



the

Career Counselor

March 2013



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

ARS Welcomes Commissioner Randy Laverty



Director Bill Walker is proud to announce his appointment of Randy Laverty as commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. He assumed the commissioner position February 4.

Laverty began his career of public service in 1975 as the Newton County director for the Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services. As county director, he was responsible for economic and medical programs, as well as children and family services.

In 1982, he was named assistant director of field operations for the Department of Human Services, Division of Social Services, and was responsible for all social services programs in 17 counties. In 1985, he assumed the position of assistant director for the Department of Human Services, Di-

Adult Education Week Celebrated



Gov. Mike Beebe (front row, center) presents the proclamation to a group of adult education administrators.

vision of County Operations, and served in that position for eight years.

Laverty also served as executive director of the Developmental Disabilities Provider Association from 2001 to 2009 and in 2009, became the association's resource development director.

He also served 16 years in the Arkansas Legislature, in the House of Representatives from 1995 to 2001 and in the Senate from 2003 until January 14, 2013.

Among his many leadership roles in the Legislature, Laverty served as chair of the Joint Audit Committee; as chair of House Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committee; and as vice-chair of the Senate Public Health, Welfare, and Labor Committee. He also served on the Joint Budget Committee, where he chaired

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Governor Mike Beebe declared September 10-16 as Adult Education Week in Arkansas and September 12 as GED® Pride Day by proclamation at the State Capitol. "Adult Education classes provide learning opportunities for those who have not obtained high school credentials, who have not mastered basic skills before graduating high school, or who are non-native speakers of English," the proclamation read.

Later that month the Arkansas GED® Testing Program held its annual Examiners' Conference at the Embassy Suites Hotel and Convention Center in Little Rock. The conference theme was "Great Things in Motion" and highlighted the move toward computer-based testing be-

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Director's Update

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

The New Year brings exciting developments and significant challenges to our agency. First, I'd like to officially welcome former Senator Randy Laverty, who joined the agency in February as the new commissioner of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. Mr. Laverty brings with him a long history of public service, which began with the Department of Human Services in 1975. He held positions of increasing responsibility in that agency, specifically in the Social Services Division. In 1995 he began a 16-year career in the Arkansas Legislature, during which he chaired and co-chaired several important committees. He has a passion for and experience in serving those in the Arkansas disability community, and we are happy to have him working for our agency.



Commissioner Randy Laverty

As far as exciting developments, the agency's launch of Microsoft IT Academy program throughout the state is making significant progress. The Governor's Workforce Cabinet announced on July 20, 2012, the formal launch of the Microsoft IT Academy pro-

gram, which includes Web-based instruction and opportunities to earn industry-recognized certifications.

The Microsoft IT Academy is continuing in its first year as a pilot program, focusing now on getting educators trained and certified. The program is currently being piloted in approximately 20 Arkansas high schools, 24 adult education centers and 25 Arkansas Workforce Centers. Future plans are for all public high schools and adult education centers to eventually offer the program. Arkansas is the first state in the nation to offer the Microsoft IT Academy to adult learners, who can access services at adult education centers and



Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Arkansas's Microsoft IT Academy is funded jointly by the Department of Career Education, the Department of Education, and the Department of Workforce Services. The state's investment of \$469,635 provides a variety of curricula, lab resources, teacher training and certification materials for an anticipated 343 sites. With the implementation of the Microsoft IT Academy, adult Arkansans who are not students will also be able to participate and acquire skills to enhance their employability.

Many Arkansans seeking to improve their employability turn to

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Arkansas Department
ACE
of Career Education

the Career Counselor

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

Arkansas Department of Career Education

Director
William L. "Bill" Walker, Jr.

Communications Director
Deborah Germany

Contributing Staff
Sandra Hubbard
Ashli Ahrens
Carl Enna
Ellice Scales
Mark Apolinar

Arkansas Department of Career Education

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

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Central Office

525 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-296-1600 (V/TTY)
800-330-0632 (V/TTY)
www.arsinfo.org





Arkansas Department of CAREER EDUCATION

Department of Career Education
 #3 Capitol Mall
 Little Rock, AR 72201
 (501) 682-1500
<http://ace.arkansas.gov>

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division
Central Office:
 525 West Capitol Avenue
 P.O.Box 3781
 Little Rock, AR 72203
 (501) 296-1600
 Toll Free: 800-330-0632
www.arsinfo.org

601 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72205
 (501) 686-2800

Arkansas Career Training Institute (formerly Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center)
 105 Reserve
 Hot Springs, AR 71901
 (501) 624-4411

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Field Offices
 501 West Arch
Searcy, AR 72143
 (501) 268-6650

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

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

1812 East Main
Booneville, AR 72927
 (479) 675-3835

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

989 Highway 425 North
 P.O.Box 450
Monticello, AR 71655
 (870) 367-9669

1401 Main Street
North Little Rock, AR 72114
 (501) 833-1490

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

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

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

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

Film Competition and Seminars

Prepare A/V Students for Careers



More than 300 Arts and Audio Visual studies students athered at the second annual Seedling Film Festival in Fayetteville on October 5. The event is the brainchild of Springdale High School teacher Trent Jones.

As a precursor to Fayetteville's 3rd annual Offshoot Film Festival that weekend, the Seedling festival featured activities just for students.

The day-long event included an adjudicated film competition, workshops on photography, filmmaking, storytelling and production design.

Local representatives from education, business, government and other organizations participated in an Advisory Council to encourage collaboration with the goal of creating the best educational and professional outcomes for today's students.



Trent Jones explains the rules for the Advisory Council discussion

Senior Management Team

SMT Update

Jonathan Bibb

Administrator/
Arkansas Career Training Institute
Associate Director
for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services



The year 2012 was one of major transitions at the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI). Two major transitions actually began in 2011: application and attainment of candidate status for accreditation by the Council on Occupational Education (COE) and the change in the medical model. In addition to these major shifts in programming, we are also enhancing services to clients served at ACTI. We now administer the the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) test on-site. Additionally, the outdoor power equipment program has earned national certification by the Equipment and Engine Training Council (EETC)

Council on Occupational Education Accreditation (COE)

National accreditation was originally recommended by an education working group made up of staff members from ACTI, the Career and Technical Education Division, and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. After reviewing the options for national accreditation, the team chose COE because its mission is consistent with the mission and vision of ACTI. The mission of COE is “assuring quality and integrity in career and technical education.”

The goals that represent the significant values and purposes to which the Council is dedicated are as follows:

- To offer public assurance that accredited educational institutions provide quality instruction in career and technical educa-

tion that facilitates learning by students and meeting the needs of the labor market.

- To provide guidance to institutions for the continual improvement of their educational offerings and related activities.
- To promote high ethical and educational standards for career and technical education.
- To enhance public understanding of career and technical education providers and of the value of the education and the credentials offered by these providers.
- To ensure that the accreditation process validates the achievement of learning and program objectives. (Council on Occupational Education, 2012)

ACTI staff has completed the first annual report to COE and the first draft of a detailed self-study. Although ACTI still has work to do, staff is confident that accreditation will be achieved shortly after the March COE team visit.

Medical Model Transition

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) conducted an on-site visit in 2011. As a result of the team’s recommendations, ACTI administrative staff began to evaluate services provided at the center. Based on the decline in acute care admissions to the ACTI hospital over the past few years, the decision was made to change from an acute-care hospital to an outpatient clinic-based model that would continue as many services as possible but eliminate the 24-hour medical

care required to maintain licensure as a hospital. This change included the projected elimination of jobs of some colleagues at ACTI.

The plan was presented to ARS senior managers in the early fall of 2011. The plan was refined through collaboration of senior managers to retain several employees at the center by transferring them to special programs but maintaining their duty station at ACTI. This action serves to enhance the service provision through those programs while retaining valued employees in Hot Springs. In November of 2011, the announcement was made to ACTI staff.

Over the next few months, the plan was reviewed and revised by ARS senior managers and a taskforce of medical professionals and administrators from ACTI. The plan was approved in early spring of 2012. The plan called for the elimi-

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Available Upon Request

If you would like additional copies of the

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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.

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nation of 24 positions. ACTI staff was notified in April of 2012 that the transition would be completed by October 15, 2012. Over the following months, multiple state agencies and other employers held employment presentations for the medical staff that would be losing their positions. By October 15, all 24 staff members had either found other employment or retired from state service. Eight staff members were retained at ACTI or ARS.

The new medical model still provides for the following services: medical clinic, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Monday-Friday; physical therapy; occupational therapy; speech therapy; pharmacy; orthopedic clinic; dental services; and mental health services. In addition, the medical staff will play a vital role in the 10-day assessments of clients. These assessments will help ARS staff to better design individual plans of employment. ACTI staff are working diligently to ensure all services are relevant and cost-effective and maximize the effectiveness of personnel. This transition continues to be a work in progress, but we are making substantive changes.

Career Readiness- Proctor Site for the CRC Exam and FastTrack

In late November, ACTI was approved to serve as a proctor site for the Career Readiness Certification (CRC) pre-test and final exam. Previously, students at ACTI were transported to the Department of Workforce Services for the pre-test and to National Park Community College for the final test. Transporting students created scheduling issues and often limited time for students in training areas. Since they now are able to proctor tests, career

readiness staff members at ACTI can create a testing environment that meets the needs of clients with disabilities.

ACTI staff has prepared students with diverse disabilities for the WorkKeys test since 2009. We are experienced in working with this population and have helped students achieve what many thought they could not. The following chart illustrates the growing success of our career readiness program by fiscal year:



In addition to offering CRC exams, ACTI is initiating a “FastTrack” program that will increase the number of students ready for testing. In the first year of FastTrack, we expect approximately 100 additional CRCs to be earned by individuals with disabilities. The CRC is recognized nationwide and provides students a competitive edge in the job market. Many companies give preferential hiring treatment to those who possess it.

Since ACTI is approved as a proctor site, FastTrack students will be able to acquire eight additional hours of coursework, as all students in the program can test at the same time rather than on different days. FastTrack will also eliminate

scheduling conflicts between ACTI and National Park Community College. In summary, the changes will enable ACTI to better prepare students for a wide variety of careers.

Outdoor Power Equipment Achieves National Certification

The outdoor power equipment training program at ACTI achieved national accreditation from the Engine and Equipment Technician Council (EETC), which has accredited 78 schools nationwide. ACTI is the first school in Arkansas to earn accreditation. ACTI pursued this certification to raise the competency level of graduates from the outdoor power equipment program.

Technicians certified by EETC demonstrate a higher level of technical proficiency in their work and this proficiency, in turn, increases the level of professionalism at dealerships throughout North America (EETC, 2012).

Instructor Gary Johnston worked diligently to restructure the training program to meet the accreditation standards. Restructuring included repairs and a redesign of the training and classroom areas. In addition, Dr. Dawn Simpson, director of vocational training, secured funding to purchase new training equipment, which was a vital component in meeting the accreditation standards.

I am very proud of the work that has been accomplished in the outdoor power equipment program. The revitalization of this program began around the time I came to ACTI. I can tell you, there has been an “extreme makeover” of the training area. Our students will benefit greatly from the changes and this new certification.

CORNER

“Assistive Technology 4 Life”



Advancing Technology Answers Consumers’ Needs

submitted by Corey Kimbrough, ICAN Program Manager

Assistive technology (AT) is more recognized and more accessible than ever. Many of the devices we currently own and use daily have capabilities that cater to some of the most complex disabilities. Apple’s iPad provides a host of features that allow people from all walks of life to use it, and the iPad one of the fastest-growing AT devices available. Not only is the iPad highly advanced with unmatched ability in a single device, but it also gives a sense of dignity to an individual with a disability. Not having to carry an unusual switch-activated talker or bulky picture exchange board, but having the same cool tablet a typical person would carry contributes to the self-esteem of a person with a disability.

Before the iPad and other similar devices, touch-to-speak technology was incredibly expensive, costing around \$8,000. Now, it only costs \$499 for an iPad and \$189.99 for a thorough touch-to-speak app like Proloquo2Go. That relative affordability has made the technology more available for children and adults who can’t use their voice. With the simple touch of an iPad, a hungry non-verbal person can communicate exactly what he or she would like to eat. Those apps can then be customized with photos or features to suit an individual’s life and needs. Another option is Assistive Chat, which predicts several sentence completion options. For the most severely disabled people, Yes/No is a simple app that allows individuals to voice their preference in yes-or-no responses. For the hard-of-hearing, iPad

users, soundAmp R amplifies sound in a variety of situations. Users can also record lectures or presentations they want to listen to again later.

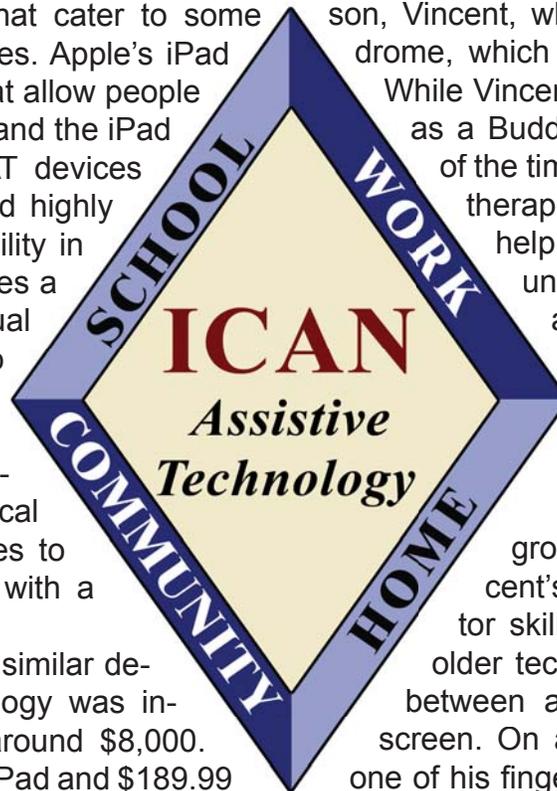
SNApps4Kids co-founder Cristen Reat has a son, Vincent, who was born with Down’s Syndrome, which can lead to low-muscle mass.

While Vincent can walk, Reat describes him as a Buddha who prefers to sit still most of the time. Throughout his life, Vincent’s therapists and parents have tried to help him be more active. It was not until his physical therapist placed an iPad on a treadmill that Vincent was motivated to walk. He now stays on for nine and a half minutes, interacting with his iPad while he’s in motion.

In addition to increasing his gross motor ability to walk, Vincent’s iPad has helped his fine motor skills. For Vincent, computers and older technology required visual shifting between a mouse or keyboard and the screen. On an iPad, Vincent can watch as one of his fingers writes directly on the screen to make selections.

Apple is constantly tweaking the iPad. New features and upgrades and built-in accessibility features are sure to be available on the next model. Apple is a company that listens to consumers. There is an old saying, “You can’t be all things to all people,” but the iPad is trying. And for people with disabilities, it’s rather “magical” and “revolutionary” that a company has designed a mainstream product with so many inclusive features.

Contact ICAN for further information at 525 West Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72201, or email **Corey Kimbrough** at corey.kimbrough@arkansas.gov.



National FFA Officers Toured Arkansas, Met with Governor

On Sunday, January 6, the Arkansas Department of Career Education's (ACE) Agricultural Science and Technology Program Coordinator **Marion Fletcher** and staff members **Chris Bacchus**, **Bart Draper**, and **Samantha McCullah**, welcomed the 2013 National FFA officer team to Arkansas. The officer team consists of six college students who were elected to their posts by the national organization, formerly known as Future Farmers of America, and hail from the states of Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, and Nebraska. The national organization chose Arkansas to host the officers for

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The FFA national officers were privileged to meet with Governor Mike Beebe in his office where they discussed the importance of agricultural education. Pictured left to right, are: Marion Fletcher, Senator Bruce Maloch, Wiley Bailey, Joenelle Futrell, Kalie Hall, Governor Beebe, Lindsey Anderson, Clay Sapp, Brennan Costello, and Representative Homer Lenderman.

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ginning in 2014.

Dr. David Deggs and Sandy Major of the GED® Testing Service and Pearson VUE presented an overview of new testing components and facility requirements. Warren Bank and Trust was recognized as an outstanding busi-

ness partner of the test center at Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center. Janice Hanlon, state GED® administrator, and Jim Smith, deputy director for adult education, also made key presentations to the approximately 200 conference participants.

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several subcommittees, including the Personnel, Classification, and Compensation Subcommittee.

Laverty holds a bachelor of science degree from Arkansas Tech University.

He and his wife, Virginia, have three children and four grandchildren.



Above left: Sandy Major, left, and Dr. David Deggs, right, of GED Testing Service and Pearson VUE, were honored with plaques at the 2012 GED administrators' conference.



Above right: The Arkansas Association for Continuing and Adult Education (AACAE), represented here by Dr. Chuck Carter (left) and Jim Smith, deputy director for adult education (right), present Sarah Agee, ACE's education liaison to the Governor's Office, with an award plaque last fall. The AACAE Board of Directors selected Agee as the 2012 "Friend of Adult Education" for her support of basic adult education in Arkansas.

Recognizing Our ACE Staff



Don Belcock, program advisor for the State Approving Agency, was recently selected to join the audit committee of the **National Association of State Approving Agencies for Veterans Education and Training (NASAA)**. He attended the committee meeting

in Washington on February 9 in conjunction with the NASAA mid-winter meeting.



ARS Counselor **Herb Pierce**, District X/Pine Bluff, has reached a milestone most of us can only imagine: *Fifty years of service to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the citizens of the state!*

Sandra Porter has been named **associate director for career and technical education for the Department of Career Education**. Ms. Porter has also been named executive director of the Arkansas Association of Career and Technical Education (ACTE).



Ms. Porter joined the Department of Career Education in 2004 as program manager for business and marketing technology and most recently served as associate director for workforce training. She joined ACE after a 25-year teaching career at Bryant and McClellan high schools, as well as in Missouri.

Jim Brock, business and marketing technology program coordinator, is **president-elect of the national DECA Board of Directors**. Brock recently participated in the National Competitive Events Taskforce meeting at which members of the taskforce reviewed the competitive events currently offered in the finance career cluster.



Ray Henson has been named to the position of **associate director for workforce training for the Department of Career Education**. Before being named associate director for workforce training, he served as program manager for career guidance, exploration, and preparation for ACE. He is a certified Global Career Development Facilitator Instructor (GCDFI) and executive director of the Arkansas Career Guidance Association.



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the GED® program, which is managed by our agency. Currently, Arkansas is one of only a few states that offer GED® preparation and testing at no cost to the student. However, in January 2014, that is likely to change.

A new test battery as well as a new method of delivering the test – on computer rather than with pencil and paper – will increase the cost of offering the test. It is

possible that students may have to pay up to \$120 to take the GED® test after January 2014. It's also important that Arkansans realize that the current version of the GED® tests will expire on that date. Previous scores on the test's components will expire then too. We're encouraging current students to get or remain engaged so they can finish the test before the end of this year. We're also

encouraging new students to visit our adult education centers and get started – there's time to finish before the year ends.

I appreciate our agency's staff and the work they do every day in managing the diverse programs we offer our fellow Arkansans. I also appreciate the support from sister state agencies and state leaders as we strive to tackle what lies ahead.

ACE EXPO in Fort Smith Welcomes 1,100 People!



Carl Daughtery, ARS chief of field services (center) with Sherry Hollinshed, ARS district manager(left) and DeNise Meyers, owner of DeSigner Barber Stylist School and Chi Academy (right) pose for a photo at the ACE EXPO in Ft. Smith last fall. Meyers and Hollinshed have worked together to enroll nearly 30 ARS clients as students in the school over the past six years. Daughtery said businesses like this barber college are critical to the success of ARS clients and their futures. At the EXPO, students of the college gave free haircuts to attendees, many of whom were there seeking employment at the EXPO's job fair.

A seventh Arkansas Department of Career Education (ACE) EXPO was held on September 25 in Fort Smith at the Phoenix Expo and Trade Center. More than 1,100 rehabilitation services clients, students, and members of the general public attended the event – the largest EXPO yet.

The event, which has previously been held in North Little Rock, Texarkana, Fayetteville, Helena/West Helena, El Dorado and Monticello, is set up like a trade show to highlight the services provided by the agency. ACE EXPOS also feature a job fair with lo-

cal employers and a reality fair for high school students which covers topics such as budgeting, dressing for success and interviewing skills.

Director Bill Walker called the Fort Smith EXPO “the most successful one yet,” saying the EXPO committee learns something from each event and carries it forward to the next. The partnership with the local offices in each EXPO city - their hard work “on the ground” - along with the experience of the standing EXPO committee helps each event build upon the success of the previous one.

In an email following the event, EXPO committee chairman, Jeff Jackson, ARS small business services program manager, along with co-chair Adrienne Robinson, ARS deputy of field services, congratulated the EXPO team. The planning committee was comprised of managers and staff from Little Rock’s

Career Education, Adult Education and Rehabilitation Services area, but also those in the agency’s Fort Smith office led by district manager Sherry Hollinshed.



Above: Tim Hicks and Sonja Wright-McMurray (left photo) presented short workshops at the Reality Fair. Leonard Boyle (right photo) helps a visitor to the booth. Below: Staff and local dignitaries gather for the event’s ribbon cutting.



(Above) Crowds lined up early at the entrance to the EXPO. (Right) EXPO chair Jeff Jackson welcomes the crowd of visitors.





What You Should Know

TAP (*Telecommunications Access Program*)

Lynn Franquemont, Program Manager

One thing you can always count on when it comes to technology is that it is ever changing. New technology in the field of telecommunication equipment is being developed at a record pace, and TAP is constantly making an effort to keep up with this pace.

Until July 1, 2011, TAP was funded by a \$0.03 surcharge on all landline phone lines. But on that day, we began collecting \$0.01 on both landline and wireless phone lines. As a result of this change in funding, on May 1, 2012, TAP began distribution of wireless phones and accessories to our customers.

Since the **Telecommunications Access Program (TAP)** was established in 1995 by the 80th General Assembly of the State of Arkansas, this program has made it possible for approximately 10,500 Arkansans who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or deaf-blind or who have a visual, mobility, speech, or intellectual disability to communicate over the telecommunications network to family, friends, and business associates by providing specialized telecommunication equipment.

TAP is always looking for and adding to our current equipment list in order to ensure that the devices we provide will enrich the lives of our customers regardless of the challenges they face when trying to access the telecommunica-

tion network.

With the addition of wireless phones, our customers are able to select from a wide variety of smart phones and have access to information concerning accessibility features and free apps on available phones. For example, if someone is blind or has low vision, then some accessibility features that would be useful to them would include voice activated dialing, adjustable screen contrast, adjustable font size, and tactile and tonal feedback from keys. For people with mobility limitations, some features that may make their wireless phones easier to use are automatic answer, automatic redial, one-touch redial, hands-free operation, and non-slip keys and controls. Our customers who are hard of hearing are given a list of phones along with the hearing-aid compatibility ratings for the devices we offer. If their hearing loss is severe or for those who are deaf, text capabilities, vibrating features, face-to-face connections, and a low-cost data-only plan are helpful in accommodating their needs.

TAP customers are given the option to order cell phones online through a special website set up in conjunction with our service provider, Sprint. If they do not have internet access, then we have paper packets that allow them to choose

and order their equipment.

To accommodate our customers who want a wireless phone but want one without all the capabilities that a smart phone offers, we provide the Jitterbug J, which features big buttons and a large, bright screen, so it's easier for those with low vision. It also has a padded earpiece that helps keep unwanted noises out to help individuals hear conversations more clearly. This phone is offered in three colors: white, red, or graphite. Applicants who already have their own cell phones and are not requesting phones through our program might find our amplified loopsets useful for amplification.

TAP believes that in order for this program to remain viable, we must continuously update the equipment we provide. While we still offer landline phones for our many customers that request them, we are always cognizant of the fact we must continue to change and grow in the same way that technology does.

To contact us for more information about the program, please call us at 1-800-981-4463 or email us at ars.tap@arkansas.gov. You can also visit our website at www.ace.arkansas.gov to see examples of equipment we offer, as well as to download an application.



Ending the Year with Training and Networking

Nearly 300 employees and guests attended the agency's 6th annual staff meeting held in Little Rock on December 6. The event was emceed by **Mark Apolinar**, web developer.

On the agenda, following a vocal performance by **Danny Simpson**, auditor coordinator, were achievement and vision reports from each of the agency's divisions.

The Career and Technical Education report was presented by **Ray Henson**, associate director for workforce training, and **Marion Fletcher**, program manager for agricultural science and technology. Adult Education was represented by **Bridget Bullard**, education and instruction coordinator, and **Reginia Kimbrough**, program advisor. The Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) presentation was given by Interim Commissioner **Randy Parker**, **Dr. Adrienne Robinson**, deputy chief of field services and **Carl Daughtery**, chief of field services.

DeCarlia Dickens, interim human resources manager, offered employee training on two human resources topics: the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), and the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA). **Lee Meadows**, chief information officer, reviewed the agency's social media policy.

Director **Bill Walker** introduced the agency's 2012 annual report followed by recognition of new employees and those with milestone service anniversaries.

Management from the Rehabilitation Services Division presented awards to the following district managers for their district's performance over the past year:

- ★ **Top producing district - Carol Ethridge, District I**
- ★ **Second producing district - Freddie Smith, District IX**

- ★ **Third producing district - Sterling Hughes, District X**

Catherine Thomas, field counselor in the Fayetteville office, was named the top-producing counselor with 77 case closures over the past year.

The meeting was adjourned and attendees enjoyed a holiday lunch and networking.



Emcee Mark Apolinar introduced Director Walker

Kim Mehalic and **Joann White**, nurses from ARS's Arkansas Career Training Institute, offered free flu shots to attendees and administered nearly 50 immunizations.

Tim Hicks, state manager of the Law Enforcement Support Office, along with **Ashley Cross**, business relations representative, coordinated a canned food drive at the meeting as an extension of the agency's annual United Way campaign. With help from **Dennis Ault**, mail services assistant, a truck-bed full of canned goods were donated to The Arkansas Rice Depot, a United Way agency.

Earlier that morning, the State Board of Career Education met. Several board members participated in the annual staff meeting and were introduced as honored guests.



Catherine Thomas (far left) holds her certificate for being named Top Producing Counselor of the Year, while she and her Fayetteville colleagues (l-r) **Cindy Couch**, **Judy Merryman**, District Manager **Carol Ethridge**, **Lorraine Miller**, **Stephanie Flohr** and **Eddie Hansford** celebrate their recognition as Top Producing District of the Year.

Governor Proclaims February 28 Career and Technical Student Organization Day



FBLA. ACE Program Coordinator for Business and Marketing Technology **Jim Brock**, State Reporter **McKain Holman**, District III Vice-President **Jacob Hall**, State and National Secretary **Rachel Ford**, State President **Kiley Anderson**, Governor **Beebe**, State Treasurer **Jamie-Lynn Gills**, District II Vice-President **Madison Carr**, District I Vice-President **Kenneth Riddle**, ACE Program Advisors **Sandon Williams** and Maria **Swicegood**, ACE Director **Bill Walker**.



SkillsUSA Post-Secondary. ACE Director **Bill Walker**, ACE Program Coordinator for Skilled and Technical Sciences **Ray Winiecki**, **Alexis Huell**, **Olivia Woods**, **Machelle Smith-Flint**, Governor **Beebe**, **Graydon O'Haver**, **Heather Barnes**, Arkansas Career Training Institute Automotive Maintenance Technology Instructor **Wayne Thomas**, **Whitney York**, **Rebekah Wright**, **Scottie Burchett**.



FFA. State FFA Director and ACE Agricultural Science and Technology Program Coordinator **Marion Fletcher**, ACE Program Advisor **Chris Bacchus**, State Vice-President/Southern **Lucas Head**, State Reporter **Amie Wilcox**, Governor **Beebe**, State President **Dausen Duncan**, State Secretary **John Brian Kirksey**, State Vice-President/Eastern **Vicki Gallaher**, ACE Director **Bill Walker**.



SkillsUSA Secondary **Jessica Young**, **Sabrina Smith**, **Brandi Shivers**, **Brandon Menard**, Governor **Beebe**, **Bradley Menard**, **Isaac Springwater**, **Kaleah Hegwood**, **Brent Harmon**, **Cheyenne Pierce**, ACE Program Coordinator for Skilled and Technical Sciences **Ray Winiecki**, ACE Director **Bill Walker**.



FCCLA. ACE Director **Bill Walker**, State FCCLA Director and Family and Consumer Sciences Program Coordinator **Suellen Ward**, National FCCLA Vice-President of Parliamentary **Law Marquis Johnson**, State President **Chloe Breckenridge**, State Parliamentarian **Bethany Briley**, State Vice-President of Programs **Ethny Ashcraft**.



PBL. ACE Director **Bill Walker**, National Treasurer **Brett Harris**, State President **Andrew Todd**, Director of Communications **Morgan Hatcher**, State PBL Director **Peggy Wakefield**.



TSA. ACE School Improvement Program Advisor **Stephanie Harvey**, **Todd Tierney**, **Larry Jason Saengchan**, **Governor Mike Beebe**, **Sal Lopez**, ACE School Improvement Program Coordinator **Bruce Lazarus**, Director **Bill Walker**.



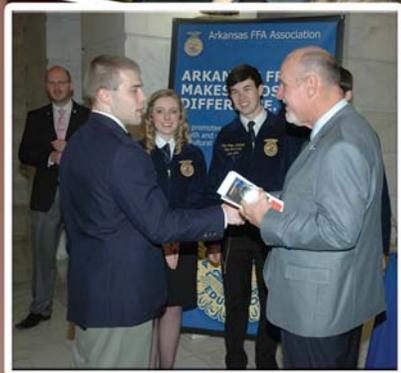
HOSA. ACE Director **Bill Walker**, State HOSA Director and Health Occupations Program Advisor **Barbara Dimon**, State Historian **Elise Thomas**, **Governor Beebe**, State President **Lorna Dollar**, State Treasurer **Brittany Dollar**, State Vice-President **A.J. Marlin**

DECA. ACE Director **Bill Walker**, ACE Business and Marketing Program Advisor **Maria Swicegood**, Vice President of Communications **Kevin Melson**, **Governor Beebe**, Vice President of Civic Consciousness **Jordan Gregory**, incoming Vice President of Communications **Mary Katherine Whitaker**, ACE Program Coordinator for Business and Marketing Technology **Jim Brock**.



JAG. **Jonas Crank**, **Darian Seewald**, **Governor Beebe**, **Phillip Archuletta**, **Samantha House** ACE Director **Bill Walker**.

CTSO Day



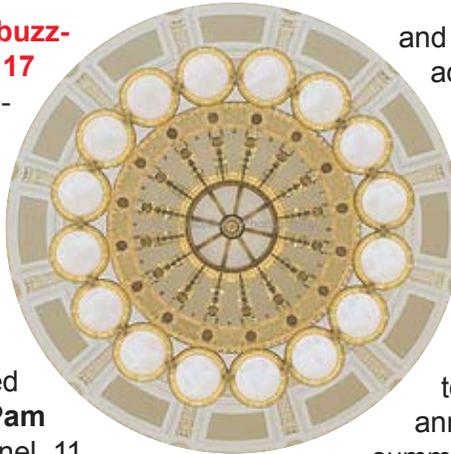
Disability Awareness Activities and Mentoring Celebration Held in October

The State Capitol rotunda was buzzing with activity on October 17

as representatives from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS), other state agencies, companies, and organizations gathered for the 14th annual Disability Awareness Day celebration.

Wanda Horton, executive director of the Arkansas Disability Coalition and host of the event, welcomed attendees and introduced emcee **Pam Baccum**. Baccum is a KTHV-Channel 11 reporter and anchor and an advocate for people with disabilities. **Shaylon Ware**, ARS counselor, sang the national anthem as Parkview High School students presented the colors.

Eric Treat, president of the Arkansas People First advocacy group, reported on a recent mock legislative session with members of the disability community and state legislators. **Bryan Cozart** of the Arkansas Disability Coalition and **SeRonna Rodgers** of the Disability Rights Center spoke about the importance of "people first" language.



and Recreation Department reported on adult day camps and accessible city park facilities. **Gary Gray** of the City of North Little Rock announced that the "Smart 911" program is available statewide and free to residents.

Leonard Boyle, Sr., executive director of the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities (GCPD), made a special presentation to **Tasha Terry** for volunteering with the annual Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a summer camp for students with disabilities.

"**The Overcomers**," a choir from Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro, provided choral entertainment. Several companies and agencies set up informational booths to showcase their employment opportunities or services.

October 17 was also Arkansas Mentoring Day – a day set aside nationwide for persons with disabilities to job shadow or otherwise learn about careers that interest them. The GCPD coordinates the activities in Arkansas.

On December 13, Boyle hosted a celebration luncheon at the Arkansas State Capitol for employers, mentors, and mentees who had participated in Mentoring Day. A delicious lunch was provided by Olive Garden,

which corporately encourages hiring workers with disabilities. Baccum emceed the event, and the guest speaker was **Wayne Covey**, Director of Operations for Olive Garden Restaurants in Arkansas.

Several program participants shared their mentoring-day experiences and the benefits they have realized from the program.

Sherrie

Shinn of the Little Rock Parks

*Pictured counterclockwise from top left: **Alexia Boyle**, AILC interim administrative assistant; **Leonard Boyle**, executive director of the Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities; **Sha Stephens**, head of the Arkansas Independent Living Council; **Carl Daughtery**, chief of field services for ARS; **Adrienne Robinson**, director of field operations for ARS. Below left: **Jim Moreland** (left), ARS director of special programs; and **Randy Parker** (center), ARS deputy commissioner, greet event host **Wanda Horton**.*



ACTI Happenings

ACTI Students Turn the Tassel

December 13 marked the 182nd commencement ceremony held by the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI). A graduation ceremony each summer and winter semester has been conducted for most of the institution's history.

The December 13 ceremony, held at the Hot Springs Convention Center, celebrated the accomplishments of 80 graduates, 26 of whom wore honors-graduate sashes.

The students graduated with education, industry-based certifications, and licensure in one of the following career areas: Business and Marketing Technology (IC3 certification), Certified Nursing Assistant, Construction Technology (NCCER), Cosmetology (State Board), Culinary Arts (ServSafe and Safe Food Handler), Graphic Communications (GAERF), Health Informatics (HIPPA), Sales and Marketing (NRFF), and Welding (NCCER & AWS).

Many graduates were also active in the SkillsUSA, HOSA, and JAG student organizations and earned the career readiness certificate.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Interim Commissioner Randy Parker, Chief of Field Services Carl Daughtery, and ACTI Administrator Jonathan Bibb offered greetings and congratulations. Musical entertainment was provided by Dr. Robbie Jones, ACTI therapy coordinator, and Nancy Shelton, ACTI administrative assistant.

Dr. Dawn Simpson, ACTI director of vocational training, presented special awards to outstanding graduates, and along with Fr. Rick Ward-Harder, ACTI director of student life, presented diplomas. Simpson also presented a plaque thanking agency Di-

rector Bill Walker for his support in ensuring that ACTI students have been able to attend the national JAG conference in Washington D.C. for two years in a row. Randy Parker accepted the award in Director Walker's absence.

The keynote address was given by Dr. Renaldo Hemphill, a native Arkansan, author, entrepreneur, and long-term leukemia survivor. Though in the hospital and unable to attend graduation as scheduled, Dr. Hemphill provided an audio recording of his presentation that was played at the ceremony. His message urged students to follow through on their commitments, clearly leading by example. Hemphill teaches at the University of Arkansas in Pine Bluff and has authored a book entitled *How to Go to College in Seven Easy Steps* – a signed copy of which was given to each graduate.

Auto Collision Repair: Instructors - **Donald Crossley** and **David Tunncliff**. Justing Rather - *Delight*, ○ Andy Reynolds - *Glenwood*, Dylan Stevens - *Hot Springs*.

Automotive Service Technology: Instructors - **Phil Crume** and **Wayne Thomas**. ■ Wesley Finch - *Roland*, Ernest Jarrell - *Smackover*, ■ Nicholette Lewis - *Little Rock*, ■ Tevin Nguyen - *Searcy*.

Business & Marketing Technology: Instructor - **Sandra Dunn**. ■ Susan Bailey - *Hot Springs*, ■ Chiquitta Chapman - *Hot Springs*, ■ Mark Fulks - *Austin*, ■ Alana Grider - *Greenbrier*,

○ ■ Ben Kuykendall - *Bentonville*, Kristina Tafoya - *Mansfield*, ■ Andrew Combs - *Little Rock*.

Certified Nursing Assistant: Instructors - **Cheryl Miller** and **Sharyn Spiva**. ● Travis Baker - *Warren*, ● ■ Tierra Davis - *Hot Springs*,

● ■ Rachel Farmer - *Mayflower*, ● Olivia Gilliam - *Jacksonville*,

GRADS continued on page 17



182nd Commencement
Arkansas Career Training Institute
Hot Springs, Arkansas

GRADS *continued from page 16*

● Candice Holliday - *Newport*, ● Katoria Jackson - *Marion*,
 ● Amanda Kettell - *Malvern*, ● Ricky Lewis - *Star City*, ●
 Sarah McChorn - *Crossette*, ● Camille Payne - *Devalls Bluff*,
 ● Sarah Ricker - *Morrilton*, ● Johnathan Rorex -
Hot Springs, ● Stella Walker - *West Memphis*.

Construction Technology: Instructors - **Nick Avery** and **David Morrow**. ■ Taylor Archer - *Sherwood*, ■ Zachary Gaertner - *Hot Springs*, ■ Sue Roberts - *Hot Springs*, ■ Dexter Taylor - *Lake Village*.

Cosmetology: Instructors - **Susan Gordon** and **Chrystel Nelson**. Melissa - *Hot Springs*, ■ Ashley Long - *Hot Springs*.

Culinary Arts: Instructor - **Curtis Faulkner**. ■ Andrew Devere - *Prairie Grove*, Kyle Gaskill - *Hot Springs*, ○ Joyce Head - *Clinton*, Roy Inman - *Jessieville*, Joseph Jones - *Dumas*, Dewayne Lambert - *White Hall*, Mathew Rentie - *Forth Smith*, Arnell Sims - *Clarendon*, Blake Young - *Sallisaw*.

Graphic Communications: Instructors - **Ralph Forbes**, **Tom Kennedy** and **Larry Ward**. ■ David Courtney - *Jacksonville*, ■ Kyle Bowen - *Fayetteville*, Dominique Dawson - *Clarendon*, ■ Derrick Duncan - *Havana*, ■ Colter Holliday - *Bentonville*, Scott Hooks - *Carlisle*, ● Josh Helms - *Booneville*, Anthony Johnson - *Gillette*, Christopher Kerns - *Nashville*, ● Zac Larreau - *Benton*, ● Staci McCollough - *Booneville*, ■ Dallas Miles - *Desha*, ● Tyler Summers - *Paragould*.

Health Informatics: Instructor - **Sequoia Ferguson-Tucker**. ● Kelli Bates - *Malvern*, ● Melanie Flenniken - *Benton*, ● Cynthia Honore - *Hope*, ● Michelle Jordan - *Hot Springs*, ● Jessica Jongekryg - *Cabot*, ● Samantha Lucas - *Hot Springs*, ● Starlite Skorich - *Hot Springs*, ● Amber Ward - *Dardanelle*.

Power Equipment Technology: Instructor - **Gary Johnston**. ● Richard Bradley - *Marshall*, Jamaal Crenshaw - *Plumerville*, ● Edgar Flores - *Belleville*, ■ Tom Hale - *Lonoke*, LaQuan Harper - *Morrilton*, ● Scott Laughlin - *Barling*, ■ Scott Allen Patterson - *Hot Springs*, Skyler Stock - *Van Buren*.

Sales and Marketing: Instructor - **Jacob Bryant**. Sara Castro - *West Memphis*, ● Jesse Condley - *Hot Springs*, ● Nathan Hosak - *Eudora*, ● Roger Pannell - *West Hale*, ● Michael Ray - *Booneville*, ● Donna Sanders - *Mt. Ida*.

Welding: Instructors - **Philip Dobbs** and **Dennis Pickering**. ● Brian Brooks - *Malvern*, ● Jim Jarvis - *Gravette*, ■ Jeremy Jones - *Fayetteville*.

Student Distinctions

- Gold Sash -- Honor Graduate
- White Sash - SkillsUSA Graduate
- Blue Sash - HOSA
- Medal - JAG Graduate
- CRC Graduate

Microsoft IT Academy Offers New Training for Teachers



A proud group of teachers show off the certificates they earned in a recent **Microsoft IT Academy training** held at the Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative in Plumerville. This group of Arkansas teachers, along with many others across the state, are being trained in Microsoft products as part of the state's rollout of the Microsoft IT Academy.

The Microsoft IT Academy program includes training and industry certification in Microsoft products such as Excel, Word, and PowerPoint, in addition to advanced subjects such as programming, Web development and database development.



State Board of Career Education Adds New Member

Dr. Ann Bain was appointed in December to the State Board of Career Education. She attended the February 28 Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Day luncheon at the State Capitol (see photo) and was introduced there by ACE Director Bill Walker.



Dr. Bain (inset) attended the CTSO luncheon at the Capitol in February with, among others, FACS Program Coordinator Suellen Ward, above left, front row.

Dr. Bain holds a doctorate in higher education administration from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) and master's, baccalaureate, and associate degrees in nursing from the University of Central Arkansas. She has served as chairperson of the Department of Nursing at UALR since 1997 and has been a faculty member there since 1987. Dr. Bain currently serves as secretary of the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) Board of Commissioners and as a board member for the Arkansas Long Term Care Foundation.

Dr. Bain has previously served as a NLNAC board member and as a member of the NLNAC Evaluation Review Panel. She has over 10 years of experience as an NLNAC program evaluator and has served as a consultant in the areas of policy development, curriculum design, accreditation, and program evaluation.

Spotlight on Ty Lancaster

Ty Lancaster is a 34-year old Bryant resident who bought his first home in October. In and of itself, it's a nice story, but you may be asking, "What's so special about that?"

The answer starts when Ty was two months old and was adopted by Alice Lancaster. She became his mother "basically overnight" after having been on an adoption waiting list for three years.

"We got a call on Friday and picked him up on Monday," she recalls. Alice says that Ty being available for adoption was delayed because "he had issues; he cried a lot; but they thought it was due to low iron."

In reality, Ty was developmentally delayed and "has had lifelong problems that required tutors." Alice said that "school was a disaster for Ty. Kids made fun of him; he got behind; it was terrible," but she believes parents have to create opportunities for their children, even if it's not easy.

After high school, Ty went to the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) in Hot Springs, but that lasted just two weeks. His mom says he just wasn't ready at



Ty poses with two of his supporters: Johann Linker, left, Manager of the Saline County Landfill, and Frank Baptist, right, ARS Business Relations Representative.

that point. They visited ACTI again a few years later, and the second time was the charm. He graduated with honors from the small engine repair program, had high test scores and was a high achiever. ,

Just as his time at ACTI was ending, an Edwards Food Giant grocery store was being built in Bryant, not far from his Mom's home. With the help of Frank Baptist, ARS business relations representative, Ty applied for a job and was hired part-time hoping to be promoted to full-time. When that didn't happen and Ty complained about not seeing the

same co-workers every day (shift work and turnover), it was clear Ty needed a new job opportunity. And he also wanted a home of his own.

Ty and his mother began looking for a home Ty could afford in a neighborhood where he'd be safe, he was also looking for another job. With assistance again from Frank, Ty landed a full-time position in June 2012 at the Saline County Landfill. He and his mother also found a house that met their criteria. Fortunately, the job came just in time for Ty to meet the 30-day employment requirement

SPOTLIGHT continued on page 19



Arkansas Schools Make “Big Ten”

Arkansas FBLA-Middle Level (junior high and middle schools) has four schools listed in the FBLA-Middle Level “Big Ten” national rankings by membership. **Beebe Junior High School earned the number one spot in the nation for its chapter membership of 261 students.** Arkansas chapters also took the 7th, 8th, and 9th places, with **West Junior High (West Memphis)** in 7th place with a membership of 135; **Russellville Junior High** in 8th place with a membership of 130 members, and **Van Buren High School Freshman Academy** in 9th place with 126 members.

FBLA-Middle Level is the fastest-growing division in the national FBLA career and technical student organization and has more than 20,000 members nationwide. Members participate in a variety of activities including job shadow programs, community service projects, and American enterprise projects.

SPOTLIGHT *continued on page 19*

of the mortgage lender.

Ty closed on his house in late October 2012, and after necessary repairs, officially took up residence in December.

Alice is especially grateful to the people who worked with Ty and on his behalf: ARS counselors Chet Stewart and Melissa Moss, ACTI instructor Gary Johnston, ARS business relations representative Frank Baptist, realtor Melinda Abernathy, and bank finance officer Lauren Felton.

“So many things had to happen for Ty to get where he is today, and we have so many people to thank,” Alice said. “And Ty had to put in the work needed to get his education, do well at his jobs, and be willing to bear the responsibility of home ownership. I am so proud of him!”

Legislators Attend Adult Ed Luncheon



Above: Director Walker, Rep. Jim Dotson, District 93 from Bentonville; Rep. Charlotte Vining Douglas, District 75 from Alma; Debbie Faubus-Kendrick, director of the Crawford County Adult Education Center; and ACE Deputy Director for Adult Education Jim Smith.

Dozens of Arkansas legislators, many of whom are new to their positions, attended a January legislative luncheon hosted by organizations affiliated with adult education in Arkansas. The event is held annually at the Capitol Hill apartment building. The event was attended by 150 people, according to

Jim Smith, deputy director for adult education, and gave ACE leadership and adult educators from around the state a valuable opportunity to meet with their legislators, share success stories and challenges, and to ask for their continued support.



Above: State GED Administrator Janice Hanlon, state Representative Warwick Sabin, and Little Rock Adult Education Center Director Linda Kindy



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To commemorate their visit to the Arkansas State Capitol, the officers posed for a quick photo just as snow started to fall. Pictured from left to right are: Secretary Kalie Hall, Georgia; Vice President Wiley Bailey, Alabama; Vice President Lindsey Anderson, California; President Clay Sapp, Florida; Vice President Joenelle Futrell, Kentucky; and Vice President Brennan Costello, Nebraska.

FFA continued from page 7

their annual “officer experience tour,” an honor the Arkansas FFA organization has never before had.

On the group’s eight-day tour of Arkansas, they visited 85 FFA chapters, met with more than 1,500 students, and traveled nearly 1,200 miles. The officers and hosts wrapped up their tour in Little Rock with an appearance on KTHV’s morning television show. They visited the State Capitol, where they met with Governor Beebe thanks to arrangements by Senator Bruce Maloch. They also visited the Senate chamber and met several legislators. At the ACE building on the Capitol Mall, the group visited with Dr. Bob Gunter, deputy director for career and technical education, and other members

of ACE management and staff.

Feedback from the touring of officers was very positive. They were particularly complimentary of the quality of the agricultural education facilities, the dedication of the chapter advisors, and the enthusiasm of the FFA members across the state. The officers also praised the ACE agricultural education department for their well-organized and executed travel schedule and the warm hospitality of Arkansans.



The national FFA officers visited 85 state chapters, including Magnet Cove (above) where students gathered to hear about FFA opportunities from President Clay Sapp.

FFA: More News from Around the State



State and National Honors for Arkansas FFA

Arkansas FFA was well represented at the national FFA convention held October 24-27 in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Lincoln chapter came out on top as winners of the national horse evaluation competition. Six chapters earned gold ranking; 12 earned silver and five earned bronze. Fourteen students were presented with American FFA degrees. The Arkansas State FFA association received a Growth in Membership award for increasing total membership.

The Flippin FFA chapter members were finalists in the “Models of Innovation” competition for their use of QR codes and videos at their FFA Children’s

Barnyard at the Arkansas State Fair. Randy Veach of Arkansas Farm Bureau received an honorary American FFA Degree, and Tyson Foods was honored with the Distinguished Service Citation. Marion Fletcher was surprised with a V.I.P. Award honoring his distinguished career and contribution to agricultural education.

FFA Members at the State Capitol

On February 19, officers and members from FFA chapters around the state visited the House and Senate chambers in celebration of FFA week in Arkansas and across the nation.

FFA continued on page 21

FFA continued from page 20

During that day's Senate session, Marion Fletcher was surprised by Senator Bruce Maloch with a plaque honoring Fletcher's 50-

year career in agricultural education. He is the ACE program coordinator for agricultural science and technology education.



Did You Hear...

★ A sophomore technology student and FBLA member from Quitman, **Pat Richardson**, brought home a big honor. Richardson competed and won district- and state-level competitions, earning he and his family an all-expense-paid trip to Las Vegas, where he competed in the Microsoft World Competition. Richardson finished in 4th place from a field of 285,000 candidates from 53 countries. Impressive!

★ The small business operations class of **Fort Smith's Northside High School** recently added an e-commerce component to the school's on-campus spirit store, Grizzly Gear, which opened in January. The store's website, which is linked from the school's home page, includes a catalog of items which can be picked up at the store or shipped.

★ Other Arkansas high schools such as **Alma** and **Harrison** have on-campus businesses run by FBLA or DECA students.



Congratulations to Arkansas FFA members **Blake Freeman** of the Lamar chapter and **Sam Harris** of the Greenbrier chapter, who were selected as delegates to the World Food Prize presentation event in Des Moines, Iowa, in October. Their selection was based on papers they researched and wrote on the topic *Cultivating Innovations to Feed the World*.

Each year, 9th- through 12th-grade students are eligible to submit a paper in a statewide competition for the opportunity to attend the national event. Freeman and Harris were chosen to represent Arkan-

sas, joining 100 others from around the country and world.

At the **Global Youth Institute**, student delegates present and discuss their findings with international experts and their peers, connect with other students from around the world, tour cutting-edge industrial and research facilities, and take part in symposium discussions with global leaders in science, industry and policy.

Freeman's paper was entitled "**Ethopia: Better Sanitation for Better Health**," and Harris's was "**Democratic Republic of Congo: Conflict Prevention through Diplomatic Initiatives**."

An Introduction to the Real World for High School Students

High school students in Earle and Forrest City have gotten a big dose of reality – but not through a tragedy or unforeseen circumstances. This particular reality is a simulation especially crafted to help them learn about the responsibilities of adulthood – before they’re thrust into it.

Kimberly Clark, a vocational rehabilitation transition counselor who serves schools in both cities, has assisted school staff in organizing “**Real World**” simulations for students where they are assigned various “lives” at random. They must take on the attributes and specified financial circumstances of whichever life they’re assigned, whether it be a “college student,” “single parent of two,” “unemployed,” “college professor,” or other scenario.

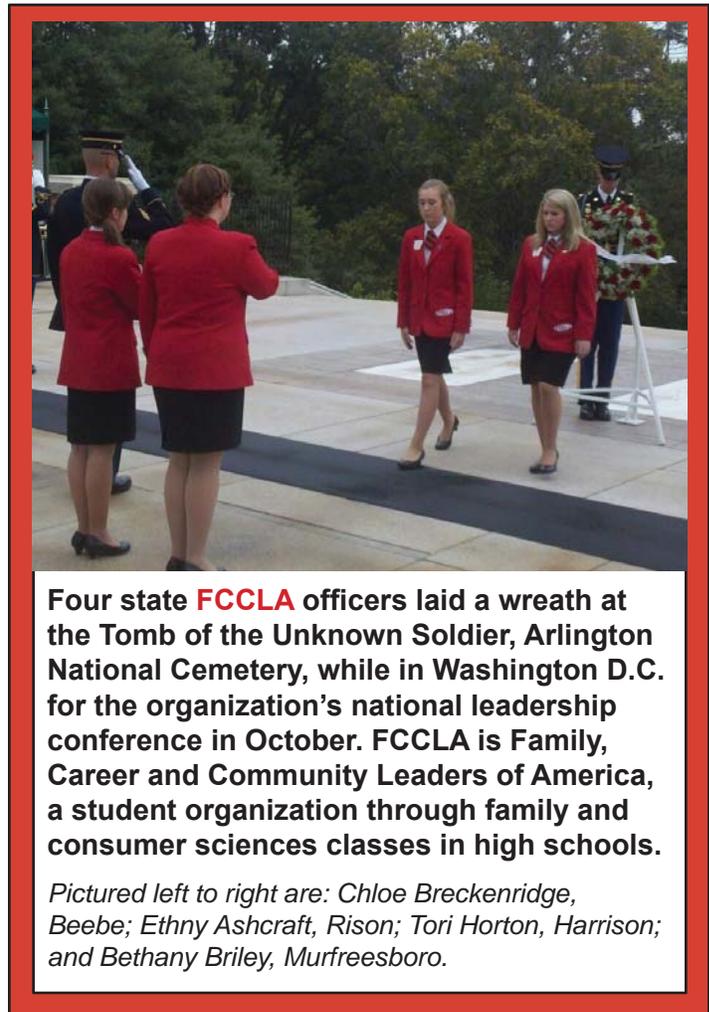
A “Real World” is set up in miniature within an auditorium, gymnasium, or other space, allowing for stations with volunteers to simulate a bank, utility company, unemployment office, grocery store, college admissions office, and so forth. The students must then negotiate real-world situations like turning on utilities in their houses, applying for unemployment benefits, attending college, and buying groceries, all within the means they’re given.

A recent Real World held at the Forrest City Civic Center gave high school students insight into the challenges of meeting their obligations on the income earned by their “life.” Students report having learned a lot from the experience including the realization that just because you have a good salary doesn’t mean you can spend the money on anything you want, and also that having children is a big hit to the budget – all doses of reality that should serve them well when they get into the ac-



tual “real world” after graduation.

The program has been positively received by students, teachers, and area businesses. Clark has presented the details and outcomes of her Real World program at the Arkansas Transition Summit, which led to replication at other schools, including Monticello High School where fellow Vocational Rehabilitation Transition Counselor **Shelia Johnson** works.



Four state **FCCLA** officers laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington National Cemetery, while in Washington D.C. for the organization’s national leadership conference in October. FCCLA is Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, a student organization through family and consumer sciences classes in high schools.

Pictured left to right are: Chloe Breckenridge, Beebe; Ethny Ashcraft, Rison; Tori Horton, Harrison; and Bethany Briley, Murfreesboro.



**SkillsUSA Students
Earn Ribbons
at National Conference**



Dave Fisher, ACE program advisor for skilled and technical sciences, traveled to Columbus, Nebraska, this fall with five officers from Arkansas's secondary SkillsUSA organization. They attended the Mid-America Leadership Conference, where Arkansas was one of only eight states to send officers from their secondary SkillsUSA chapters. Each of the five students earned at least one ribbon in competitions with 130 other students from across the nation.

Pictured above, left to right: *Bradley Menard - Welding Technology (Arkansas High), Brandon Menard - Welding Technology (Arkansas High), Kaleah Hegwood - Health Science Technology (Camden Fairview High), Brandy Shivers - Health Science Technology (Fordyce High), and Cheyanne Pierce - Web Technology (Eureka Springs High).*

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The Adult Education Centers around Arkansas are preparing for the new GED^(R) test coming in 2014. Meanwhile, the push is for people to finish their GED^(R) now, particularly if they've begun the process under the current test battery. For Adult Education center locations and more information, visit: www.ace.arkansas.gov/adultEducation or call (501) 682-1980.

Coming July 15-19, 2013: The 15th Annual Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities

Students age 15 - 18 will learn about these topics: *Transition to Secondary school* ■ *Time Management* ■ *Independent Living Skills* ■ *Nutrition and Medications* ■ *Disability Rights* ■ *Leadership and Diplomacy* ■ *Values & Diversity* ■ *How to Apply for & Get a Job* ■ *Responsibilities of Having a Job* ■ *College Living Experience.* ■ *There will also be plenty of fun activities!*



Applications and more information can be found on the ACE website under Arkansas Rehabilitation Services/Special Programs/Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities/Youth Leadership Forum or email carl.enna@arkansas.gov.





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Arkansas Department of Career Education

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

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division Central Office

525 West Capitol Avenue
Little Rock, AR 72201
501-296-1600 (V/TTY)
800-330-0632 (V/TTY)

Arkansas Career Training Institute

501-624-4411