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ON THE CALENDAR

Cosmetology Summer 2010 New Student	April 23
Priority Registration Current Students Only	April 12- May 7
Awards Ceremony	April 30
Final Exams	May 3-6
PN Pinning Ceremony	May 6
Graduation	May 8
Registration Summer I and II	May 12-27
Registration Summer III	May 12-July 1
Registration Fall Currently Enrolled Students	May 12- August 13
Spring Cosmetology Class Ends	May 13

Two of OTC's Own Honored at Chamber Banquet

Two of Ouachita Technical College's (OTC) own were recently honored at the Hot Spring County Chamber of Commerce Banquet. Mr. Billy Francis was awarded Manager of the Year, and Ms. Brenda Keisler was awarded Educator of the Year.

Mr. Francis is the Program Director of the Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) at OTC in Malvern, Arkansas, which is in the Department of Work Force Education. Billy is very interested in job training and human resource development in our rural service area of Hot Spring, Saline, Clark, Dallas, and Grant Counties. He is also very active in community activities through his work with the Girls and Boys Club, Lions Club, and other community service endeavors.

He recently finished a year-long Leadership Academy conducted by the Malvern Chamber of Commerce. Last year he was selected as one of 25 Young Leaders to watch by *Arkansas Business Journal*. He continually works through the state-wide Career Pathways Initiative that is sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, to develop strong a network of CPI programs and managers at the 24 community and technical colleges in Arkansas. The CPI gives low-income parents, who qualify, a "helping hand" to obtain job training credentials and a college education at one of the two-year public institutions in Arkansas at

almost no cost to them.

Billy has worked at the College for more than three and one half years and was promoted to Program Director from the position of Student Counselor. He manages a \$550,000 budget, supervises six employees that supports 250 students in college and pre-college programs. Billy has used his grassroots experience as student counselor to encourage each employee to reach further to find those people who qualify for CPI but have not yet entered College or a training program for a variety of personal reasons.

Billy earned his undergraduate degree from Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia where he excelled in intercollegiate sports as a scholarship athlete. He has completed the coursework required for an MBA from the University of Phoenix and is currently working on his Doctoral degree at the University of Arkansas.

Ms. Brenda Keisler has 23 years of continual service at Ouachita Area Adult Education Center. During those 23 years, Brenda has never missed a chance to tell a student, "Yes, you can get a GED – just stay up with me". She mentors and teaches adults who have come back to school after many years away. Brenda also acts as a role model for the teenagers that come from the local High Schools.



Brenda has taken extra work on herself just to serve the community. She began working on an on-line work force readiness and communication class with the local community action agency just because they called and started telling her how much the employees would benefit from that. She had to first learn how to operate in an on-line classroom environment – it didn't take long because she practiced at home on her own time rather than using classroom time.

Brenda has participated in the English as a Second Language program in Malvern by setting up work place classes at many local businesses. She has been a driving force in the Arkansas Chapter of Teacher of English as a Second Language (TESL) as an officer in the Chapter and has attended many national conferences.

According to Dr. Blake Robertson, VP of Adult and Workforce Education, "Brenda is a teacher's teacher – many adult education teachers can learn from her because she continually strives to stay up-dated in the ways and methods of delivering instruction to those who need it the most."

From the President's Desk...



When I talk with students during "New Student Orientation" before the start of each new college semester, I congratulate them for making one of the smartest decisions of their life and I frequently mention the

benefits of attending a two-year college which includes, among other things, low cost – less than half the cost of a public university, high quality, and small size means small class sizes where the instructors know the names of their students and students get more individual attention.

Then I mention that I started out in college at a two-year college very similar to OTC and my first college credential was an associate degree just like OTC confers. I then tell them that my first associate degree was the first of four college degrees that I earned

because I continued my higher education at a university and eventually earned a bachelor's degree, a master's degree and a doctor's degree. Then I mention that every credit I earned at the two-year college level was counted for credit at each of the next three higher levels. Every credential I earned not only counted toward the next higher level, but qualified me for an occupation that had more job security, better earnings and improved opportunities for promotions. "Starting at a two-year college will take you as far and as high as you want to go," I tell them.

Last month we received a new research report that validates and documents what I tell students about my experience. This new report from the U.S. Department of Education indicates that nearly one in five (19%) of all doctoral degree recipients in the United States in 2008 got their start at a two-year college.

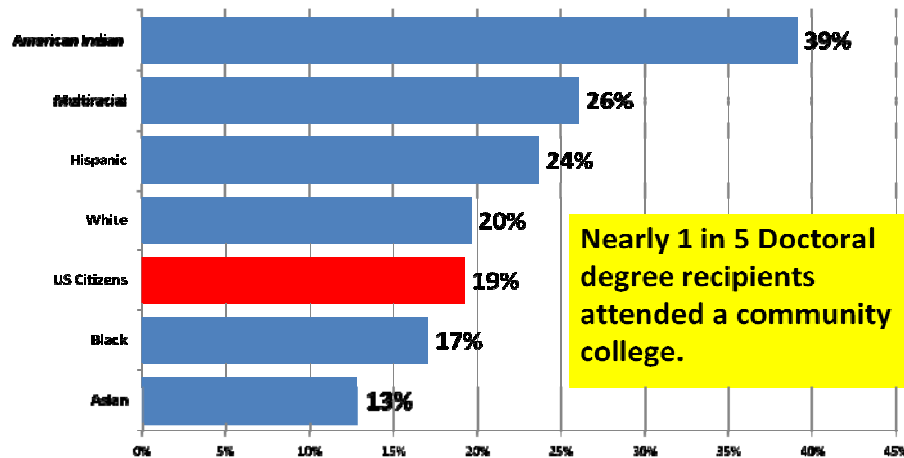
In checking with the American Association of Community

Colleges we find that there are 1,177 two-year colleges in the U.S. and that they enroll 11.7 million students which constitute 44 percent of all U.S. undergraduates. The average age of two-year college students in the U.S. is 29 years, almost the same as OTC.

The chart below shows the racial makeup of all students in the U.S. who received a doctor's degree in 2008 **AND** who started their college career at a two-year college. From the chart, one can see that 39 percent of 2008 American Indian doctoral recipients in the U.S. got their start in college at a two-year college. Twenty-four percent of Hispanic doctoral recipients got their start at a two-year college. Twenty percent of White doctoral recipients got their start at a two-year college. And, 19 percent of all doctoral recipients combined got their start at a two-year college.

When you start your college career at a two-year college, the

Percent of 2008 Doctorate degree recipients who earned college credit from a two-year college/community college



Nearly 1 in 5 Doctoral degree recipients attended a community college.

Source: 2008 Survey of Earned Graduates, an annual survey funded by NSF, NIH, DoE, USDA, and NASA.

Vesha McNeely Takes Advantage of Pilot Program

By: S.G. Seals

For many students walking into the “hallowed” halls of higher education for the first time, college is a whole new world—and not in a good way. There are simple things like class locations and credit hours and prerequisites to figure out. There are complex things like the whole academic “lingo” and a professor’s teaching style to decipher.



There are whole new sets of friends to make, work schedules to reconcile, and study skills to learn.

Smart college students—*successful* college students—are those who figure out early in their academic careers the quick paths through all the mazes. Vesha McNeely is one such student.

When McNeely started out at Ouachita Technical College, she had a unique opportunity. McNeely was told that she was in a unique pilot class, and that if she worked hard, she could make her way through two semesters of English in one semester--IF she worked really hard.

McNeely was enrolled in an accelerated Basic Grammar/Basic Composition class, a combination class that is a project the College is undertaking as part of its Achieving the Dream initiative to improve student retention and success in college. By working hard to meet the outcomes of two courses instead of one, McNeely could obtain six hours instead of three, save herself some

Pell monies, and get into Composition I with not only the skills she needed to be a successful college writer, but with speed—an important consideration for someone who wants to go on for a four-year degree and beyond.

Says McNeely, “It was very nice, knowing that you are receiving credit for both classes at once.” Successful completion of the English classes was also required for other college-level courses. “You get to move on to the next subjects and continue to progress in all your required classes,” she says. The class “. . . helped me remember to always have a title, a thesis, a minimum of three para-

graphs and a conclusion. I still manage to use some of my notes from the combo to help me get through the other [classes].”

McNeely, an outgoing and personable student, noted that she could not have been successful in the acceleration without her teacher—Ms. Donna Hill. “She not only taught us how to organize our thoughts in our papers, but she is very encouraging. She always told us to write about something we had an interest in.”

The encouraging faculty is not the only thing McNeely has liked about OTC. “OTC is a very small campus, which I like—meeting different people and speaking to others. The classes are not really big, so you can get more time to collaborate on what the teacher is explaining. It’s nice to see the school is prospering and moving on to higher heights.”

Although she started out wanting to be a middle school teacher, McNeely is thinking now about going for her Master’s degree in guidance counseling. “After I finish OTC, my plans are to attend Henderson State University where I can take up classes to become a school counselor.” She wants to help others successfully mold their futures and move forward into the whole new world of

OTC VP Selected by FBI



Dr. Blake Robertson, Vice President of Adult and Workforce Education, has been selected as a member

of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) Citizen’s Academy for 2010.

Dr. Robertson was chosen from a select group of business and community leaders to attend a minimum of seven sessions to provide community leaders the opportunity to have a look inside at the FBI’s operations.

“Not many people get into the FBI”, Robertson said of the honor.

The goal of the sessions are to offer a better understanding of the FBI’s role in the

community to enhance the lines of communication between the FBI and those they serve.

The Academy will include presentations of all areas of the FBI’s operations, including Counterterrorism, Counterintelligence, Cyber Crime, White Collar Crime, Violent Crime, Organized Crime, Drug Matters, Civil Rights, Application Program and the FBI’s Community Outreach Program.

Financial Aid Directors Answer Questions on KATV

The Arkansas Association of Financial Aid Administrators participated in KATV Channel 7's call in from 5:00-7:00pm on February 16th. The public was invited to call in and ask questions concerning college students financial aid. The

phones ran continuously during the call period and volunteers answered over 170 calls and mailed out several informational packets. There was a broad range of questions dealing with such things as federal aid application and the new expanded

Arkansas Challenge Scholarship funded by the lottery. Jason Pederson with Channel 7 was live on-air and kept the public calling.



Achieving the Dream



Pictured in Charlotte, NC: Dr. Barry Ballard, AtD's Data Coordinator Mike Flores, Dr. Martin Eggensperger, Pat Simms, Dr. Sharon Seals, and June Prince

The Achieving the Dream (AtD) Strategy Institute in Charlotte, NC February 2 – 5, 2010, was attended by members of the OTC AtD Core Team including Sharon Seals, June Prince, Pat Simms, Martin Eggensperger and Barry Ballard. During the 4-day Strategy Institute, paid by the AtD grant, core team members from over 100 AtD colleges from around the country studied research on successful initiatives and heard about procedures to implement best practices. The OTC core team members attending also had time to discuss planning with AtD's Coach John Brockman and AtD's Data Coordinator Mike Flores to do some fine tuning on OTC's several ongoing initiatives.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

DAVID SEE

DIRECTOR OF COMPUTER SERVICES

Started at OTC in 2004.

My job responsibilities include administration, planning, policy, budget, and vendor relations for both academic and administrative information technology.

My family includes my wife, Tammy; daughters Tarai (27) and Jennifer (16); and son David (22).

My dream vacation would be to revisit some of the European cities I visited in the early 1980s.

My favorite food is...Nothing beats a good steak!

One thing that people might not know about me is that I played the violin and clarinet in elementary school.

As a child, I wanted to be in the army when I grew up.

My first vehicle was a 1973 Dodge Scamp.

My favorite thing to do in my spare time is play the Xbox; unless it is warm and sunny, then I am in or around the water.

The furthest I have traveled is the east coasts of Africa and Korea.

My biggest pet peeve is people that cannot follow established procedures.

My favorite thing about OTC is the educational opportunities that the college gives to its students and community.

My favorite thing to do on a Saturday is nothing! (but that never seems to work out)



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SHARON SEALS

CHAIR OF ENGLISH

Started at OTC in the spring of 1996.

My job responsibilities include mentoring 17 adjuncts and attending to their needs so that they have no distractions in the classroom.

My family includes Larry, Cate (22), and Brid (19).

The last book I read was *the Three Evangelists*, by Fred Vargas.

My dream vacation would be a month in Ireland, or a week in San Antonio at the Watermark Spa.

My favorite food is "Steak and 'taters".

One thing that people might not know about me is that I carry an Irish passport. I'm a citizen by foreign birth.

As a child, I wanted to be a Neonatal Physician when I grew up.

My first vehicle was a 1969 Chevy Impala station wagon.

My favorite thing to do in my spare time is read trashy detective novels.

With one hour of free time I would get a rub.

My biggest pet peeve is cell phone discourtesy.

My favorite thing to do on a Saturday is sleep in, then go see my kids.

The furthest I have traveled is to Egypt.

My favorite thing about OTC is the "can-do" attitude of most of our students—against some staggering odds. They are my daily inspiration.

