the ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM:

IMPACTING ALABAMA'S Future
On behalf of the 2017 Executive Committee of the Alabama Community College Association, I bring you greetings. Our Executive Committee is excited to host this year’s Annual Conference at the Montgomery Renaissance Hotel and Spa, November 19-21. As we are finalizing our plans to make this a successful conference, we certainly hope that you are making plans to attend by registering and making your hotel reservations on our ACCA website.

We are definitely off to a great start and thank you for submitting session proposals. The theme of this year’s conference is “ACCS: Impacting Alabama’s Future.” The sessions chosen for the conference reflect our theme which embraces the expertise and greatness of our employees in the Alabama Community College System in the areas of Teaching and Learning, Student Success and Services, Leadership Development, Staff Development, and Workforce Development. In addition, we have a diverse set of keynote and commission speakers that will bring innovative and thought-provoking ideas to Alabama and our System as a whole.

We invite you to continue participating in our upcoming webinars throughout the year. Please visit our ACCA website for the latest updates. In addition, we ask that you take a moment to review this edition of the Journal in order to learn about all the exciting activities being conducted by ACCA and its member institutions. We hope that you are able to discover just how our System is “Impacting Alabama’s Future.”

We look forward to your participation at the 2017 Alabama Community College Association Conference. Collectively, we can celebrate and share our outstanding contributions to our System. Thank you for your support as part of the Alabama Community College Association. See you in November.

Kemba Chambers, Ed.D.
ACCA President
2017 ACCA Annual Conference
November 19th - 21st

Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa
at the Convention Center

Registration is $175.00 per person until Nov. 1st and $200.00 per person afterwards.

HOTEL INFORMATION
Don’t forget to book your hotel group rate of $89
Click here to book your room. Deadline is Oct. 20

Visit www.alabamacca.org for more information
Tell Your ACCS Story

This year’s theme is “Impacting Alabama’s Future” and the ACCA Journal and our social media outlets provide an outstanding way to share the great stories of our association, colleges, and System. You’re also invited to help “Impact Alabama’s Future” by encouraging colleagues, students, and alumni from your college to post individual stories on ACCA’s social media pages using the hashtag #ACCSstory. We will be collecting these all year with hopes of sharing them at this year’s ACCA Conference.

IN THIS ISSUE
President’s Message 2
2017 Conference Information 3
2017 ACCA Elections 5
Conference Speakers 6
ACCS News 7
Study Alabama 33

MEMBER ARTICLES
Bevill State 8
Bishop State 9
Calhoun 10
Central Alabama 11
Chattahoochee Valley 12
Drake State 13
Enterprise State 14
Gadsden State 16
Ingram State 18
Jefferson State 19
Lawson State 20
Lurleen B. Wallace 21
Northeast Alabama 23
Northwest Shoals 24
Shelton State 25
Snead State 26
Trenholm State 28
Wallace - Dothan 30
Wallace - Selma 31
Wallace State 32
2017 ACCA Elections

Online elections for the position of SECOND VICE PRESIDENT will be held in October at AlabamaCCA.org. Information about the candidates appears below.

ANNETTE FUNDERBURK
Interim President
Ingram State Technical College

Annette Funderburk currently serves as Interim President of J.F. Ingram State Technical College. The College serves the citizens of Alabama by offering accessible, responsive, and quality postsecondary career and technical education to incarcerated adults and eligible parolees, helping them to successfully return to their families and communities. Ingram is the only 100 percent institutionalized educational provider in the State of Alabama.

Ms. Funderburk, who served most recently as Director of External Affairs for the ACCS System Office and in various other capacities within the System Office since April 2008, was appointed to the position on January 30, 2017.

In addition to her experience at the ACCS System Office, Funderburk worked in county administration for Tallapoosa and Talladega counties. She earned a Master of Public Administration from Troy University; has a certificate in governmental accounting; is a graduate of the Community College Fellows Program which is composed of community college system leaders from Alabama and Mississippi and a graduate of Talladega and Tallapoosa Leadership classes. She is married to Ken Funderburk, they live in Prattville, and they have three sons.

BEN JORDAN
Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services
Southern Union State Community College

Ben Jordan has worked at Southern Union for more than 25 years and has held positions as Accounting Instructor and also Business Manager. Before joining the Southern Union staff, he worked in public accounting and is a State of Alabama Certified Public Accountant. While at Southern Union, Ben has served as a member of the college’s executive council, chair of the college judiciary committee, three time member of the steering committee for SACSCOC reaffirmation, Phi Theta Kappa advisor for both the student and alumni chapters, and President of the Southern Union Alumni Association.

Ben's involvement with the Alabama Community College Association includes serving as Treasurer for six years; Commission on Administration chair; Evaluation Coordinator; and Affiliates and Vendors Coordinator. Participation in other state organizations includes past president of the ACCS Financial Management Association and member of the Alabama Society of CPAs. Ben was the recipient of the 2013-14 ACCS Financial Manager of the Year honor.

His educational background includes an Associate in Science degree from Southern Union State Junior College, a Bachelor’s degree in accounting from the University of Alabama, and a Master's degree in business administration from Auburn University.
Dr. Martha Kanter leads the College Promise Campaign's national initiative to increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion in American higher education, starting in the nation's community colleges. She is also a Senior Fellow at New York University's Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy. She specializes in policy efforts to identify innovative education interventions, financing models and behavioral incentives at the local, state and national levels to raise America's high school and college graduation rates from two and four-year colleges and universities. Her academic interests include: The Confluence of Access, Equity and Excellence; The Intersection of Policy and Politics in American Higher Education; and The Contributions of America's Community Colleges to the Nation's Social Fabric, Civic Future and Economy.

In 2009, President Barack Obama nominated Kanter to serve as the U.S. Under Secretary of Education, with oversight responsibility for all federal postsecondary statutory, regulatory, and administrative policies and programs for the U.S. Department of Education, including the $175B annual federal student aid programs, higher education, adult education, career-technical education, international education and 6 White House Initiatives. From 2009-2013, serving under U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan, Kanter and her team took bold steps to increase college access, affordability, quality and completion to implement President Obama's goal to have the best educated, most competitive workforce in the world by 2020. She oversaw the successful implementation of the Direct Student Loan program that resulted in a 50-percent increase in the college enrollment of low-income students, growing from 6 to more than 9 million Pell Grant recipients. Previously, Kanter served as President of De Anza College and then Chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District for sixteen years. She began her career as an alternative high school teacher. She holds a B.A. degree in Sociology from Brandeis University, an M.Ed. from Harvard University, and an Ed.D. from the University of San Francisco.

Steve Marshall became the 48th Attorney General of Alabama on February 10, 2017. He is a native of Atmore and graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1987 and the University of Alabama School of Law in 1990. He served Marshall County as District Attorney from 2001 until 2017. When he was sworn in at age 36, he became the second youngest District Attorney in Alabama.

During his time as District Attorney, he established a reputation for being tough on crime. He founded the Marshall County Major Crimes Unit, the Marshall County Computer Forensics Lab and the Marshall County Crystal Meth Task Force. He was instrumental in passing legislation that required a driver’s license for Alabama residents to purchase ingredients for making crystal meth. The legislation also created a database for such purchases and led to a 90-percent reduction in the number of crystal meth labs in the state over the past five years.

He also played a major role in the Brody Act, which holds criminals who kill or injure a mother's unborn baby accountable for two crimes – one against the mother and one against the baby. He was a strong supporter of the Marshall County Coalition Against Domestic Violence and successfully pushed for passage of Kelley’s Law, which makes it a capital crime to murder someone who has a protective order against the offender. The law was named for a Marshall County resident who was murdered in a domestic violence incident.

AG Marshall has also served as chairman of the Alabama Criminal justice information System (ACJIC) and he is a member of the Alabama Sentencing commission.

He and his wife, Bridgette, have one daughter, Faith. They are members of LifePoint church in Albertville.
Statewide faculty convene for Alabama Master Teacher Experience

In mid-July, faculty from the Alabama Community College System left the comfort and routine of their daily classrooms to trek towards Sand Mountain for the Alabama Master Teacher Experience (AMTE). Hosted by Northeast Alabama Community College under the leadership of Dr. David Campbell, participants stayed at Goose Pond Colony Resort for a retreat-like experience. From the welcome reception on Monday night to the last session on Friday morning, those five days were jam-packed with learning, professional growth, networking, and perhaps most importantly, fun.

Teaching demonstrations included everything from 3-D printers and building your own YouTube videos, to scissor usage, drawing bones, and algebra aerobics.

Teachers learned to become students again. The concept of a seminar designed expressly for teachers originated in 1962 by Roger Garrison at Westbrook College in Portland, Maine. Since that time, the concept has become a national movement with programs in numerous states across the nation and around the world.

Roger Garrison’s beliefs centered on the following premises:
- much excellent teaching takes place in American higher education
- teachers striving toward mastery of their craft have much to share with others
- bringing teachers together in a relaxed, informal atmosphere to share their successes and their problems will enhance the skills of all.

The AMTE Class of 2018 included Joyce Allison (Marion), Samantha Vance (CVCC), Rhonda Coffelt (Calhoun), Deborah Enfinger (Calhoun), Clint Langley (CVCC), Melissa Landers (Wallace Hanceville), Erin Smith (ESCC), Melissa Arnold (Wallace Hanceville), Pam Horn (SUSCC), Kristin Henderson (Jeff State), Steve Bowen (Snead), Rachel Etheridge (Coastal), Elizabeth Boehm (Coastal), David Hyatt (GSCC), Charlotte Kiger (GSCC), Anthony Sanders (LBWCC), Michelle Ross (Wallace), Donna Moore (NACC), Karl Paoletti (Wallace), Heather Johnson (CACC), Amy Rogers (SUSCC), Jonathan Cole (Coastal), Roberta Roberts (NACC), and David Spewak (Marion).

AMTE would not be possible without the cooperation and assistance of the faculty and staff at NACC and the AMTE staff: Alina Adams (Wallace Hanceville), Chris Harrison (GSCC), Thomas Hock (Marion), Derrick Griffey(GSCC), Ron Van Houten (CACC), George Scott (ESCC), Docquinn Taylor (Drake), and Kristy White (LBWCC). Special thanks is also extended to Dr. Vicki Karolewics, for the use of Wallace State’s bus and driver, Larry Sullens.

The ultimate goal of this faculty development is to establish and sustain a community of learning in which faculty collaborate and engage in growth and dialogue around areas of common interest. When such a community exists, faculty members are more inclined to initiate and continue their involvement from a perspective of intrinsic motivation. We are currently seeking faculty to join our community of learners, and we invite you to nominate up to three academic or technical faculty to represent your college at the 2018 AMTE. The cost is $600 per faculty member and includes lodging and meals. This year the conference dates are July 16-20, 2018. Registration is already open for the 2018 event. To register visit https://www.eventbrite.com/e/alabama-master-teacher-experience-tickets-37736466788 For more information, contact Kristy White at kwhite@lbwcc.edu.
Bevill State Receives $1,920,000 Grant from ARC

Bevill State Community College (BSCC) is pleased to announce that the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has awarded a $1,920,000 grant for the Bevill State Community College POWER 2016 Initiative. The project will create a new Rapid Training Center at Bevill State's Jasper campus that will serve as a regional workforce training and job placement hub in northwest Alabama – an area that has been adversely affected by the recent retirement of coal-fired power generation facilities and the closure of multiple coal mines.

The Rapid Training Center will offer accelerated workforce training programs that provide industry-recognized credentials in six growing regional industries: welding, commercial trucking, rigging, hydraulics/pneumatics, healthcare, and print reading. Through a partnership with the Alabama Department of Labor, individuals directly impacted by the decline in coal production will be offered up to $1,000 in scholarships and stipends to move them through the Center's retraining programming in the most efficient manner possible. In addition, Bevill State is partnering with the AARP to tailor a portion of the retraining and placement support for individuals who are 50+ years old. The project will train 4,000 trainees over the life of the award, and will improve 40 existing businesses in the region.

State Senate Majority Leader Greg Reed of Jasper was instrumental in helping former BSCC President Larry Ferguson secure the ARC grant money for Bevill State.

“This is terrific news for Bevill State and for the hundreds of people across west Alabama who have been negatively impacted by the loss of coal jobs in our area. The Rapid Training Center at BSCC's Walker College campus is going to offer hands-on training in marketable skills for these men and women who are looking for work,” Senator Reed remarked. “If a person has recently lost their job, it is often tough for them to find another one with an equivalent income, and it’s especially challenging when you’re trying to completely change industries.”

“Dr. Ferguson and I had discussed this problem at length, and when he came to me with the idea for a Rapid Training Center that would teach people specific skills in welding, rigging, and healthcare, and give scholarships to folks who were coming out of the coal industry, I made this a top priority,” Reed said. “It has been a privilege to work with Dr. Ferguson and the Department of Labor on this project, and I am eager to see the positive results it will have in matching up local, out-of-work folks with regional employers who are ready to hire.”

BSCC Dean for Career Technical Education and Workforce Solutions, Al Moore stated, “We are looking forward to the ARC grant making an indelible mark on our community, by helping us continue preparing students for the workforce.”

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) announced nearly $26 million to expand and diversify the economy in coal-impacted communities in 5 Appalachian states. These 28 awards are projected to train more than 7,300 workers and students impacted by the changing coal economy in certificate, credentialing, and other workforce development programs. They will also create or retain more than 2,500 jobs, leverage an additional $31 million from public and private investors, and create a more vibrant economic future for Appalachia’s coal-impacted communities. Since 2015, ARC has invested $47 million specifically to diversify the economy in the Region’s coal-impacted communities through the POWER (Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization) Initiative. The POWER Initiative is a congressionally funded, multi-agency strategy bringing federal resources directly to help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America’s energy production.

“These investments capitalize on the growing momentum for a diverse economy in Appalachia,” said ARC Federal Co-Chair Earl F. Gohl. “They are strategic, collaborative, and impactful projects making the Region more competitive in technology, manufacturing, entrepreneurship, broadband, health, and a variety of other sectors.” With today's announcement, ARC’s dedicated funding for economic diversity in the Region’s coal-impacted communities is projected to create or retain more than 6,500 jobs and leverage an additional $132 million into the Region.
BISHOP STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Bishop State Community College: Still Supporting Dreams

For decades, the Department of Nursing at Bishop State Community College has been instrumental in supplying employers in Mobile County and surrounding areas with quality nurses. The list of qualified, highly trained nurses has grown, as the College recently conferred degrees upon former students from ITT Technical Institute, who completed their studies at Bishop State. Following its sudden closing, many of ITT’s students, bearing the weight of heartbreak, disappointment, and despair, turned to Bishop State with hopes of finishing their programs of study.

The nursing students who were admitted to the College following the closing were permitted to join the cohort of nursing students at Bishop State. These students quickly adjusted to a new learning environment, curriculum, faculty, and clinical experiences. Although the changes may have delayed the students’ anticipated dates of graduation, they each endured the challenges. The students attested that while change is sometimes difficult, they now realize embracing change is often necessary in order to move forward to meet the demands of life’s journey. Likewise, they acknowledged the role that Bishop State Community College’s administration, faculty and staff played in helping them to reach their goals in life.

As a result of the concerted efforts of these students and employees of Bishop State Community College, students who had once feared their dreams would never be realized, are currently listed among the growing list of nursing graduates who are now Board-certified and have earned the distinction of “Registered Nurse.”

STAY CONNECTED WITH ACCA!
The University of Alabama at Birmingham announced a partnership with Calhoun Community College through the UAB Joint Admissions Program, launched in 2013. The initiative offers many benefits to participating students, as well as UAB Presidential Full Tuition Scholarships for two Calhoun graduates each year, continuing the institution's commitment to attracting top Alabama students.

“We are very pleased with the success of our Joint Admissions Program since its inception, and we are excited to extend its benefits to Calhoun students,” said UAB President Ray L. Watts. “It is important that our institutions of higher education work together to remove barriers and create opportunities to help students receive the necessary support to realize their fullest potential and go on to rewarding 21st century careers.”

Students who are not immediately eligible for traditional UAB admission can enroll in a Joint Admissions Program partner institution, and students can also self-select into this program during their first year at Calhoun. As students pursue an associate degree at a partner institution, they have access to UAB facilities, libraries and campus events. Students also have access to a UAB admissions counselor on-site at their community college who will help ensure that they meet the requirements necessary to transfer to UAB.

Participating students are admitted to UAB when they earn an associate degree, and they receive a $2,000 annual scholarship for their junior year and senior year if they maintain eligibility.

With locations in Decatur and Huntsville, Calhoun is the largest of the two-year institutions making up the Alabama Community College System.

“This new partnership with the University of Alabama at Birmingham represents a tremendous opportunity for our students to continue their higher-education journey beyond Calhoun,” said Calhoun Community College President James Klauber, Ph.D. “We thank Dr. Watts and his team for extending this invitation to the college and our students, and look forward to working with the university in this Joint Admissions initiative.”

Since its inception in 2013, the UAB Joint Admissions Program has provided hundreds of students throughout the state the opportunity to benefit from enhanced advising and a smooth transition to UAB to realize their dream of college success and completion.

Institutions now partnering with UAB through the Joint Admissions Program include Bevill State, Calhoun Community College, Gadsden State, Jefferson State, Lawson State and Wallace State-Hanceville.
Central Alabama Community College and Dr. Susan Burrow, president of CACC, are pleased to announce that several CACC students were awarded a scholarship for the summer semester from the SABAL Trail Scholars Program.

The SABAL Trail Transmission project is a natural gas pipeline that begins in North Carolina and will end in south Florida. The pipeline, currently under construction, will encompass approximately 20.5 miles of Tallapoosa County. SABAL Trail believes in supporting institutes and colleges in communities along the pipeline route which provide educational programs that can lead to energy infrastructure careers and bolstering community vitality in the area.

“We are extremely excited to partner with the SABAL Trail Transmission to create the SABAL Trail Scholars Program,” Dr. Susan Burrow stated.

“This scholarship program will provide countless opportunities to some of our students who might not have had the opportunity to attend classes in the summer semester.”

This program provides partial scholarships, which covers tuition and fees for up to six semester hours, to students interested in pursuing industrial trades, particularly welding, machining, robotics, electronics/industrial maintenance, manufacturing technology, and emergency response, including nursing. The program can fund up to 20 students in the summers of 2017 and 2018 and 15 students in the summer of 2019. Any unexpended funds will be distributed in the summer of 2020 on a pro rata basis.

The greatest barrier to timely program completion is the inability to utilize Pell Grant funds during the summer terms. Most students, in turn, seek employment which greatly impacts program completion. Other students take only one or two classes which also impacts their ability to maintain course sequencing when prerequisite courses exist.

Natalie Hatfield from Alexander City and Jadie Coleman from Titus, who are both second semester nursing students, applied and were selected to receive scholarships.

“Receiving this scholarship is such an honor,” Hatfield said.

“Without this scholarship I wasn’t sure how I was going to afford my summer semester which is vital to success for all of us nursing students. Thanks to the generosity of CACC and SABAL, I will be able to continue pursuing the career I’ve always dreamed of having.”

Coleman was also very appreciative in receiving the scholarship.

“Receiving this scholarship is important to me, not only because financial support helps decrease my stress load but also because I value the extra encouragement and support,” Hatfield mentioned.

“I am thankful for the opportunity to continue to pursue my dream!”

The college is employing its current scholarship application process and those who receive a scholarship are required to sign a statement of intent titled the SABAL Trail Scholars Commit to Complete which indicates their intent to complete either a degree or certificate.
Chattahoochee Valley Community College, Troy University and the Phenix City Housing Authority celebrated 14 women who completed a new five-week program entitled WISE in the Phenix City room on the CVCC campus. Seven of the women who attended all parts of the program received a $500 scholarship from the CVCC Foundation. Susan Wiggins, CVCC Foundation Chair, applauded the women for taking this first step toward achieving their goals. The scholarship will cover the cost of tuition and or books for one three-credit course at CVCC in the 2017-18 academic year.

Women Inspired, Successful, Empowered (WISE) is a new program at the PCHA. The program helps women establish educational goals and teaches tools to be successful in accomplishing goals. Faculty and staff from CVCC and TU provided information and assistance during the program.

The program began with each participant starting a notebook for their educational journey. Whether the end-result is GED, two-year degree or beyond, a clear plan was made to map out educational goals for each woman.

WISE helped participants navigate through the financial aid process. This included explaining what financial aid entails, how to locate and apply for scholarships, and completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

In addition to learning about college admissions procedures and success strategies, WISE participants learned about job skills. This includes not only resume-building and dressing successfully, but also applying for a job, what skills are in demand for jobs, as well as what degrees and certifications are needed for in-demand jobs.

The success of the program has sparked interest in men at the Phenix City Housing Authority and a future project to target men is being developed. WISE will continue as an effort by CVCC, TU and PCHA.

For more information on the WISE program, please contact Dr. Joree Jones, CVCC Dean of Institution Advancement and Effectiveness, joree.jones@cv.edu, Haley Ramey, Resident Services Supervisor at Phenix City Housing Authority, hramey@pchousing.org, or Marianne Michael, Director of Campus Communications, Troy Riverfront Campus, mmichael@troy.edu.
In accordance with Science and Engineering Services, LLC. (SES) and Huntsville City Schools (HCS), J. F. Drake State Community and Technical College have created the Aviation Technology Training for Advanced Manufacturing program. This collaborative effort will provide direct educational and training opportunities for students in advanced aviation manufacturing. Students will be exposed to a broad range of subject areas that will create multi-skilled employees who will meet the needs of the ever changing aviation advanced manufacturing.

The Advanced Manufacturing curriculum at Drake State, coupled with resources provided by SES will provide for dual enrollment students in the HCS system to be trained in advanced Aviation Technology. The hands on laboratory environment at SES provides an exceptional educational training for students. In addition, this training potentially will lead to employment and/or promotions for current Drake State students, unemployed or underemployed workers, veterans and incumbent workers seeking advanced training in aviation technology at SES.
Inaugural Buzz Sawyer Memorial Scholarship awarded to Alabama Aviation College Student

Ms. Hannah Rogers, an Alabama Aviation College student in Ozark, is the recipient of the inaugural Buzz Sawyer Memorial Scholarship. Jed Blackwell, President of the Aviation Council of Alabama Inc., and Jerry Cofield, Director of Albertville Regional Airport, presented the scholarship to Hannah on Wednesday, June 14, 2017, on behalf of the Aviation Council of Alabama.

The Aviation Council of Alabama Inc. is Alabama’s only statewide airport and aviation association which represents International, Air Carrier, General Aviation Airports, and Aviation Businesses, Economic Developers, Pilots, Aircraft Owners and Aviation Associations. The Aviation Council of Alabama is dedicated to continued improvement, development and advancements of airports and aviation throughout the state.

According to Mr. Blackwell, the memorial scholarship was formed to honor Mr. Buzz Sawyer, a longtime aviation enthusiast who helped run aviation throughout Alabama for well over 50 years and dedicated his life to aviation. The scholarship is awarded to high school and college-aged students in the State of Alabama who have plans to develop careers in aviation. The scholarship, valued at $1,500, is expected to be awarded annually to one high school senior or currently enrolled college student who has demonstrated an aptitude for – and has an interest in – pursuing aviation, or who is currently pursuing an aviation-related degree at an accredited college or university. Applicants are asked to submit a brief 250-word essay describing their goals, achievements thus far and need for financial assistance for the selection committee's review.

“Ms. Rogers was a very worthy candidate based off the recommendations and the letters we received from the staff and friends (at Alabama Aviation College). Her essay provided her overall goals to help aviation in the state of Alabama following her graduation from Alabama Aviation College. We look forward to her graduating and fulfilling her goals in aviation,” Mr. Blackwell said.

Mr. Cofield offered additional support for the scholarship: “The Alabama Aviation Council wants to do everything we can to encourage the young people to step up and take the place of those people who are at retirement age in the aviation industry.
Without young people like Ms. Rogers, the aviation industry is going to suffer in about five to ten years because there won't be anyone to replace the retirees,” he said.

Hannah is a self-described “Daddy’s Girl” from Daleville, Alabama, and a graduate of Daleville High School, class of 2011. Hannah’s fond memories of tinkering around her father’s shop at a young age encouraged her to continue her mechanical work at a motorcycle shop throughout high school. Through the inspiration of her former supervisor and the pride of hearing an engine come back to life, she eventually sought out furthering her education as an Airframe and Powerplant mechanic.

Shortly following high school graduation, Hannah began working as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) to support her son, Trenton, and herself, though she realized how much she truly missed mechanical work. Hannah then transferred to the Aviation Maintenance Technology program at the Alabama Aviation College in January 2017. Hannah's primary objective was to prove to her son that, through hard work, any goal is achievable.

When asked about future employment, Ms. Rogers stated, “I would love to be employed with Gulfstream in Savannah, Georgia due to their class of work and the state of environment.”

Hannah’s advice for future students would be to “have a good support system and connect with fellow students and staff.”

“The support of everyone at Alabama Aviation College has greatly benefited my determination and education,” she said.

Hannah would like to credit Ms. Valeria Pryor for assistance in applying to the Alabama Aviation College and further assisting in the application process for the Aviation Council of Alabama scholarship.

Alabama Aviation College is a unit of Enterprise State Community College with campuses in Albertville, Andalusia, Mobile and Ozark. Each campus currently fulfills the Alabama Community College System’s mission for education and training which leads to high-wage, high-demand jobs in integral careers worldwide. Students can obtain Associate's degrees and certificates through multiple programs at the college.

### Cerebral Weevils place fourth in the nation at academic quiz bowl

The Enterprise State Cerebral Weevils traveled to Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the NAQT Community College Championship Tournament - the national tournament for all two-year colleges from around the country. The Weevils placed second in the sectional tournament in Birmingham in January 2017 to qualify for the event. After a grueling two days of competition, the Weevils placed fourth in the nation with a record of 8-4. This fourth-place finish earned the Cerebral Weevils an invitation to the ICT, a four-year college championship which will be held in Chicago, April 7-8, 2017. In addition to the team's overall finish, Mike Johnson, a member of the Cerebral Weevils, finished second in overall individual scoring in the event. He says this on the subject: “I didn't expect too much coming in, but in this tournament, and in those past, I've managed to go and beat dozens of competitors with the help of my team. I'm impressed at our performances and I hope we can continue our success in the future.”

The team was excited for the opportunity of further competition and practiced diligent in preparation for facing teams such as Vanderbilt, Harvard, Columbia, NYC, Chicago, Duke, and others.

NAQT competition is an academic quiz bowl. It showcases knowledge in the Sciences, Math, the Arts, Literature, current events, Geography, History, and a host of other topics. Students who participate must be able to quickly cycle through their entire breadth of knowledge to find answers to the questions before they are “buzzed out” by the other team. This finish highlights the academic excellence for which Enterprise State Community College is known.

The travel team for this national competition consisted of Matthew Skinner (captain), Jonathan Page, Shannon Lynch, Penny Steagall, Mike Johnson, and Chris Carter. Other members of the Cerebral Weevils 2016-17 team were Zac Yohn and Ishmael James. The sponsor is Kathy Pattie, English Instructor at Enterprise State Community College.

For more information about the Cerebral Weevils please contact Kathy Pattie at 334-347-2623 x2249 or kpattie@esc.edu.
Salers among first class of HSDO recipients at Gadsden State

Amanda Salers remembers the day vividly – the day she found out she would not graduate from high school because she didn’t pass the mandatory Alabama High School Graduation Exam.

“I found out my senior year at Sardis High School that I would be receiving a certificate of attendance but I would not be getting my diploma,” she said. “I was devastated.”

At 32 years old, Salers has finally earned her diploma after participating in the new non-traditional High School Diploma Option program at Gadsden State Community College. She was the speaker at the Adult Education Services Graduation held June 29 at Gadsden State.

“I’m so excited that I’ve accomplished something I’ve wanted to do for a very long time,” she said.

Salers is one of more than 500 Alabamians who took advantage of the new HSDO program, which was developed through a partnership between the Alabama Community College System and the Alabama State Department of Education. The program is for those who dropped out of high school without earning the required number of credits or failed portions of the now-retired graduation exam.

“The new program provides students an alternative to the GED test as the high school equivalency,” said Dr. Karen Blythe Smith, director of Adult Education Services at Gadsden State. “Because of the importance of the high school diploma credential in the workforce, this program creates another avenue that students can utilize to meet that goal.”

In 2004, Salers failed the social studies and science portions of the graduation exam. According to the Center on Education Policy, 19 percent of Alabama students failed the science portion and 24 percent failed the social studies portion that year.

“Even though I was a good student who earned a scholarship to a community college, I could not receive my diploma because I didn’t pass those two portions of the exam,” Salers said. “I was so upset.”

In 2005, she took the GED test but failed the math portion by one point.

“I couldn’t catch a break,” she said.

Salers soon got married and took a break from education to raise her two children, Mahalah, now 8, and Jacob, 6. Then, last year, she decided to pursue her goal of being a high school graduate.

“There are not many jobs available to people who don’t have a diploma,” she said.

She took the graduation exam again, but her attempt was unsuccessful since she didn’t pass the social studies portion.

“I was so discouraged,” she said. “I couldn’t believe I was still three credits short of earning my diploma.”

The principal at the elementary school attended by Salers’ daughter was at a meeting where Smith talked about the HSDO program.

“The principal knew about my issues so she told me all about it and I called Gadsden State the very next day,” Salers said. The first step in participating in the HSDO program is to complete a transcript request. Smith reviewed her transcripts and determined a “go-forward” plan for Salers.

“I’ve had many opportunities but the HSDO program at Gadsden State is the best opportunity I’ve been given,” she said. “The faculty and staff were great to me. They helped me get stronger where I was weak. I appreciate them so much.”

In April, Salers took several practice tests before taking the WorkKeys Test, one of several options considered for successful completion of the HSDO program.

“The option pursued is determined on an individual basis,” Smith said. “Scores on the GED, ACT WorkKeys and Test for Adult Basic Education as well as prior work experience are considered.”

Salers completed all requirements for the diploma and was awarded her diploma at the June 29 ceremony. Her high school transcript will be updated to reflect the credential. Now, she’s focused on continuing her education to work with preschool- and elementary-age children.
“I now know I can accomplish anything I set my mind to,” she said.

As a youth leader at Spirit Led Church of God in Guntersville and a substitute teacher at Whitesboro Elementary School, she has no doubt that she wants to mold the minds of small children.

“The Lord knows working with children is my path, and He has started opening doors for me,” she said.

Salers will return to Gadsden State this fall to get certified in CPR and first aid and possibly work towards a certification in early childhood development.

“After coming to Gadsden State, I know there's no other place for me,” she said. “I succeed at Gadsden State. Before, I was very discouraged. Now, I have a new chapter. I can now tell people to never give up on your dreams. Dreams do come true.”

Free GED classes and the HSDO program are available in Etowah, Calhoun, Cherokee and Cleburne counties through Gadsden State Community College. For more information, call 256-835-5462 or visit www.gadsdenstate.edu.

Gadsden State instructor earns NASA fellowship

A Gadsden State Community College instructor participated in a project at one of the world’s most innovative research facilities in the country: NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. The prestigious laboratory implements programs in planetary exploration, earth science, space-based astronomy and technology development while applying its capabilities to technical and scientific problems of national significance.

Audrey Webb, an instructor and division chair for Engineering Technologies at the Ayers Campus, was selected as a Faculty Fellow at the JPL this summer. She reported to JPL June 5 and served a 10-week fellowship.

“It’s such an honor,” she said. “I'm overwhelmed with excitement. I’ve wanted to do projects like this since someone from NASA visited my school when I was in the first grade. This has been a dream come true.”

Webb’s project focused on the Spacecraft Atmosphere Monitoring (SAM) system.

“I worked with the electronics on the miniature gas chromatograph and the mass spectrometer,” she said. “They are components in the SAM that test for traces of volatile organic compounds in the atmosphere for present and future spacecraft. Specifically, the components test oxygen, water vapor, carbon dioxide, nitrogen and other compounds.”

Her goal was to identify possible new components, test them in the atmospheric chamber, program the components and integrate to the SAM.

“Because everything is smaller and faster, we had to make sure SAM had smaller electronics with less power consumption at a lower cost,” she said. “It’s smaller and not as heavy to put on a rocket, and it’s more cost-effective. I’m proud that I was involved in this project.”

Webb qualified for the fellowship due to her education and experience. She earned a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Alabama in Huntsville and a master’s degree in engineering from Mississippi State University. She worked for several years as an engineer in two manufacturing facilities before becoming an instructor at Gadsden State six years ago.

“Being able to do engineering in the field again is a wonderful gift,” she said. “I’m able to get a fresh new perspective that I can take to the classroom. I can’t wait to tell my students all about the new technology I’m working with. It’s cutting edge technology created by NASA.”

Though this is the first time Webb has been named a Faculty Fellow, she has done JPL projects in the past with her students, including a 2013 project testing organic compounds using water vapor.

“We have had several students who have interned at JPL as well,” she said. “For the SAM project, they wanted someone with an engineering background who can work with electronics. Our students have always done a great job but they needed someone with more experience for this particular project.”

In addition to the research and project work, Webb also attended lectures by renowned scientists and visited the Goldstone Observatory in the Mojave Desert. The observatory’s complex includes satellites used to track and communicate with space missions.

“Because I was able to take advantage of this fellowship, I feel like I’m a better engineer and an even better educator,” Webb said.
INGRAM STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Ingram State Technical College Celebrates 40-Year Accreditation Milestone

Ingram State Technical College marked 40 years of accreditation by the Council on Occupational Education this year, a milestone that will be recognized at the Council’s annual meeting in November.

Interim president Annette Funderburk said, “COE serves as the accrediting agency for a diverse group of institutions, making it an excellent choice for ISTC. They understand we serve a truly unique student population, and they recognize the constraints associated with delivering quality education to the incarcerated.”

ISTC, which celebrated 50 years of service to students in 2016, was established by the Alabama legislature to provide incarcerated students with “training in useful occupations, and to prepare them to take their place as useful citizens in our society.”

The College serves over 2,600 students annually at five locations across Alabama. In addition to 18 career technical programs, ISTC students can earn their GED or enroll in short-term non-credit training leading to industry certification.
Jefferson State culinary instructors help students earn top national honors

In back-to-back years, the instructors in Jefferson State Community College’s Culinary and Hospitality Institute have helped students win both the gold and bronze medals at the National SkillsUSA Culinary Competition.

Jefferson State Culinary Student Brian Duffett earned the nation’s top award this year, and last year Joy Phillips finished third. To compete in nationals, both students first had to win the Alabama SkillsUSA competition.

“When you’re competing at the national level, you are going against the top culinary students,” said Duffett. “It’s fun, it’s exciting and it really gets your adrenaline pumping.”

During the national competitions, both Duffett and Phillips had to complete protein fabrication skills, knife skills (vegetable cuts), a salad course, a soup course, and two entrées to include protein, starch and vegetables. Competitors are judged on numerous categories such as food safety, cuts, cooking techniques, menu development, professionalism, and more.

“Both Brian and Joy are phenomenal students who excel in all areas of Jefferson State's Culinary Program,” said Director of Jefferson State's Culinary and Hospitality Institute Joseph Mitchell. “They bring a professional work ethic and attitude to both the classroom and kitchen every day. All of us are very proud of their accomplishments and we look forward to their future success.”

“So much of the credit belongs to Chef Mitchell and the Jefferson State Culinary instructors,” said Duffett. “Every instructor helped me and taught me something I needed.”

To learn more about the Jefferson State Culinary Program, go to www.jeffersonstate.edu/chi or call (205) 983-5214.
Lawson State student selected to participate in NASA Scholars program

Lawson State Community College Honors College President, Richard Cribbs III, was accepted as a NASA Science & Engineering Scholar. As a Level-2 NASA Scholar, Richard participated in weekly activities on campus, which included taking a Chemistry 250 Fundamentals of Biochemistry course. The course instructor was former NASA astronaut Dr. Lawrence DeLucas and the course included Ph.D. MERIT Scholars from UAB as well.

Richard was also selected to participate in the online portion of the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars (NCAS) program by a selection panel based on his application profile, essay, and a letter of recommendation. The five-week online component of the program was hosted by D2L and held during June and July 2017, with a final project due for completion. Selection into the fall workshop at a NASA center was based upon his successful completion of the graded online component.

Richard, a 3.9 GPA mathematics major, received a Presidential Community College Scholarship to the University of Alabama and plans to major in Electrical Engineering.

Lawson State receives major NSF STEM implementation grant

The National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded a $1.9 million Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Implementation Grant: Pi-STEM E3 to Lawson State Community College, the third such award in less than 15 years. The goal of the grant is to increase the number of underrepresented minorities pursuing STEM career pathways. The project also provides a model for how community colleges can take a more direct, purposeful role in impacting the potential employment pool of STEM professionals.

Lawson State was also a recipient of NSF HBCU-UP grants in 2005 of 1.2 million and in 2011 of 1.9 million. Through these opportunities, Lawson State is significantly increasing the number of underrepresented minorities in STEM career pathways, more specifically through its STEM Scholar, College Bridge, and Summer Institute Programs.

“We look forward to continuing our efforts to increase and enhance our STEM recruitment, retention, and graduation at Lawson State. The Pi-STEM E3 seeks to engage 8th graders and high school students throughout the metro-Birmingham area broadening the STEM Pipeline to Lawson State Community College and beyond,” said Dr. Perry W. Ward, president of Lawson State Community College.

The current project, led by Dr. Bruce Crawford, vice president of Instructional Services and Dr. Calvin Briggs, director of the HBCU-UP/2-Pi STEM program, seeks to significantly improve student success rates in the community college's STEM programs by creating critical thinkers, increasing STEM literacy, and educating the next generation of STEM professionals. A significant broader impact is the collaboration between the community college and its middle school and high school partners.
LURLEEN B. WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LBWCC expands options in industrial electronics program

Lurleen B. Wallace Community College has new options in the industrial electronics program, enhancing learning opportunities for students and employment opportunities for graduates.

“In addition to a short certificate, this program is now offering two degree options,” said Tammye Merida, LBWCC associate dean of applied technologies. “Starting fall semester, students can choose the industrial systems option or the electromechanical option.”

In the industrial systems option, students will learn about electrical systems including PLCs, motor controls, and construction wiring. The electromechanical option will include courses for industrial equipment including environmental control systems, chain and belt drive systems, and pumps and piping systems.

“Both options include core studies of basic electrical theory and related hands-on lab activities, including new robotics courses,” she said. “Students will be trained and certified in robotics using the new robot we purchased through U.S. Department of Education Title III Strengthening Institutions Grant funds.”

Also purchased for enhanced training are chain and belt drive trainers, shaft alignment trainers and tools, commercial fire
alarms, and new lab stations for commercial and residential wiring labs, she added.

Job opportunities in these fields include industrial manufacturing technicians, service technicians, and industrial mechanics.

“The job opportunities cover a broad area of almost anything involved with electricity and communication systems to industrial mechanical operations. Students who choose to complete both options are in high demand as they are prepared for a range of skills in a short period of time. Many companies look for multi-skilled technicians to be more versatile for company needs.”

A short certificate is also available in the program, which is completely transferrable to the degree options, said Merida.

“The short certificate consists of basic electrical theory courses and hands-on activities to provide for students who need to go to work quickly. If the student decides to further their training at a later time, the classes in the short certificate transfer to the degree options.”

Short certificate earners qualify for employment as electrical or technician helpers, she said.

“The short certificate is also a career path for dual enrollment students to obtain a certificate, which will be valuable if they choose to enter the workforce immediately after graduating high school. Those earning the short certificate will have the opportunity to take the Electronics Technicians Association’s Direct Current and Alternating Current certification exams.”

The industrial electronics program is one of the career technical training programs offered at LBWCC in Opp. For more information on the expanded options, call Allen Teel, LBWCC advanced manufacturing division chair and industrial electronics instructor, at 334-493-5388.
NORTHEAST ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

NACC and JSU sign transfer agreement

Northeast Alabama Community College (NACC) President Dr. David Campbell was joined by Jacksonville State University (JSU) President Dr. John Beehler in signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two colleges designed to facilitate the transfer process for students earning an associate degree at NACC. It is called the Transfer Pathway Program and it will provide a specific route to complete a bachelor’s degree by identifying specific courses students must take at NACC and at JSU upon transfer.

The MOU signing event and reception took place on Wednesday, July 26, at the Mathematics, Science and Engineering Technology Center on the campus of Northeast College. In addition to the presidents of both institutions, several deans, directors, staff and faculty from JSU and NACC were present.

Faculty and academic administrators from both institutions will develop the discipline-specific transfer pathways and students may choose to enter a pathway agreement and follow that pathway for a specific major.

For more information about the MOU, contact Dr. Joe Burke, Vice President/Dean of Instruction at NACC, at 256-638-4418 or 256-228-6001, ext. 2320, or by email at burkej@nacc.edu.

For additional information about NACC, go to www.nacc.edu or download the free App from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
NW-SCC awarded $661,878 per year for Upward Bound Programs

The Upward Bound program at Northwest-Shoals Community College (NW-SCC) has been funded $661,878 for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, an increase of three percent from the previous grant cycle, by the U.S. Department of Education.

NW-SCC is one of 17 colleges or universities in the state of Alabama to receive the Upward Bound grant funding.

NW-SCC houses an Upward Bound program on each of the two campuses. Each program should receive funding for the next five years (2017 - 2022).

The Phil Campbell campus program, which was funded for $380,688, serves specified schools in Colbert, Franklin and Winston counties. The Shoals campus program, which was funded for $281,190, served specified schools in Colbert and Lauderdale counties.

“The Upward Bound Program, along with the other TRiO programs like Talent Search and Student Support Services, are so important to the students we serve,” said NW-SCC President Dr. Humphrey Lee. “All of these programs offer services to help remove obstacles toward a postsecondary education. Without these programs, many students would not be able to realize their dream of a college degree.”

The program is aimed at students between 9th and 12th grades who will be the first in their families to graduate college and who come from lower income backgrounds. The program also encourages individuals to complete a two-year or four-year college degree.

The Upward Bound program is one of three TRiO programs, including Talent Search and Student Support Services, at NW-SCC. The programs are 100 percent federally funded by the U.S. Department of Education.
Shelton State graduate credits instructors with success

Surrounded by a group of his former instructors the week after his graduation, former Shelton State Community College student Sam Schuckert shared fond classroom memories, stories about his grandfather, and his gratitude to each faculty member for the role they played in preparing him for the future.

Schuckert, a former homeschool student, arrived at Shelton State two years ago having never interacted with a teacher. “I grew up using teaching textbooks, so I never really had a true student/teacher interaction,” he said. Though he wasn’t sure what to expect, he would soon develop an appreciation for these relationships. “Every one of my instructors has meant something to me and has helped me.”

Whether it was being the third in his family to have the same math instructor, an “extra-mile” scholarship application review experience with his English instructor, or a life lesson from his art instructor, Schuckert was able to offer specific examples of how faculty and staff influenced him during his time at the College. “I even remember a staff member trying to help me figure out what was wrong with my car,” he recalled.

Schuckert, a recipient of an associate in science degree, credits all his instructors equally in preparing him for his next chapter in nursing school at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. “Naturally, they taught information specific to a course, but they have been instrumental to my development both academically and as an individual. They’ve prepared me for more.”

Faculty and staff at Shelton State look forward to watching Schuckert’s “more” unfold.
Snead State tennis team earns top academic spot in NJCAA

The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) announced that 35 Snead State Community College student-athletes are recipients of NJCAA Academic Awards.

For the second year in a row, the Snead State tennis team earned the top academic spot in women’s tennis in the nation and finished third in the nation among the National Junior College Athletic Association’s 3,400 teams, which spans multiple sports. The team finished with a 3.80 grade point average. Pictured left to right is Olivia Sharpton of Cullman, Brandi Daniels of Arab, Morgan Thompson of Rockmart, GA, Katy Beth Bole of Hartselle, Brooklyn Brothers of Douglas, Alesha Triplett of Oneonta, Alexis Daniels of Arab and Hannah Rains of Albertville.

For the second year in a row, the Snead State tennis team earned the top academic spot in women’s tennis in the nation and finished third in the nation among the National Junior College Athletic Association’s 3,400 teams, which spans multiple sports. The team finished with a 3.80 grade point average.

Three other Snead State teams earned spots amongst the NJCAA’s top academic squads in their respective sports – volleyball (3.52), women’s golf (3.10) and baseball (3.01).

A 4.0 GPA earns NJCAA First Team All-Academic while a 3.80-3.99 will earn NJCAA Second Team All-Academic. NJCAA Third Team All-Academic is awarded to student-athletes with a GPA of 3.60-3.79.

Of the 35 Snead State Parsons earning NJCAA All-Academic, 14 were named to the First Team for their 4.0 GPA.

NJCAA First Team All-Academic Recipients: Baseball- Jacob Coker (Southside), Jordan Nelson (Elkmont), Nathan Doss (Cullman); Women’s Basketball- Paige Ward (Huntsville); Men’s Basketball- Payton Youngblood (Birmingham); Women’s Golf- Cati Harris (Arab); Softball- Torie Garner (Florence); Tennis- Alesha Triplett (Oneonta), Brandi Daniels (Arab), Morgan
Thompson (Rockmart, GA); Volleyball- Ginny Hester (Boaz), Haley Howard (Huntsville), Hannah Smith (Cullman) Sabryn Chandler (Leesburg).

NJCAA Second Team All-Academic Recipients: Baseball- Brandon Matthews (Gadsden), Christian Leonard (Boaz), Ridge Watson (Arab); Men's Basketball- Ryan Dupree (Madison); Women's Golf- Jordan Gregoria (Alexandria); Softball- Alora Whitehead (Scottsboro), Courtney Blevins (Ider); Tennis- Alexis Daniels (Arab); Volleyball- Ashley Norris (Fort Payne), Jada Harris (Danville), Katie Jett (Powder Springs, GA), Morgan Stinson (Somerville).

NJCAA Third Team All-Academic Recipients: Baseball- Riley Shaw (Alexandria); Men's Basketball- Austin Ricks (Florence); Softball- Ashlyn Benefield (Pisgah), Cassidy Underwood (Gadsden), Paxton Nance (Pisgah), Sarah Shook (Hueytown); Tennis- Brooklyn Brothers (Douglas); Volleyball- Hannah Carter (Walnut Grove), Lily Hawkins (Crossville).

Snead State Community College receives Cyber Defense re-designation

Snead State Community College received re-designation as a Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) in Cyber Defense through the year 2022.

The re-designation recognizes the College nationally as a Cyber-Defense Training Center by the Department of Homeland Security, Department of Defense, and the National Security Agency.

“It is an honor to have this recognition and is a result of all the hard work by our faculty in the Computer Information Systems department,” said Snead State Computer Information Systems Program Chair Greg Randall.

The goal of the CAE designation is to reduce vulnerability in the national information infrastructure by promoting higher education and research in Cyber Defense and producing a growing number of professionals with expertise in various cybersecurity disciplines.

“Students attending CAE schools are eligible to apply for scholarships and grants through the Department of Defense and the Federal Cyber Service Scholarship for Service Program. Graduates also received special attention when applying for federal employment,” said Mr. Randall.

Mr. Randall represented Snead State at a special ceremony at the Huntsville Space and Rocket Center in June. The College was recognized for the re-designation.
Trenholm State Community College was selected, along with Bishop State Community College, Drake State Community and Technical College, and George C. Wallace Community College-Selma, to pilot the App Development with Swift curriculum Fall 2017. Trenholm State’s Graphic Design Instructor, Spencer Arington, CIS Instructors, Omekia Harrison and Dr. Syed Raza attended training directly from Apple, Inc. at their headquarters in Cupertino, California this past August to learn the curriculum in order to prepare students for the courses.

The curriculum was designed by Apple, Inc. to teach students the elements of app design using Swift, one of the world's most popular programming languages. Students enrolled in the Swift courses will take three courses that will enable them to explore future jobs in software development and other technology fields.

Trenholm State currently has a mixture of students enrolled in the first course to include new and currently enrolled students in various programs. The College will offer the second course in the Spring and will repeat the first course. Additionally, the College is looking to provide the course in the future through its Workforce Development initiatives. President Munnerlyn stated, “We are proud to be part of this initiative with Apple, Inc. and our sister institutions. We know the importance of preparing our students to meet the needs of the workforce in the River Region and intend to fulfill that obligation through education and training.”

Trenholm State Community College Career Center has a Holistic Approach When Preparing Students for the Job Market

In the past, employers could escape difficult personalities and noisy co-workers by shutting the office door. The design of the modern workplace that has cubicles in wide open spaces, coupled with the increased requirement to collaborate across teams and divisions, underscores why skills like problem solving, interpersonal communication and critical thinking are so important. Business and industry managers have realized that they need employees who are adaptable.

Countless jobs go unfilled every day when employers report that job candidates lack soft skills which often develop an employee's work ethic and professional attitude.
As a result of working with business and industry through workforce development initiatives, Trenholm State Community College (TSCC) has re-tooled its’ Career Center to be more focused on providing workshops and resources to increase students chances of obtaining a job, leading to a career. Maria Richardson, Director of the Career Center says that “students are eager to learn and that Career Services is hoping to bridge the gap and help students to understand that sometimes you don’t know, what you don’t know.” A survey of business and industry conducted by the Workforce Solutions Group at St. Louis Community College found that 60 percent of employers say applicant’s lack “communication and interpersonal skills”—a jump of about 10 percent in the last two years.

Studies also indicate that soft skills directly contribute to an individuals’ success when entering the workforce. TSCC Career Services assists students with exploring, developing and setting goals related to their unique educational and academic needs. Richardson says that “we have integrated soft skills training into our menu of offerings and it has become part of the core mission of the Career Center.”

The center is gearing up to host another career expo in April 2018 which attracts hundreds of students. “We want our students to be as prepared as possible once they leave Trenholm,” says Richardson. According to surveys, companies like Alabama Power, Baptist Hospital, Coca-Cola United Bottling Company, and Russell Brands return year after year because of the highly qualified students that graduate from Trenholm,” Richardson adds. She attributes much of the Career Centers success to the holistic approach used in preparing students for an ever changing workforce.
Wallace-Dothan receives top national honor for student success

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) recently named Wallace Community College – Dothan (WCCD) the number one community college in the nation for student success. The award makes WCCD one of five innovative community colleges named Awards of Excellence winners at the AACC national conference, held in New Orleans on April 24. The Student Success award goes to the community college that has led with purpose and intentionality in an effort to foster student success.

Wallace was recognized for developing and implementing the I-CAN (Improvement, Constant And Never Ending) instructional initiative to help close the socioeconomic gap and increase completion rates. I-CAN focuses on significantly improving student learning through maximum engagement with applicable instruction and supportive relationships. It is a faculty-driven initiative that required a complete redesign of the learning environment, with on-going professional development.

The College backed up its hard work with hard facts.

The I-CAN initiative resulted in a 67 percent increase in the number of AA/AS conferred for 2014-15 as compared to 2010-11 and a 27 percent increase in retention rates. While all students showed significant increases in success, low-income (Pell Grant eligible) minority students experienced over three times more improvement than their higher income counterparts. The measurable benefits for students were achieved with little or no monetary investment.

“This award recognizes exceptional work among the nation’s two-year colleges. The efforts of faculty and staff have been noticed, and our faculty has embraced an extreme level of ownership when it comes to student success,” said WCCD president Linda C. Young. “We are an institution focused on achieving success through quality education and excellent customer service for our students.”

The concept began in 2007 in the science division when analysis revealed gaps in learning caused by higher than acceptable withdrawal rates and low attendance rates (which was the number one problem noted by instructors). The department decided to do something to change the trend with strategies to improve the learning environment such as detailed objectives, lecture videos (more than 7,000 have been recorded so far), frequent assessments, and early interventions. The results were immediate and substantial. The next year revealed a 31 percent increase in the number of students attending class and a 47 percent increase in the number of successful students (C or higher) across all biology courses.

The early success in the science division evolved into I-CAN in 2012, when the College adopted the initiative college-wide. Implementation also occurred in the top ten enrollment and developmental courses, courses that serve many at-risk students.

“This award is simply icing on the cake for a special group of faculty and staff committed to relentless improvements in instructional and support strategies,” said Tony Holland, WCCD dean of instruction. “Instructional strategies created inspirational faculty/student connections and facilitated learning with a diverse student population, and were a direct result of a growth mindset throughout the organization.” Holland accepted the award on behalf of the College.

To be named as the winner for this award, the College must have a comprehensive completion plan, achieved measurable and significant increases in on-time completion, certification completion, and transfer from 2-year to 4-year institution(s). They must also have developed programs to support student success in developmental education, student support services, K-12 partnership/collaboration. In addition, the winner must have substantially contributed to the integration of completion goals and principles across the institution and have promising practices to advance student success.
WCCS Nursing Program Ranks Above National Average in Exam Scores

The Wallace Community College Selma nursing program ranks above the national average in pass/fail rates for the National Council Licensure Examination, which determines if it's safe for a student to begin practice as an entry level nurse. Wallace students pass the NCLEX-RN exam over 87 percent of the time and the NCLEX-PN more than 93 percent of the time. That’s well above the national average for the first time, U.S. educated students, who passed at 84.5 percent of the time in 2016, according to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

“Our ultimate goal is to meet the student where they are and we have an extensive evaluation that we do from admission through graduation … to closely monitor their progression,” said Dr. Tracey Shannon, Wallace’s Director of Health Sciences. “As we move forward, we do remediation to make sure all of our students stay on course.”

Registerednursing.org, an online resource for future and current registered nurses, ranks Wallace as the No. 16 nursing program in the state of Alabama. Dr. Shannon points to dedicated instruction and a supportive administrative staff as to why Wallace’s nursing program, which includes about 145 students, is having the success it is.
Wallace State President Vicki Karolewics elected to American Association of Community Colleges Board of Directors

Dr. Vicki Hawsey Karolewics, president of Wallace State Community College in Hanceville has been elected to the American Association of Community Colleges Board of Directors. Her appointment to the 32-member board, which represents 1,108 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 13 million students, is for a three-year term.

Founded in 1920, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for community colleges at the national level. The association has ongoing interaction with key federal departments and agencies including the U.S. departments of Labor, Education, Energy, Homeland Security, and Commerce, and the National Science Foundation. AACC supports and promotes community colleges through policy initiatives, innovative programs, research and information, and strategic outreach to achieve its mission to “Build a Nation of Learners by Advancing America’s Community Colleges.”

Dr. Karolewics is known as a visionary leader with an enthusiasm for innovation. She has transformed Wallace State Community College in rural Hanceville, Alabama into one of the top community colleges in the nation, twice recognized by the Aspen Institute as having among the best student outcomes in the nation, and ranked among the top colleges in the country for the health care graduates it produces by Community College Week. The Chronicle of Higher Education reported Wallace State as having among the highest graduation rates of the nation's two-year colleges, and Southern Business and Development Magazine ranked Wallace State Top 3 in the South for workforce development. In a separate poll released in Spring 2017, Wallace State was recognized in that magazine as the community college receiving the most votes for “Best Community Colleges in the Birmingham Area for Workforce Training.” When the college joined the prestigious Achieving the Dream initiative in 2012, it was already recognized as among the most advanced community colleges in the consortium based on Dr. Karolewics’ commitment to excellence and positive student outcomes. Since that time, Wallace State has been selected as one of 19 institutions to participate the prestigious AAC&U Roadmap Project and one of 30 colleges named to the AACC Pathways Project. In 2016, the college was listed among Community College Week's Fastest Growing Community Colleges in the U.S. with enrollments of 5,000 or more. It has recently been named a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education by the National League for Nursing, the only community college in Alabama to receive that distinction, and is one of only 180 All-Steinway Schools in the world.

A lifelong, passionate advocate for community college learning experiences, Dr. Karolewics’ 30 years of experience in the Alabama Community College System have provided her with a deep understanding of the needs of community college students and the opportunities that can be provided by the best institutions. Not only is she a product of community college education herself, having earned degrees from Reid State Technical College and Patrick Henry Junior College before completing her bachelor’s from Troy University, and master’s and doctorate in Administration of Higher Education from Auburn University, but her professional experience also includes positions in various roles from support to instruction to the highest levels of administration.

Dr. Karolewics previously served on the AACC Commission on Economic and Workforce Development and was member of AACC’s 2014 delegation to the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) World Congress in Beijing, China. She was also invited to participate in the 2014 White House College Opportunity Day of Action and the Clinton Global Initiative.
Study Alabama: A Consortium for Global Engagement and Economic Development invites members of the Alabama Community College System to learn more about this organization and consider joining. Study Alabama’s mission is to raise the profile of the State of Alabama higher education sector as a global study and research destination with a focus on international student enrollment, education abroad, and the global engagement goals of member institutions and organizations.

Recognizing that travel and educational pursuits abroad are not just for the four-year college students, Study Alabama is helping to bring these opportunities to colleges in the Alabama Community College System. All students can benefit from study abroad. In today’s global economy where students will spend their lives and careers, the knowledge to be versatile and competitive cannot be overvalued. For more information on this effort, contact Ed Douglas, Coastal Alabama Community College, at 251.968.3102 or ed.douglas@coastalalabama.edu.

For more information on Study Alabama, contact Stacye Thompson at 205.856.7920 or sthompson@jeffersonstate.edu.