



**SPRING JOURNAL
2023**

Alabama Community College Association

A large magnifying glass with a black handle and a silver rim is positioned in the center of the page. The lens is clear and reflects light. Three diamonds of various sizes and cuts are scattered on the surface below the magnifying glass. The background is a light gray gradient with a red diagonal stripe in the top left corner.

**POLISHING OUR
DIAMONDS:**
Leading from Every Level

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Alabama Community College Association is excited to celebrate this year's Diamond Jubilee of the Alabama Community College System. 2023 is going to be an amazing year as we showcase Diamond Alumni from our colleges, highlight the incredible work our institutions do each day, and focus on creating a better and brighter future for our students. With that in mind, our emphasis this year will be on honing our leadership skills, no matter what our roles may be in our organizations. Each of us has the ability to play a critical part in leading our students to the finish line—whatever that finish line may be. To draw attention to this focus, the ACCA Executive Committee has identified "Polishing our Diamonds: Leading from Every Level" as this year's conference theme.

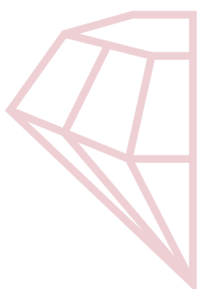
Alabama's community colleges are filled with stories of students who began as "diamonds in the rough," but were able to leave as sparkling gems because of their experiences in our colleges. Someone, most likely many people, helped lead those students to success. Someone was there to provide that polish. Perhaps it came from the support and guidance of an academic advisor, the high standards set by faculty members, an encouraging smile from a staff member, or an extra investment of time by a club sponsor. Someone saw an opportunity, made the decision, and became a leader for those students.

Whether you are the first voice or first face students encounter on our campuses, are offering them high-quality instruction in the classroom or lab, or are working with programs, services, and activities that support their success, you are a leader! And, you are making a difference!

This year as in the past, the Alabama Community College Association will continue to provide professional growth opportunities for all system-wide employees. These opportunities will be available through Commission activities, meetings, webinars, and the ACCA Conference on November 19-21 in Mobile. Please visit the ACCA website at www.alabamacca.org for additional information about the conference and how you can take advantage of professional development opportunities.

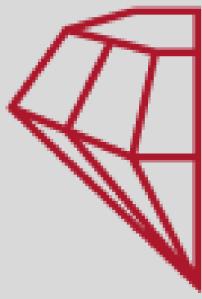
As we celebrate this Diamond Jubilee year, we hope you will be reminded of how brightly the Alabama Community College System shines in our state. Our students receive outstanding educational experiences because of the talented and dedicated employees leading from every level in our System.

Shine on!



Dr. Ashli Wilkins
2023 ACCA President





Alabama Community College Association



2023 CONFERENCE

Polishing Our Diamonds: Leading from Every Level

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

Keynote Speakers

Ryan Hawk

Author, *The Pursuit Of
Excellence & Welcome
To Management*;
Host, *THE LEARNING
LEADER SHOW*



Rick Bragg

Author, *All Over but the
Shoutin'*, *Ava's Man*;
Pulitzer Prize-winning
Journalist



**November 19 -
November 21**

**Renaissance Riverview
& Mobile Convention
Center**

Mobile, AL

\$275 EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION

Early Bird registration: July 1 - October 15. \$350 registration after October 15.
Room rates are \$142 per night plus tax.

VISIT ALABAMACCA.ORG TO REGISTER TODAY

2023 CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Ryan Hawk is the host of The Learning Leader Show. He has recorded more than 500 episodes over the past 8+ years. Forbes called The Learning Leader Show, “the most dynamic leadership podcast around.” Inc Magazine said, “it’s one of the 5 podcasts to make you a smarter leader.” Apple named it an “all-time best seller” in 2020 and 2021.

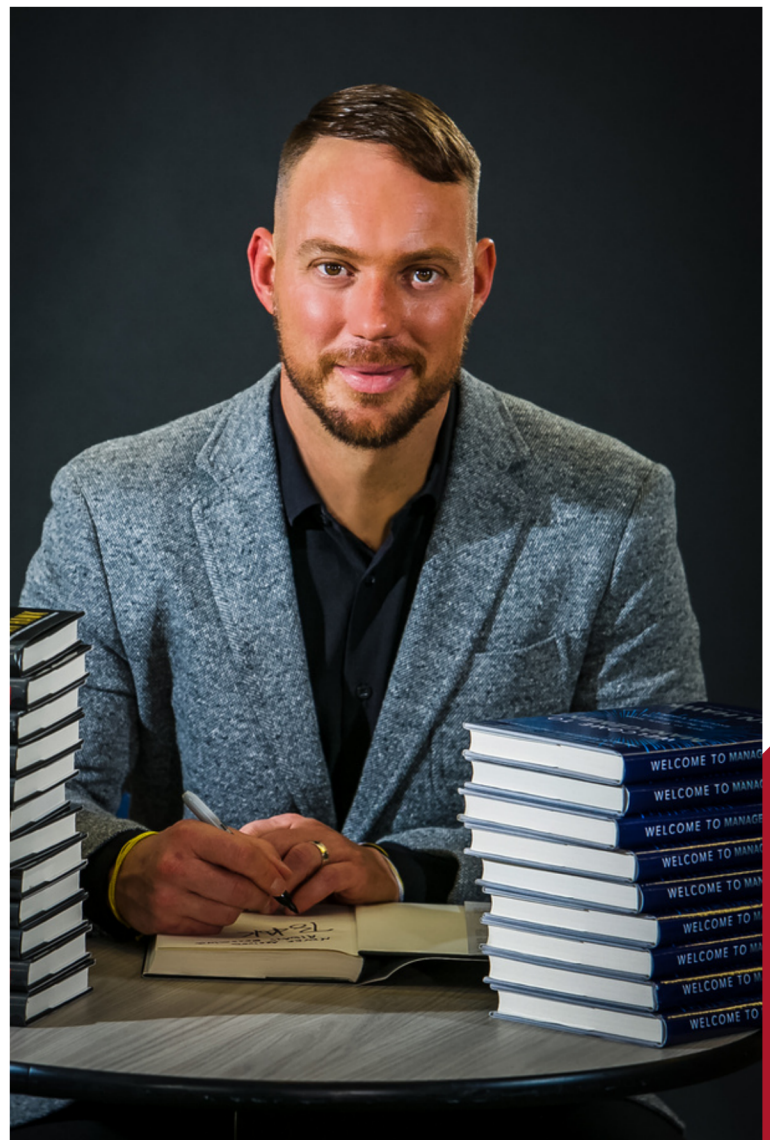
Ryan is the author of Welcome to Management: How To Grow From Top Performer To Excellent Leader. Book Authority recently named it to its 100 Best Management Audiobooks of all time (#25). Forbes called it, “the best leadership book of 2020.” Ryan’s second book is called The Pursuit of Excellence. It sold out of it’s first printing in eight hours and was named an instant Amazon Hot New Release. Forbes wrote (about The Pursuit of Excellence), “We’re on the receiving end of Hawk surgically deconstructing the best leadership traits from world class athletes, accomplished military leaders, and CEOs. If Tim Ferriss was coined the Oprah of the internet, Hawk is the Drucker of leadership. Pound for pound, The Pursuit of Excellence is the most dynamic leadership book of 2022 delivering a masterclass on how to apply the most useful habits to real-life.”

Previously, he worked in corporate America for 12 years. Ryan started as an entry-level telephonic sales rep and worked his way to manager, director, and ultimately VP of sales for a multi-billion-dollar company.

When he’s not recording podcasts or writing books, he works to help leaders be more effective. Some of the ways he does that: Leadership Circles, 1:1 advising, and teaching in The Learning Leader Academy (the online school he created). Ryan has delivered hundreds of keynote speeches on leadership and performance excellence all over the world.



RYAN HAWK



2023 CONFERENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Rick Bragg is a noted journalist and writer who won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing for his work with the New York Times. His most lasting contribution, however, is likely his trilogy of family stories. Initially, Bragg believed these stories would be important only to himself and his immediate family, but they have garnered wide appeal among people who see themselves and their own families reflected in the characters and settings.

Currently a professor of writing at the University of Alabama, Bragg teaches courses in literary journalism and magazine writing. Bragg has won more than 50 writing awards in his 20 years of journalism, including the American Society of Newspaper Editors Distinguished Writing Award twice. He was honored with the Harper Lee Award for Alabama's Distinguished Writer of the Year in 2009.

Works

All Over but the Shoutin' (1997)
 Somebody Told Me: The Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg (2000)
 Ava's Man (2001)
 I Am a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story (2003)
 The Prince of Frogtown (2008)
 Jerry Lee Lewis: His Own Story (2014)
 My Southern Journey: True Stories from the Heart of the South (2015)
 The Best Cook in the World: Tales From My Momma's Table (2018)
 Where I Come From: Stories from the Deep South (2020)
 The Speckled Beauty (2021)



RICK BRAGG



ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

24 Colleges. One, Unified System: The Alabama Community College System celebrates 60 years

Landmark legislation signed into law on May 3, 1963, laid the groundwork for what would become the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). Legislators wanted a unified system of institutions to focus on accessible training in “arts and sciences and in useful skills and trades” for current and future labor needs. Sixty years have passed, but that important cause remains the purpose of the 24 community and technical colleges that make up the ACCS.

Two years of celebration, called the ACCS Diamond Jubilee, kicked off April 17 at the State Capitol to mark the System’s 60th anniversary. Through 2024, dozens of Diamond Jubilee celebrations and community service projects across the state will highlight the positive impact we have made in Alabama.

The following are parts of the ACCS success story that we share systemwide.

Alabama is our priority.

Every investment in ACCS is a long-term investment in our state. More than 95% of the students who attend our colleges live in Alabama and more than 71% who graduate remain in Alabama to work and raise their families.

Our success is our communities’ success.

We exist to serve our communities, and every resident can benefit in some way – whether through academic and skills training or through community projects and events. With several locations among our campuses, adult education providers and instructional sites, we are uniquely positioned to offer our students accessible, affordable and flexible educational opportunities anywhere in Alabama.

We strive to improve the Labor Force Participation Rate.

Our colleges and alumni add more than \$6.6 billion to Alabama’s economy and support one of every 27 jobs in Alabama. Enrollment continues to increase at our colleges. We are advancing transformational programs for rapid training, apprenticeships, student services, and many others that will positively impact our state’s labor force for decades to come.

There is always more to the story.

Sustainable success for Alabama’s workforce requires a deliberate investment in that workforce — our neighbors, colleagues, and children. Nothing that Alabama’s community colleges do is meant for short-term impact; the long-term benefit is always the focus.

We invite everyone to take the opportunity of our Diamond Jubilee to reflect on how we started, look at where we are, and be inspired by where we are going as we pursue excellence. Learn more about the Diamond Jubilee events and updates at www.accs.edu/jubilee

In addition, if you are an ACCS alumni, the ACCS would love to celebrate your story. Please share your story with the ACCS Communications Office at www.accs.edu/alumni.

Cheers to another 60 years.



BEVILL STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Bevill State Hosts Bevill MAP: Making A Path Event

On March 30, 2023, Bevill State Community College hosted the first Bevill MAP: Making A Path event for high schools in the area. Bevill MAP: Making A Path was held on the Fayette Campus. The event was attended by approximately 600 9th-grade students from the Fayette County Schools (9th and 10th grade), Pickens County Schools, Lamar County Schools, Winfield High School, and Pickens Academy. The students participated in hands-on activities with local businesses and industries.

“Bevill MAP is a wonderful opportunity for high school students that are served by the Bevill State Fayette Campus to have a dynamic experience with potential careers in the area. They will ‘Make A Path’ for their future by matching high-wage, high-demand programs at Bevill State with jobs that are available where they live. This is good for the students and the region as a whole. We want these bright young minds to stay in our communities,” stated Dr. Joel Hagood, President of Bevill State. “We are appreciative to Lavender, Inc. and all of the businesses that partnered with Bevill State to help make this event possible.”



Bevill MAP: Making A Path is an exciting, interactive workforce development outreach event, designed to engage students in real-world simulations of high-demand career paths in our workforce region. This allows event attendees to learn how to Make A Path for the future by connecting Bevill State education and training programs with real careers located right where they live. Offered at no cost to students served by the Fayette Campus of Bevill State, this event brings together post-secondary education with business and industry as part of a comprehensive effort to assist students in developing meaningful career knowledge and an empowered mindset.

The College hosted a Networking Event that evening for high school seniors currently enrolled in Dual Enrollment with Bevill State and any current BSCC student, providing an opportunity to explore jobs, internships, and apprenticeships with the participating businesses.

Exhibitors include Welding: BSCC - Welding & Pipefitter Programs, Empire Truck/ Stribling Equipment, King Kutter, Inc., LAVENDER, INC., Lincoln Electric, Marathon, Ox Bodies, Inc., and O’Neal Manufacturing Services; Forestry & Agriculture: Alabama Forestry Commission and Interfor; Modern Manufacturing & Electrical: BSCC - Electrical & Industrial Maintenance Programs, Bolzoni Auramo Inc., Dal-Tile, PACCAR Engine Company, Phifer Inc., Tronox, and United Rentals, Inc.; Professional Services; Alabama Credit Union, BSCC - Child Development Program, BSCC - Systems Information Technology Program, BSCC - Management & Entrepreneurship Program, BSCC - Office Administration Technology, and Pickens County College & Career Center - Teacher Cadet; Health Sciences: Baptist Hospital, BSCC - Health Sciences, and UAB; and, Heavy Equipment Zone: Thompson Tractor and United Rentals; Heavy Equipment- Thompson Tractor and United Rentals.

BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PTK students win seven awards at regional convention

Members of Bishop State Community College’s Alpha Epsilon Nu chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society won seven awards at the PTK Regional Hallmark Award convention in Huntsville on March 3-4, 2023.

The PTK students won in the following categories:

- 5-Star Chapter
- Distinguished Chapter
- Excellence in theme for Honors in Action project
- Distinguished Officer - Katlyn Sampson
- Distinguished Member - Jadan Gainey
- Paragon New Advisor - Lydia Host
- Paragon New President - Olivier Charles

President Olivier Charles is one of 28 presidents across the nation that will be awarded the Paragon Award for New Presidents during PTK Catalyst 2023, the Society’s annual convention in Columbus, Ohio, April 20-22. To be eligible for this award, college presidents must be new in their role having served less than 3 years. President Charles was nominated by Bishop State’s PTK students because of his active interest in supporting high-achieving students and developing student leaders on campus. He is only eligible to receive the award once. President Charles was selected from among 406 college presidents, chancellors, and CEOs eligible to receive this award.

“These students just knocked it out of the park!” says Lydia Host, PTK advisor and art instructor. “Such amazing student leadership skills are developing here at Bishop State. Our chapter members were also chosen to speak in front of the entire assembly in 6 out of the 10 groups. We have excellent support from our administration, and we are so PTK Proud!”

Bishop State recently welcomed new students into the student-led organization during its induction ceremony on Friday, March 24th. More than 30 students joined PTK and were encouraged to continue the charge by the organization’s graduating seniors, former members, advisors, and President Charles.

“I am so proud of all of you,” President Charles said during the induction ceremony. “I am proud of our graduates, and I am also proud of our inductees. This is a wonderful association led by passionate student leaders who care about their peers and this college. PTK students are in the top 5% of our students. They have proven they are not average. And as such it is our responsibility to push, challenge, and support them.”

Phi Theta Kappa students are now planning to attend Catalyst, the National meeting for PTK chapters, in April.



CALHOUN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Calhoun Hosts Official Building Renaming and Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Gene Haas Center for Advanced Manufacturing

Calhoun Community College and the Gene Haas Foundation is excited to announce its building renaming and official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the College's new Gene Haas Center for Advanced Manufacturing. The event will be held on Tuesday, November 15, at 9:30 am, in the Advanced Technology Center, on Calhoun's Decatur Campus.

The building renaming and renovations were made possible from a \$550,000 grant that was presented to the College last spring from the Gene Haas Foundation. "Machining is both extremely important and vital in not only North Alabama, but across the country as well," commented Dr. Jimmy Hodges, Calhoun President. "I made the choice to go to college because I knew I wanted to be a machinist, which is why this announcement is so personal to me. Our college is privileged to be selected for such an opportunity where our students will benefit tremendously. Our manufacturing students compete nationally in various advance manufacturing competitions, and one of the reasons they have a track-record for success is from having the ability to train using Haas equipment. The generosity of the Gene Haas Foundation will forever be etched in our hearts as we will be able to train the next generation of manufacturers with the best top of the line equipment in the industry," added Hodges.

According to Johnette Davis, Calhoun Foundation Director, the funds were awarded by the Gene Haas Foundation in exchange for naming rights to the college's Computer Numerical Control (CNC) Lab inside of its Advanced Technology Center on the Decatur campus. The CNC lab, also known as the high bay, is now officially called The Gene Haas Center for Advanced Manufacturing. In conjunction with renaming the college's lab, the grant will also help fund any expansion plans, as well as create more training opportunities for future manufacturing technology students. "The Gene Haas Foundation has been a consistent supporter of our advanced manufacturing students through scholarships throughout the years," commented John Holley, Calhoun Dean of Technologies. "Calhoun's technologies programs are recognized across the region as one of the best workforce development training facilities, and by partnering with The Gene Haas Foundation, this will only strengthen our efforts," added Holley.

Gene Haas is the American founder, president, and sole stockholder of Haas Automation, a CNC machine tool manufacturer. Haas Automation is the largest machine tool manufacturer in the United States. With over 45 state-of-the-art advanced manufacturing learning labs at top-level institutions across the nation, its ultimate goal is to provide the best CNC training and advanced manufacturing education possible. The training is designed to increase the supply of highly skilled graduates available to meet the needs of local and regional industry. "It is an extraordinary honor for Calhoun's Advanced Manufacturing Center to bear the Gene Haas name, and we are deeply grateful to The Gene Haas Foundation for its partnership and shared vision," commented Davis.



Jimmy D. Smith
 Owner, Jimmy Smith Jewelers

Class of 1957

CENTRAL ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Central Alabama Community College's Inaugural Nursing Apprenticeship Program: A Resounding Success Bridging Education and Workforce Needs

Central Alabama Community College (CACC) is happy to announce the remarkable success of its inaugural nursing apprenticeship program. This groundbreaking initiative enabled the college to establish vital partnerships with local healthcare providers and facilities, addressing the pressing demands of the healthcare industry. The Alabama Office of Apprenticeship was instrumental in launching this program, rapidly gaining support from clinical partners in the service area. The pioneering group of 14 student-nurse apprentices collaborated with six clinical facilities within CACC's service area, blending hands-on work experience with academic learning. CACC President Jeff Lynn expressed his satisfaction with the program's impact: "The nursing apprenticeship program's accomplishments have surpassed our expectations. It has been a mutually advantageous partnership, linking our students to employment opportunities while assisting healthcare facilities in addressing their staffing requirements."

Dr. Jennifer Steele, Health Science Program Administrator at CACC, underscored the program's significance in bridging the divide between job-seeking students and employers needing skilled workers. "We are ecstatic with the progress our student-nurse apprentices have made in the healthcare sector," said Dr. Steele. "By collaborating closely with seasoned professionals, our apprentices significantly contribute to patient care. As the number of apprentices joining the workforce increases, we are confident that healthcare facilities will continue to experience improvements in staffing and patient outcomes."

The apprenticeship program saw students forging agreements with Coosa Valley Medical Center, Grandview Medical Center, Prime Management, and Rehab Select. It offered them the exclusive chance to secure employment with a healthcare facility, obtain higher wages, and get paid for the clinical hours mandated by the nursing course. Reflecting on the transformative experiences of students participating in the program, Dr. Steele remarked, "The nursing apprenticeship program has profoundly impacted our students, enabling them to juggle work and family life while pursuing their nursing education. It has been a fantastic opportunity for CACC and our healthcare partners to join forces for the betterment of our community."

As the program continues to grow, CACC remains dedicated to expanding its offerings and incorporating feedback from students, clinical partners, and other stakeholders. By adapting to the changing needs of the healthcare industry and the local community, the college aims to strengthen the nursing apprenticeship program further and sustain its positive impact. CACC takes great pride in the nursing apprenticeship program's achievements and its capacity to cultivate connections between education and the workforce. The initiative has brightened the future of its students and the healthcare industry in the region and laid a solid foundation for ongoing growth and success in the coming years.



JERRY L. FIELDING
 Senior Circuit Judge, Retired
 Alabama Senator, 2010-14

Class of 1967

CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

CVCC Nursing Student Overcomes Cancer Diagnosis and Earns Degree

When Alexa Shiver decided to return to college, she knew it would bring its share of challenges. At the time, she was living with her twin sister, Allison, who was fighting cancer. She wanted to help care for her sister in every way she could. Eventually, she realized she was meant to do more, so she decided to enroll at CVCC and pursue a degree in Nursing. Shortly after enrolling in classes, she received devastating news. She was diagnosed with breast cancer, just like her twin sister.

Balancing school and treatment was a formidable thought, but Alexa was determined that she could do it; she just needed a little help.

"I was able to continue the semester with the grace of all of my teachers," she said. "They allowed me to do work online, kept in constant touch with me via emails and texts, and made it possible for me to continue my education during my cancer treatment. Everyone here was so supportive of me and willing to do anything to help me excel."

Being unable to work full-time proved to be yet another challenge Alexa faced, so she reached out to the CVCC Foundation to learn more about the many scholarship opportunities available. With an impressive academic background and extensive community service, Shiver found that she qualified for several scholarships, which ensured she had the support and resources necessary to focus on her education and career.

"The Foundation has been a blessing for me these past semesters at CVCC," she said. "When I first met with the scholarship committee, I felt like I was going to be overwhelmed with fear, but everyone was so kind and welcoming, and by the end, I felt like I was at a table with my friends."

Alexa is grateful for the welcoming and supportive environment provided by the CVCC Foundation, where she could express her passion for nursing and her desire to make a difference in the community. After graduating this Spring, Alexa plans to continue her studies by pursuing a Bachelor's degree in nursing. She is cancer-free and ready to embark on her journey to one day work in the field of oncology in order to help others navigate the life-changing cancer experience. Alexa is grateful to the CVCC faculty and the Foundation for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout her academic journey, which has been critical to her success.

"I am truly thankful to everyone at CVCC and the Foundation for all they've done to help me succeed," she added. "It has meant the world to me."



PEGGY MARTIN
 Phenix City Councilwoman,
 Mayor
 Russell County Commissioner

Graduate of CVCC's 1st class

COASTAL ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Coastal Alabama Community College to Launch Unified Brand and Mascot for Athletics

This April, the Coastal Alabama Community College Athletics Department will undergo a strategic rebranding, which includes a new team name, mascot and athletic logos for use on all campuses. The exciting new brand was created through a partnership with the national branding firm RARE Design, which has produced some of the most recognizable sports identities in the world — including several NBA, MLB and NFL teams.

The College will reveal its new brand at noon on April 26, and those wishing to participate can do so at any campus, or online via Coastal Alabama Community College’s Facebook and YouTube pages.

The rebranding, which was a result of employees and students input during the College’s strategic planning efforts last summer, coincides with a realignment within the Athletics Department. A recent decision by the Alabama Community College Conference (ACCC) now allows individual institutions to determine in which division their teams will compete.



On the College’s main campus in Bay Minette, the only major change is that the volleyball program will move from National Junior College Athletic Association’s (NJCAA) Division 1 to Division 2. All ACCC volleyball programs will do likewise across the State. The baseball, softball, men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s tennis, and men’s golf teams will remain in Division 1.

On the Brewton campus, the baseball program will join volleyball and the newly fielded men’s and women’s cross-country teams in NJCAA Division 2. Men’s and women’s golf teams are being added and will also compete in Division 2. In Monroeville, men’s and women’s tennis programs have been created, and will compete in Division 2 along with the men’s and women’s basketball, and softball teams.

For more than two decades, the College’s teams could only compete in NJCAA Division 1. And due to the logistics of having established athletic programs on three campuses, that meant teams were often required to play each other in conference and divisional play.

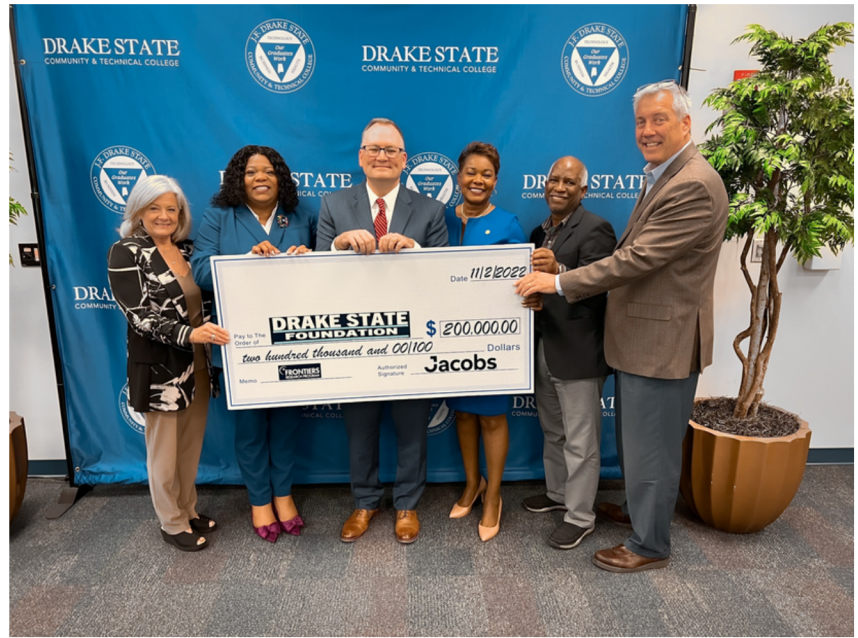
Overall, the restructuring and rebranding will allow the College to unify in the realm of athletics across its footprint while still providing tremendous opportunities for student athletes.

DRAKE STATE COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Jacobs donates \$200K to support Drake State's Frontiers Research Program and industry diversity

In November 2022, Jacobs presented the Drake State Foundation with a \$200,000 commitment to support the college's Frontiers Research Program. Notable speakers included Jacobs Critical Mission Solutions President Dr. Steve Arnette, Marshall Space Flight Center Director Jody Singer, Huntsville City Council President John Meredith, and Jacobs Space Exploration Group Team Lead and Harambee Ambassador Ayana Reese.

The \$200K donation is part of Jacobs' 2020 corporate commitment to donate \$10 million dollars over five years with a priority on Black educational and professional development and scholarship opportunities under its global diversity Action Plan for Advancing Justice and Equality. Due to racial inequalities and lack of advancement among Black talent in the workforce, Jacobs tapped Drake State to collaborate and strengthen the participation of Black students in science and engineering educational programs.



"We're creating change within our community by providing solutions to diversify the workforce," said Drake State President Dr. Patricia Sims. "The Jacobs TogetherBeyond and Harambee Scholars Fund will support our additive manufacturing curriculum and help students develop the necessary skills to complete their associate degrees that could lead to potential internship and full-time job opportunities with Jacobs." As NASA's largest service provider, Jacobs has been the Prime Contractor on the engineering, science, and technology contract at Marshall Space Flight Center since 1989.

The Frontiers Research Program is a NASA-sponsored Cooperative Agreement with Drake State and is the first of its kind to be awarded to a two-year institution and Historically Black College and University (HBCU). The Frontiers research interns have been working on a variety of additive manufacturing projects that contribute to current NASA needs in lunar habitat design and manufacturing.

"Advancing justice and equality requires strong leadership and a relentless drive to deliver on that vision," said Jacobs Chair and CEO Steve Demetriou. "As a global leader, we know we must contribute to structural change not only at Jacobs, but in society as a whole. We believe in setting the tone and actively doing our part to create a future where everyone can thrive."



Floyd Elliot "Butch" Seay
 Captain, City of Huntsville Fire
 Department, US Air Force

Class of 1963

ENTERPRISE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

AAC student receives prestigious aviation maintenance award

Alabama Aviation College student Aaron Phillips was chosen to receive the 2023 James Rardon Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) Student of the Year Award. This award is presented by the Aviation Technician Education Council (ATEC) in collaboration with JSfirm.com and the Northrop Rice Foundation. Phillips was nominated for the award by AAC Campus Director Stan Smith. The award winner was chosen by a selection committee based on a set criterion that included leadership/motivation and recommendations from others.

The Alabama Aviation College, a unit of Enterprise State Community College, is one of 120 Aviation Maintenance colleges that are members of the organization. "As the director, I had heard instructors talking about what a great student Aaron Phillips was, his high comprehensive exam test scores and the extra things he does on campus to include repairing college equipment and tutoring other students for free," AAC Director Stan Smith said, noting that Phillips received a 98 and 100 on the Airframe Comp, the highest in the College's record books.

Nominators are required to include two additional letters of recommendation for the nominee. Smith said he received five additional letters when he requested them.

The magnitude of this award cannot be overstated since 120 aviation maintenance colleges are members of ATEC," Smith said. "Not only is Aaron Phillips our best student, but he was selected as the best in the nation. As reassurance that we made the right choice, when I called Aaron to let him know he won the award, he was tutoring students at that time."

Phillips said he was honored to be nominated for the award and for the chance to represent the College. "First and foremost, I would like to thank Mr. Stan Smith and everyone who vouched on my behalf for presenting me for nomination for such a prestigious award and having confidence in me for being worthy of selection," he said. "I'm proud to have the opportunity to represent a great institution such as the Alabama Aviation College, and I'm humbled by the respect for my efforts everyone has shown me on this journey."

He thanked instructor Patrick Williams for his encouragement and mentorship during his time in the program. He also especially thanked fellow students, Blake James and Callie Sparks, for their help and support, stating that "study sessions with the two of them is what inspired me to start helping others."

Phillips said family inspired him to join the aviation maintenance program, also known as the Airframe & Powerplant (A&P) program. He is expected to complete the program this May. He said he also hopes to continue to give back in some way "by inspiring in as many others the dedication towards success [the program] has instilled in me."



BILL CARR
 Co-Founder & Managing Partner
 - Carr, Riggs & Ingram

Class of 1967

GADSDEN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Gadsden State breaks ground for new technical facility

Approximately 300 people gathered Feb. 21 at Gadsden State Community College for the groundbreaking of the new Advanced Manufacturing and Workforce Skills Training Center. It will be constructed on the East Broad Campus in Gadsden.

"This facility will transform the lives of our people in our community for good and forever," said Dr. Kathy Murphy, president of Gadsden State. "It's a day to be thankful and appreciative."

Keith Phillips, vice chancellor of Workforce Development for ACCS, asked the crowd of approximately 200 to consider what would happen if Gadsden State didn't exist. "What would this area look like? How would we succeed?" he said. "We'd have almost \$208 million missing from the local economy."

A recent economic impact study stated the College provided \$207.9 million in added income during the fiscal year 2021 to the service area. The study shows that Gadsden State supports 3,555 jobs in the community. Sen. Andrew Jones also touted the study's findings. "A student from Gadsden State has a return of \$6.90 in higher future earning for every dollar invested in their education," he said. "Who else can provide that rate of return?"

Goodrich "Dus" Rogers, a member of the ACCS Board of Trustees, said he looks forward to the completion of the new facility. "This facility will improve the quality of life in this area," he said. "It will enhance economic development to the point that it will positively impact people who haven't been born yet."

Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth said that 65 percent of Alabamians do not have an associate or bachelor's degree. He sees the Advanced Manufacturing and Workforce Skills Training Center as an avenue for training those in need of employment or job advancement. "They can come to Gadsden State and get trained for 21st century jobs," he said. "As a result, you will have a skilled workforce, which will make it easier for your team to recruit business and industry to this area. This is a great day for Gadsden State and a great day for Alabama."

Alan Smith, dean of Workforce Development, was instrumental in getting support for the facility from public officials as well as local business and industry. He is grateful for those who supported the idea of an advanced manufacturing facility at Gadsden State.

"Thank you to everyone who listened to me when I asked you for your support," he said. "This new facility will allow us to make shifts in education and training as workforce needs change. We can provide reskilling and up-skilling for adults. There's so much we can do. "This is a big day for me but, most importantly, it's a big day for our community," he said. "It's a historic day."



Bobby Junkins
 Etowah County Probate Judge
 Alabama District 30
 Representative

Class of 1967

INGRAM STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Alabama Leaders Tour Ingram State Technical College

State leaders and lawmakers gathered at J.F. Ingram State Technical College (ISTC) to discuss correctional education opportunities available for justice-involved individuals across Alabama.

“Over 94 percent of those incarcerated in Alabama’s prisons will be released, returning to communities across the state,” said ISTC President Annette Funderburk. “Ingram State provides resources and education needed to develop skills essential for securing meaningful long-term employment.”

Co-hosts Sen. Clyde Chambliss, (R-30), Sen. Will Barfoot, (R-25), and Rep. Troy Stubbs, (R-31), discussed the impact Ingram State has made on the Alabama workforce in their districts.



“I appreciated the opportunity to co-host the Tour and Talk with my fellow legislators and President Funderburk,” said Senator Chambliss. “It is important to recognize the work that Ingram State does every day and the impact it has on the state’s incarcerated population. Because of Ingram, inmates have the knowledge and skills to gain employment once they are released and make a positive contribution in their communities as taxpaying citizens.”

In 2022, Ingram State became the sole career technical education provider in the state, servicing 17 correctional institutions across 20 counties. In 2023 the college expanded education services to all Alabama Bureau of Pardons and Paroles (ABPP) sites and is now the state’s primary educational provider for justice-involved individuals.

“The Bureau is always excited about the partnership results with J.F. Ingram State Technical College,” said ABPP Director Cam Ward. “Data has shown the proven results of improving recidivism through implantation of ISTC work programs. Today’s tour was an excellent means of educating our policymakers to the benefits ISTC and their partners provide.”

ISTC is working to close the employment gap in Alabama by offering technical training in 20 career fields, adult education and GED preparation, and soft skills training essential for success in today’s workplace. Ingram State has nearly 500 employer partnerships and has placed 247 ISTC alumni in jobs in 2022.

J.F. Ingram State Technical College is a fully accredited member of the Alabama Community College System serving incarcerated students exclusively. The College offers training in 20 career and technical programs.

JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Jefferson State Launches Student Success Center, Training Center, and CDL Track

Jefferson State Community College recently launched three new initiatives to increase student success, remove barriers to education, and enhance workforce training. Jefferson State, with the help of various partners including the Regions Foundation, unveiled a new Student Success Center in March 2023. The new center provides no-cost services to students ranging from emergency grants to food pantry access, mental healthcare to financial counseling, and more.

“We are invested in the success of our students, and we want to remove as many barriers as possible to help them complete their education,” said Jefferson State President Keith Brown. “The Regions Foundation Student Success Center is a one-stop hub where students facing a variety of challenges can receive valuable support at no cost and keep progressing toward earning their degrees and building a brighter future.”

In October, Jefferson State collaborated with various partners to open a workforce training facility in downtown Birmingham. Training at the center focuses on entry-level roles at St. Vincent’s Health System, while high-quality childcare is provided on-site by Childcare Resources. This “2Gen” approach benefits the whole family, and is one that the college has partnered with The Women’s Foundation of Alabama on for several years.

The downtown facility builds upon the college’s existing Jeremiah’s Hope partnership and provides training in healthcare positions such as Administrative Medical Assistant, Clinical Medical Assistant, Sterile Processing Technician, and Phlebotomy. St. Vincent’s also partners closely with the college on work-based learning through clinical externships for education programs, ensuring students receive valuable experiences before entering the workforce.

Lastly, with the help of a wealth of partners, Jefferson State opened a new Commercial Drivers License Track in September at the college’s Chilton-Clanton Campus. As of April, two classes have already graduated from the program and thousands have indicated they are interested in receiving the training.

“In our discussions with the business and industry community, it was clear there was a tremendous need for CDL drivers in a wide variety of industries,” said President Brown. “Jefferson State is excited to complete this new CDL track to help our business partners, and also provide living-wage careers for our students and their families.”

Key partners for the CDL program include the city of Clanton, the Alabama Community College System through workforce grants, the Appalachian Regional Commission through a grant to cover tuition costs, Central Six Regional Workforce Council through providing a CDL simulator, Trenholm State Community College through donation of a rig to the program, Weil Wrecker through donation of a trailer, Chris Stricklin with Dunn University, and Wood Fruitticher with a trailer donation.



Diane L. Woodall, MD
 Neonatologist, Methodist
 Healthcare – Memphis

Class of 1968

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

U.S. Senator Katie Britt Visits Lawson State Community College

In recognition of Career and Technical Education Month in February, U. S. Senator Katie Britt visited Lawson State Community College to acknowledge the work being done to open doors to the American dream. She also noted the importance of HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) to the state of Alabama and the nation.

“What we see here today at Lawson State Community College is exceptional. We have 101 HBCU’s across the nation, and 14 in Alabama. When it comes to community colleges we only have 12 nationwide and we have six in the state. When you look at what Lawson State provides young men and women across our state and this community in particular, it’s incredible,” said Senator Britt. These efforts are important to the needs of our workforce. “By 2025, we will be 500,000 workers short in this state to meet the demands of our workforce and ever-growing industry,” Britt said. “What we see here gives them the foundation and pathway to achieve the American dream. Whether it’s healthcare and we are in a critical need of more people joining that industry, whether it is truck driving, whether it is graphics and communication, you can design a pathway to success right here at Lawson.”



Senator Britt’s visit included a meeting with Dr. T. Cynthia Anthony, president of Lawson State Community College and Mr. Milton Davis, a trustee to the Alabama Community College System. Following this meeting, the tour included visits to Graphic Art Communications, Manufacturing featuring Mechatronics and Robotics, Logistics and the Alabama Center for Automotive Excellence, with stops in Toyota, Ford and General Motors. Senator Britt was also given the wheel on the truck driving simulator, to which she was exposed to the challenges of driving and parking, all within the confines of her controls.

Dr. Anthony fully embraced the partnership opportunities as she thanked Senator Britt for her visit to Lawson State. “Teamwork is important. As we go forward in partnership and with those commitments to advancing our workforce, the Community College System, specifically Lawson State for this area, is of importance as the economic driver that makes our state and communities what they are and the best that they can be,” she said. “So, it is imperative that we continue along this road to progress.”

Senator Britt was also joined on the tour by local officials, Alabama State Senator Merika Coleman, Alabama State Representative Ontario Tillman, and Bessemer Mayor Kenneth Gulley.

As released in a media advisory from Senator Britt’s office, this visit comes near the end of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month nationally. Senator Britt recently introduced a bipartisan resolution with Senate colleagues officially designating CTE month.



Billie Clemons, Jr.
 US Army, Bellsouth/AT&T
 Class of 1964

LURLEEN B. WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LBW Leads in the Field of Forestry

Situated in the heart of South Alabama sits the only two-year forestry program in the state. After almost 40 years of graduating forest technicians, the LBW Forestry program continues to place highly qualified graduates in private industry and public forestry roles. Forestry in Alabama is valued close to \$29 billion, and the LBW program fills a highly desired niche for technicians, with over 95% of recent graduates finding jobs in forestry.

The program has undergone recent enhancements, to include wildlife management within the degree plan, as well as opportunities for work-based learning and co-op. Credentials have been added that see students certified as Alabama Prescribe Burn Managers, Professional Logging Managers, and Commercial Pesticide Applicators. Closer partnerships have been formed with the United States Forest Service, the Department of Labor Job Corps, and various private industry companies.

LBW's Forestry program is grounded in the reality that a passion for the industry and a commitment to good work ethic is essential in fostering an interactive and hands on learning environment. Kara Foreman, a student in her last semester of classes, provides her insight, "As we push into the future of forest management, a hands-on-dirt reality is needed for us to be multifaceted within the field...we want to work, and do our job well."

LBW is graduating high-quality technicians, ready to face any of the challenges the current forestry field presents and striving to better themselves at each opportunity.



Jane Dillard
 Dorsey Trailers, Bridgeville
 Trailers - Accounting

Class of 1967

MARION MILITARY INSTITUTE

Marion Military Institute partners with AeroPro for FAA-certified flight training program

Marion Military Institute (MMI) has entered a new partnership with AeroPro, a subsidiary of Resicum International, LLC, for the college's FAA-certified flight training program. The veteran-and woman-owned small business currently operates flight training and aircraft maintenance at two Alabama locations: Jack Edwards Airport in Gulf Shores and Craig Field Airport in Selma.

Their first venture as aviation partners will begin with the summer 2023 Aim High Flight Academy, sponsored by the U.S. Air Force and designed to introduce high school graduates to aviation careers. With two sessions hosted at MMI (in May and July), Aim High will offer 20 participants the opportunity to complete ground school and reach solo flight status in just three weeks. There is no cost to attend Aim High Flight Academy, and AeroPro's flight training will take place at Vaiden Field, just 10 miles south of the MMI campus.

"AeroPro is thrilled to work with Marion Military Institute to train our nation's future pilots and leaders," said Jeanine Zeitvogel, Resicum International, LLC CEO. "We look forward to supporting MMI's growing flight program now and into the future." Beginning with the 2023-24 academic year, AeroPro will operate MMI's existing flight training program (known as the Flying Tigers) for its college cadets. Using two Cessna 172s and one Cessna 150 owned by MMI, flight training under AeroPro will be structured for two types of student profiles: For individuals interested in commercial aviation, a two-year track is geared toward earning a Private Pilot's License (PPL). For aspiring military pilots, a one-year track will focus on achieving solo flight status and demonstrating flight aptitude.

Extracurricular flight training for cadets during the school year is conducted on afternoons and weekends. The cost to go from zero flight hours to solo flight status is approximately \$3,500 per student, based on completing an average of 15 flight hours plus ground school. The MMI Foundation provides flight scholarships for students once they solo, which helps offset out-of-pocket costs.

"This partnership promises to take MMI's flight program to a whole new level. AeroPro is a top-tier aviation company which will offer MMI cadets interested in military or civil aviation a quality training opportunity at a very affordable cost," noted COL Ed Passmore, USA (Ret), MMI's Senior Vice President. "AeroPro's experience and resources combined with MMI's unique academic program will open up many options for our cadets that don't exist anywhere else. We are excited about this program and look forward to serving as a pathway for young people to get into a good-paying, exciting, rewarding and in-demand career." For more information on MMI's certified flight program, visit marionmilitary.edu/fly.



James W. Rane
 Great Southern Wood
 Preserving

Class of 1964

NORTHEAST ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NACC Mustang Gaming Esports Program Off to Great Start

Last summer, Northeast Alabama Community College expanded its student activity inventory by adding the Mustang Gaming Esports team. Students at NACC were extremely receptive of the new Esports opportunity, and the club has grown rapidly.

Mustang Gaming is made up of four teams, including the Invitational Team. Comprised of eight students, this team qualified for the Invitational Season and are currently ranked first in the nation! Teams range from individual competitions to groups of five. Students may compete against schools across the country and in Canada. There are currently four teams, and over ninety students are active in the Esports Discord channel.

"We are very pleased to offer the Esports opportunity to our students," stated NACC President Dr. David Campbell. "Esports helps students hone their skills in technology, and we at Northeast strive to be at the cutting edge in providing technology and its application for our students."

NACC's Esports Teams compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association Esports (NJCAA). "We anticipate that some of these students will be recruited or accepted into esports programs at four-year institutions after graduating from NACC," said Esports coach Bryon Miller. Miller serves as Esports Coach with Noah Allen being the Assistant Esports Coach. Additionally, NACC's teams play and compete in an Esports lab that was custom-built for gaming! NACC President Dr. David Campbell and the staff at Northeast wanted to ensure Mustang Gaming was set up for success from the inception of this new program.

"We owe very much to our staff for getting this preprogram started," stated Dr. Campbell. "Our IT Director Patricia Falk came up with the idea and advised the college on what equipment to purchase, as did Cybersecurity Instructor Bryon Miller. Computer Technicians Lee Garret, Noah Allen, and Kyle Ealy work closely with the team, as does Mr. Miller. The college rehabbed a room and bought special computers and equipment just for the competition, and the college bought special seating just for the players to use during competition. It was all money well spent, as we consider Esports to be the cutting edge of the new sports coming on the American scene."

Esports Coach Bryon Miller says students will continue to gain skills as the program expands. "Depending on the game title, players will need to communicate effectively and efficiently, cooperate to achieve game objectives, commit to attending practices and games on time, and keep up their grades in their classes to remain eligible. Additionally, Team Captains will develop the ability to organize teams, schedule practices and scrimmages, review and analyze games and statistics, and assist the team when preparing for games. These roles will also help students develop high-demand, technical, and interpersonal skills that will help them in the workforce."



John Cooper
 Director, Alabama Department
 of Transportation

Class of 1967

NORTHWEST-SHOALS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NW-SCC celebrates 50th anniversary of Nursing Program

The Northwest-Shoals Community College (NW-SCC) Nursing program celebrated its 50th anniversary with a reception on the Phil Campbell campus Friday, November 18th.

According to NW-SCC President Dr. Jeff Goodwin, the nursing program has positively impacted so many lives in Northwest Alabama. "We want to reach out alumni and community members that have benefited from our nursing program over the years and welcome them back to campus," stated Goodwin.

The nursing program was started in 1972 on the Phil Campbell campus to help alleviate a shortage of registered nurses in Northwest Alabama. The program has grown from an inaugural class of 30 to almost 100 students in recent years.

"I believe the nursing faculty are the heart of the program," said Brittney Humphres, NW-SCC Nursing and Executive Director of the Phil Campbell campus. "They are true student advocates who truly care about our students and them succeeding in their career."

Ann Bales, a 1976 alum and retired NW-SCC instructor, said the program changed everything about her life. "Nursing has been the most amazing thing in my life, aside from my children," stated Bales. "You experience things that forever change who you are as a person."

According to Sandi Barnes, retired Vice President of Patient Services at Helen Keller Hospital and 1979 alum of NW-SCC, The nursing program builds the strong foundation that successful nurses need in the healthcare profession. "This outstanding program not only allowed me to graduate with my nursing degree, but opened my mind to the vast opportunities healthcare offers and greatly needs," stated Barnes. "I have experienced the amazing opportunities of many facets of the healthcare industry all within our community from clinical nursing to hospital administration through the foundation I received from Northwest-Shoals."

"As a Chief Nursing Officer and Chief Executive Officer at Shoals Hospital, and a Chief Nursing Officer and Vice President of Patient Services at Helen Keller Hospital, I remained fully aware of the strength of the graduates of the NW-SCC program. I will forever be grateful that the committed, outstanding faculty and strong curriculum allowed me to understand how to meet the diverse needs of patients."



Jerry Baker
 Principal, Russellville Middle School,
 Associate Professor of Education,
 University of Montevallo

Class of 1965 (1st graduate to walk across the stage of 1st graduation ceremony)

REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Spotlight On Mrs. Lois Robinson, Business Administration Technology Instructor At Reid State Technical College

Wanting every Business Administration Technology (BAT) student at Reid State Technical College to graduate with a resume that reflects some level of business-related experience remained at the top of BAT Instructor Lois Robinson's agenda. Mrs. Robinson saw her plan become a reality when she presented her idea for internship opportunities to the Conecuh County Commissioners at a 2019 meeting. Her plan was readily embraced and approved by the county commissioners' office and later by several local businesses.

The following businesses/organizations have provided much needed experience for her students, and in turn have received great administrative support from the Business Internship Program: Conecuh County Economic Development Office (Evergreen, Alabama); Bower Memorial Baptist Church (Evergreen, Alabama), Georgiana School (Georgiana, Alabama), and Powell & Hamilton Law Office (Greenville, Alabama).

Mrs. Robinson is a fierce supporter of the BAT program and her passion for her students' success is admirable. Due to her individual efforts, several businesses have opened their doors for shadowing and/or on-the-job training for BAT students, who otherwise would have graduated with little or no related experience to provide for potential employers.



First Class of Practical Nursing Graduates

Class of 1967

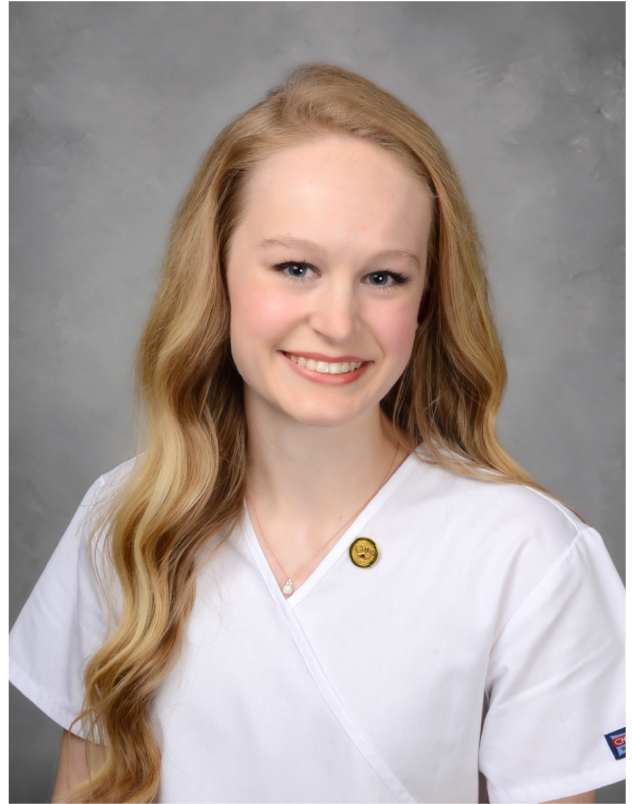
SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A Full Circle Moment

Hannah Markham visited Shelton State Community College (SSCC) in 2017 to attend the West Alabama Works Worlds of Work (W.O.W) event. That singular experience not only sparked her interest in a future career in nursing, but it also made her excited to one day attend Shelton State.

W.O.W, sponsored by the Region 3 Workforce Development Council and the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and hosted at SSCC, is a hands-on, educational opportunity for the area's high school students to learn about high-demand, high-wage career opportunities in the area. Students can participate in immersive experiences such as building mini-construction projects, operating large machine equipment, and even rock climbing. For Hannah, the highlight of her visit was a labor and delivery simulation that allowed her and her sister to deliver a baby. At that moment, she knew she wanted to pursue nursing at Shelton State.

"Because W.O.W. was a hands-on experience, and I am a hands-on learner, it showed me that I could begin a hands-on nursing program sooner than going a traditional four-year route," said Markham. A graduate of University Church Christian Academy Homeschool, Markham enrolled in Dual Enrollment at Shelton State in hopes of jumpstarting her future career in nursing.



"After attending W.O.W. and deciding to pursue an associate degree in nursing (ADN) from Shelton State, I was able to tailor my Dual Enrollment classes toward that degree goal." Markham says her experience as a Dual Enrollment student was marked by caring teachers who were invested in her success.

Six years later, Markham's dream is becoming a reality, and she is now preparing to begin her nursing career. She will graduate on May 5, 2023, with an ADN from Shelton State and a job as a registered nurse at DCH Regional Hospital in Tuscaloosa.

"I am most excited about giving back and caring for my community while at the same time putting the nursing skills that I have learned into practice."

Markham reflects fondly on her time at Shelton State from attending W.O.W. to Dual Enrollment and now as a graduate. "If I had it all to do over again, I would still choose Dual Enrollment and the ADN program at Shelton State."

SNEAD STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Making waves: Guntersville para-athlete swimmer uses story to lead, inspire others

Snead State Community College freshman Gabe Marsh has made a name for himself as a para-athlete and has become an inspiration through sharing his testimony of overcoming adversity and finding a relationship with God. More than a decade ago, as his adoptive mother, Ann, was working with their other children in the pool, teaching them how to swim, a four-year-old Gabe found himself on the outside looking in. Born with no legs and only one arm, the family was skeptical of Gabe’s potential ability to swim.

While he may have appeared different, Gabe viewed himself the same as everyone else. So, he dove into the water and swam straight to Ann. Ann told AL.com in April 2022 interview, “He does not want to be handicapped, and he doesn’t feel like he is handicapped. He feels like he’s just like everybody else.”

Gabe has been swimming ever since. Around the age of six, he started swimming competitively as a para-athlete and has become one of the best in Alabama. Over the years, he’s won numerous titles at the Alabama High School Athletic Association (AHSAA) State Championships and the Alabama Para Olympics. In 2022, Gabe was named the Ken and Betty Joy Blankenship Bryant-Jordan Achievement Award state recipient - the second student-athlete in the AHSAA to ever receive the award. Gabe was recently honored with the 2023 National High School Spirit of Sport Award, presented by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

But Gabe, now age 18, is much more than a decorated swimmer. Since he was about 12 years old, Gabe has traveled many places to speak to many people and share his story with the goal of encouraging them. “I just don’t want people to be like I was,” he said. “Years ago, it was a dark time for me. I didn’t want help from anyone. I was angry, selfish. And really, I was in pain.”

“I want people who may be suffering that same kind of emotional pain to know that they’re not alone. I’ve felt this pain, too.

When asked why it is important that he work to tell his story and work to inspire others, Gabe said it’s “God’s calling” for him to be a preacher and motivational speaker, and that was all that mattered.

After graduating from Guntersville High School in the spring of 2022, Gabe chose to continue his education and enroll at Snead State Community College. From there, he plans to transfer to a four-year college and study theology. “It’s really cool if my story can make an impact on others’ lives, but to me that isn’t the goal,” Gabe said. “The goal is really just to connect with people and make sure they know they’re not alone and that God loves them.”



Margaret Story
 Educator

Class of 1964

SOUTHERN UNION STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Southern Union Quiz Bowl Places Third in Nation

Southern Union State Community College's Quiz Bowl Team brought home a third place finish from the 2022 NAQT Community College Championship Tournament on February 25. SUSCC finished the tournament with an overall 8-3 record. Quiz bowl is a competitive, academic, interscholastic activity for teams of four students. Quiz bowl teams use buzzers to answer questions about science, math, history, literature, mythology, geography, social science, current events, sports, and popular culture. The matches feature a blend of individual competition and team collaboration, since no individual player is likely to be an expert in all subject areas. Participation in quiz bowl both reinforces lessons from the classroom and encourages players to develop new intellectual interests.

This was the first in-person Community College Championship Tournament in three years. The previous two years saw the CCCT played online due to COVID restrictions on travel. The 24 teams competed in four pools of six and then the top teams were placed in a championship pool of eight, and played round robin matches against the other teams in the championship pool.

Southern Union went undefeated in the preliminary rounds, and finished 3-3 in the playoffs where they defeated Kansas' Cowley County, Florida's State College at Manatee, and Kentucky's Jefferson Community and Technical College, and lost to Tallahassee and both teams from Chipola College. Southern Union's team consisted of: Joseph Anglin, Xander Howell, Will Hughes (captain), Joshua Kroll, and Jayson Renobato. Hughes led the team in scoring with an 87.85 scoring average, Hughes was the high scorer through all matches in the competition and earned a slot on the tournament All-Star team.

With campuses in Wadley, Opelika and Valley, Southern Union State Community College is the second oldest community college in the state and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associates degrees.



Jerry Hall
 Owner, Hall's Red and White
 Class of 1963

TRENHOLM STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Trenholm State Community College Announces New Healthcare Instructional Site

Trenholm State Community College is expanding with the purchase of the Blount Property, located in Executive Park on Eastern Boulevard. This property will be Trenholm State's 3rd Major Instructional Site and will become the Healthcare Training Facility. All the Health Sciences programs that Trenholm State offers will be housed at this property.

This move allows the Health Sciences program to grow and be in a centralized location for healthcare partners. Currently, Trenholm State has the largest number of collegiate healthcare programs that are offered in the River Region, with 14 Health Sciences programs and looking to expand to 4 additional Health Sciences programs within the next year.

Expanding the Health Sciences program offerings to the new site provides space on the Trenholm Campus to develop a Workforce Development Training Center to serve the citizens of West Montgomery with targeted program offerings that lead directly to the workforce.

Dr. Kemba Chambers, President of Trenholm State Community College said, "The addition of this new Healthcare Training Site will allow the College to fulfill the River Region's immediate healthcare shortage and provide health resources for our community. Additionally, it provides Trenholm State to advance its relationships and partnerships with our healthcare industries. Baptist Health, Jackson Hospital, and the Nursing Home Association are eagerly excited about our new training site and helping provide the workforce to the healthcare industries."



WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE-DOTHAN

WCCD, City of Dothan Partner to Provide Skills for Success CDL Training to City Employees

Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) and the City of Dothan have partnered to provide Skills for Success Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) training for current City employees. The training is taking place at the Wiregrass Public Safety Center and is designed to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for City employees to receive a Class A CDL license required for employment.

“CDL licensed drivers are the lifeline of several of our City of Dothan operations, particularly in the Public Works and Dothan Utilities Departments. From medium to heavy equipment operators to safety sensitive positions that require a CDL, the City relies upon the ability of our employees assigned in these areas to provide an essential service to the public,” said Linda Cunningham, City of Dothan EEO & Professional Development Training Officer. “With the City of Dothan’s partnership with Wallace College, this allows our employees and prospective employees to obtain a CDL and build a career with our organization.”

To date, the WCCD CDL training has prepared 23 City of Dothan employees to take and pass the federal Class A CDL test. WCCD has provided online Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT) as well as hands-on instruction. Skills taught include safely maintaining and maneuvering trucks into traffic, into loading or unloading positions, and in and out of parking spaces. In addition, City employees will learn how to apply the necessary protocol to transport various types of goods and materials, whether regionally or nationally. Participants will be able to demonstrate how to operate important equipment, including truck cab computers, CB radios, and tools for basic maintenance conditions. They will also be able to demonstrate vehicle pre-trip and post-trip inspection, straight line backing, alley dock backing, as well as coupling and uncoupling various trailers.

“We are truly excited to partner with the City of Dothan and the Wiregrass Public Safety Center to provide CDL training for the City of Dothan employees. The training is a great example of how the College partners with local industry to provide rapid workforce training to existing employees at no cost,” said Joe Johnson, WCCD Director of Workforce Development. “Employees have an opportunity to participate in quality training that will lead to an industry-recognized credential and better prepare them to be successful in their current role. I applaud the City of Dothan for investing in their workforce and for providing the training the employees need to be successful in their careers.”

The CDL training program is facilitated by WCCD through the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) Innovation Center.



Lew Humphrey
 Textron Executive, Naval Aviator

Class of 1967

WALLACE STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Wallace State students help in restoration of NASA telescope

Students from Wallace State Community College’s Machine Tool Technology program are playing a part in history by providing parts for the Astro Restoration Project with NASA HUNCH and the Smithsonian Institute’s Air and Space Museum.

The Astro Telescope flew in space two times on space shuttles before being decommissioned and eventually scrapped for parts. When plans were made to restore the telescope, the NASA HUNCH program contacted Wallace State Machine Tool Technology to craft some of the parts needed to replace those pulled from the original machine.

Using some of the program’s newest machinery, the students created the brackets that astronauts used to tether themselves to the telescope during spacewalks once it was deployed from the space shuttle. Students and instructors traveled to NASA Space and Rocket Center Wednesday where the telescope is currently on display and undergoing renovation for a fitting of the parts. It will be moved to the Smithsonian Institute’s Air and Space Museum once restoration is completed.

“It was a great educational opportunity for our students,” said Jonathan Minyard, chair of the Machine Tool Technology program. “Being involved in this project has allowed our students to kind of get a first-hand experience of what it means to build something that’s going to be used for space exploration or study the skies or, for that matter, the defense industry, the medical industry. It gives our students more connection, especially to be able to come here and firsthand see the engineers that originally worked on this project and our students get to go in there and hand fit the part.”

“It was pretty cool,” said student Johnson Sellnow of Gunterville. “It was a good opportunity to learn. And I don’t think many people can say they’ve had the opportunity to see something they’ve made in the Smithsonian or here, for that matter.”

Students and faculty were also invited to sign a piece of Single Stowage Locker that will travel to the International Space Station. The lockers are used to store experiments and projects on board the space station. Along with Sellnow, other students participating in the project include Bailey Gooch and Jack West of Cullman, Trent Gorham of Fairview, Philip Hansel of Arab, Brylan Rice of Samantha, Slade Ryan of Baileyton, and Brody Sams of West Point. Along with Minyard, faculty members included Justin Burnett, Chris Quick and Steve Smith.

The Wallace State Machine Tool Technology program trains students for careers as machinists, tool and die makers and more using machines such as lathes, milling machines, computer numerical control (CNC) machines, computer assisted programming equipment and graphics programming. Classes are available at the main campus in Hanceville and the Oneonta Technical Center.

Wallace State is the first college to partner with NASA HUNCH.



Regina Hammond
 Internal Affairs, Homestead FL
 Police Department, Retired

3-time graduate of Wallace State

WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE - SELMA

From Cosmetology to Volleyball - Billingsley excels at WCCS

Nylah Billingsley has always had an interest in owning a hair salon, and now two years later, she's closer to her dream. "I've always had a passion for hair and I knew cosmetology would give me an opportunity to become my own boss," said Billingsley. "Cosmetology also provides an opportunity to serve others and help them feel better about themselves," she added.

Billingsley, who will graduate in May with her Associates Degree, obtained her Cosmetology Certificate in May of 2022 and earned her state license in January 2023. Billingsley returned to play an additional year of volleyball because of the bond she established with WCCS Head Coach Wanda Tyler. "Nylah was not only a skilled player but, her character speaks volume. She embraced the vision of leadership and she will be hard to replace," said Tyler. "Stillman is receiving a special player," she added.

At WCCS, Billingsley served as Co-Captain of the volleyball team for the past two years all while excelling in the classroom. "Whatever the task was, Nylah aced it," said Lawanna Quarles, WCCS Cosmetology Instructor. "She was an exceptional student, balancing volleyball and studying. Because of her volleyball schedule, if she needed additional time she would come in early or stay late."

On March 8, Billingsley signed a volleyball scholarship to continue her collegiate career at Stillman College. "Moving away from home to attend Wallace was challenging for me, but I knew there was business I had to attend to," she said. "Since Stillman is much larger than Wallace, I am a little nervous about the change, but I have confidence that God will guide me in the right path, and I am excited to see what the future holds."

At Stillman College, she plans to study Elementary Education and minor in Business Administration and after graduation she wants to teach and open her own salon. She also wants to coach softball and volleyball. "Nylah has the personality and drive to succeed," said Quarles. "She will be an asset to our industry because of her exception gift and her excellent customer service skills."

Asked about her experience at WCCS, Billingsley focused on her instructors and mentors. "I was very nervous about being alone in a new city but, I made new friends and had awesome teachers and mentors and I began to feel more comfortable. Also, Wallace's smaller class sizes allowed me to learn more in the classroom. I feel very prepared for the world of work!"



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals are now being accepted for the annual Alabama Community College Association conference. Sessions should cover topics that support or strengthen the various colleges, divisions, or entities within the Alabama Community College System.

The following are suggested presentation topics:

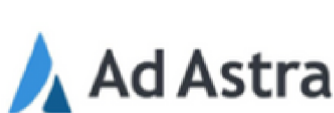
- Best Practices for Student Success, Retention and Completion
- New and Emerging Techniques in the Classroom
- Engagement & Active Learning Strategies
- Academic and Technical Partnerships / Collaborations
- Libraries in Today's Digital World
- Online / Distance Education
- Student Engagement
- Mental Health / Awareness
- Behavioral Intervention & Threat Assessment
- Safety and Campus Security
- Professional Learning Communities
- Mentoring and Coaching
- Outcome Assessments
- Workforce Skills
- Credentialing
- Customer Service
- Technological Enhancements
- Fundraising Opportunities
- Motivating the Masses
- Communication in the Workplace
- Internships / Apprenticeships
- Enrollment Management
- Clinical Environment
- Records Management and Retention
- Financial Aid Programs
- Grants Management & Restricted Funds
- Grounds & Maintenance
- Custodial & Janitorial
- Adult Education
- Community & Economic Development
- Dual Enrollment
- Veterans Affairs
- Office / Software Applications
- Workplace Productivity

Other presentation topics in addition to those suggested above are welcomed and should support this year's conference theme: Polishing Our Diamonds: Leading from Every Level. The deadline for submissions is September 1, 2023.

Please visit alabamacca.org to submit a proposal.

Your contribution to the professional growth of our System personnel is important and valued.

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