134 students!) in person after the competition awards ceremony in Kansas City. The value of the SkillsUSA chapters and curriculum is clear. Giving students the opportunity to learn career-focused skills and gain hands-on experience makes them more prepared and qualified to be successful in today's and tomorrow's workforce.

We had some bittersweet days this summer as several of our agency's leaders have retired or have announced their intention to do so. ***John Wright, the rehabilitation division's chief financial officer for 27 years, retired in August and is taking a wealth of institutional knowledge and experience with him.*** John's quiet wisdom and leadership will be missed, but we wish him well as he and his wife, Gloria, waltz across the nation competing in their joint passion, ballroom dancing.

Another John, ***John Davidson, a 38-year veteran of the Arkansas educational system and an 11-year member of our agency's staff, retired at the end of June.*** We honored him with a retirement reception attended by an auditorium full of staff and many local and far-flung colleagues who praised John and his work. Please read the article about John in this issue.

John Davidson took me under his wing when I arrived at the agency a few short years ago. He instilled in me his passion for career and technical education (CTE), and the importance of maintaining a focus on "the kids" even when our self-created bureaucracy and funding challenges seem insurmountable.

Through John's leadership and vision, career and technical education in the state of Arkansas has become an example that other states and countries follow. I promised John that I would not let his work be in vain, and I'm confident that Rod Duckworth, a veteran CTE educator himself and now interim Deputy Director for CTE, and his staff will continue to build on the foundation John laid.

An immediate manifestation of John's vision is the recent launch of the STEM initiative. You'll see a lot more in future issues about this important statewide educational focus on science, technology, engineering and math (abbreviated STEM) curriculum in secondary education, and the role our agency's career and technical education programs will play in its success. Our agency has set designated up to $900,000 to help fund this initiative. Of that, $500,000 is designated for support of Project Lead the Way, a national initiative designed to provide high school

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Arkansas Department ACE of Career Education

the Career Counselor

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SouthArk Technical Center Automotive Team Earns Awards

The South Arkansas Community College Secondary Technical Center automotive technology team of **Nick Matthews** and **Francisco Echavarria** recently earned state and national honors in the Ford/AAA Automotive Service Competition. SouthArk's team placed first in Arkansas, earning the right to advance to naionals, where they placed 12th. In addition to this year's first-place finish in state competition, SouthArk's teams have also earned third-, second- and first-place finishes within the past five years. **Karsten Tidwell** and **Doyle Manis** are the automotive technology program instructors.

Moser Elected ATEA President

Dr. Larry Moser, director of the South Arkansas Community College Secondary Technical Center, has been elected president of the American Technical Education Association, a postsecondary technical program professional development organization with members in more than 30 states.

Available Upon Request

If you would like additional copies of the

Career Counselor

or if you have comments concerning this publication, please contact **Deborah Germany**, Director of Communications, at 501-682-1701, or deborah.germany@arkansas.gov

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact Ellice Scales at 501-682-1701 or ellice.scales@arkansas.gov.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Association
sponsors annual spring training conference
"New Beginnings"

The Arkansas Rehabilitation Association (ARA) held its annual training conference June 16-18, with 147 attendees, 20 of whom were students from Arkansas Tech University and the University of Arkansas. ARA gave six $1,500 scholarships to students enrolled in educational programs relating to vocational rehabilitation.

Keynote speakers included National Rehabilitation Association President Tom Wilson (Nationa Rehabilitation Association President), President-Elect Sara Sundeen-Majewski, state Senator Linda Chesterfield and National Rehabilitation Counseling Association President Jennipher Weibold. Conference attendees had the opportunity to gain 20 CRC credits during the three days of the conference.

ARA also held a silent auction during the conference and raised over $1,000 to be deposited in the scholarship accounts.

ARA Offers Scholarship Recipients Help for *New Beginnings*

Wilson

Riels

Lagrone

The following students, who are enrolled in rehabilitation-related areas of study, received scholarships at the annual scholarship banquet held during the Arkansas Rehabilitation Association Annual Training Conference:

R. LEWIS URTON SCHOLARSHIP: **Kristine Wilson** is currently a junior at Arkansas Tech University majoring in rehabilitation science. She plans to pursue a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling at the University of Arkansas when she completes her undergraduate degree.

VINCENT H. BOND SCHOLARSHIP: **Amanda Moore** is currently enrolled full-time in the University of Arkansas graduate program in rehabilitation counseling. Her goal is to become a counselor specializing in veterans' issues.

HAROLD E. THOMAS SCHOLARSHIP: **Allison Riels** is a full-time graduate student at Arkansas State University. She would like to work at a veterans' hospital.

BUTCH BARNES SCHOLARSHIP: **Tekesea Williams** is a graduate student in the rehabilitation counseling program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock with a 3.37 GPA. She calls applying to the program "the best choice I've made in a very long time."

Moore

Williams

Bhatia

THIRLAND "DANNY" MCKISSIC SCHOLARSHIP: **Selidia Lagrone** is a junior at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff majoring in rehabilitation counseling. Her plans

ARA *continued on page 12*

What You Should Know

Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC)

Nicholaus Paal, PhD
Clinical Psychologist
LEC/RIDAC Program Manager

The Learning and Evaluation Center (LEC) is a direct client service program within the Department of Career 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 staff 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.

Among the 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, attentional disorders, pervasive developmental disorders such as autism and Asperger's Disorder and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. The LEC has two staff members trained and licensed to provide specialized neuropsychological assessment services: Connie Venhaus, Ph.D., licensed psychologist, and David C. Boyd, M.A., licensed psychological examiner, and one staff member who provides traditional psychological evaluations, Carol Holloway, M.S., licensed psychological examiner.

LEC has goals of providing timely access to evaluations, and expedited completion of reports and feedbacks with a maximum turnaround time of 30 days on reports. LEC still conducts most evaluations in Little Rock but has recently been able to provide some evaluations on a case-by-case basis in closer proximity to where the clients reside, as well as providing feedback sessions at the local field office.

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 others. Joyce Scott provides these services and can be contacted at (501) 686-9688 or e-mail at joyce.scott@arkansas.gov.

LEC staff members are housed at 26 Corporate Hill Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205, and the program manager is Nicholaus Paal, Ph.D. For more information about LEC or to schedule an evaluation, call Sharon Hill at (501) 686-2812, fax referrals to (501) 686-9685 or e-mail carol.a.holloway@arkansas.gov.

Welcome a-Board!

John R. Yates joined the State Board of Career Education in June. He is an attorney with Acxiom Corporation in Little Rock. Yates and his wife, Charlotte, have two children, ages 8 and 3.

"I am very thankful for the chance to serve on the State Board of Career Education," he said following the board's most recent meeting on August 4.

"I believe every Arkansan should have access to quality educational programs that can lead to a successful career. In my short time on the board I have begun to learn about the many efforts underway to help Arkansans prepare for opportunities in our ever-changing economy."

Prior to joining Acxiom, Yates was in private law practice for six years. Before entering private practice, he held positions in government with Governor Jim Guy Tucker and Congressman Vic Snyder. Yates received a bachelor of arts degree in political science and Spanish from the University of Arkansas and earned his law degree from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law. Yates has studied international law in Madrid, Spain, with William and Mary College of Law and is fluent in Spanish and proficient in Portuguese.

Director Walker welcomes new board member John Yates upon his appointment.

The State Board of Career Education is composed of seven members appointed by the Governor subject to confirmation by the Senate. Act 803 of 1997 requires the appointment of one member from each congressional district and three members from the state at large. The members are to be selected from among parents, business, industry, labor, persons with disabilities, minorities and other groups representative of the many career opportunities available in the state.

In Memoriam

Jack Justus, who served as the chairman of the State Board of Career Education from 1998 until his retirement from the Board in 2010, passed away July 31. Mr. Justus remained a staunch supporter of the Department of Career Education and its students, clients and staff members throughout his career.

Justus with Governor Beebe at December 2008 SBCE board meeting.

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students hands-on curriculum and practical applications in STEM areas.

Cross County and Lincoln high schools have already received grants to help them become our state's first "new tech" high schools, following the national model that's been very successful. I look forward to helping them implement this program and certainly hope many other Arkansas schools follow the new tech path. We'll be right here to help them.

It is imperative that all Arkansas students – not just the top five or 10 percent – gain the STEM skills that will be required in every 21st-century career.

Spotlight on Romula Buen

Rehab Client Joins Jacksonville Air Force Base Staff

Arkansas native Romulo Buen has been a client of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) for many years. In fact, ARS field counselor Deandria Bass was instrumental in helping Buen secure funding for his education at Christian Brothers University in Memphis. That funding was needed to supplement the academic scholarships he earned as a cum laude graduate from Hall High School.

Despite a successful college career and a bachelor of science in business administration in accounting and finance, Buen faced difficulty finding a job after graduation.

"Despite my best efforts, I got passed over (in favor) of other qualified candidates applying for positions I was interested in. The hiring managers who made the decisions believed that I looked good on paper, but nobody was willing to give me the opportunity to work for them," Buen said in a letter sent to Rodney Chandler, ARS business services manager.

The situation changed when Buen's vocational rehabilitation counselor referred him to Ashley Cross, a business relations representative (BRR) with ARS. BRRs work across the state to assist business owners and employers in developing strategies relating to disability issues in the workplace.

Pictured (l-r): ARS client Romula Buen with Commissary Manager, Manuel Othon.

Cross had been developing a relationship with the Jacksonville Air Force Base's new commissary director, Manuel Othon, gaining an understanding of the job opportunities there and encouraging Othon to consider hiring some of her ARS clients. She relayed the information to Buen, who expressed interest in the position, and Othon expressed interest in talking to Buen. Turns out, it was a match.

After months of applying for numerous jobs, landing a few interviews but getting no job offers, Buen was sworn in as a federal employee at the Jacksonville Air Force Base commissary on June 21. In his new position, he puts his bookkeeping and accounting skills to great use.

"I am appreciative of how Arkansas Rehabilitation Services has prepared me for my career and future. I praise Deandria Bass for helping me finish my college education," Buen said in his letter dated April 21, not knowing then he'd have a job by June.

WAGE Graduates Honored in Van Buren

The Crawford County Adult Education Center and Pepper Source, Ltd., partnered this spring to offer Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) classes at the company's Van Buren location. WAGE is a work readiness program designed to ensure that unemployed and underemployed Arkansans have the skills necessary to be successful in the workplace.

Eight employees completed the program, earning the WAGE employability certificate. Four of those earned a second WAGE certificate focusing on industrial employment. Many graduates expressed a desire to continue with their education by earning a GED or enrolling in college.

Congratulations to Debbie Faubus-Kendrick, Crawford County Adult Education Center director, and to Darla Melton, Crawford County Adult Education WAGE coordinator, for the success of this program.

Pepper Source WAGE Graduation. ***Pictured from left to right, far left picture: Darla Melton, Johnny Newton , Roy Bamburg, Jonna Newton, Michael Scantlin, Kaleb Jones, Mary Burton, Shannon Pepper, Debbie Faubus-Kendrick and Ralph Edds, State WAGE Coordinator. Above right: Debbie Faubus-Kendrick with WAGE graduate Bradley Heister.***

ACTI Happenings

Staff, Students, Department Administrators Celebrate ACTI SkillsUSA Participants

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have to hold them back from achieving their dreams."

"The students from ACTI did an outstanding job at the SkillsUSA Conference," said Jonathan Bibb, ACTI administrator. "Sara, Charlie, Kristy and Rocky showed tremendous focus on their preparations prior to nationals, and it paid off. I am also proud of the leadership shown by the state officers from ACTI."

Three ACTI students, Jimmy Winters, Rocky Stone and Staci McCollough, served as state officers this year in the Arkansas SkillsUSA organization; they also represented ACTI as delegates to the national conference.

The administration at ACTI wanted to show the competitors and their fellow ACTI students just how proud they were, so they held a very special "pep rally-like" student assembly to welcome home the champions and competitors. Father Rick Ward-Harder, ACTI chaplain, and Simpson organized the event. Loud music, cheerleaders with pom-poms, chants and standing ovations surrounded the students as they accepted their awards on stage. The atmosphere created a memorable celebration for students, staff and leaders from the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Department of Career Education central offices, who offered their congratulations.

At the assembly, Bibb gave special thanks to ACTI SkillsUSA sponsor and bus driver, Wayne Thomas, who overcame the bus's significant mechanical issues on the trip to Kansas City. For that he was awarded the "Courage Under Fire" certificate.

"Sara, Charlie, Kristy, and Rocky [*who was unable to attend*] showed tremendous focus on their preparations prior to nationals, and it paid off."
- Jonathan Bibb

Kristy Fincel and her instructor, Sharyn Spiva (fifth from left) poses with (l-r) state Skills USA sponsor Jeremy Brevell; Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery; ACTI Vocational Training Director Dawn Simpson; ACE Director Bill Walker; Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith; ACTI Administrator Jonathan Bibb; Director of Field Operations Adrienne Robinson; and ARS Commissioner Robert Treviño.

Sara Newcomb with instructor Tom Kennedy

Charlie Graves with instructor Ralph Forbes

Above left: ACTI cheerleaders rally an enthusiastic crowd; right: participating SkillsUSA students were greeted with showers of confetti.

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

Jim Smith
Deputy Director
Adult Education Division
Arkansas Department
of Career Education

The Adult Education Division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education has recently added several new names and faces to our staff. The list includes a new associate director, Dr. Trenia Miles, and program advisors Bridget Bullard, Cecelia Jarry, and most recently, Sherreccia Jackson. The division has added two new internal auditors, Carolyn Korte and Don Bellcock. We also saw some leave our office: Dr. Phillip Less, who is now the deputy director of adult education for Rhode Island; Priscilla Flowers, who recently retired; and Carrie McDaniel.

General Educational Development (GED©)

One of the most refreshing activities in adult education is a General Educational Development (GED©) graduation. Regardless if I address the graduates or am just a stage guest for their celebration, the platform view yields the same picture. For every graduate who is present, there are at least 10 or more family and friends whose ages range from months to more than 80 years in attendance to cheer the graduate. They take pictures, scream in excitement, sound horns, applaud, and stand up and dance. This behooves the question **WHY**? And the answer is **SUCCESS** for the future and **COMPLETION** of a driving desire for the betterment of a member of their family.

Recently, I asked a graduate, "How does it feel to have the hole filled?" Without missing a beat, that individual responded, "How did you know?" The fact is that there is a missing part of every person who doesn't finish high school. That empty feeling faces the person every time he or she looks in a mirror, sees a high school classmate who graduated or sees a graduation ceremony. The individual who didn't graduate can lie to everyone except that person in the mirror who knows. The accomplishment of filling that "hole" is experienced by Arkansans ages 16 to 86 who earn their GED every year.

On average, Arkansas awards 7,000 or more Arkansas High School diplomas for those who successfully pass the GED Tests. The total for the past 10 years is 70,019. Consider the positive financial impact for Arkansas. GED recipients earn approximately $8,000 more per year than individuals without high school diplomas or GEDs. Based upon that finding, in just one year, Arkansas's 7,000 GED recipients stand to earn $56 million more than their counterparts without a high school credential. The 70,019 who have earned GEDs over the past 10 years potentially have earned a little more than $560 million more than their peers without a high school credential. Yes, there are many variables involved in meeting that expectation, but consider the impact of what happens if these students don't achieve the Arkansas High School diploma. Economic and personal financial disaster occurs.

Dr. William "Dubs" Byers and Dr. Bill Glover, superintendent and assistant superintendent of the Arkansas Correctional School, wrote their dissertation on a three-year recidivism study of those in prison who were paroled and earned a GED. Their study found that 6.4 percent of those who earned a GED and were paroled would not return within three years. That looks like an insignificant figure unless you consider what it really means in human terms. It is possible that of the 70,019 who earned their GEDs over the past 10 years, 4,481 who might otherwise have returned to crime were instead empowered to earn a decent living and pay state and federal taxes; to earn a vocational certificate, associate degree or other diploma; to marry and support a family. They were also empowered to reduce their health care costs by understanding the importance of good nutrition and having the ability to read and understand medical instructions and procedures. These prison costs alone, had these 4,481 turned to crime, saved the state a possible $10,978,450 each year they were not in prison.

All of the success of the adult education program occurs due to the administrators, teachers, tutors and support staff who have dedicated their lives to the improvement of those who need this second chance.

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Recognizing Our ACE Staff

Ray Henson Honored by National Career Development Association

Henson, second from right, with (l-r) Pauline Linam, an ACDA member; Rebecca Martin, ACDA secretary; Cindy Mason, ACDA treasurer; and Ron Cathey, NCDA chair from Louisiana Tech.

CONGRATULATIONS TO RAY HENSON for being honored by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) as a **National Career Development Facilitator Champion of the Year** at the organization's national conference held this July in San Antonio. This honor is awarded annually to career development facilitators (CDFs) who have advanced the training of CDFs and contributed to increased awareness of the program. In addition, the Arkansas Career Development Association founded by Henson in 2010 was recognized with the NCDA Outstanding State Division Award.

HENSON *continued on page 20*

ARS staff Honored at ARA Spring Training Conference

SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR: Voted by the members of the Arkansas Association of Rehabilitation Technicians and Specialists (AARTS), **LaTrinda Woodruff** started her career at ARS in Little Rock at the Deaf Access Office where she became an integral part of the office and quickly showed her administrative assistant abilities. She is currently assistant to ARS Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery, who called her an "exemplary employee."

Woodruff (above, center) with Director of Field Operations Adrienne Robinson and Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery.

COUNSELORS OF THE YEAR: This year, members of the counseling associations (ARCA/ARCEA) decided to honor a retired counselor and a current counselor.

Chet Stuart, who retired from the Benton field office in February 2011, was recognized for his knowledge, dedication, professionalism and devotion to the rehabilitation community. He is currently employed as an adjunct instructor in rehabilitation science at Arkansas Tech University.

Jim Spragins, counselor in the Russellville field office, has worked in the rehabilitation field for 34 years and has been a vocational counselor for 22 years. The selection committee found Spragins "dedicated to the quality of services of individuals with disabilities" and pointed out his supervision of interns and practicum students in "helping 'grow' future rehabilitation professionals."

Stuart (left) and Spragins display awards.

AT CORNER

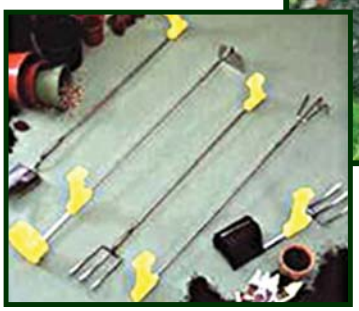
"Assistive Technology 4 Life"

Easi-Grip Long Reach Gardening Set

The Long Reach Garden tools are a great resource for gardeners. The Long Reach Tools with Easi-Grip handles take the strain and discomfort on hands and wrists out of gardening for all gardeners. The ergonomically angled handles keep the hand and wrist in a natural position. The stainless steel metal section helps prevent soil adhesion. The "soft-feel," non-slip grip prevents the tools from turning in the hand, giving a firmer grip even in wet conditions. These tools can be used with the plug-in "Arm Support Cuff" that allows the strength of the forearm to also be used.

Easi-Grip Tools Are Easy To Use Because

- The handle design helps prevent injury to the hand and wrist, with a "natural grip."
- All metal parts are made of 100 percent stainless steel, which does not rust and slides easily through soil.
- Each Fist Grip tool weighs about 1.2 pounds. Heavier tools, no matter how well made, reduce the gardener's efficiency.
- The bright yellow handle, selected as a "not natural" color, allows for easier spotting of a tool laid down in a garden or shed.



Due to the working position and weight of these tools, we recommend using the arm support cuff. The arm support shown on the long-handle fork is a separate accessory. The company recommends this add-on for added leverage.

Long Reach Lengths:

- Long Reach Trowel = 34.5"
- Long Reach Fork = 32"
- Long Reach Cultivator = 32"
- Long Reach Hoe = 31"

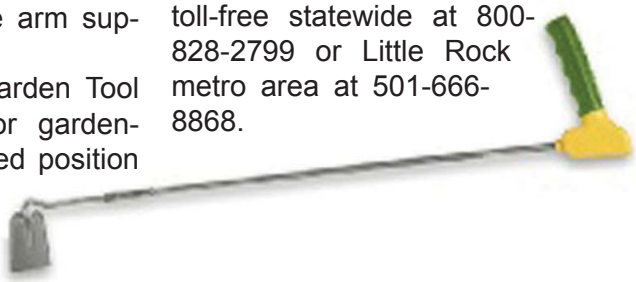
For gardeners who work in a seated position, the Easi-Grip Long Reach Fork is the solution for reaching ground level. Due to the working position and weight of the Easi-Grip Long Reach Fork, it is recommended that the arm support cuff be used.

The Long Reach Garden Tool Hoe is the solution for gardeners who work in a seated position to reach ground level without bending over. The ergonomically angled handle keeps the hand and wrist in a natural and comfortable position, while the length of the tool eliminates the strain on the back and shoulders of those who garden in a seated position. The "soft-feel" non-slip grip handle gives greater comfort and control, even when wet.

Long Reach Garden Tools Features:

- Non-slip grip handles
- Keeps hand and wrist in a natural position
- Eliminates strain

For more information or a demo of this assistive technology, contact Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) at www.ar-ican.org or toll-free statewide at 800-828-2799 or Little Rock metro area at 501-666-8868.



ARA *continued from page 4*

are to continue her education by earning a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

COMMISSIONER'S SCHOLARSHIP: Anmol Bhatia is a first-semester student at the University of Arkansas working on a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. Growing up as the only member of his family with a disability in a country where "services for people with disabilities are practically non-existent," he says his family "made the tough decision to send me to the United Sates so that I could get my education and grow up to be just as successful as my sighted peers."

AARTS/KEN MUSTEEN SCHOLARSHIP: Stuart Currie is a student in the small engine repair program at the Arkansas Career Training Institute. He will graduate in September and hopes to open his own shop in Hot Springs.

Currie with AARTS officer JoAnn Martz

REHABILITANT OF THE YEAR: Frank Bailey, who applied for vocational rehabilitation services in 2003 when he was unable to continue a job that required him to be on his feet, earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith and a master's degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. He worked most recently as a disabilities case resource manager for Northwest Arkansas Community College and was scheduled to start to work August 8 as a counselor in the Fayetteville field office but passed away unexpectedly on August 2.

(Left) Representing the membership of ARA, President **Tresvil Pack** presented Arkansas state Senator **Linda Poindexter Chesterfield** its Legislator of the Year Award for "outstanding legislative leadership and advocacy efforts on behalf of Arkansans with disabilities."

(Right, l-r) ARS Chief of Field Services **Carl Daughtery** and Director of Field Operations **Adrienne Robinson** welcome keynote speakers **Tom Wilson**, National Rehabilitation Association president, and **Sara Sundeen-Majewski**, NRA president-elect, to the Arkansas conference.

Below, l-r: Barbara Lewis, Gwen Wright and Carolyn Turner

Above, l-r: Arleen Curtis and Jennifer Cook

Above, l-r: Sarah Cabello, Kirstin Morgan, Melissa Jones and Hannah Adderholt

Below, l-r: Jason Brooks, Janie Crafford and Renisha Rivers

New Beginnings. Renewed Commitments.

John Wright Retires After 34 Years of Service

John Wright, chief financial officer for the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE), was honored with a retirement reception on August 31. The event was held at the agency's Capitol Avenue office in Little Rock and was hosted by Wright's finance department staff. Wright spent the last 27 years with ARS and retired with 34 total years of state service.

"It's hard to imagine ARS without John Wright at the financial helm," said Director Walker. "With all the new initiatives and changes over the years, I don't think we could have had a steadier hand on the wheel than John's. His remarkable historical knowledge of ARS, as well as his familiarity with state and federal financial rules and regulations, will be greatly missed."

A large crowd of current and former agency employees attended the celebration and shared words of tribute to Wright's dedication to the agency, including Wright's wife, Gloria, who retired from ARS in 1986.

"John always found a way to get done what ARS needed to get done, and there were many times I thought the financial odds were against us," Commissioner Bob Treviño said. "We were so fortunate to have him at the agency for 27 years."

Top: Wright with wife, Gloria, at his August 31 retirement reception. The two are avid ballroom dancers. Mrs. Wright told reception guests that she "plans to keep John on the road a lot" traveling to dancing competitions. **Left:** Helping Wright, right, celebrate are (back row) Director Walker and Commissioner Treviño, and (front row) co-workers Matthew Myers, Michelle Washington, Pat Hensley and Carl McKinney. **Above right:** Members of the ARS finance department presented Wright with a book on his favorite dance, the tango, and also an album of photos. Wright, left, with (front row, left to right) Carolyn O'Bannon and Sherry Madden. Back row, left to right: Susan Kitrick and Ellen Johnson.

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Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™)

The Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) program is another successful facet of the Adult Education Division. WAGE is led by an active advisory committee comprised of business and industry leaders in the community and service providers. The chair must be from business and industry.

WAGE provides literacy task analysis (LTA) for businesses and industries to identify their greatest needs in terms of solving issues that cost the companies money, such as high product loss or employee dissatisfaction and turnover. Almost always, these problems result from employees lacking the reading, math and communication skills necessary to perform the job. Employees who were socially promoted during their school years enter the workforce without the necessary basic academic skills, and failure generally occurs.

Adult education meets this challenge by using current work-related documents as functional hooks in the classroom to link these necessary basic academic skills to the needs of the job, so that employees can gain the skills that they need to do their jobs. The company sees a turn-around with reduced product loss, increase in customer satisfaction, increase in profit and lower employee turnover. Another major success occurs when employees seek to improve their higher education attainment and enter college to earn a vocational certificate, associate's degree or bachelor's degree. The most recent WAGE report shows that 16 percent of WAGE graduates enter postsecondary education programs, and 47 percent enter or advance in employment.

2011 Youth Leadership Forum

CAMP EDUCATES AND ENCOURAGES STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Nine high-school students from around Arkansas participated in this summer's 13th annual Youth Leadership Conference (YLF) held July 11-15 at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. The conference is sponsored by the Arkansas Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities (GCPD) and the Arkansas Department of Career Education's Rehabilitation Services Division. High school juniors and seniors with disabilities - whether physical, emotional or mental - are encouraged to apply and participate in the week-long camp.

Attendees were:

- **Brett Blakely**, Hot Springs
- **Michell Fletcher**, Little Rock
- **Craig Hudson**, Holiday Island
- **Victoria Glover**, Greenbrier
- **Sean Kirkendall**, Smackover
- **Raven Bateman**, Pine Bluff
- **Mark Jynes**, Altheimer
- **Leonard Boyle, Jr.**, Little Rock
- **Courtney Carroll,** Little Rock

Outstanding students who have attended YLF in the past often return as peer counselors to assist campers. This year's peer counselors were Christine Woods of Little Rock and Antonio Del Real from Alco.

The main purpose of YLF is to help prepare the students to transition into life after high school. Whether they'll be attending college, studying a trade or aiming to land a full-time job, the information they learn at YLF is geared toward preparing them and providing access to related resources.

"The biggest emphasis at YLF is transition," said Carl Enna, Youth Leadership Forum program manager. "Students with disabilities have the same rights in high school as they do in furthering their education; it's just that the way they go about receiving those services greatly differs."

Representatives from the Department of Career Education and the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division presented sessions on self-advocacy, disability law, leadership, nutrition and medication interaction, job interview preparation, educational opportunities, budgeting and grocery-buying and more – all in preparation for the students' eventual independent living. Other speakers included Carrie Tuttle of the Department of Education, who explained how college differs from high school, and Carri George with Arkansas CURRENTS (Center for

YLF *continued on page 21*

Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities Awards 40 Scholarships

The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities awarded 40 scholarships at its June 21 annual scholarship banquet held at the Governor's Mansion. The event was emceed by Tommy Norman of the North Little Rock Police Department. Norman was recently chosen by the public as the 2011 America's Most Wanted All-Star Contest grand prize winner and is extensively involved in community service activities.

According to Leonard Boyle, the commission's executive director, the number of scholarships rose this year, thanks to increased funding from handicapped parking space enforcement and from additional funds from the commission itself.

"We're working closely with police departments around the state to encourage more strict enforcement of the law. It helps keep those parking spaces available for drivers who actually need them and, as a result, helps fund scholarships for disabled students to pursue higher education," said Boyle.

GCPD *continued on page 21*

2011 GCPD Scholarship Recipients

YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM
FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
JULY 11 - 15, 2011

Sean Kirkendall

Mark Jynes

Raven Bateman

Victoria Glover

Craig Hudson

Brett Blakley

Peer Counselor
Antonio Del Real

Michell Fletcher

Courtney Carroll

A.J. Boyle, Jr.

Peer Counselor
Christine Woods

Poster Contest Highlights Career Choices

Students from across Arkansas recently participated in the annual statewide poster contest, sponsored by ACE and the Arkansas Career Orientation Teachers Association. The competition is open to students in career orientation, workplace readiness, workforce technology, internship, keystone and senior seminar.

Judges rated the entries based on five criteria: following guidelines, neatness, creativity, spelling and grammar, and depiction of career.

1st Place: Mikala Clark; Neonatologist; Lake Hamilton Junior High School, Pearcy; Carolyn Woodyard, Instructor

2nd Place: Madison Atehley; Veterinarian; Randall G. Lynch Middle School, Farmington; Dawn Hill, Instructor

3rd Place: Anna Schefano; Veterinarian; Greene County Tech Junior High School, Paragould; Kerry Combs, Instructor

4th Place: Brandy Baker; Registered Nurse; Sheridan Middle School; Robin Todd, Instructor

5th Place: Hunter Brasel; Air Traffic Controller; Ahlf Junior High School, Searcy; Kristie Morrison, Instructor

6th Place: Kaitlinn Bailey; Pediatrician, Hector High School; Rhonda Jacobs, Instructor

7th Place: Chris Scott; Postsecondary Business Teacher; Booneville Junior High School; Dawn Hotubbee, Instructor

8th Place: Sophie Kamerman; Photography; Ahlf Junior High School, Searcy; Kristie Morrison, Instructor

9th Place: Michael A Russell; Announcer; Armorel High School; Theresa Bruce, Instructor

10th Place: Katie Heath; Biomedical Engineer; Lake Hamilton Junior High School, Pearcy; Carolyn Woodyard, Instructor

Twenty-two Awarded National FFA Scholarships

Twenty-two Arkansas FFA members have received $26,250 in scholarships through the National FFA Organization scholarship program, which awards approximately $2 million in scholarships. Scholarships are sponsored by businesses and individuals through the National FFA Foundation and are given for a wide variety of experiences, career goals and higher education plans.

Arkansas scholarship recipients are as follows:

Student	FFA Chapter	Scholarship Sponsor	Amount
Chasity Brunetti	STUTTGART HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
John Coffey	PRAIRIE GROVE HS FFA	Pfizer Animal Health	$1,250
Amanda Cox	LINCOLN HS FFA	Tyson Foods Inc.	$1,000
Katie Davis	GREENE CO TECH II FFA	Monsanto Company/National Association of Farm Broadcasters-Commitment to Agriculture Scholarships	$1,500
Chase Dejournett	SLOAN HENDRIX HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Taylor Duke	LAKE HAMILTON HS FFA	Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company of Iowa	$1,500
Jessica Fikes	BRINKLEY HS FFA	Monsanto Company/National Association of Farm Broadcasters-Commitment to Agriculture Scholarships	$1,500

FFA *continued on page 20*

2011 SkillsUSA Champions at Work®

Arkansans captured nine medals and a number of top-10 finishes at the 48th annual National Leadership and Skills Conference (NLSC), held in Kansas City, Missouri, in late June. More than 15,000 SkillsUSA members from across the nation attended the conference, with more than 6,000 competitors vying for medals in more than 90 contests.

The Arkansas delegation boasted 134 competitors competing in 72 leadership and technical contests, and thanks to their performance, Arkansas ranked 26th out of 59 states, provinces and divisions that competed. Arkansas medalists are as follows:

- **Gold:** Medical Math; **Lildiana Quezada**, Western Arkansas Technical Center
- **Gold:** Medical Terminology; **Elizabeth Leslie**, College of the Ouachitas
- **Gold:** Screen Printing Technology; **Travis Goad**, Greenland High School
- **Silver:** American Spirit; **Kathy Self**; College of the Ouachitas
- **Silver:** Video Product Development; **Connar Cowan**, Rich Mountain Community College
- **Silver:** Video Product Development; **Shane Sibbett**, Rich Mountain Community College
- **Bronze:** Computer Programming; **Sebastian Bossarte**, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith
- **Bronze:** Plumbing; **Jered Otts**, Greater Little Rock JAC Training Center
- **Bronze:** Screen Printing Technology; **Sara Newcomb**, Arkansas Career Training Institute

Top 10 finishers are as follows: **Brendon Glidden** and **Serena Vanderford**, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith; **Haley McKnight**, **Charity Stewart**, **Erica Carter, Crystal Rust**, **Kaitlin White,** Conway Area Career Center; **Michael Barham** and **Benjamin Fox**, Arkansas Tech University - Ozark Campus; **Calvin Sartin**, Southern Arkansas University Tech Career Academy; **Brooklyn Brinkley**, **Tyler Downs**, **Cody Matheny**, **Blair Weaver**, **Jeanetta Anderson**, **Jamie Royal, Jordsan Simon,** Cave City High School; **Brian Avey**, North Arkansas College; **Richard Patterson**, Rogers Heritage High School; **Shannon Morris**, Arkansas State University - Marked Tree; **Kayley Huffman**, Armorel High School; **Jennifer Allen**, Pulaski Technical College Culinary; **Charlie Graves** and **Kristy Fincel**, Arkansas Career Training Institute; **Marc Rolfe**, Crowley's Ridge Technical Institute; **Kendra Guess** and **Nicole Hines**, Pulaski Technical College Saline County Career Center; **John Hansen**, Pulaski Technical College; **Jackson Ables**, **Cody Bost**, **Zachary Draper**, **Dillon Hall**, **Chase Norwood** and **Preston Williams**, Malvern High School; **Taylor Bratton** and **Jonathan Mainhart**, Mid-South Community College Technical Center.

Pictured above is the College/Postsecondary Arkansas delegation to the national conference. (Bottom row, l-r): **Lidiana Quezada,** Gold Medalist from Western Arkansas Technical Center (Fort Smith), **Kathy Self,** Silver Medalist from College of the Ozarks (Malvern), **Elizabeth Leslie,** Postsecondary State Officer & Gold Medalist from College of the Ozarks (Malvern), **Jered Otts,** Bronze Medalist from Greater Little Rock Area JAC (Little Rock), **Travis Goad,** Gold Medalist from Greenland High School (Greenland), **Sarah Newcomb,** Bronze Medalist from Arkansas Career Training Institute (Hot Springs), and ACE **Director Bill Walker.** (Back row, l-r): **Rocky Stone,** State Officer from Arkansas Career Training Institute (Hot Springs), **Staci McCollough,** State Officer from Arkansas Career Training Institute (Hot Springs), **Jeremy Brevell,** Arkansas SkillsUSA State Director, **David See,** State Officer from College of the Ozarks (Malvern), **Jimmy Lee Winters,** State Officer from Arkansas Career Training Institute (Hot Springs), **Laura Worthen,** Secondary State Officer/National Candidate from Springdale High School (Springdale).

Arkansas PBL and FBLA Students Earn National Awards

Arkansas students represented the state well at the Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) national leadership conferences held in Orlando in June. Two Arkansas students were elected to national offices: Aaron Carroll, a student Arkansas State University, was elected PBL national secretary, and Tony Jones, a student at Fort Smith Southside High School, was elected FBLA southern region vice president.

Arkansas PBL sent 125 participants to the national PBL conference, with 91 competing in 50 events. More than 1,800 students from across the nation attended the conference.

Arkansas FBLA sent 300 participants to the national FBLA conference, with 170 competing in 60 events. More than 8,000 students from across the nation attended the conference.

The following PBL competitors earned top 10 rankings:

First place: Chapter with most CMAP Awards; South Arkansas Community College

First place: Marketing Analysis & Decision Making; Brad Harris, Williams Baptist College

Second place: Human Resources; Courtney Clark, North Arkansas College

Second place: Parliamentary Procedure; Andrew Lane, Roschella Schooley, Seth Bartolotta, Amber Rowlett, Rosa Ru Salazar; Arkansas State University at Mountain Home, University of Central Arkansas, University of the Ozarks

Second place: Sales Presentation; Tieler Goff, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Third place: Community Service; Lisa Dicus and Bryan Somers, North Arkansas College

Third place: Local Annual Chapter Business Report; Southern Arkansas University

Third place: Sales Presentation; Brad Harris, Williams Baptist College

Third place: Small Business Management Plan; Yang Kia and Sue Yang, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Third place: Telecommunications; Noah Moses, South Arkansas Community College

Fourth place: Management Analysis & Decision Making; Courtney Clark and Linda Tamayo, North Arkansas College

Fifth place: Business Law; Bryan Somers, North Arkansas College

Fifth place: Human Resources; Justin Daubert, Williams Baptist College

Fifth place: Parliamentary Procedure; Kayla Samples, Hannah Harrington, Brittany Holleman, Cecilie Lane, Southern Arkansas University

Fifth place: Telecommunications, Robert Freeman, South Arkansas Community College

Fifth place: Word Processing; April Goble, South Arkansas Community College

Sixth place: Business Law; Andrew Todd, Arkansas State University

Sixth place: Database Design & Applications; Danny Adams, Williams Baptist College

Sixth place: Free Enterprise Project; Valerie Smith, Southern Arkansas University

Sixth place: Justice Administration, Nick Williams, University of Central Arkansas

Sixth place: Public Speaking; Haley Murray, North Arkansas College

Sixth place: Strategic Analysis & Decision Making; Adam Choate, Southern Arkansas University

Seventh place: Accounting Analysis & Decision Making; Nick Schroeder, University of Central Arkansas

Seventh place: Free Enterprise Project; Katie Niskern, University of the Ozarks

Seventh place: Future Business Executive; Travis Bolton,University of Arkansas-Fort Smith

Seventh place: Small Business Management Plan; Claudia Rucchio, University of Arkansas-Fort Smith

Eighth place: Accounting Analysis & Decision Making; Travis Bolton, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Eighth place: Computer Applications; Kimberly Sayavongsa; University of Arkansas at Fort Smith

Eighth place: Web Site Design; Qianwen Chen, Arkansas State University

Ninth place: Accounting Principles; Andrew Todd, Arkansas State University

Ninth place: Marketing Concepts; Sally Mills, North Arkansas College

Tenth place: Community Service Project; Kayla Case and Eugene Downs Alvarez, University of the Ozarks

Tenth place: Local Annual Chapter Business Report, South Arkansas Community College

Tenth place: Sports Management & Marketing; Justin Hawkins, Williams Baptist College

Pamela Hillard, Southern Arkansas University, received Who's Who in PBL recognition, and Latisha Settlage, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, received Adviser of the Year recognition.

The Arkansas FBLA chapter scored

PBL/FBLA *continued on page 19*

What a Difference a Van Can Make

Kim Ison and her wheelchair-bound son, Michael Gordon, like to get out of their house and see the beautiful sights of their hometown, Heber Springs. Two years ago, 25-year-old Michael broke his neck and was paralyzed from the shoulders down, but after the accident they tried their best to maintain normal activities.

"We used to go out a lot," Ison said. "Then Michael got a new motorized wheelchair, which was better, but the new chair didn't work with our van, so he didn't go anywhere for about a year."

Then an employee of the Spinal Cord Commission told Ison about the Alternate Financing Program (AFP) offered through the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division.

"The AFP offers low-interest loans to disabled Arkansans, their family members, guardians or authorized representatives to help them get the equipment they need," explained Michael Vickers, AFP program manager.

"Sometimes what they need is their home's bathroom remolded for better accessibility. Other times they need a ramp system installed at their front door. In this case, what was needed was a better van, but the key was arranging affordable loan payments that Ms. Ison could afford on her limited income. That's the great thing about this program – the interest rate and payment terms are almost always better than they can get on their own elsewhere."

Ison and her brother applied for a loan through the AFP and found the process to be "simpler than a regular loan process." Finding the van they needed wasn't very difficult either, and now they had the means to buy it.

"We found a 2003 Ford Windstar at Presidential Van Conversion in Fayetteville that we really like a lot. Now Michael can roll himself in the van all by himself and have room to turn around. I don't need anyone to help us anymore," Ison explained proudly.

When asked about the AFP loan experience, Ison said she'd use it again if she had to and she'd recommend it to anyone.

"It really worked out well; we got the van and it has made a gigantic change in our lives. Now we get out almost every day."

For information about the Alternative Finance Program, contact Michael Vickers at 501-296-1663 or michael.vickers@arkansas.gov.

PBL/FBLA *continued from page 18*

top-10 rankings in the following:

First place: American Enterprise Project; Nicole Nokes and Anna Vasquez, Siloam Springs

First place: Business Ethics; Daniel Call and Mitchell Hasler, Bentonville

Second place: State Chapter Event, March of Dimes; Arkansas FBLA

Second place: Largest Increase in State Chapter Membership; Arkansas FBLA

Second place: Local Chapter Event, March of Dimes; Nettleton

Second place: Community Service Project; Marcy Atkins, Donysia Jennings and Haley Myers, Pangburn

Second place: Computer Game & Simulation Programming; Lucas Dorrough and Logan Geurian, Dardanelle

Second place: Cyber Security; Jedidiah Nohre, Mountain View

Second place: Desktop Application Programming; Ayush Saraswat, Little Rock Central

Second place: Desktop Application Programming; Hunter Bobel, Fort Smith Southside

Fourth place: Desktop Publishing; Emily Brown and Kara Nelson, Greenwood

Fifth place: Entrepreneurship; Asher Perkins and Justice Thompson; Siloam Springs

Fifth place: Future Business Leader; Allison James, Lonoke

Sixth place: Health Care Administration; Lindsey Pritchett, Bergman

Sixth place: Hospitality Management; Lauren Shufelberger, Mena

Sixth place: Management Information Systems; Afton Shackleford and Corbin Dean; Fort Smith Southside

Seventh place: Marketing; John Hobbs, Lonoke

Eighth place: Public Speaking I; Jamie-Lynn Gills, Murfreesboro

Eighth place: Technology Concepts; Blake Simmons, Hillcrest

Ninth place: Virtual Business Challenge; Brett Harris and Alex Prince, Mountain View

Ninth place: Word Processing I, Katherine Caid, Arkansas Baptist

Ninth place: Word Processing II; Michelle Dougherty, Omaha

Molly Bennett, Riverview, received Who's Who in PBL recognition, and Donna Penn, Fordyce, received Adviser of the Year recognition.

FFA *continued from page 16*

Student	FFA Chapter	Scholarship Sponsor	Amount
Brent Files	VALLEY VIEW HS-FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Dillon Garr	SPRINGDALE HAR-BER FFA	AGCO Your Agriculture Company	$2,000
Samantha Kaiser	SPRINGDALE HS FFA	Mahindra USA Women in Ag Scholarship Program	$2,500
Emily Kaufman	WONDERVIEW HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Lindsey Mitchell	SHERIDAN HS FFA	Fastline Publications	$1,000
Weston Monger	MOUNTAIN HOME HS FFA	Fastline Publications	$1,000
Cheyenne Moyer	PRAIRIE GROVE HS FFA	RAM Trucks	$1,000
Taylor Nipps	JACKSON COUNTY HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough- FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Lindsey Pritchett	BERGMAN HS FFA	Bunge North America	$1,000
Brittany Richert	LINCOLN HS FFA	Cargill Community Scholarship Program	$1,000
Emily Smith	POCAHONTAS HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Madolyn Statler	NEWPORT HS FFA	Ford Trucks/Built Ford Tough - FFA Scholarship Program	$1,000
Kallie Sullivan	FARMINGTON HS FFA	Cargill Community Scholarship Program	$1,000
Karson Walker	ROGERS HS FFA	Cargill Community Scholarship Program	$1,000
Tori Waters	ALPENA FFA	Arkansas Green Industry Association Scholarship	$ 500

Arkansas Farm Bureau Awards Scholarships

Nine FFA members have been named winners of $2,500 scholarships from the Arkansas Farm Bureau Foundation. The following students received scholarships:

Heather Black of Norman, an agricultural business major at Southern Arkansas University

Nathan Davidson of Compton, an agricultural business major with a concentration in animal science at Arkansas Tech University

Mollie Dykes of Hot Springs, an agricultural communication and poultry science double major at the University of Arkansas

Stanley Foster of Paragould, an agricultural business major with an animal science minor at Arkansas State University

Cody Gallagher of Foreman, an agricultural business and poultry science double major at the University of Arkansas

Brittany Harpole of El Dorado, a pre-veterinary medicine major at the University of Arkansas at Monticello

Clay Sims of McCrory, an agricultural business major at Arkansas State University

Craig Walker, Jr., of Jonesboro, an agricultural business major at Arkansas State University

Justin Wiedower of Quitman, an agricultural education major at Southern Arkansas University

HENSON *continued from page 10*

Henson, program coordinator for career guidance, exploration, and preparation, shown on page 10 accepting the Outstanding State Division Award with fellow officers Cindy Mason and Rebecca Martin, said, "I was surprised and honored to be recognized for the CDF work I've been a part of here in Arkansas. I think we're really making an impact."

CDF training leads to the Global Career Development Certification, which is recognized internationally. Those with CDF certification are trained to provide high-quality career guidance to middle, secondary and college students; unemployed and underemployed adults; and even adults who want to change careers. CDFs help their clients focus on a career path, help them determine what education and training is needed, connect them with resources and help them develop a feasible plan for reaching their career goals. According to Henson, Arkansas has trained approximately 334 CDFs in the past four years.

For more about the CDF program, visit http://ncda.org.

GCPD *continued from page 14*

The following 37 students were awarded $750 scholarships at the June ceremony. Three additional students were awarded book scholarships for $500 each. All are listed with their hometown and the college they plan to attend.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Devin Asbill, Bentonville, *Rochester Institute of Technology*
Casey Bailey, Little Rock, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*
Lauren Barrett, Harrisburg, *Arkansas State University*
Mallory Burke, Little Rock, *Pulaski Technical College*
Timothy Burrell, Hot Springs Village, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*
Nathan Burroughs, Beebe, *Arkansas State University at Beebe*
Elliott Collins, Conway, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*
Alexander Cossey, Cave City, *Arkansas State University*
Jessica Daily, Jessieville, *Arkansas Tech University*
Jordan Eldridge, Siloam Springs, *John Brown University*
Joshua Evans, Canehill, *University of Arkansas at Fort Smith*
Gloria George, Arkadelphia, *Henderson State University*
Hillary Hagerman, North Little Rock, *University of Central Arkansas*
Adonis Hartsfield, Magnolia, *University of Missouri*
Katelyn Haynes, Charleston, *University of Arkansas at Fort Smith*
Brady Hobbs, Jessieville, *University of Arkansas*
Kristen Holmes, Turrell, *University of Arkansas*
Forrest Jones, Marion, *University of Central Arkansas*
Kyler Kelton, Delight, *Harding University*
Jason Martin, Western Grove, *North Arkansas College*
Michael Melcher, Elkins, *University of the Ozarks*
Brandi O'Donnell, Saratoga, *Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas*
Jordan Payson, Booneville, *University of the Ozarks*
Sidney Roach, Little Rock, *University of Central Arkansas*
Brittany Scott, Poyen, *Ouachita Technical College*
Savanna Seliga, Siloam Springs, *John Brown University*
Bryan Somers, Harrison, *Arkansas State University at Mountain Home*
Laney Staggs, Mena, *Rich Mountain Community College*
Cynthea Stanton, Leola, *Ouachita Technical College*
Brandon Tabor, Russellville, *Arkansas Tech University*
Ashley Tennis, Greenbrier, *Central Baptist College*
Mallory Turner, Bismarck, *Henderson State University*
Lindsey Upshaw, Sheridan, *Ouachita Baptist University*
Corey Warford, Clarksville, *University of the Ozarks*
Jesse Watson, Fort Smith, *University of Arkansas at Fort Smith*
Ryan Wight, Alma, *Arkansas Tech University*
Tyler Williams, Fordyce, *Ouachita Baptist University*

BOOK SCHOLARSHIPS

Lorrie Bowman, Alma, *University of Arkansas at Fort Smith*
Michelle "Shelly" Chapman, Hot Springs, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock/University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences*
Anna Fischer, Van Buren, *University of Arkansas at Fort Smith*

YLF *continued from page 14*

Utilization of Rehabilitation Resources for Education, Networking, Training and Service), who taught Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Successful People and Teens."

A highlight of this year's YLF was a trip Little Rock. Campers toured the Arkansas Capitol, met Governor Beebe and had pictures made with him. Following the Capitol visit, the students were treated to a luncheon with supporters and mentors of students with disabilities. This year's luncheon speaker was former Arkansas Razorback and NBA star Sidney Moncrief, who talked about the path to success and setbacks along the road. He called it "Re-inventing Yourself." Moncrief signed autographs and posed for pictures with the students. Following the luncheon, the group visited the Governor's Mansion for a tour led by Leonard Boyle of the GCPD/YLF staff. Leonard is a docent at the Mansion and is the father of one of the 2011 campers.

The students also participated in social events during the week, including a night at an Arkansas Travelers' game—where peer counselor Christine Woods threw out the first pitch—and a dinner and dance at UCA.

Applications for next summer's YLF, to be held June 25-29, will be accepted beginning October 1 and will be posted on www.ace.arkansas.gov under Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division, Special Programs. For information about the program, contact Carl Enna at carl.enna@arkansas.gov or 501-683-6962.

Rod Duckworth named Interim Deputy Director for CTE

ACE Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., has named Rod Duckworth as interim deputy director for career and technical education. The position was left vacant when John Davidson retired June 30.

Duckworth

A native of Arkansas, Duckworth joined the Department of Career Education as associate director for career and technical education in November 2007. He earned a bachelor's degree in agriculture education from Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia in 1987.

Duckworth began his career as an agriculture instructor in Hope, where he taught for seven years. In 1994, he moved to Alexandria, Virginia, to accept a position with the National FFA Organization managing the National Agriscience and the Agriculture Teacher International Travel Experience programs. In 1997, after serving three years with FFA, he returned to Arkansas to accept a position as area supervisor and FFA executive secretary with the Department of Workforce Education (now ACE).

In 1999, Mr. Duckworth moved to Olympia, Washington, where he served as the program supervisor for agriculture education within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. In June 2004, he was promoted to state director of career and technical education, a position that he held until he returned to Arkansas in 2007.

DAVIDSON *continued from page 1*

tional education and an administrator's certification from the University of Arkansas.

His career in education began in 1973 as an agriculture instructor for the Sheridan School District. From 1975 to 1984, he taught agriculture and chemistry for the Lead Hill School District.

Marion Fletcher, program coordinator for agricultural science and technology education at ACE and lifelong friend said of Davidson at his recent retirement party, "John, I remember when you started teaching ag in Sheridan at 1973. Then you moved to Lead Hill and tried to start an ag program up there. You were told you couldn't do it but you did it anyway. Back then, as you do now, you put in a lot of time and effort and you moved on up the ranks."

From 1984 to 1990, Davidson served as principal of Eureka Springs High School. In 1990, he became director of the Fayetteville High School West Campus Technical Center, which became widely recognized as a model program for meeting the diverse needs of high school students.

Sarah Agee, long-time friend of Davidson and current director of constituent services for the Arkansas Governor's Office said, "When John was in Fayetteville at West Campus, we sent students to his technical school from Lincoln, Prairie Grove and Farmington. These children were the ones that had slipped through the educational cracks. No one cared about them, but John did."

Throughout his 38-year career in education, John L. Davidson always led and inspired others by his simple principle of "do what's right for the kids."

In October of 1999, Davidson joined the Department of Career Education as the deputy director of career and technical education, where his leadership and influence have impacted students, teachers and administrators across all of Arkansas. Davidson's accomplishments are many.

Dr. Jim Rollins, superintendent of the Springdale School District, said, "I think of the work that we've done with John's leadership: the career action planning model that's touched thousands and thousands of Arkansas kids, the career academies, Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) – all relating to career and technical education at the highest level. The reality is that John knows what excellence looks like; he's helped create it."

Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Arkansas's commissioner of education said, "We look for people to help with the work, to find the solutions, to find

DAVIDSON *continued on page 23*

DAVIDSON *continued from page 22*

ways around the bureaucracy that we have the tendency to create, to help schools meet the needs of kids. John Davidson is one of the best at that. He could always find a solution; he could always find a way to do what needed to be done for the kids."

During Davidson's tenure with ACE, he served on numerous local, state and national career education-related boards and commissions. He has been a member of the Arkansas Pygmalion Commission on Nontraditional Education and served as chair of the Commission. Davidson also worked with the Arkansas Department of Education, serving as a member of the State Special Education Advisory committee, and the State Professional Development Cabinet.

Above: ***John Davidson with his wife Carolyn, center, are surrounded by agency staff following the presentation of a plaque from the members of his career and technical education team. The plaque's inscription thanked Davidson for his 38 years of service to education in Arkansas and beyond.***

Below: ***Career and technical education staffers Barbara Wheeler, Mary Ellen Koettel, Paula McGill and Leah Elmore give Davidson framed artwork reflecting his love of horses as his family looks on.***

Davidson currently serves as board chair of the National Partnership for Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security and as board chair of the Multi-state Academic and Vocational Curriculum Consortium. He is a board member of the National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC) and in 2008 was honored with the NCAC's Sisyphus Award.

Dr. Ed Franklin, executive director of the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges, said, "It's been a real pleasure working with John. There's nobody that believes more in technical education and focuses it back on the students more than John Davidson."

Charlie Brown, ACE chief finance officer and close personal friend, offered the following tribute to Davidson, whose wife and family also participated in the June retirement ceremony:

"John, you have taken your place in the pantheon of educators in Arkansas's history. You truly have. I want to thank your wife and family for sharing you with us and with the children of the state. John, you looked out for a great big family out there, and looked after them with compassion and kindness. You tried to do the very best for all of them just like they were your own children. And by gosh, you did a really good job."

Sandra Porter, associate director for workforce training at ACE, said to Davidson, "You're always such a visionary with those 'big picture' ideas and that's what we're going to miss. Some of us can think outside the box, but you don't even know where the box is."

In August, Davidson was named a finalist by ASEA in their 2011 State Employee of the Year competition and is shown here at the association's annual conference in Hot Springs.

In his closing remarks at Davidson's retirement ceremony, ACE Director William L. "Bill" Walker said, "Beyond the achievements and accolades, there is a remarkable man who has personally touched and enriched the lives of thousands of Arkansans. I don't know what we're going to do without you, John, but I have a strong conviction that we won't let the work you built go by the wayside. While we know we won't find someone who can fill your shoes, we'll find someone with the passion and commitment to continue your work. If we do that, we'll be doing our John Davidson proud."

Davidson was named a finalist for 2011 Outstanding State Employee. He was honored at the Arkansas State Employees Association Awards Banquet August 12 at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs. Davidson was one of 32 nominees from across state government.

Davidson and his wife, Carolyn, a retired school counselor, have three adult children, Shawn, Richey, and Elizabeth, and one grandchild.

FFA State Conference Honors Many, Teaches Important Lessons

A sea of 1,200 blue corduroy jackets, each with the golden FFA emblem embroidered on the back, and the sound of the jackets' wearers – all on their feet reciting the FFA creed with one voice — set an energetic tone for the opening ceremony of the 84th Annual State FFA Convention in June at Camp Couchdale in Hot Springs. The enthusiasm was palpable, and it continued for four days through an agenda packed with education, recognition and inspiration for Arkansas FFA students gathered from all corners of the state.

The theme of the 2011 conference was ***"Infinite Potential,"*** and the state officers and staff certainly demonstrated the potential these students have for shaping their futures and that of our state. **Heather Leding**, state FFA president, presided over the conference and welcomed special guest National FFA Eastern Region Vice President **Tiffany Rogers**.

The conference was dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the founding of the New Farmers of America (NFA). The NFA was organized in Virginia in 1927 and became a national organization for African-American young men in 1935. The organization was originally formed to serve agriculture students in Southern states where schools were segregated by law. Much like the national FFA organization, NFA sought to provide young men with vocational, social and recreational activities in order to develop their skills in public speaking, leadership and agricultural trades. NFA and FFA merged in 1965. Through that merger, FFA added the talents of 52,000 NFA members to its roster.

Several Arkansans who were members of the Arkansas NFA attended the opening ceremony to be honored by Arkansas FFA. Many of these men went on to develop careers in agriculture and credit the influence of NFA - and later the FFA - for their success as leaders and agriculture practitioners. Those in attendance were:

- **Dr. Freddie Scott, Cotton Plant**
- **Harrison Locke, Cotton Plant**
- **Bobby Shackelford, Forrest City**
- **Joseph Lang, Marion**
- **Nolan McMurray, Woodson**
- **Link Hubbard, Augusta**

The NFA members were introduced on stage and given framed certificates commemorating their participation in NFA and their recognition at the 84th Arkansas FFA convention.

Major General Arnold Fields gave the key note address during the first session. Fields was an NFA member in his home state of South Carolina, where he held state and national offices. He went on to have a distinguished military career, serving in the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm, and later working for the Department of Defense as inspector general for the Afghan reconstruction. After retiring from the military in 2004, Fields "became reengaged with FFA" and credits NFA for teaching him the importance of brotherhood.

Fields was recognized along with the Arkansas NFA members for their par-

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NFA members honored at the FFA convention were (left to right): Bobby Shackelford, Dr. Freddie Scott, Nolan McMurray, Joseph Lang, Harrison Locke, Link Hubbard and Maj. Gen. Fields.

CONFERENCE *continued from page 24*

ticipation in that organization. The group was honored at a reception later where the group shared stories from their NFA days.

The second day of conference brought a surprise for John Davidson, ACE deputy director for career and technical education, who had been invited to attend. Davidson was honored by the Arkansas FFA body *for a career of service to Arkansas education, specifically to career and technical education in Arkansas.* Davidson began his career as an agricultural studies teacher in the Sheridan School District and became a career-long champion of the importance of career-focused education. Davidson retired from the agency in June.

Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe also addressed the students and encouraged them by reporting on the overall progress Arkansas is making in the realm of education. William L. "Bill" Walker, director of the Department of Career Education, stated his support of the FFA organization and commended it for honoring the NFA organization.

An annual FFA conference tradition is the conferring of honorary state FFA degrees on non-members. Recipients of honorary degrees are nominated for their contribution to the success of the Arkansas organization and its students. Those receiving honorary state FFA degrees at the 2011 conference were:

- **Gary Bean, Amity**
- **Michael Bradshaw, Mountain Home**
- **Janice Burks, Malvern**
- **Rob Cooper, National FFA**
- **Major General Arnold Fields, South Carolina**
- **Rich Hilman, Arkansas Farm Bureau**
- **Bryan Messersmith, Hot Springs**
- **Rep. George Overbey, Lamar**
- **Rep. Betty Overbey, Lamar**
- **Rob Roedel, Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas**
- **Tony Wilkie, Forrest City**

Those receiving honorary state FFA degrees were (pictured from left to right): Rich Hilman, Janice Burks, Bryan Messersmith, Rep. Betty Overbey, Gary Bean, Rep. George Overbey, Michael Bradshaw and Rob Roedel. Not pictured are: Rob Cooper, Tony Wilkie and Major General Fields

A highlight of the conference was the announcement from Entergy Arkansas representatives Bobby Pharr and Mark Hunt that their company was donating 16 acres of land adjacent to Camp Couchdale to Arkansas FFA. Pharr and Hunt made the official gift presentation to Heather Leding, state FFA president. The organization has been leasing the land to Arkansas FFA since the 1950s for a nominal fee, but the gift gives the camp the freedom to expand facilities on that land without any restrictions. The property on which Camp Couchdale stands was donated for the purpose of establishing a state FFA campground by Arkansas Power &Light (now Entergy) founder Harvey Couch in 1928.

An important focus of FFA membership is the opportunity for students to earn scholarships. In all, 52 scholarships were awarded at the conference, 22 of which were national FFA scholarships totaling $26,250.

An important part of this summer's FFA leadership camps came when several hundred campers participated in what was called a *"hunger banquet."* This important experience is designed to clearly com-

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HUNGER *continued from 25*

The Hunger Banquet encouraged campers to experience a characteristic meal of (l-r) high-, middle-, and low-income populations, and to subsequently discuss the implications.

municate the problem of hunger in the state, country and beyond. **The rules:** participants draw tickets at random that assign each to a high-, middle-, or low-income tier based on the latest statistics about the number of people living in poverty. Each income level receives a corresponding meal: the 15 percent in the high-income tier are served a sumptuous meal (see picture, top left); the 35 percent in the middle-income section eat a simple meal of rice and beans (pictured, top center); and the 50 percent in the low-income tier help themselves to small portions of rice and water (pictured, right). Campers were encouraged to assume characterizations provided on their cards that fit the situation of a specific person at their assigned income level. Finally, participants were invited to share their thoughts after the meal. The work Arkansas FFA has done to bring about awareness of the hunger problem among their membership was honored by the Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance at its annual Hunger Action Breakfast September 13.

(l-r) Governor Beebe with state FFA Sponsor Marion Fletcher; students from across the state show off their colors.

There She Is... Ms Wheelchair America

Carl Daughtery, chief of ARS field services, was invited to serve as one of five judges for the 2012 Ms. Wheelchair America competition. Celebrating its 40th year, the program was held in early August in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Representing states from across the nation, 28 ladies competed for the crown.

The mission of Ms. Wheelchair America is to provide an opportunity for women of achievement to successfully educate about and advocate for the more than 54 million Americans living with disabilities.

Each year the Ms. Wheelchair America Program holds a competition to select the most accomplished, articulate spokeswoman for people with disabilities. The titleholder must be able to communicate and educate the public, business community and lawmakers regarding the dignity, productiveness, and basic value of people with disabilities.

"Being around these ladies and their families was a wonderful experience," Daughtery said. "But I was really surprised about the level of competition; the contestants are very serious about getting the crown! They came to win."

Daughtery was proud to have had a role in selecting Ms. Pennsylvania, Josie Badger, as the winner of the 2012 crown.

"The other contestants never saw Josie coming," Daugherty recalled.

"When they announced the top five and Josie was in it, everyone was shocked. But Josie was so articulate and educated in her comments and how she responded to the judges' questions. It was clear she would be the best representative and advocate for people with disabilities in 2012."

This isn't Daugherty's first time in the judge's seat, but his first at the national level. He's been a judge for the Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas five times, the most recent being in mid-August at the Arlington Hotel in Hot Springs. The winner of the 2012 Ms. Wheelchair Arkansas was Karen Campos of Jacksonville. Campos will compete in the 2013 Ms. Wheelchair America contest.

Daughtery will also be back in the national judges panel next year serving as the head judge.

"I'm really proud to represent Arkansas Rehabilitation Services when I judge at the state and national level. I always find participants who are not aware of the services available to them. I love to tell people that what they need is something we can provide, whether it's equipment, training, or other resources," Daughtery concluded.

The newly-crowned Ms. Wheelchair America 2012, Josie Badger of Pennsylvania, left, smiles with her predecessor, Alexandra McArthur of North Carolina, Ms. Wheelchair America 2011.

Ms Wheelchair Arkansas 2012 Karen Campos with Daughtery.

Shown at their stations for the 2012 Ms. Wheelchair America competition, the judges pictured left to right are: Kate Pew Wolters, president of the Kate and Richard Wolters Foundation; Carl E. Daughtery, chief of field services for the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division of ACE; Head Judge Susan Rotchy, Ms. Wheelchair California 2007; Georges Flores, harp technician; and Stephanie Crenshaw, Ms. Wheelchair Georgia 2006.

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