

## Ouachita Technical College

By SHIRA KELLEY

Daily Record Staff Writer

Ouachita Technical College is constantly growing and the past year has seen much of that growth.

In the past eight years, enrollment has nearly quadrupled. For the Fall 1998 semester, 788 students were registered for credit hours. This semester, 765 students are registered.

June Prince of OTC said, "We had thought enrollment would be lower because of the construction, and the spring semester traditionally has a lower enrollment than the fall semester."

OTC is currently working on a 33,000 square foot building, expected to be completed by late fall. The building will hold a library and learning resource center, a lecture hall, 10 new classrooms, offices and a book store.

OTC has added a Computer Integrated Manufacturing (CIM) lab, where robotic devices perform manufacturing tasks. OTC is the only technical college in Arkansas with a CIM lab.

It is the also the only school in Arkansas to be certified as a Microsoft Authorized Academic Training Program. This was established last year and is part of the Computer Information Systems degree.

OTC offers classes over the Internet in a virtual campus program, including online math and writing labs.

"They can get the same services as a student on campus," Prince said.

The school is also developing an intranet — an internal network on campus, on which all policy manuals and paperwork will be posted. This will allow updating without reprinting and is easier to



Daily Record photo by Shira Kelley

Ouachita Technical College is building a 33,000 square-foot library and learning resource center, which will include classrooms, a lecture hall and offices.

access than sorting through stacks of papers.

"A lot of our information is available to the public through our Web site. We still like for people to come on campus for tours," Prince said.

OTC is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, so some students take general education credits there.

"(Students) know that what they're getting here is as good as they can get anywhere else because it'll transfer," OTC president Dr. Ken Martin said.

Other students take classes for continuing education hours, business and industry training or adult education. In the Fall 1998 semester, 400 people were enrolled in the adult education program and 295 were involved in business and industry training.

Adult education is also changing. It is operated through OTC and was formerly located in the Hot Spring County library. Recently, though, the program relocated to East Page and was incorporated, extending the growth of OTC.



# Food service department successful

By MARK BIVENS

Staff Writer

Since its beginning in 1972, Ouachita Technical College has been an assembly line for reputable food service employees.

OTC director of finance Bob Jones, the second person hired when the school was built, says the school has earned that reputation with quality students venturing into the area of food service and living up to expectations of the high standards OTC sets.

With 15 students under the watchful supervision of food service instructor Tressie McJunkin, Jones says the instructor has an ideal student-teacher ratio most years. The enrollment limit for the class is 20. Too often, Jones says, students have to be turned away because of lack of funding.

"We've had waiting lists and had to turn people away," Jones said of the food service class.

"We couldn't accept them. We do the best to our ability as finances allow."

Jones said students successfully completing the course have a background in most everything involved in commercial food service. The course covers purchasing, management, cooking, cost analysis and a general overall picture of what goes into being a good food service employee or food service business owner.

"We have a real good placement rate," Jones said of students



## Food service students prepare meals.

graduating getting employment in the field of food service. "It's 90-percent plus. She (McJunkin) has calls all the time from (businesses) wanting students. She

has a real good reputation for putting out good students."

McJunkin was a 1975 graduate

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Wednesday  
January 13, 1999

# OTC keeps on growing

■ Enrollment at Ouachita Technical College has grown four-fold in eight years.

By SHIRA KELLEY  
Daily Record Staff Writer

Ouachita Technical College enrollment has nearly quadrupled in the past eight years.

Amber Lindsey, coordinator for Marketing and Public Relations at OTC, said there were nearly 800 students registered for the Fall 1998 semester, up from 210 in 1991.

Dr. Ken Martin, president of OTC, credited part of the increase to the quality of education.

"(Students) know that what they're getting here is as good as they can get anywhere else because it'll transfer" to four-year universities, Martin said.

Part of the growth is due to the relative novelty of two-year colleges, Martin added. Many two-year schools across Arkansas are growing rapidly, but Martin said he expects to see that growth "plateau out to about 1,000 to 1,200 students here at OTC."



Daily Record photo by Shira Kelley

The spring semester at OTC started Monday. The college offers classes to high school students, graduates and non-traditional students. Enrollment has grown from 210 students in 1991 to almost 800 in 1998.

That isn't saying the school plans to become stagnant, either in growth or academics. The school is currently building a 33,000 square foot

library/learning resource center, expected to open by the Fall 1999 semester. It will hold a lecture hall, 10 new classrooms, a book store, offices and the

resource center.

The resource center will include, besides books and resource materials, comput-

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# OTC

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er-aided instruction. Martin said OTC is "probably as well or better equipped with informational technology as any two-year college in Arkansas."

Martin said OTC was a leader in having Internet classes among two-year colleges and also among the first to develop a web site.

Students can take classes over the Internet and have flexible scheduling opportunities through a Virtual Campus Program, Lindsey said. There are also high school concurrent enrollment programs and non-credit continuing education classes.

Martin said 50 to 60 people probably use the Internet courses. Those people are counted as part of OTC's growth although "they're not a significant part ... as time goes on that will be a significant part of our enrollment," he said.

Lindsey said many students choose OTC because it is affordable.

Kathy Francis, a part-time

student at OTC, said, "I wanted to attend college and still be able to pay for my daughter's college education in two years, when she graduates from high school."

Low tuition costs at OTC, she said, "allow me to continue to save money for her and attend college myself."

Tuition is \$38 per semester credit hour, with \$5 associated fees, Martin said. But for those who are unable to save the money for tuition, there are alternatives. Scholarships are provided through the president's office, the Student Government Association and other areas.

The school also uses financial aid packets, such as Pell Grants, and the college foundation helps out in cases of financial need.

"It's part of our policy that no student will be denied an education because of an inability to pay," Martin said.

The average age of OTC students is in the upper twenties, Martin said. However, "every semester there are more people coming to OTC right out of high school."

And the day/night campus populations are about equal,

Martin said. More credit hours are taken through day-time classes because students are there longer, while night students usually come for one class, but there are about the same number of students.

OTC offers two kinds of degrees, as well as certificates. The associate of arts degree is "essentially a transfer degree," with general education courses and some computer credits, Martin said.

The associate of applied science degree is offered in several areas.

Some four-year universities will accept part of it to transfer, but it is more than a transfer degree, Martin said.

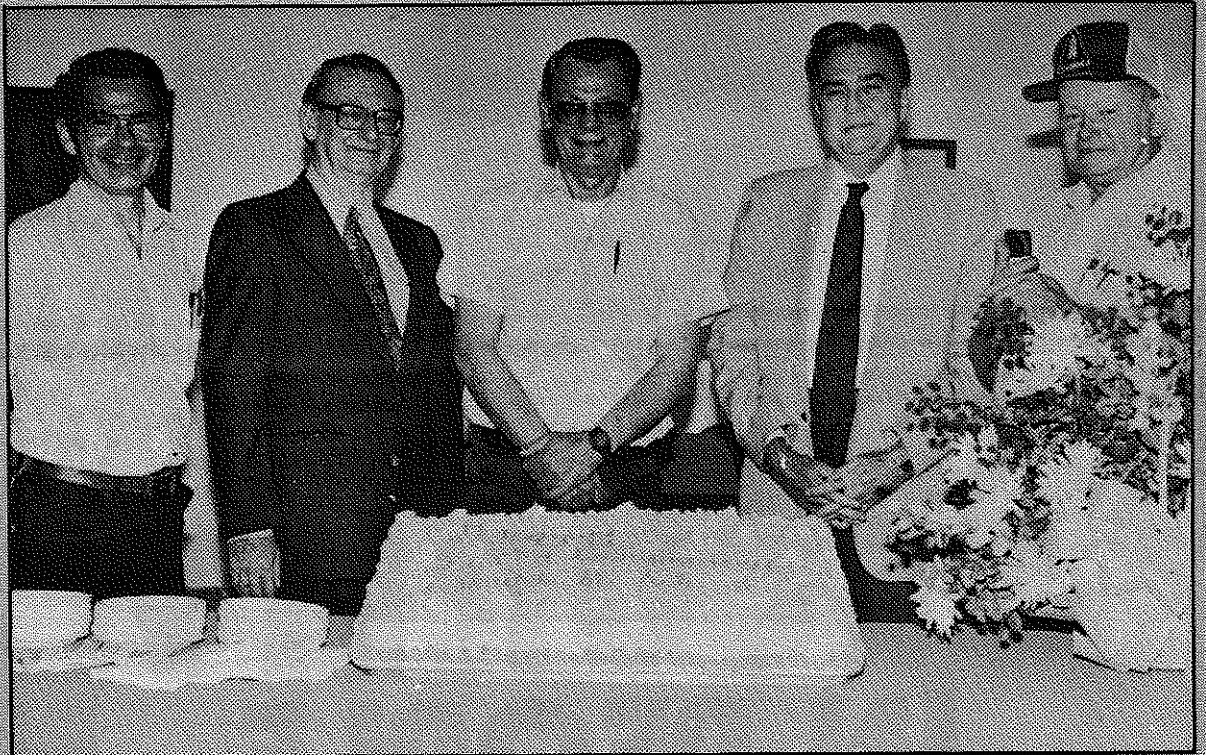
The school also offers technical certificates for specific fields and certificates of proficiency for people seeking to upgrade skills.

"In terms of curriculum, there is no difference" between OTC and community colleges, Martin said.

Community colleges receive millages from their surrounding districts, much like public schools. OTC, though, does not receive any local funding. It is financed by state funds and tuition fees, Martin said.



# 100 years of experience



Daily Record Photo—Gillham

Ouachita Technical College Director Earl Clevenger assembled "this crew of original people" who have been with the school since the beginning, in 1972. The five men's experience at OTC alone totals a minimum of 100 years of experience. Pictured, left to right, are Machine

Shop Instructor Gary Garrison, Business Manager Bob Jones, Business Instructor J. Louis Moles, Supervisor of Instruction Hugh W. Looney and Diesel Mechanic Instructor Dean Carter. The school is celebrating its 20th anniversary with activities throughout the week.