



the Workforce Counselor



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Focus on The State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities

(This is the first in a series of articles highlighting the State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities and its members that will appear each month in The Workforce Counselor.)

The State Board of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities was established by the Arkansas General Assembly through Act 803 of 1997.

The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor. All members are selected from among parents, business, industry, labor, persons with disabilities, minorities and other groups that represent the many career opportunities available in the state.

Currently, **Jack Justus** of Little Rock serves as Board Chairman. Justus has more than 40 years of service to the farm community through the Arkansas Farm Bureau



and the Cooperative Extension Service. He served as Executive Vice President of the Farm Bureau from 1982-1997. He is a native of Boone County and graduated with honors from the University of Arkansas with a BSA in Agriculture. In 1997, the University of Arkansas College of Agriculture, Food, and Life Sciences named him an Outstanding Alumnus. In 1996, Justus was honored with *Progressive Farmer's* Man of the Year Award in Arkansas Agriculture in 1996.

Phil Taylor, of Jonesboro, is the SBWECO Vice-Chairman. Taylor is Executive Director of Abilities Unlimited of Jonesboro, Inc., where he has worked for nearly 30 years. Mr. Taylor



SBWECO continued on page 8

Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate assists potential employees in the 21st Century Workplace

The Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) was rolled out on January 14, 2008, at a forum at Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock, where Gov. Mike Beebe handed out the first certificates. An Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate is a portable credential based upon WorkKeys® assessments that demonstrates to employers that an individual possesses basic workplace skills. The WorkKeys® employment system is a comprehensive procedure for measuring, communicating and improving the common skills required in the workplace.

The Arkansas CRC program uses results from the WorkKeys® assessments to award certificates in three categories: Gold level, Silver level and Bronze level. An

CRC continued on page 19



Department of Workforce Education Associate Director Rod Duckworth (left) and DWE Deputy Director for Adult Education James Smith (background) speak with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Director Artee Williams (right) at the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate Forum.



Director's Update

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

By raising the bar and investing more in education, Arkansas can help its citizens enjoy greater opportunity, greater prosperity, health, wealth and wellness.

We at the Department of Workforce Education are committed to improving the opportunities of educating the workforce throughout Arkansas and together we will build a better skilled, more trained and educated Arkansas for a brighter tomorrow.

Governor Mike Beebe has made education and economic development a center point of his administration. He has said that education is the hinge upon which our future swings. He has said providing the highest quality education will be one of our greatest challenges and, likewise, will be one of our most important victories.

He has placed a high priority on creating new jobs and retaining the ones that are already here. Because he values this so much, he has created the Governor's Workforce cabinet, composed of the Department of Workforce Education, Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, Department of Education, Department of Higher Education, Arkansas Science and Technology Authority, the Economic

Development Commission and the Association of Two Year Colleges. The Workforce Cabinet's mission is to promote maximum coordination and efficiency among education, employment and economic development services in order to positively position Arkansas in the global economy.

We at the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education are working everyday to ensure that our students are the best educated, the best equipped and the best trained so that they will be well prepared for the careers of the 21st century. We are committed to working alongside our sister agencies in the full spirit of cooperation to fulfill Governor Beebe's vision of a better educated, better skilled and better trained Arkansas workforce. The students of today will eventually become tomorrow's leaders in the high skill, high wage and high demand workplace.

The American economy is fueled by innovation. Today's workplace is constantly evolving in response to changing economic demands and consumer expectations. Business and industry are continuously updating and using new, marketplace-enhanced technologies to remain competitive in the global economy.

Our agency is committed to

DIRECTOR continued on page 19



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

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education **Director**

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What You Should Know

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)

Linda Morgan, *Interim Administrator*

The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services' **Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)** program is a federally funded grant and committed to the idea that persons with disabilities can reach their full potential, participate and be productive members of their communities if they have the tools or assistive technology available.

The mission of **ICAN** is "to increase awareness and provide access to assistive technology (AT) to all Arkansans with disabilities." The goal of the program is to "expand the availability of assistive technology services, devices, training and support that help Arkansans with disabilities to work, attend school and live independently."

ICAN components include the Technology Center and Arkansas AT4ALL .

- The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services' **Technology Center** is located at 26 Corporate Hill in Little Rock. The staff is knowledgeable and experienced in assistive technology and can provide **product demonstrations and training** of a large array of assistive technology devices. Technology includes job related assistive technology, computer aids, hardware and software, durable medical equipment and aids for daily living. Assistive technology available in our training room addresses sensory deficits, physical deficits, learning disabilities and other cognitive challenges. ICAN has sponsored numerous vendor specific **AT workshops** offered to the community free of charge. The staff also provides **information and referrals**.
- **Arkansas AT4ALL** -At Arkansas AT4ALL, clients will find used assistive technology for **loan**, for **sale** or **free**. Clients can also find

equipment from local lending programs that can be borrowed or demonstrated before a decision to purchase is made. Clients can visit the Arkansas AT4ALL website at www.Arkansas-ican.org. Arkansas AT4ALL has a wide variety of assistive technology available including: wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, personal care items, vision and hearing technologies, adaptive keyboards, and much more. ICAN also accepts assistive devices as a donation and recycles them to other persons who may need them. To donate an item, call the **Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services' ICAN staff at 501-683-4338 or 1-800-828-2799**. A portion of the website is a dedicated e-market place for individuals who want to buy and sell their used assistive technology equipment.

Division of Rehabilitation Services Holds Managers Meeting To Discuss Training and Goals for 2008

District managers from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services met in Little Rock in January to line out goals and objectives for 2008. At the meeting, the managers heard from Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, Division of Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño, and Associate Director of Field Services Ken Musteen.

During the meeting, district managers devised a new discharge formula for students from the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC) to improve

MEETING continued on page 14

GED Recipient Gives Back to the Community in a Big Way

Dr. Emma Kelly Rhodes believes in the power of education. She believes so deeply, she estimates she has spent at least \$150,000 of her own money to help educate and empower members of Little Rock's African-American community.

Dr. Rhodes knows what she's talking about and uses her own experiences to demonstrate the transformative power of education.

Dr. Rhodes earned her General Educational Development (GED) Diploma as a 29-year-old widow with seven children who dropped out of school at age 14. She went on to earn a Bachelor's degree and a Master's degree. Her determination led her to achieve a Ph.D. in education from the University of Arkansas by attending classes at night while working during the day to support her family.

After serving 26 years as an administrator for the Arkansas Department of Education, she retired and started the Dr. Emma Kelly Rhodes Education and Multipurpose Center in 2000 for inner-city communities and individuals most in need. In December of last year, she expanded the center's scope and opened the House of Vision.

The Education and Multipurpose Center provides adult education, GED classes, refresher courses for adult graduates, computer literacy classes, life-skills training and conversational Spanish classes. The House of Vision offers job development and placement, and professional development for women. Dr. Rhodes plans on expanding House of Vision services by offering health screenings later this year. She's even purchased a house next door to the facility with plans on turning it into an activity center.

Now, the Department of Workforce Education is looking to provide additional funding sources for Dr. Rhodes' efforts.

"This is where the rubber meets the road," said Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr. "She's making a difference. When you take efforts like this out into the community, you change people's lives in a profound way."

Until now, Dr. Rhodes has depended on money from her own pocket to fund her endeavors, cashing out her pension and stock holdings.

"I'm going to teach adult education even if nobody



(l to r) Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, Dr. Emma Kelly Rhodes, DWE Adult Education Deputy Director Jim Smith in front of the Dr. Emma Kelly Rhodes Education and Multi-Purpose Center in Little Rock.

pays me," Dr. Rhodes says. "All expenses are on me. I've never received a dime. I'll be paying teachers out of my own pocket as long as possible."

Right now, the center offers adult education classes two days each week and Dr. Rhodes teaches those herself. At one time, the Little Rock School District designated the center an adult education satellite facility and paid two teachers there part-time. When the funding dried up last year, the teachers were lost – a problem faced by satellite facilities throughout the city.

"The district gave raises and shut down the satellites," said Department of Workforce Education Adult Education Deputy Director Jim Smith. "It's like cutting off the arms and legs. The body's still alive, but not the extensions."

Now Smith is helping spearhead the effort to secure money for Dr. Rhodes' center. Smith says two likely sources of funding include special project dollars from Little Rock Adult Education, an idea which has support from Little Rock Adult Education Director Richard Jones, and federal direct and equitable grants. Direct and equitable grants are available to, among other organizations, local education agencies and volunteer literacy organizations of "demonstrated effectiveness."

"We're going to put our heads together to see what we can come up with," Walker explained to Dr. Rhodes

RHODES continued on page 17

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

by **John Davidson**
 Deputy Director
 Arkansas Department
 of Workforce Education's
 Division of
 Career and Technical Education
(Part One of a two part series)



The success of **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**, when traced all the way back to the time when many referred to it as Vocational Education, has been marked by its life changing programs.

Student organizations, not extracurricular but *intracurricular*, have been key to this impact. Numerous students, me included, were first-time high school graduates in their families and then entered college due to the impact of their student organization and their CTE instructor. Gerald Hughes, Siloam Springs FFA advisor and later Assistant Director at what is now Rich Mountain Community College, was the person who believed enough in me as a chapter officer to convince me to enroll in Arkansas Tech University after high school. He changed my life and those of many other boys he taught.

The impact of CTE burns daily like an inner candle in thousands of former Arkansas FFA, FBLA, DECA, HOSA, VICA (now SkillsUSA) and FHA (now FCCLA) members' lives. Many successful business leaders, politicians, educators, doctors, lawyers, entertainers and military heroes are, in part, who they are today because of those guiding words

embraced in the Arkansas CTE student organizations.

These guiding words have now become a core part of our lives and influence our daily decisions. I remember repeating so many years ago these very words from the FFA, *"Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve."* From FCCLA are the words, *"For we are the builders of homes, homes for America's future, homes where living will be the expression of everything that is good and fair, homes where truth and love and security and faith will be realities, not dreams."*

From FBLA, *"I believe every person should prepare for a useful occupation and carry on that occupation in a manner that brings the greatest good to the greatest number."* And from SkillsUSA, *"I believe in the dignity of work, I believe in the American way of life, I believe in education, I believe in fair play, I believe satisfaction is achieved by good work, I believe in high moral and spiritual standards."* Let us not lose the core values these words represent, or we will have lost the next generation!

Our story - the story of Arkansas Career and Technical Education - while very adequately told in the lives of our students, must also be

celebrated in the history of their occupational success which in a data-driven society must be enumerated, validated and reported. We have these successes right here in Arkansas. As Arkansans, we sometimes fail to realize the strength of our secondary programs. Seventy-six percent of Arkansas students in grades 7-12 are enrolled in our CTE programs annually. Thirty-nine percent of those seniors finish a 3-year sequence of study to become a CTE completer. Our state office tracks the success of our local programs through the federal Perkins indicators required for accountability within our national CTE system. Here too, we show that Arkansas CTE programs are winners. **Arkansas students completing our CTE programs have a 95% positive placement rate, with 65% going on to college, 36% employed, and 4% entering the military.**

Our CTE students have also demonstrated skill attainment through the end-of-course online assessments by showing a 12% growth statewide since 2000-2001. This is no small task with over 60,000 Arkansas students assessed annually. Of course today NCLB is paramount when

SMT continued from page 19

Former Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center Client Using Acquired Skills To Run Her Own Salon

Melissa Dunkel is a fighter. Not only is she a self-advocate, but she helps others who have been down some of the same roads she has traveled in her life. The 31 year old is now in her prime and hitting her stride.

A former client of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services' Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC), Dunkel is using what she learned at the center to run a successful business in the Spa City and is also helping others follow dreams of their own.

A native of Washington state, Dunkel moved to Hot Springs with her family when she was 13. In her young life, she endured seven open-heart surgeries and today, struggles with spinal scoliosis, which makes standing difficult. But rather than letting her disability get the better of her, she used it as inspiration to forge ahead with her dream to open **Dazzlin' Diva's Victorian Salon** in Hot Springs. The salon offers hair styling, a tanning booth and an ear piercing station.

"I wanted to be my own boss," Dunkel said. "Because when you work for someone else, they might not understand that some days are tougher than others, and you can't do some things that you can on other days. One day, when I can't spend the day on my feet, I'll go back to school and finish my studies in forensic criminal justice. I'm only two semesters from a degree," she elaborated.

Dunkel attended National Park Community College and the University of Arkansas Community College in Batesville. She found out about the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center from a friend who wanted to attend.

"I had no idea that the center was there or what it did until I read information about it," she said. "I'd always wanted to learn cosmetology, but didn't have the money to go to a private beauty school. So, with my disability, the center provided the opportunity I needed."

Even before she began learning cosmetology, she had a concept in her mind for a salon. That's where the idea for **Dazzlin' Diva's** was born.

"I'd see something that would fit the décor concept I had in my mind and pick it up, even though I knew that it might be a year or two before I could open a salon," she said.

Even with all the time and effort that goes in to running the salon, Dunkel still finds time to give back.

"I work with women's shelters because I've been in an abusive



Melissa Dunkel styles HSRC cosmetology instructor Jennifer Balisle at Dazzlin' Diva's (below).



relationship and I know that victims need hope," she said. "I do free makeovers for them and tell them about my experiences and re-affirm to them it's gonna be alright."

Melissa is also involved in "**Cut it Out**," a program for professional beauticians that builds awareness of domestic abuse, trains them to recognize warning signs and safely refer clients to local resources.

Just like a fighter going into the late rounds of a close bout, Melissa has a strategy to succeed. Keep moving to keep fighting.

Former Jonesboro Mayor GED Success Story

One of the Arkansas General Educational Development (GED) program's most vocal supporters is likely one of its most unusual and inspirational.

Former Jonesboro Mayor Hubert Brodell, now 80, earned his GED with the help of the Valley View Adult Education Center last May and now serves as an ambassador for the center – sharing the virtues and benefits of adult education with anyone who will listen.

Following a successful insurance career, Brodell was elected mayor of Jonesboro in 1986. He says few people knew he hadn't graduated from high school, but he soon realized that education was the key to success.

"We have a lot of people [in Arkansas] who don't have a high level of education," Brodell says. "If we have more people with GED's or a high school education, we can get better jobs and better industry. When people are better educated, the community is better."

Brodell says a community's literacy rate is one of the first things businesses consider when looking to locate in an area.

"You have to have basic skills to even fill out a job application," says Brodell. "Anytime I speak to a group, that's one of the first things I say. As soon as you get that education, your quality of life improves."

But, according to Brodell, even though an education virtually guarantees a better life, many worry that they won't be able to do everything necessary to earn a GED.

He says adult education instructors can help reduce that anxiety and tailor a program toward a student's needs.

"You have to go in and want to do it," Brodell says. "Arkansas has one of the best GED programs there



Mayor Hubert Brodell

GED

Learn how the GED tests
can work for you.
Visit <http://dwe.arkansas.gov>
or call 501-682-1980

is. They'll do everything in the world to help. Some people don't want to take the GED pre-tests, but those pinpoint your weaknesses. Once they know what your weaknesses are, they know exactly what to do to make sure you get help in those areas."

Brodell says once adults realize that help is available and that they can succeed academically, that knowledge will filter down to younger generations.

"When you have more educated parents, you'll have more educated kids," Brodell says. "When I was young I got lots of help from my parents. If you have a parent who doesn't know math, they can't work with their kids on math and it just doesn't seem important. Kids learn from their parents. When kids realize education is important to their parents, it becomes important to them."

Last October, Brodell was honored with by the Arkansas Association of Administrators of

Adult Education for his work speaking on behalf of the state's GED program with the first **Garland Hankins Award**, named after the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's former adult education deputy director.

Valley View Adult Education center Director Steve Clayton says the honor was richly deserved.

"He has done a tremendous, tremendous job of exposing our center to the community and the state basically," Clayton says.

While he's busy spreading the GED gospel, Brodell says his quest for knowledge isn't complete.

Brodell intends on taking a few computer classes at the adult education center to master eBay, e-mail and other internet services. He says he may not stop there, and that students at Arkansas State University could soon have him as a classmate.

SBWECO continued from page 1

holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling and a Specialist in Education Degree from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. He is also certified as a licensed professional counselor, a rehabilitation counselor and a vocational evaluation specialist. Mr. Taylor is active in many professional associations including the Arkansas Association of Community Rehabilitation Programs, the United Way Directors Association and the Vocational Evaluation/Work Adjustment Association of Arkansas.

Member **Richard C. Smith** of Tillar has spent a long and distinguished career in Arkansas education, beginning in 1949 as a high school teacher and coach in the Parkdale School District and ending in June 1990 after three years as a junior high principal in the McGehee School District. Before McGehee, he worked as an elementary and high school principal for nearly 25 years in the Desha Central and Delta school districts. Mr. Smith holds a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and a Master's degree in Educational Administration from Arkansas State University in Jonesboro. He is a former member and chairman of the State Board of Education and served as a board member of the National Association of State Boards of Education from 1992-1994. He also currently serves as Vice President of the Housing Board for the Southeast Arkansas Area Agency on Aging.



Member **Kathy Scarsdale** of Harrison is Vice President in charge of sales for Arkansas Products Company in Harrison, a hardwood flooring mill which has been owned by the Scarsdale family since 1945. Mrs. Scarsdale is past president of the Arkansas Wood Manufacturers Association and currently serves on its board. Through her work, she has been active with job fairs, plant tours, job shadowing, classroom presentations, the DECA career and technical student organization and is working with a new wood apprenticeship program. Mrs. Scarsdale has also volunteered for several civic and charitable organizations, including the Circle of Friends for Arkansas Children's Hospital, the Boy Scouts of America, the United Way and the Harrison Chamber of Commerce.



Member **Bob McClanahan** of Pine Bluff retired as

superintendent of the Cotton Belt Railroad in Pine Bluff after 43 years of service with the Cotton Belt and Southern Pacific Railroads. He began his career in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, serving in various positions in Texarkana, Memphis, St. Louis, Eugene, Oregon and Los Angeles. He completed the mid-management course at the University of Houston. He also served in the Army National Guard from 1948 to 1962. Mr. McClanahan serves on the Board of Directors of the Cotton Belt Rail Historical Society in Pine Bluff and as chairman of the Historical Railroad Preservation Commission. He is a former member of the Greater Pine Bluff Chamber of Commerce and Leadership in Pine Bluff.



Member **Lucy Ralston** of Fayetteville is a native of Bogata, Columbia. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Spanish from Safacon College Famenino, Bogata, Columbia, and a degree in Evangelism from YWAM Bible Institute in Elm Springs. Mrs. Ralston has served as a missionary in Mexico and Nicaragua and has worked as an elementary school teacher, bank teller and cosmetologist. She is a member of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the Hispanic Women's Association.



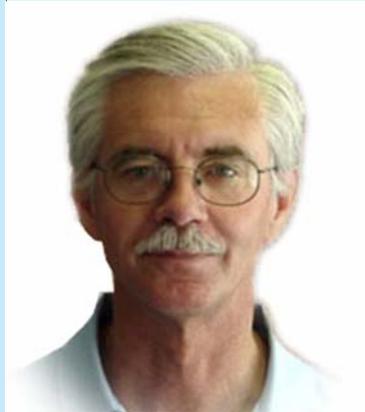
Member **Martha Dixon** of Arkadelphia attended Henderson State University and received a degree in fashion and design from Commercial Technical Institute in Little Falls, New Jersey. She owns and operates three companies in Arkadelphia: Martha's Fashion and Design, Dixon Manufacturing, Inc., and Martha's Kids. Mrs. Dixon is also involved with several civic and charitable organizations including the Arkadelphia Chamber of Commerce, Baptist Medical Center of Arkadelphia, the Arkadelphia Rotary Club, the Arkansas Leadership Forum, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, and the Shadow Program.



The Director of the Department of Workforce Education, William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., serves as SBWECO ex-officio secretary. The Director of the Department of Education, Dr. Ken James and the Director of Department of Higher Education, Dr. James Purcell serve as ex-officio members.

Moreland Chosen as Division of Rehabilitation Services Interim Chief of Special Programs

Jim Moreland, program director of the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission and administrator of both the Alternative Finance Authority and Disability Management, has been tapped by Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Division of Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño to serve as interim Chief of Special Programs. He took over the role in January following the retirement of Sue Gaskin.



Jim Moreland

Moreland has more than 30 years of service in state government. He came to the Division of Rehabilitation Services in 1985 as a psychological examiner for Rehabilitation Initial Diagnosis and Assessment for Clients (RIDAC) and was later promoted to program administrator. He then became program administrator of the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC) in January of 2003.

Because of his years at Rehabilitation Services, Moreland has had plenty of experience with several of the entities that fall under the special programs

banner.

“I’m very grateful for the support Glenda Williams has provided during the transition period,” Moreland said. “We have always worked well together and I’ve learned a lot during this interim period. I work with a bunch of great people who all seem to do what’s right by the program’s clients.”

In his new role as interim Chief, Moreland will oversee Alternative Financing Program (AFP), Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC), Disability Management,

Return to Work, Governor’s Commission on People with Disabilities, Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), Learning Evaluation Center (LEC), Minority Leadership Development Program, Rehabilitation Initial Diagnosis & Assessment for Clients (RIDAC), Successful Employment through Assistive Technology (SEAT) and Supported Housing.

“Jim will do a fine job in this interim period,” said Commissioner Trevino. “I know the Special Programs department will run very well under his guidance and leadership.”



The Arkansas Department of Workforce Education’s Veterans Approving Agency

(VAA) program manager **Sara Patterson** explains the benefits of the Transition Assistance Program to representatives from **Hawker Beechcraft** during a job fair at **Little Rock Air Force Base**. Staff from the VAA conduct regular job fairs at military installations across Arkansas, promote the **GI Bill** and are responsible for approving and supervising programs of education for the training of veterans, eligible dependents and eligible members of the **National Guard and the Reserves** in order to help veterans transition into successful employment outside of the military.



Governor Mike

State Board of
Education and

Director, William L.

Division of Rehabilitation Services
Robert Trevino, Commissioner/Deputy Director

Communications
Reginald Jackson,
Deputy
Director

Communications
Department

Financial & Management Services
John Wright,
Associate Director

Fiscal Affairs
Inventory
Procurement/Purchasing
Fleet Management
Information Systems & Services

Program, Planning Dev. & Evaluation
Roy Albert,
Associate Director

Compliance
Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP)
Program Evaluation
Grants/Contracts Management
Title XX
Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
Standards/Measurement

Field Services
Ken Musteen,
Associate Director

Vocational Rehab Operations
Job Placement
Office for the Deaf & Hearing Impaired (ODHI)
Independent Living/Supported Employment (IL/SE)
Telecommunications Access Program (TAP)
Transition Services

Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC)
Barbara Lewis,
Associate Director

Client Services
Administrative Services
Hospital Services
Program Planning & Evaluation
ACTI (Arkansas Career Training Institute)

Special Programs
Jim Moreland
Interim Associate Director

Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN)
Supported Housing
Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC)
Alternative Financing Program (AFP)
Rehabilitation Initial Diagnosis & Assessment for Clients (RIDAC)
Learning Evaluation Center
Successful Employment Through Assistive Technology (SEAT)
Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities
Minority Leadership Development Program

Beebe

Workforce
Career Opportunities

Organizational Chart

“Bill” Walker, Jr.

Human Resources & Development
Pam Harris
Administration Manager

Personnel
EEO-Grievance
Succession
Volunteer Services
Payroll
Benefits
Training

Finance
Charles Brown,
Deputy Director

Fiscal Affairs
Inventory
Procurement/
Purchasing
Fleet Management
Information
Systems
& Services

Division of
Adult Education
Jim Smith,
Deputy Director

Adult
Education
VACANT
Associate
Director

Adult
Basic
Education
English as a
Second
Language
(ESL)
General
Educational
Development
(GED)
Testing
Workforce
Alliance for
Growth
in the
Economy™
(WAGE)
Workplace
Education

Federal
Surplus
Property
Agency
VACANT
Associate
Director

Law
Enforcement
Support
Office
1033
Program
(LESO)
Department
of Defense
1122
Program
(DoD)

Division of
Career
& Technical
Education
John Davidson,
Deputy Director

Accountability & Funding

Contracting &
CTE Funding

Secondary
Technical
Centers, Youth
Apprentice-
ship,
Workforce
Training &
Program
Support
Lee Griffith,
Associate
Director

Post Secondary
Technical
Institutes
Adult
Apprenticeship
Veterans
Approving
Assessment &
Curriculum
School
Improvement,
High Schools
that Work
(HSTW) &
Special Needs

CTE Programs
& Special Projects
Rod Duckworth,
Associate
Director

Agricultural Science
and Technology
Business and
Marketing
Technology
Career Guidance,
Exploration &
Preparation Career
Readiness
Family and
Consumer
Sciences Education
Skilled and
Technical Sciences

Students Provide “A Look into My Future” During DWE Poster Contest

More than 50 seventh and eighth grade career orientation students from across Arkansas offered up a dazzling look into their future career goals.

The students were all participants in a statewide poster contest themed “A Look into My Future” sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education and Arkansas Career Orientation Teachers Association. From biophysicists to models, these middle school students used paint, paper, crayon and cardboard to tell a complex story of how each intends to spend their career goals.

Five judges from the



Department of Workforce Education rated the entries based on five criteria: **following guidelines, spelling, grammar and neatness, graphic representation, creativity and interpretation of theme.**

The ten highest-scoring entries were selected to be displayed at this year’s Department of Workforce Education Career Guidance Conference tentatively scheduled for July 27-28, 2008 at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock.

Here’s a list of the top ten



DWE Program Advisor Dr. Dawn Simpson and Communications Secretary Trina Harris judge posters during the “Look Into My Future” contest

winners:

First Place

Courtney Moore

Fashion Designer
Coleman Junior High School,
Van Buren

Second Place

Nicolas Wilkerson

Biophysicist
Coleman Junior High School,
Van Buren

Third Place

Derek Walker

Head Coach
Carl Stuart Middle School,
Conway

Fourth Place

Jordan Cost

Firefighter
Bob Courtway Middle School,
Conway

Fifth Place

Evelia Paz

Model
Russellville Junior High School

Sixth Place

Susan Taylor

WNBA (Basketball) Player
Russellville Junior High School

Seventh Place

Jelani Cole

Basketball Player
McRae Middle School,
Prescott

Eighth Place

Caitlin Morrison

Kindergarten Teacher
Bob Courtway Middle School,
Conway

Ninth Place

Taylor Cotton

Artist
Sheridan Middle School

Tenth Place

Abby Spence

Crime Scene Investigator
Ahlf Junior High School,
Searcy

This was the first of two career orientation poster contests held each school year. One contest is held during the first semester, the other is held during the second semester. Entries for this year’s second semester contest are due at the DWE state office by April 15.

Special thanks go out to Department of Workforce Education contest judges Randy Prather, Skilled and Technology Sciences department; Leah Elmore, Career and Technical Education Division; Barbara Lensing, Career Guidance, Exploration and Preparation department; Ginger Fisher, Business/Marketing and Technology department; and Trina Harris, Communications Department. Career, Guidance, Exploration and Preparation public school program advisor Dr. Dawn Tirado Simpson served as the tie breaker.

Rehabilitation Services District I-N Assisting Clients Utilizing Local Resources

Capitalizing on advantages can make anyone's job easier. **Department of Workforce Education Division of Rehabilitation Services** District I-North Manager Carol Ethridge says her office's Fayetteville location gives her and the counselors who work there several advantages to work with.

The main requests for services from any of the Division of Rehabilitation Services **19 field services offices** in any of its seven districts are to provide medical support, education and job training for the disabled. Regardless of where they are, field counselors are charged with finding and tailoring those services for their clients and ultimately securing employment and an independent life.

According to Ethridge, because of their location alone, clients living in District I-N are uniquely positioned to benefit from the rapid growth and economic success of Northwest Arkansas.

"The unemployment rate here is low," says Ethridge. "Usually we can place our clients quickly. Hopefully they're able to get a job without much training."

Northwest Arkansas has good job growth with unemployment numbers 20 percent below the national average and 37 percent below figures for Arkansas as a whole.

Ethridge says the Northwest corner of the state has been riding high on the crest of a construction wave, but as with everywhere else in Arkansas and in the rest of the nation, new housing starts and other building projects are starting to slow. That, however, is where Ethridge says location also benefits rehabilitation counselors and their clients.

"We have five or six colleges within a 50 mile radius of Fayetteville," she says. "We have clients who are interested in college and there are no shortages of choices because the training opportunities are here. There are teachers being recruited. They're looking



**District I-N Manager
Carol Ethridge**

for people to go into the medical field."

Similarly there is no shortage of corporate citizens in the area. Ethridge adds companies such as Wal-Mart, J.B. Hunt and Tyson Foods could also be fertile grounds to till for future client placement.

"We used to use a placement service to help find jobs for some of our clients," she commented. "But now if we see an ad for a job and think that it fits one of our clients, we'll try and get them hired that way. But we have considered going back to using a service again."

Just like everything else in the area, the Latino population in Northwest Arkansas is booming. While she can't explain the reasons, Ethridge says she hasn't seen an appreciable increase in Hispanic clients.

"They're not coming in any higher percentage than anyone else," says Ethridge.

That doesn't follow trends in the region which is home to roughly one-half of Arkansas's Latino residents. A 2007 study from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation shows that District I-N's two largest counties, Benton and Washington, have the state's largest Hispanic population – 20,296 and 18,414 respectively.

As with elsewhere in our state, numerous industries and economic ventures have prospered since the mid-1990s due in large part to the contributions of the immigrant workforce. According to the Arkansas Department of Education, 38 percent of students in the Springdale School District were Latino (6,258) and Latino students made up 37 percent of the Rogers School District (4,912) for the 2006-07 school year. These districts have increased their English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and recognize that many of these students speak Spanish among family and friends.

While Ethridge's office hasn't seen a significant increase in Hispanic clients over the last several years,

DISTRICT I-N continued on page 14

DISTRICT I-N continued from page 13

she says it hasn't been for a lack of trying.

"We have a good partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services," Ethridge added. "They refer the clients to us and then we go to work. Just as each person is an individual, their educational or medical plans are unique to their needs. We do everything within our power to make sure the client gets what is right for them."

Ethridge is the first to admit that even though District I-N has its share of advantages, it's not all sunshine and lollipops. There's one problem that seems to be pretty universal among field services offices throughout Arkansas.

"Public transportation is a big problem," Ethridge elaborated. "It's getting better in Fayetteville though with the University system."

The University of Arkansas runs 11 accessible buses and three Razorback Transit vehicles that provide curb-to-curb, demand-responsive para transit service which mirrors its fixed-route bus service for permanently or temporarily disabled residents.

MEETING continued from page 3



(above) Director Walker and Commissioner Treviño meet with Division of Rehabilitation Services managers including (below) Sue Osburn, Carol Ethridge, Chief of Field Services Ken Musteen and David McDonald.



communications between HSRC counselors and field counselors.

The new formula will require counselors from the center to e-mail counselors who refer students to Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center of the impending discharge. The e-mail will include the appropriate classification – whether the student completed the program, failed to complete the program, completed the program and was employed or failed to complete the program and was employed.

If a student was employed, the e-mail is to include the following information: the employer, the employer's location, job title, total hours worked each week, hourly rate of pay and SOC code change (if warranted). HSRC is also expected to update the student's contact information. That information includes a permanent address, current phone number, cell phone number and e-mail address.

Once all of the corrections and updates are made, the counselor will be expected to send the e-mail with a read receipt acknowledgement for a paper trail.

The district managers also lined out several other goals for 2008. They want to use existing technology to provide current information on HSRC students. They want to keep an HSRC counselor folder with student information on a shared drive so that it may be updated weekly and that field counselors can check on student progress at any time.

DECA Students to Converge on Rogers for State Meeting

All systems are go for the **Arkansas DECA State Career Development Conference** scheduled for February 24-25, 2008 at the Embassy Suites in Rogers.

Plans for the marketing students association event were finalized at an executive council meeting in Rogers on January 14.

State DECA advisor and Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Public School Program Advisor Jim Brock says roughly 400 students from across Arkansas will be on hand for the two-day conference to compete in a variety of competitions including: **fashion merchandising, sports and entertainment merchandising, business ethics, accounting applications, food marketing, marketing management and retail merchandising** just to name a few.

It won't all be good natured competition though, says Brock. Department of Workforce Education Director William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., will be on hand to offer greetings to the students during the opening session of the conference and DECA members will also get to exercise what Brock calls "civic consciousness."

During the event's first day, students will hold a fair and a silent auction to raise money for Arkansas Children's Hospital and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. These funds will be combined with monies local chapters have already raised



Jim Brock

Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Public School Program Advisor and State DECA Advisor

through hometown fundraisers such as miracle minutes, cookie sales and donation solicitations.

According to Brock, students raised about \$15,000 last year and could surpass that figure in 2008.

"I know Fayetteville already has about \$3,000 for Arkansas Children's Hospital," Brock said. "Harrison has about \$1,600 for Children's and that's a good start."

Once the state conference is over, it's off to Atlanta. Brock says roughly 100 Arkansas DECA members will join 15,000 of their colleagues from all over the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam and Germany in Atlanta April 26-29, for the DECA International Career Development Conference.

According to the DECA website, "When the lights go down and the music begins at the Opening Session of ICDC, the effect can be

so overwhelming that it won't wear off until well after the 15,000 attendants conclude at Closing Session."

ICDC sees the top competitors, corporate sponsors, business professionals, advisors and members from all different backgrounds unite in an action-packed experience. Brock says students are in store for non-stop excitement that includes tours of area attractions, a party at Olympic Centennial Park and opening and awards ceremonies inside the Georgia Dome.

DECA is an international association of high school students studying marketing, management and entrepreneurship in business, finance, hospitality and marketing sales and service.

Plans are also now in place for the 2008 DECA Southern Region Conference which is scheduled to be in Nashville, Tennessee November 7-9, 2008 and is expected to host as many as 2,000 students.

Brock says roughly 100 members from our state will attend and participate in workshops on hospitality, entrepreneurship, sports and entertainment and general marketing. Brock adds those who participate in the workshops will receive a certificate upon completion of each.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in DECA Leads – a leadership training course for state and national officers.

Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG) program Working at Riverview High

If Riverview High School in Searcy is any indication, the **Jobs for Arkansas's Graduates (JAG)** program is an overwhelming success.

Operating in its first year, JAG counts 43 Riverview 11th and 12th graders as participants. Of those 43, 40 are seniors. That accounts for nearly one-half of the graduating class at the school.

Currently more than 40 Arkansas schools or career and technical education centers boast a JAG program. JAG is a broad-based school-to-work program for juniors and seniors designed to assist students whose ability to successfully graduate from high school and obtain meaningful employment is in jeopardy. The program's goal is to ensure student graduation or General Educational Development (GED) completion and prepare them for workplace success, whether their careers begin immediately upon high school graduation or following post-secondary education or training.

Riverview JAG specialist Sandy LaFantasie says the program which allows participants to leave campus after school to work helps keep students, especially seniors, in school.

"In Arkansas, until just three or four years ago, seniors could leave after lunch," said LaFantasie. "But when the state Department of Education changed it, that's when we started having problems. For a lot of them, all they needed was English to graduate."

And she says more students started dropping out as a result.

"It's hard to tell a senior, even one going to college, that they need to stay in school all day," LaFantasie said. "Especially when all they need is English to graduate. You can tell them education is important, but they just don't want to hear it. They want out."

As a solution, LaFantasie turned to JAG which offers students an additional three high school credits – one for a classroom session and two more for working. Students can opt to work for an area business or take on an internship.

LaFantasie says that choice opens up opportunities and options for participants.

Isreal Williams transferred to Riverview from Bradford solely for JAG and now he's working his way

up the ladder at McDonald's.

"I didn't want to drop out of school, but I also needed to work full-time," Williams says. "Being a manager, I'm going to work full-time and if I was at my other school, I would have to work to close and then be back at school. I can't work until 1 a.m. and then be back at school. At my old school, we had to be there at 7:50 and get out at 3:20. I couldn't work and do that schedule. So I transferred here."

Williams sees a future with McDonald's and plans on attending its Hamburger University management training program.

"It is really helping," Williams says of JAG. "If this wasn't here, I guess I would have had to drop out."

JAG continued on page 17



William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr., Director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, with former Maryland Lt. Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend at the **Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG)** National Leadership Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C., December 6, 2007. **JAG is a national organization giving high school and middle school students with barriers to graduation and employment the skills to earn a diploma, seek higher education, or get and retain jobs.** The National Leadership Awards Ceremony recognizes those individuals and programs achieving outstanding results during the year.

Williams Named Interim Director of Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission



Glenda Williams

The new interim director of the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC) has an interesting insight into her position.

Glenda Williams, who was tapped by Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Division of Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño in January to temporarily helm the commission, knows first hand about the people she will be serving. Williams received a kidney transplant in April 2002 and knows the ups and downs of dealing with the disease and its consequences.

"I am looking forward to the challenge presented by this opportunity," Williams said. "I have already learned so much in my short time with the agency".

Williams started working with Arkansas Department of Workforce Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services' Kidney Disease Commission in June 2007. She will serve in her role while Jim Moreland serves in the role of Interim Chief of Special Programs.

AKDC was created in the early

1970's to provide services for people on kidney dialysis or who had received a kidney transplant. The commission provides prescription drugs to clients each month and pre-transplant dental services for those waiting on a kidney transplant. AKDC is looking to expand its transportation services, a major issue for clients.

As interim director of AKDC, Williams will be responsible for overall operations of the program. The commission has a governor-appointed board that meets quarterly.

Williams will also serve as the interim administrator of the Alternative Financing Program (AFP), another assignment that's attached to the AKDC. This program provides loans to people with disabilities for the purchase of assistive technology. It's a partnership between the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (ADFA), a governor-appointed technology equipment revolving loan fund committee.

Commissioner Treviño said, "Ms. Williams may have been at this agency a short while, but I know she's up to the challenge because she has plenty of experience to draw upon."

RHODES continued from page 4

about funding possibilities. "We want to put some substance behind this rhetoric."

Dr. Rhodes is all about action and she plans on empowering and educating with or without additional funds.

"Education breaks the cycle of crime and poverty," Dr. Rhodes says. "These are people who need jobs. Just because you didn't finish formal training doesn't mean you can't be educated. I dropped out. I'm an example of what can be done. We have to have a reason to be proud of ourselves. I want our students to know we do more than rob folks. I want to give them positive information."

Dates to Remember

FCCLA District 3 Springs Leadership Meeting: February 12, Valley View Auditorium (tentative); for District 3 FCCLA Chapter Members & Advisors

FCCLA District 2 Spring Leadership Meeting: February 15, Beebe High School; for FCCLA District 2 Chapter Members & Advisors, FCCLA State Officers

State STAR Events Lead Consultant Meeting: February 21, AR Adult Learning Resources Center, Little Rock; for FCCLA State STAR Events Lead Consultants and State STAR Events Coordinators

DECA State Career Development Conference: February 24, Rogers; AR DECA Members and advisors

Southern Leadership, Ag Mechanics & Electricity CDE: February 29, Southern Arkansas University, Magnolia; for Ag Students and Instructors

JAG continued from page 16

JAG started in Arkansas under the Department of Workforce Education with nine pilot schools in 1999 with dropout prevention and recovery among its stated goals. According to national figures, JAG Model programs regularly exceed a 90 percent graduation rate with at least 80 percent of graduates experiencing a positive outcome (i.e. employed, in the military, or pursuing a post-secondary education) during the 12-month post-graduation follow-up period.

In year one at Riverview, LaFantasie says the program is meeting its goals and changing the lives of students.

HSRC Happenings

2008 Staff Development Training Days held

The staff at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center (HSRC) kicked off the new year with staff development training at the center's Jim Davis Memorial Auditorium January 2-3, 2008. The agenda included remarks from Arkansas Department of Workforce Education Director Bill Walker, Division of Rehabilitation Services Commissioner Robert Treviño and Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center Administrator and Deputy Director Barbara Lewis. Director Walker also presented certificates of services to tenured staff.

Mrs. Lewis gave a presentation on HSRC as a Center of Excellence and provided the staff with key goals to work toward this year. Those goals included: (1) an increase in the number of employment outcomes for HSRC students (2) increase in revenues generated through the HSRC hospital and (3) grant funding for capital improvements and program needs at the Center.



Director Walker speaks to the assembly on Staff Development Day

Staff training included "Who Moved My Cheese" and "Service Excellence/Focusing on the Customer" conducted by Cassandra Woods. Youmna El Sabaa provided training on "Effective Communication for Positive Results". Pam Harris, Division of Rehabilitation Services Personnel Administrator provided a personnel update along with Terry Lucy from the Public Employees Claims Commission. Additional topics included a **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)** update by Howard Rutenberg, HSRC Assistant Administrator for Hospital Services and a presentation on "Battling Superbugs" by Dr. Micheal Brinson, HSRC Staff Phycsian and Sheri Wilkie, HSRC Medical Technologist.

35 - 30 Year Service



Tom Albaugh: 35 years



Troy Bright: 30 Years



Evvie Davis: 30 years



Mary Boyle: 30 years

Service certificates were awarded to:

1972 – 35 Years

Tom Albaugh

1977– 30 Years

Mary Boyle, Troy Bright, Evvie Davis

1982 – 25 Years

Perry Bell, Peggy Hamilton, David Henderson

1987 – 20 Years

Katie Weston, Sue Osburn, Barbara Roach, Barbara Whittaker

1992 – 15 Years

Janey Hunter, Brian Teague, Barry Richardson

1997 – 10 Years

Ralph Forbes, Danny Tadlock, Juaquina Usry, Roy Washburn, Darrell Weston

DIRECTOR continued from page 2

being on the leading edge with vision and foresight to ensure Arkansas's students are high-performance, well prepared, work-place-ready graduates eager to tackle the challenges of a 21st century economy. The continual process of innovation and technological change has resulted in jobs that demand ever higher skill levels.

When we develop high skill, high demand, high wage programs of study geared towards these types of occupations, we better prepare students to keep Arkansas and America more competitive in the global economy thereby developing a more competitive workforce.

SMT continued from page 5

discussing school accountability. Arkansas CTE instructors have much to be proud of as the number of CTE students who are proficient has increased 6% in literacy and 25% in math over the past four years. Many people look at this winning secondary record but ask what happens when they get to college?

Arkansas CTE programs have made remarkable progress in lowering the remediation rate of our CTE students by 14%, which is a level within 1% of all Arkansas students. Our CTE students have also raised the number of those who persist to the sophomore year. Presently 72% of all CTE students who enroll as freshmen persist into their sophomore year. This is 4.7% above the rate of all entering freshmen. **This success is due in part to the efforts of CTE instructors to encourage students to take higher level courses.** We have seen a 21% increase in the number of CTE students who take the ACT recommended curriculum. Arkansas career centers based on two-year college campuses also have something to brag about. With a total last year of more than 3,600 high school students earning 24,620 concurrent college hours, this program provided a \$1.6 million savings in tuition to their students.

(Part 2 of Deputy Director Davidson's column will continue in the next edition of the Workforce Counselor.)

CRC continued from page 1

advantage for a recipient of an Arkansas CRC is that it will increase the chances for that individual to be hired. The CRC verifies the level that individuals can handle such tasks such as reading instructions, finding information and working with numbers.

An individual with a CRC helps employers take the guess work out of hiring employees.

"It is so important that we have a ready-to-work, educated and trained workforce with the kind of understanding of the particular job skills and work ethic required in any instance," Gov. Beebe said. "The CRC will give Arkansans confidence in their own skills and qualifications, while helping employers streamline hiring decisions."

Several state agencies formed a steering committee and were key partners for the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate. Those agencies were: Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges.

For additional information about the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate, call 866-757-2999 or email crc@arkansas.gov.

Available Upon Request

If you would like additional copies of The Workforce Counselor or if you have comments concerning this publication, please contact **Reginald L. Jackson, Director of Communications at 501-682-1500, or reginald.jackson@arkansas.gov**





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