

# Memo

**To: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**From:** Barry Ballard, President *BB*

**Date:** November 19, 2008

**Re:** Update on Various Issues

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Below is a list of significant items and activities at Ouachita Technical College about which I think you will be interested. In this bi-monthly report to you I try to include things that I think you would want to know about the operation and management of OTC that you probably would not otherwise read about in newsletters, email and reports received during the official Board meetings?" These items are in no particular order.

**1. OTC HOSTED A JOB FAIR FOR SYKES ENTERPRISES** Ouachita Technical College was the site of a job fair on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> helping the Malvern area become the new home for a customer technical support center (call-in center) operated by SYKES, Enterprises of Tampa, Florida. SYKES provides expert outsourcing and consulting solutions to the world's leaders in the technology, finance and communications industries for over 25 years. In talking to the SYKES employees, it became obvious that their formula for success is simple – they understand that excellence in service comes from knowing their business, hiring good qualified people, and knowing the client's needs.

Mr. Rene Lafferty an HR person for SYKES reported that "the job fair at OTC was very successful. Based on initial observations I believe we'll be able to meet if not exceed our commitments to our client." Mr. Lafferty continued, "I'd like to take a moment to commend your (OTC) staff - everyone was very helpful and more than accommodating with our needs." The people at the College that SYKES would like to recognize are: Christina Bratton, Amber Childers, Mitzi Overturf, Harley Reeves, Jason Scott, George Welch, David See, and Blake Robertson who were all very accommodating and went the extra mile to make sure that SYKES had a

successful job fair. Additionally, the staff of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services at the Workforce Center was also very instrumental in the success of the job fair. Staff members entered all the participants in the Arkansas Job Link service. The efforts of the DWS staff were lead by Connie Bain of the Malvern office.

The total attendance of the job fair is still being analyzed by the SYKES team, but early projections show that approximately 650 to 700 people walked through the doors of Ouachita Technical College to enquire about employment with SYKES Enterprises and learn about the jobs they have available, the pay ranges and the benefits provided to employees. About 250 came in on Wednesday. About 196 came on Thursday. And, over 200 came on Friday. Their current plans are to start about 150 new employees on February 1, 2009 and then add 50 more new employees a month for a year or until they get up to almost 500 employees. This is a fine new employer for our area.

## **2. NEW STATE (ADHE) PROGRAM EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Dr. Susan Karr, OTC's Vice President of Instruction, was appointed by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) to serve on ADHE's program review committee. This committee is developing procedures to implementing new procedures for program viability and program evaluation. Beginning in 2010, ADHE staff must annually identify existing certificate and degree programs that do not meet AHECB program viability standards. New certificates and associate degrees will be identified for program viability standards after three years, and bachelor's degrees and above will be identified after five years.

The viability standards, based on a three-year average, are as follows: 1. An average of four (4) graduates per year for career and technical education certificates (CTE) and career and technical associate degree programs (AAS); and 2. An average of six (6) graduates per year for transfer associate degrees (AA, AS, and AAT).

Awards of certificates that are imbedded within an associate degree program will count toward program productivity standard. OTC has many of these because we deliberately created career pathways where students can complete certificates of proficiency and/or technical certificates on the way toward completing an associate degree. When calculating the three-year average of a degree program with imbedded certificates, a student will only be counted once –either as certificate or an associate completer. If the highest award of an imbedded program does not meet the graduate threshold and produces less than 50% of the graduates in the entire program (certificates and associate's degree), the highest award will be discontinued if the number of graduates does not meet the threshold within two years.

Career and technical education programs (CTE) with low degree production may be reconsidered by providing specific evidence of market demand for students



who do not complete the degree. Evidence must include a history of high job placement rates at high wages for non-completers.

All certificate and degree programs offered by public colleges and universities in Arkansas will be reviewed through the Existing Academic Program Review Process. This review process includes the following parameters: 1. All academic programs will be externally reviewed every 7-10 years. Each institution will submit its recommended program review cycle to ADHE. Technical programs will require a local evaluator and an out-of-state reader. AA/ AAT programs will require an out-of-state evaluator and an out-of state reader; 2. Programs under separate accreditation or licensure by state boards will not be subject to review in this manner. Accredited/licensed/state certified programs will follow the usual review practices and schedule of the accrediting/approval body. The site team's written evaluation and institutional response will be sent to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

We think all of OTC's programs are in good shape and will meet these new state standards.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, FUND RAISING, AND FOUNDATION UPDATE**

The following shows the actual cash total for each account as of November 14, 2008.

Scholarship Endowment	\$356,300
Instructional Technology Center	\$ 44,601
Unrestricted	\$ 6,463
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Total	\$407,364

This total is up from our last report that showed a total of \$357,290. Two final drawdowns from U.S. Department of Education Title III Endowment Grant were performed in September totaling \$40,345.

Significant contributions received during this period include a \$6,000 pledge payment from MNB Bank.

During the five-year Title III grant that recently ended on September 30, 2008, the College and the OTC Foundation was impacted in many positive ways. The number of prospective donors, private sector donors, and corporate donors all increased significantly. An Alumni database was developed and now consists of 795 OTC alumni. The College's first scholarship endowment was established and with matching funds from the grant, that endowment now contains \$356,300, an amount that may allow the Foundation to give 15 or 16 \$500 scholarships annually to needy students.

### **4. TITLE III GRANT PROJECT UPDATE - IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS**

On September 30, 2008, Ouachita Technical College finished its Title III grant project. The grant project had two main activities. The goal of activity one was the creation of the College's first scholarship endowment and the grant provided



matching money for endowment fund raising. The emphasis of the other main activity of this five-year grant project was to improve the retention and graduation rates, student success rate in developmental courses, professional development for faculty and staff, and an increased use of instructional technology to improve student learning. At the end, OTC has accomplished the following:

- A. The overall retention goal was met at the end of the grant. The goal was to increase from 39% to 49%; the OTC retention rate is currently at 50%.
- B. The goal of increasing the retention/success rates in gateway courses was also met. The retention/success rates increased by 6.5 percentage points from our baseline year.
- C. Retention/success rates increased in developmental courses.
- D. Increase instructional technology resources in classroom so that faculty can vary instructional methodologies to accommodate the varying learning styles of students to increase student success. By Christmas, there will be a total of 18 "smart" classrooms on the OTC campus. There are 7 in the new Arts & Education Building, 3 in the science building; 2 in the Business Technology area, 2 in the Allied Health (Nursing) Building, 1 in the Applied Science area, 1 in the lecture hall, and 2 in the A classroom building. There are two general use computer labs available (one in the new Arts and Sciences building and one in the A classroom building). Additional instructional equipment was purchased such as computerized student response systems, webcams, DVD burners, and such.
- E. The use of the student Early Alert system has increased. A total of 254 alert reports were received from faculty on 201 students so far during the current semester. At midterm, 54% of students failing two or more classes had been reported by instructors. This is an increase of 34% from last semester. Out of the 201 students failing at midterm, 42 had withdrew and 82 have improved their grades when check just a week after midterm. All students who were failing were contacted by letter and approximately 25% then contacted the student success coordinator to discuss needed behavior changes to be successful.
- F. A focus has been on high risk students who are conditionally admitted because they assess into two or more developmental courses. There were 85 of these transitional students during the 2007-2008 school year that were in the program. Ninety-four percent (94%) of these students were retained and 90% completed the year with a GPA of 2.0 or better. During the current Fall 2008 semester, there are 65 transitional students. All these high-risk students are being tracked throughout the semester with instructors meeting formally and informally to discuss academic achievement of these students and their needs.

**5. ACHIEVING THE DREAM GRANT INITIATIVE** In the spring of 2008, the College used data to identify three areas in which we could improve student success and retention in College. The problematic areas that we chose to address



were in Intermediate Algebra (which had a 44% success rate in fall 2004, 2005, and 2006 cohorts); in student success overall as measured by retention in college (which had a 44% retention rate in the fall 2004 to summer 2007 cohort); and in Basic Composition (in which African Americans had a 54% success rate verses a 70% success rate for whites in the 2004, 2005, and 2006 cohorts).

Three initiatives were undertaken to improve on these areas. First, alternative delivery methods of extended class time and providing a traditional instructor-lead classroom were implemented in Intermediate Algebra. Secondly, Student Affairs created a comprehensive orientation and improved First Year Experience strategies to help retention of students overall. Third, a Basic Grammar/Basic Composition combo class was piloted with redesigned curriculum.

While these changes are yet too new to generate useful data, we do have some preliminary findings. In Intermediate Algebra, we are finding that faculty, teaching in a traditional classroom, have difficulty matching the pace of the ICanLearn Lab, and that there is less student participation in a teacher-lead class than in self-paced sections of math. Also, those students in the extended Intermediate Algebra class are completing lessons at the same rate as those in non-extended time classrooms. Additionally, we have too few students enrolled in the math pilot to draw solid conclusions, so that part of the pilot will be extended for another semester.

In Student Affairs, we have found that if orientation is mandatory before students can register, they will attend orientation, and we have found that special retention efforts have to be made with African American males. A focus Group of African American males revealed that we need to spend more time on explaining the transferability of OTC's courses to four year colleges, we need to engage the population through social networking, and we need to work on the College's image—perhaps by dropping "Technical" from its name.

In Basic Composition, we have learned that the low enrollment of African American males skews our data, so we need to work on getting more of these students into College and into our pilot classes. We need to investigate further the relationship between Compass placement scores and the Compass e-Write scores being used to assess readiness for and success in the combo class. To date, we find that 9 out of 11 students in the course are on track to get credit for both Basic Grammar and Basic Composition. This is a good thing. However, none of the nine students succeeding in the combo course are African American male, so there is yet no evidence that the combo course can help them.

Once there is a full year of data from these initiatives, we will have a much better sense of what is working and what is not working in our efforts to help our students stay in college and succeed there.



## **6. THE CRAFT LAW SUIT WAS DISMISSED BY FEDERAL JUDGE DAWSON**

We were thrilled to inform you on October 21, 2008 that Federal District Judge Robert Dawson had granted our motion for summary judgment and dismissed, with prejudice, Mr. Curtis Craft's claims of racial prejudice and retaliation. "With Prejudice" means that the Plaintiff Craft cannot file another lawsuit with similar claims anytime in the future, though he can appeal Judge Dawson's decision to the Federal Court of Appeals, providing he does so before November 22, 2008.

I have enclosed a copy of Judge Dawson's order of October 21, 2008, within which he dismissed the lawsuit. The document is full of employment law legaleze and is sometimes hard to read, but it details the circumstances of Mr. Craft's termination and all the legal reasons why the motion for summary judgment was granted. I actually enjoy reading it.

When the legal complaint behind a lawsuit like this one first becomes public, the defendants feel terrible because the language used by the plaintiff in the complaint portrays us administrators as incompetent, unreasonable, unfair, and racist. Then the plaintiff and his lawyers set about trying to prove that portrayal to the court. Mr. Craft's lawyer, Mr. John Walker, attempted to ridicule all of us during the lengthy depositions. It was not fun and a trial would have been worse.

When the Judge's order identified the actual facts of the case, it turns out that the plaintiffs are competent, after all, they are not racists, and their dealings with employees are fair and reasonable. When I read the order, I cannot help but feel vindicated. The discouragement and weight of these allegations lasted for more than two years and, hopefully, they are now behind us.

**7. END OF 2008 FALL SEMESTER ACTIVITIES** As we approach the end of the current fall semester we are reminded about the related campus activities as well as the usual year end and holiday activities calendar which include:

- A. The campus will be closed for the Thanksgiving break on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 26-28, 2008 and returning on Monday, December 1, 2008.
- B. Tuesday, December 2, 2008, 5:00 p.m. is the next Board of Trustees meeting on campus in the Board Room.
- C. Final exam week ends on Thursday, December 11, 2008 and final grades are due by Monday, December 15.
- D. The RN pinning ceremony has been changed to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 9, 2008 at the First Baptist Church.
- E. The LPN pinning ceremony will be at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 11, 2008 at the First Baptist Church.
- F. The OTC Christmas luncheon party for all employees and Board members will be at 11:45 a.m., on Friday, December 12, 2008 on the OTC campus in Room A300 (Great Room).
- G. The students and faculty will start their Christmas holiday beginning Monday, December 15, 2008.



- H. The staff and administration begin their Christmas holiday on Tuesday, December 23, 2008. The campus will be closed during the days of December 23, 2008 until Monday, January 5, 2009.
- I. Faculty also return to campus for the Spring 2009 Semester on Monday, January 5, 2009 and student registration resumes that day.
- J. Classes for the Spring 2009 Semester begin on Monday, January 12, 2009.

**END** This concludes my report for this period. We look forward to seeing you after Thanksgiving at the last regular Board meeting of the year at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 2, 2008. A light dinner snack with sweets and beverages will be available for you after 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room where we will have the meeting. Future Board meetings are scheduled next year on January 27, 2009; March 31, 2009; June 2, 2009; July 28, 2009; September 29, 2009; and December 1, 2009.

We hope that you will join us for the RN and LPN pinning ceremonies and especially for the holiday luncheon on Friday, December 12, 2008 here on campus.

Thanks again for your commitment, many contributions, and support.



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Below is a list of significant items and activities at Ouachita Technical College about which I think you will be interested. I apologize for the length of this report. This document seems to frequently become longer than I expect it to when I first start writing. I always start with a list of things that result when I ask myself, "If I were a Trustee, what would I want to know about the management of OTC that I do not find out about in newsletters, email and reports received during the official Board meetings?" The items are in no particular order.

## **1. GOVERNOR BEEBE APPOINTS TWO NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

We were very happy to receive word on August 8, 2008 that Governor Mike Beebe had appointed two new members to the OTC Board of Trustees. The two new Board members are Ms. Dee Edie, President, Diamond Lakes Federal Credit Union, and Ms. Jean Harper, Assistant Director, Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC). Both of these new Board members reside in Hot Spring County.

We have been working with both of these fine community leaders for several years. Ms. Harper has been a major partner with us at the Workforce Center and she has worked with us on the New Arkansans Resource Network (NARN) and as a Board member of the Latin Community Organization (LCO). Ms. Edie was appointed to fill the remainder of the term of former Board member Ms. Kristi Norris. She has been very active in various leadership positions, including President and Executive Board, of the Malvern/Hot Spring Chamber of Commerce and as an OTC Foundation Board member.



We have updated the OTC Board information document and it is attached for your information. We are delighted with these new Board members and they both are excited about their appointment and their opportunity for service.

## **2. CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW BUILDING IS COMPLETE**

The construction of the Arts and Sciences Center is complete. By the time you receive this report we will have had our dedication, ribbon cutting and open house. The students, faculty, and staff who use it every day love it. It is a great place to learn and to work. The beauty and functionality of the building makes me feel good every time I step into it. Other students and faculty say they have the same great feeling each time they enter.

We have had challenges getting the grounds outside the building in good shape and landscaped. We deliberately did not attempt to plant things in mid-summer because the hot dry conditions usually causes them stress and many of them die. However, when we were finally ready and trying to put in new trees and plants, we get 3.5 inches of rain one week followed by another week with Gustov that produces 10.5 inches of rain and 50+mph winds followed by a week with Ike and another spell of 3.5 inches of rain with 40+mph winds. Conditions for landscaping have been far from ideal until this week, but we are trying to make things look as nice as possible for the dedication.

The OTC Foundation Board has also planned a meeting at noon on that date following the dedication to make some final decisions about the scholarship endowment matching funds. The Title III grant ends on September 30 and all matching opportunities will be gone after that date.

## **3. THE STATUS OF THE CURTIS CRAFT COMPLAINT**

The activities related to defending ourselves against the Curtis Craft law suit continues to intensify as we get closer to the Monday, October 27, 2008 trial date (U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas, Hot Springs Division). The Court has scheduled a mandatory settlement conference with a judge magistrate for Thursday, October 16, 2008 in the U.S. District Court House, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Prior to that date both sides and their attorneys are required to disclose to the judge magistrate (1) The strengths and weaknesses of our respective cases and (2) What we would offer to settle the case. The rules of the settlement process and conference are such that no information disclosed by the respective sides can be discussed or entered as evidence in the actual trial at the end of the month before the federal judge and jury.

The conference is much like an administrative hearing during which the representatives for the two sides meet together briefly to review their positions verbally with the judge magistrate then the two sides are put into separate private conference rooms. The judge magistrate, who is knowledgeable about the case from having studied the written materials, previously submitted the two sides, then shuttles between the two rooms for private discussions to try to broker or facilitate a coming together for a settlement agreement. If an agreement can be reached,



the judge magistrate has the attorneys for the two sides write up the proposed agreement, which he then submits to the court. The settlement has to be approved by the federal judge in a formal order. It was during the settlement conference back in 2004 when we were able to settle the Lynette Smith lawsuit the result of which had her resign for a modest amount of money that was less than the annual salary she earned. Our weakness in that case was that the plaintiff was finally able to identify witnesses who would say they heard the former president threaten to fire or demote them or someone else if they did not do what he demanded, so they had evidence of retaliation on the grievance she appealed to the Board, something that is protected by federal law.

Our attorney, Assistant Attorney General Ka Tina Hodge, believes that the Plaintiff essentially admitted, in his deposition, that he failed to perform certain components of his job and that he failed to comply with reasonable work requests of his supervisor (insubordination). She, therefore, plans to send the Court the evidence mentioned above along with a request for dismissal of the complaint or summary judgment in the next week or so.

Asst. A.G. Ka Tina Hodge remains confident that we will prevail in both the federal court and with the Claims Commission, for which she will provide defense counsel on both. Plaintiff has not yet filed a "breach of contract" complaint with the Arkansas Claims Commission. As you may recall, the Federal Court, at Defendant's request, threw out this part of Plaintiff's original complaint and he has since filed an amended complaint without it. Our attorney remains confident that the suit can be successfully defended in every respect. She invites any Board member to call her at 501-682-1307 to discuss anything about the case.

#### **4. ACHIEVING THE DREAM INITIATIVES FOR 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR**

As you may recall, in 2007, OTC became a Round Four Achieving the Dream (AtD) participant in a competitive application process in which only four two-year colleges in Arkansas were selected. The goal of this AtD initiative is: "to achieve high rates of success for all students—and especially groups that have traditionally faced the most significant barriers to success—colleges must have a student-centered vision, a culture of evidence and accountability, and a commitment to equity and excellence. We have now received approval on our work plan and the \$100,000 budget for the 2008-09 school year, the second year of the five-year initiative.

Through the 2007-08 school year, the AtD Core and Data Teams studied data on cohorts of full- and part-time, award-seeking students who had been tracked until graduation or transfer. Data studied this year included 2004, 2005, and 2006 cohorts enrolled from fall 2004 through summer 2007. AtD's following Five Indicators of Institutional Improvement were analyzed:

1. Complete developmental courses;
2. Complete College Algebra and Composition I;
3. Successfully complete attempted courses;



4. Re-enroll from term to term and year to year;
5. Graduate, i.e., earn certificates and degrees.

Findings of data analysis of the five AtD Indicators were:

- Low success rates in intermediate algebra (44 percent in combined fall 2004, 2005, 2006 cohorts);
- Low percentage of cohort students graduate, transfer, or re-enroll (44 percent for fall 2004 cohort tracked to summer 2007);
- Low success rates of African-Americans in basic composition (54 percent as compared to 70 percent for total population in combined 2004, 2005, 2006 cohorts).

These findings became priorities around which interventions were planned. Those interventions that will be implemented this year include (1) Intermediate Algebra—the pilot of an increased-time I CAN Learn math lab class to 240 minutes per week (now 150 minutes per week), the pilot of a teacher-led class, and their comparison to the current I CAN Learn lab delivery; (2) Basic Composition—pilot a combination basic grammar/basic composition class, conduct focus groups with African-American males for their input on writing topics, training faculty in writing pedagogies that contextualize grammar instruction within students' own writing; and (3) the review and revision of first-year experience components (orientation, advising, engagement activities, tutoring, etc.). Measurable two-year and four-year goals for each of these interventions have been established. We are working on all three of these planned interventions right now.

#### **5. DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, FUND RAISING, AND FOUNDATION UPDATE**

The following shows the actual cash total for each of the three development accounts as of September 16, 2008:

Scholarship Endowments	\$280,468
Instructional Technology Center	\$ 44,385
Unrestricted	\$ 32,437
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Total	\$357,290

This total is up from our last report that showed a total of \$304,161.

The OTC Foundation hosted its first Big Bingo Bash fundraiser on Friday, August 15. The OTC Great Room overflowed with more than 150 enthusiastic bingo players. The event raised more than \$9,000 for the Scholarship Endowment fund and drew people in from all around Central Arkansas. In the middle of the evening, a raffle was drawn for a Nintendo Wii, won by Mrs. Dot Paladino. Below is a breakdown of revenue and expenses for the event.

## BIG BINGO BASH Revenue and Expenses

Sponsors		\$5,917.80
Cash/Checks	\$5,917.80	
In-Kind (non-cash prizes)	\$2,775.00	
Total All Sponsors	\$8,692.80	
Bingo Revenue		
From Tickets and Addl. Card sales		\$4,166.46
Raffle Ticket Sales		\$420.00
Food Sales		\$291.31
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Total cash brought in		\$10,795.57
Expenses:		
DFA (permit)	\$35.00	
Signsmith (banner)	\$132.50	
Graphics Xpress (tickets)	\$52.80	
Arkansas Bingo Supplies	\$340.00	
Sam's (food)	\$77.19	
Food Center (drinks)	\$74.93	
Cookies	\$17.55	
Wal-Mart (prizes)	\$250.00	
Total Expenses	\$979.97	(\$979.97)
Total profit		\$9,815.60

Prizes valued from \$203.00 to \$426.00 were awarded as prizes as well as a Nintendo Wii. Total value of prizes awarded was \$5,741.90.

The following businesses played a major role in increasing the profits of the Big Bingo Bash by sponsoring the event: Young's Health Mart, KBOK/KLAZ, Joe Keith, Malvern Daily Record, MNB Bank, Southern Bancorp, Southern State Bank, Summit Bank, Winner's Circle Convenience Stores, Roger and Deborah Coomer, Diamond Lakes Federal Credit Union, Stephen Efird, DDS, Food Center, Grayer Electric, Joe and Susan Karr, Kindy & Elliott, CPA, Lisenby's Jewelry, Regency Funeral Home, US Bank, Wal-Mart, and Western Sizzlin. The amount contributed by these sponsors to the Big Bingo Bash was \$5,917.80 cash/checks and \$2,775.00 in-kind services/donations for a total of \$8,692.80.

In development activities, other significant contributions received during this period include a \$5,000 pledge payment from Summit Bank and a \$2,000 pledge payment from Southern State Bank.

In June, the OTC Foundation approved a drawdown of \$28,000 from the U.S. Department of Education Title III matching funds. With only days left until the end of the Title III grant, the OTC Foundation approved a drawdown on September 19,



at its last meeting. The total amount for the 2007-08 grant year that will be matched is \$50,000 bringing the total amount over the five year grant period to \$155,000. With the matching funds, the Scholarship Endowment fund will grow to \$310,000 plus interest. After September 30, 50 percent of the interest earned may be used for scholarships.

## **6. STUDENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**

Dr. Cortez Henderson, OTC's new Vice President of Student Affairs, began work on August 1, 2008. Because of an Achieving the Dream workshop that we sent her to and because of some vacation time for which I gave her permission at the time of the job offer (this allowed her to fulfill some long standing obligations she had made to conduct in-service training for teachers at several other school districts), she probably did not spend a full work week in OTC Student Affairs until late August. She has spent a lot of time visiting with each individual to learn about his or her responsibilities and getting to know them personally. She has had several sub-group meetings and a full staff meeting/in-service training session.

This particular group has always done okay but it has never had good teamwork. The individuals are dependable, hard working, and interested in student success. One of the challenges is that there are four specialized sub-groups in the department, three of which have become organizational silos. These three subgroups, (1) TRiO, (2) Admissions and Registrar, and (3) Student Financial Aid, can work independent of each other and the subgroups frequently fail to communicate with each other until they have an emergency. They depend on one another to provide all the necessary services that students need and expect, but they can get by without working together because the fourth sub-group (counselors and advisors) get them to coordinate on a functional level just enough to give the impression to students that everyone is working together like a well-oiled machine. Nothing could be further from the truth. Dr. Henderson's challenge is to get them to work together as a team – a very unnatural act.

Dr. Henderson is female; black; assertive; confident; expects high performance; is formal in her manners and dress; wants employees to be accountable, collaborative, cooperative with each other and use initiative especially where student needs are being addressed; and wants outrageous customer service for our students. Most of her subordinate staff is not yet comfortable with all these aspects. Problems with some employees have come up during the initial six weeks. About half of the employees in the department could not be happier. We have had three grievances and one resignation. Both Dr. Henderson and I have made some mistakes with the employees in the department, and we are adjusting and changing to become managers that are more effective.

Dr. Henderson has resolved two of the grievances within the department working directly with the employees who had complaints. Things are getting better. The third grievance resulted in the one resignation. This unhappy employee was Mrs. Brandi Martin. (See the Appendix for more details on Mrs. Martin's resignation)

Late last week Dr. Henderson had a long meeting with all of the Student Affairs staff. It was a good meeting. I think things are improving in the department and that there is less tension in the air in spite of many angry students complaining. Next week they will get their checks and this will pass. Dr. Henderson and I both believe that the SA department members can and will improve their communication and teamwork. This group has the potential to move from good to great.

**END**

This concludes my report for this period. We look forward to seeing you at the next regular Board meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 30, 2008. A light dinner snack with sweets and beverages will be available for you after 4:30 p.m. in the Board Room where we will have the meeting. Future Board meetings are scheduled on December 2, 2008 and the proposed meeting schedule for 2009 has meetings on January 27, March 31, June 2, July 28, September 29, and December 1.

Thanks again for your commitment, many contributions, and support.



## **Appendix**

### Information on the Brandi Martin Resignation

The unhappiness of Ms. Martin resulted from some advice and questioning she got from Dr. Henderson after a student's privacy was violated and his issues were being broadly discussed all over campus by students, staff, and faculty. Ms. Martin helped the student apply for federal financial aid, learned during her private conference with him that he had been in prison for a few years and had been convicted of battery – a violent crime, and was out on parole. She learned this because the application requires information about employment and address information for several previous years. The student told her everything and more than she needed to know. After the session was over, Ms. Martin let Dr. Henderson know about the convicted felon we now had on campus. It was very proper for her to do this. Dr. Henderson told her that it was not illegal or improper for him to be in college here and that we were a college of second chances for many students. Within hours the student, his background, and his issues were being broadly discussed all over campus by students, staff, and faculty. After Dr. Henderson heard about the scuttlebutt, she talked again with Ms. Martin about the student's privacy rights under the federal FERPA law and enquired about whom she may have talked to about the student. The discussion did not go well. Ms. Martin got upset because of the repeated questions and felt that Dr. Henderson did not believe her, was prejudging her, did not trust her, was disrespecting her, and was inferring that she was not telling the truth.

Ms. Martin contacted Ms. Rhonda Smith, Personnel Officer (and also Affirmative Action Officer and Equal Employment Opportunity Officer), who told her how to file a formal grievance by putting her complaint in writing and that it required a clear statement of the problem and a proposed remedy. Our COPP on problem solving and grievance has an informal stage during which the aggrieved employee meets with the supervisor and they discuss the problem and seek a resolution. Most problems can and should be resolved at this stage. The second stage is a formal grievance requiring the employee to put the complaint in writing by a clear statement of the problem(s) along with a proposed remedy. This written grievance may be given to the supervisor or to the personnel officer. Then a formal hearing is scheduled between the employee and the supervisor and it requires the personnel officer to be present to record the session and to moderate and provide technical assistance. The supervisor is required to make a decision and to give that decision in writing within a specified time. If the decision of the supervisor is unsatisfactory, the employee may appeal the decision up the chain of command by requesting a review in writing with a statement of the problem and a remedy and giving it to the Personnel Officer.

After the unpleasant advice and questioning by Dr. Henderson, Ms. Martin became increasingly upset. She talked with her supervisor, Ms. Teresa Avery about the problem and she talked to Ms. Smith who told her how to file a written grievance. Then she called me and asked for a meeting. I was able to work her in my schedule within 45 minutes and she came over and told me about her problem and about



being upset. She was visibly angry, upset, and emotional. I told her about the informal and the formal stages of the procedure. She said that she did not think that she could talk with Dr. Henderson. I suggested that she ask Ms. Avery to accompany her to a meeting with Dr. Henderson. In addition, I urged her to give Dr. Henderson a chance to deal with the problem and to try to work it out with her. I requested that she try the informal method before filing a formal, written grievance. She left my office still upset and went to Ms. Avery's office to discuss a possible meeting with Dr. Henderson. Ms. Avery called me within 10-15 minutes and said that Ms. Martin was so upset and emotional that she could barely talk and she felt Ms. Martin should take the rest of the afternoon off at which time Ms. Martin left the campus.

Early the next morning, the Thursday before the Labor Day weekend, I learned that Ms. Martin had returned to work. I was glad about that because it was still very early in the semester and many students were still bringing in documents to support their financial aid applications. Ms. Avery had taken Thursday and Friday off as she had to take her ailing mother to the doctor and she wanted to get an early start on a trip out of state to see her husband who works in the Midwest.

At about midmorning I get a call from Ms. Rhonda Smith who requests a meeting right away in my office with her and Ms. Martin regarding Ms. Martin's grievance. I invite them to come over. During the meeting with the two of them, Ms. Smith tells me that Ms. Martin has filed a written grievance against Dr. Henderson and given it to her because she does not want to talk to Dr. Henderson believing it to be futile and too upsetting to Ms. Martin. I told them that I would approve skipping the informal stage if they felt strongly that it would be futile, but that I did not like the fact that Dr. Henderson was not going to get a chance to resolve an informal complaint. Then I asked Ms. Smith if Ms. Martin had given her a proper written grievance with a clear statement of the problem and a remedy. She said, "Sort of." She then said that the complaint was clear enough, but the proposed remedy was not something about which Dr. Henderson had the authority to bring about. I asked Ms. Martin to explain and she said that she requested that the campus organizational structure be redrawn with Student Financial Aid under Dr. Coomer the Vice President of Finance and Administration because, "I can get along with him and I will not work under Dr. Henderson under any circumstances." I told her that her proposed remedy was out of the question, but that I wanted Ms. Smith to contact Dr. Henderson anyway to schedule a hearing so Dr. Henderson would have a chance to hear the problem directly and to try to work something out with Ms. Martin. Ms. Martin got emotional, got up to leave and said that would not work as she walked out of the office. Ms. Smith remained behind and I told her that I hoped that Ms. Martin would not quit and would give Dr. Henderson a chance to work it out. I asked Ms. Smith to go ahead and contact Dr. Henderson to schedule a hearing and to proceed with that hearing as soon as possible.



Ms. Smith called me back in about 30 minutes and said that Ms. Martin had brought her a written resignation, boxed up all her personal effects in her office, turned in her keys, and left campus very upset.

Ms. Martin had been with the college for more than ten years, was an OTC honor graduate, finished a Bachelor's degree in Business with Franklin University with straight As, was a hard worker and very dependable. I was very sad that she resigned and left. Dr. Henderson was also off campus the Thursday and Friday. Thursday, I gave her permission to telecommute from home to finish a large project (a work plan on the third AtD intervention mentioned on page 4 above) in preparation for the upcoming Core Team meeting and visit by our AtD Coach and Data Facilitator. I talked with Dr. Henderson several times that Thursday and exchanged several email messages with her so I know she was working. She also brought in a draft of a complete, detailed work plan early the following week. She had done a lot of work.

I regret that Dr. Henderson never got to talk with Ms. Martin about her problem and hurt feelings, never saw Ms. Martin's written grievance, and never got a chance to try and work out the problems with her. Ms. Martin did not give her that chance.

I do not know if Ms. Martin deliberately intended to hurt the college by leaving at a very critical moment when the urgent completion of her work was essential to disburse grant and loan funds to students on a timely basis. She should have known the consequences of her unfinished work. The college schedules the first cash disbursement of the balance of Pell Grant and Loan proceeds (after tuition, fees and textbook charges are deducted) exactly 31 days after school starts (federal regulations require 30 days to make certain the students start and stay in college that long before they get cash). The published date was September 19, 2008. Ms. Avery could not get all the processing and reporting done by herself so that the students could get their checks on September 19. Early last week, on the eighth, we started notifying the students that their checks would not be ready until September 26. This is a one-week delay. Over 500 students who thought they were getting a Pell Grant disbursement and over 100 additional students who thought they were getting a federally guaranteed loan disbursement will not receive their check on time, but will get their check a week late. Dozens of students are already complaining that they needed the money for groceries, gasoline, and other bills and asked if there was any way that OTC could give them a bridge loan. Sadly, we cannot legally help them. Sadly, we have hundreds of angry students who are in a financial predicament.

Ms. Martin had a written contract with the college that ended June 30, 2009. She walked out and broke that contract. In so doing, she left us in a bad predicament. If she had given us two weeks notice, notice of intent of nonrenewal of her contract for next year, or requested to be released from her contract, she would have left under professional conditions. I am very angry about the way she chose to leave.



STATE OF ARKANSAS  
MIKE BEEBE  
GOVERNOR

## OFFICIAL APPOINTMENT

Date: August 8, 2008

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE:

Under the provisions of Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-61-529,

I have, on this date, appointed Delores "Dee" Edie,

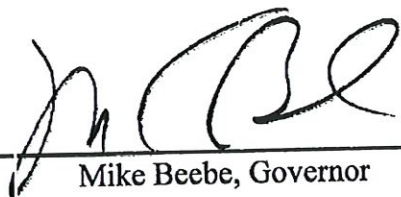
whose address is <sup>delete</sup> 73333 Highway 270, Malvern, AR 72104, Hot Spring County,

and whose telephone number is w: 501-332-6530, h: 501-337-4402,

as a member of the Ouachita Technical College Board of Trustees

for the term which expires July 1, 2012.

Replaces: Kristi Norris

  
Mike Beebe, Governor







STATE OF ARKANSAS  
MIKE BEEBE  
GOVERNOR

## OFFICIAL APPOINTMENT

Date: August 8, 2008

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE:

Under the provisions of Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-61-529,

I have, on this date, appointed Jean Harper,

whose address is 5431 Country Club Road, Malvern, AR 72104, Hot Spring County,

and whose telephone number is w: 501-778-1133, h: 501-332-3956,

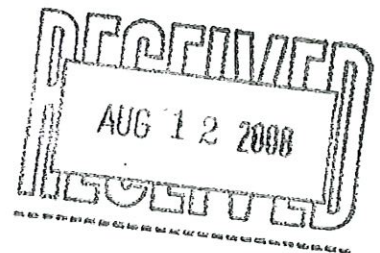
as a member of the Ouachita Technical College Board of Trustees

for the term which expires July 1, 2015.

Replaces: Ray Ollar

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Beebe", written over a horizontal line.

Mike Beebe, Governor



## Ouachita Technical College

One College Circle  
Malvern, AR 72104

Phone: 501-337-5000 E-Mail: otcweb.edu Home Page: www.otcweb.edu

### Board Officers

2008 – 2009

Mr. Bill Stilwell, Chair – Malvern, Arkansas  
Judge John Cole, Vice Chair – Sheridan, Arkansas  
Ms. Delores "Dee" Edie, Secretary – Malvern, Arkansas  
Ms. Jean Harper – Malvern, Arkansas  
Mr. Jimmie Lea – Malvern, Arkansas  
Mr. Pete Paladino – Malvern, Arkansas  
Mr. Don Tackett – Malvern, Arkansas

### Administrative Staff

Name	Position	Phone & Ext. / Direct Dial	Fax	E-Mail
Dr. Barry Ballard	President	337-5000 / 1132 332-0232	332-4100	bballard@otcweb.edu
Dr. Roger Coomer	VP Finance & Administration	337-5000 / 1120 332-0220	337-9382	rcoomer@otcweb.edu
Dr. Susan Karr	VP Instruction	337-5000 / 1131 332-0231	332-4100	skarr@otcweb.edu
Ms. June Prince	VP Planning & Assessment	337-5000 / 1133 332-0233	332-4100	jprince@otcweb.edu
Dr. Cortez Henderson	VP Student Affairs	337-5000 / 1105 332-0205	337-9382	chenderson@otcweb.edu
Dr. Blake Robertson	VP Adult/Workforce Ed	337-5000 / 1135 332-0235	337-9382	brobertson@otcweb.edu

### Board of Trustees

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<p>Ms. Delores "Dee" Edie (Norman) 7333 Highway 270 Malvern, AR 72104 Office: 501-332-6530 CELL: 501-337-6590 Home: 501-337-4402 FAX: E-Mail: dee@diamondlakesfcu.org</p> <p>Term Expires: July 01, 2012</p>	<p>Mr. Bill Stilwell (Glenda) 219 Saturn Malvern, AR 72104 Office: 501-337-7504 CELL: 501-884-6686 Home: 501-337-1747 FAX: E-Mail: bstil@sbcglobal.net</p> <p>Term Expires: July 01, 2013</p>
<p>Ms. Jean Harper (Paul) 5431 Country Club Road Malvern, AR 72104 Office: 501-778-1133 CELL: 501-815-2638 Home: 501-332-3956 FAX: 501-778-9120 E-Mail: jharper@cadcc.com</p> <p>Term Expires: July 1, 2015</p>	<p>Mr. Don Tackett (Cathy) P. O. Box 610 Malvern, AR 72104 Office: 501-337-7788 CELL: 501-844-0018 Home: 501-332-8400 FAX: E-Mail: dtackett@summitbankdirect.com</p> <p>Term Expires: July 01, 2011</p>
<p>Mr. Jimmie Lea (Robbia) 1242 Grayson Circle Malvern, AR 72104 Office: 501-337-7504 CELL: 501-844-0135 Home: 501-332-6416 FAX: E-Mail: jimlea1954@yahoo.com</p> <p>Term Expires: July 01, 2009</p>	





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**Pulaski Tech Opens New Little Rock-South Campus**  
By Amy Riggan - 8/19/2008 9:48:04 AM

Several hundred students were enrolled in Pulaski Technical College's newest site near the Saline and Pulaski county border as the fall 2008 semester got under way Monday.

The Little Rock-South site is located at 13000 Interstate-30. Renovation of the site, formerly the Little Rock Expo Center, began last year and has been substantially completed, according to the school.

"After all the hard work that has gone into getting the site open, it's great to finally see students here," said Mike Sneed, dean of technical and industrial programs and site coordinator of Little Rock-South.

The 159,000-SF center includes a library, bookstore, café, computer labs and student services.

Motorcycle/ATV is one of the career-oriented programs housed within the new campus' Transportation Technology Center. Other programs include diesel technology, small engine repair and transportation facility management. Automotive technology and collision repair technology will remain at the main campus in North Little Rock this semester, but will be relocated for the spring 2009 semester.

The Pulaski Technical College Arkansas Culinary School relocated to the more spacious Little Rock-South this semester from its previous home on Asher Avenue.

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# 12 colleges sitting out high school program

## Only 4 participating after grade-inflation claims; others awaiting audit results

BY MIKE LINN

ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

MONTICELLO — Twelve of 15 colleges that participated last year in the Arkansas Early College High School program have pulled out amid an investigation into grade-inflation allegations, but enrollment has still grown, education officials said this week.

Participating high school students are enrolled in more than 2,000 classes for the 2008-09

year, up from about 1,800 last year, said Judy Jones, director of the program run by the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative in Monticello.

Four colleges are participating this year, two of which are expanding their programs and accepting students who had planned to sign up with other colleges, said Karen Eoff, interim director of the Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative in Monticello.

Most colleges that participated last year are sitting out, waiting on findings from the Legislative Audit Division before deciding whether to re-join the program or bail out for good.

"We're waiting on that legislative audit to see if, in fact, there is something for us to be concerned about," said Verlene Ringgenberg, dean of regional programs at Arkansas State University at Jonesboro, one of the

colleges that dropped out this year.

"It's better for us to take part in any audit and make very sure the instruction everyone is getting is top-notch."

State Department of Higher Education Director Jim Purcell requested the audit of the program, which allows high school students to earn college credits through distance learning.

Faculty members teach via

See **GRADES**, Page 9A

## Grades

• Continued from Page 1A  
compressed interactive video or videoconference equipment. Faculty members and the high school students can see and hear one another in real time via big screen monitors.

The teachers in the program are employed and monitored by the cooperative, not the participating colleges.

The University of Arkansas at Monticello and Arkansas Tech University in Russellville are expanding their offerings in the program.

The other two colleges participating this year are Ouachita Technical College in Malvern and North Arkansas College in Harrison, Eoff said. North Arkansas College did not participate last spring, Jones said.

### SPECIFIC CLAIMS

Laura Creach, the former director of the early college program, informed Purcell of her concerns about the program shortly after she resigned in April. She has said the cooperative's former director, Bruce Terry, told teachers that no student should receive less than a B.

Terry resigned as director last month after the cooperative's board suspended him.

Charles Sidney Gibson, Terry's attorney, declined to comment through a spokesman at his Dermott law firm.

After getting the information from Creach, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Department of Education investigated the program in the spring.

In a June 12 e-mail to state Auditor Roger Norman, Purcell said the investigation corroborated academic credibility issues through multiple sources.

The investigation discovered evidence of: teachers giving higher grades than students deserved, management pressuring teachers to change grades, faculty members who refused to change grades and dilute standards being harassed and terminated.

Moreover, the investigation found that there was an emphasis in Advanced Placement curriculum at the sacrifice of college-course content in those courses that were concurrent, according to Purcell's e-mail to Norman.

"I saw enough smoke to think there may be some fire," Purcell said. "We have firefighters [Legislative Audit Division] who can go in there and figure out the breadth of it."

One of the program's former teachers, Susan Orenstein, expressed her concerns in a letter to Karen Solinski, assistant director for legal and governmental affairs at the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, a private, nonprofit college accreditation agency.

"I have taught [at] numerous colleges and universities ... and I have never encountered an educational scam like the one that is conducted at the Southeast Arkansas Cooperative," the letter said.

"The point of the [early college high school] program is, Ms. Solinski, not to educate but to sell grades and college credits

to students in districts serviced by the [cooperative]," Orenstein continued.

The cooperative's board is made up of 13 superintendents from school districts in southeast Arkansas.

In a telephone interview, Orenstein said she was placed on administrative leave in November after refusing to give students better grades than they deserved.

Moreover, she said teachers or students at Lakeside High School in Lake Village turned off the videoconference monitor so students could cheat without being caught.

Lakeside School District Superintendent Joyce L. Vaught did not return a phone call seeking comment.

But Eoff said she can't imagine that that actually happened.

"I don't think that one has much merit," Eoff said. "The only time I've heard of a monitor being off is if there were technical difficulties."

Jones said all allegations of cheating are being investigated.



## ENROLLMENT UP

In a draft letter in April to presidents and chancellors of Arkansas colleges, Purcell requested that "all state-supported institutions of higher education suspend participation in the Early College High School Program until all allegations have been resolved."

The draft letter, however, was never sent to college presidents and chancellors.

"We decided we needed more evidence," Purcell said. "The letter was premature."

Instead, Purcell sent a different letter to presidents and chancellors on May 9 outlining his concerns with the program but not asking them to suspend participation.

Jones said colleges that opted out of the program this year were: Arkansas Northeastern College, ASU-Jonesboro, ASU-Beebe, ASU-Heber Springs, Black River Technical College, Cossatot Community College, East Arkansas Community College, Henderson State Univer-

sity, Phillips County Community College, Southern Arkansas University, University of Arkansas Community College at Hope and the University of Central Arkansas.

Richard Henry, a composition teacher, sent an e-mail to Purcell in June expressing his concern about having almost twice as many students in the fall as he did in the spring, when he had fewer than 80.

In the e-mail, Henry said 80 students is "the maximum number of students most composition teachers have per term at most [colleges]."

He expressed concern about the additional time it would take to grade the extra papers, just one of which takes about 20 minutes, he said in the e-mail.

"This is a real source of worry," he told Purcell.

So far, each composition teacher has between 130 and 140 students for the fall semester, but Jones said she is working to reduce that number.

"We're working desperately to get that number down, and I

honestly don't know the solution right now," said Jones, a former English teacher. "If I have to help grade papers I will."

Henry said Jones and other administrators inherited the problems and are working to resolve them.

Ouachita Technical College President Barry Ballard, whose college is participating this year, said he has concerns about the program but decided to continue this year because he knows of no case of grade inflation or grade changes for the students participating under his college.

"We believe our experience has been quality and not problematic," Ballard said. "I can't say that about other schools, especially from what I've read from these current and former instructors."

Ballard said the only complaint about the program that he's received was from administrators at a school district who said one of the courses was too difficult. Ballard said the college investigated the complaint and found the course to be rigorous

but acceptable.

The early college program is funded this year, for the most part, by a \$720,000 distance-learning grant from the state Department of Education, spokesman Julie Johnson Thompson said.

Eoff said she'd be surprised if the audit turned up any major problems, but she noted that the cooperative plans to increase its oversight of the program.

"We're going to put ourselves through a rigorous self-examination," Eoff said. "We want a quality program, a top-notch quality program. To achieve that, you have to do your own review to know where you're strong, to know where you're weak and know what you have to change."

Purcell agreed that the program needs more monitoring.

"For us, we want there to be access for kids in the state, but we want there to be quality teaching and greater institutional oversight and perhaps greater oversight from this office," Purcell said.

# Malvern Daily Record

Friday, July 18, 2008

## OTC gets funding for 'Achieving the Dream'

The Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation has announced the funding of the Achieving the Dream initiative at Ouachita Technical College in Malvern, providing the college with the first \$100,000 installment of a \$400,000 grant to increase student success in higher education.

Following a year-long study of its practices, particularly with developmental education and with students of color, the college intends to both increase the number of students attending college and help those students be successful once

they enroll in college. Using a culture of inquiry and evidence, Ouachita Technical College has used data to point out areas in which it can improve, and the college is launching three Achieving the Dream initiatives to help its students.

First, the college is restructuring the curriculum and delivery of basic grammar and basic composition classes to enhance student learning and engagement. Secondly, the college is varying the delivery of intermediate algebra to improve student success rates. Third, the college is reassessing its student intake strate-

gies, such as its registration and orientation processes, to create fewer barriers for students enrolling in college.

In addition to the initiatives, the Achieving the Dream grant will make it possible for faculty and staff at the college to participate in conferences that help educators understand the learning styles, and struggles, of millennial students.

Toward that end, Ouachita Technical College instructors and administrators will be participating in workshops with college faculty across the state in a cross-

college effort to affect changes in higher education policy at the state level.

In 1974 the Trustees of Governor Winthrop Rockefeller's Estate endowed the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation to continue the Governor's philanthropic work.

Today, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation is a private foundation whose mission it is to improve the lives of Arkansans. Additional information about the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation can be found on its website, [www.wrfoundation.org](http://www.wrfoundation.org).



## Betty Lawless

---

**From:** Barry Ballard [bballard@otcweb.edu]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 11, 2008 7:39 PM  
**To:** Jeri Post; 'Sharon Turley'; 'Adrian Ashley'; 'Pat Simms';  
'Jessica Beard'; 'Ruben Keisler'; 'Mary Ann Harper'; 'Billy Francis'; 'David W. See'; 'Marshel Johnson'; 'Teresa Avery';  
'Linda Johnson'; 'Amber J. Childers'; Betty Lawless; Blake Robertson; Cortez Henderson; June Prince; Roger Coomer; Susan Karr  
**Subject:** 2007-08 Annual Report to OTC Board

*← This rpt took the place of a Board Packet Report for July 29, 2008 Board Mtg.*



OTC Board Annual  
2007-08 Repor...

Attached is the president's 2007-08 Annual Report to the OTC Board of Trustees. They were very impressed with your accomplishments presented in this report. I tried to name all the contributors on the second page - Table of Contents.

Many thanks for all the things you and your subordinates do to help our students be successful and the institution be successful.

BB

J. Barry Ballard, Ed.D.  
President  
Ouachita Technical College  
One College Circle  
Malvern, AR 72104  
bballard@otcweb.edu  
Tel: 501-332-0232  
FAX: 501-332-4100

CHANGING LIVES...BUILDING FUTURES

# Memo

**To: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**From:** Barry Ballard, President BB

**Date:** May 20, 2008

**Re:** Update on Various Issues

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Below is a list of significant items, accomplishments, and activities at Ouachita Technical College about which I think you will be interested. The items are in no particular order.

**1. CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW BUILDING IS PROGRESSING** The progress on the construction of the Instructional Technology classroom building is going well. Everything is going according to schedule. The building should be ready for an inspection and punch list in a little over one month from now on June 27<sup>th</sup>. The inside of the building has changed a lot over the last two months. Almost all the woodwork and interior finishes, with the exception of the tile and carpet flooring, has been completed.

The ceramic tile was lost in shipment but the subcontractor re-ordered it three weeks ago and reports that it will be delivered any day now. Mr. Seals says that the priority for the tile installation is the restrooms because they need three or four days to hang all the toilet partitions after the tile work is complete. All the toilet partitions have been delivered and are ready for installation.

The Cal-Wall ceiling and roof over the entry foyer is just about complete. All the windows have been installed in the classrooms, labs, and offices. The glass doors and storefronts entering from the fire escapes on the east and west ends of the building and the glass storefronts for the front and back of the center entry foyer will all be done in about a ten days. Basically the contractor is down to finishes and final site preparation.



Our state association, AATYC, did a survey and about half of the colleges are implementing some type of modified summer hours to obtain the benefits mentioned above. Attached is a copy of the survey results showing how each college has scheduled their hours of operation. Seven of the colleges work only four ten-hour days and are completely shut down on Fridays. We do not have enough classroom and lab space to schedule all our summer classes in only four days. Our labs are heavily utilized every day and on Fridays through the noon hour. Maybe next summer, the new building will provide us with enough classroom and lab space that we can teach our growing summer schedule in four long days and be shut down on Friday's.

**3. DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, FUND RAISING, AND FOUNDATION UPDATE**

The following shows the actual cash total for each account as of May 15, 2008.

Scholarship Endowments	\$222,951
Instructional Technology Center	\$ 43,775
Unrestricted	\$ 37,435
<hr/>	
Total	\$304,161

This total is up from our last report that showed a total of \$296,142.

Significant contributions to the OTC Foundation for this period include a total \$2,000 gift from Malvern Lions Club -- \$1,000 for this year as well as \$1,000 advance gift for next year. This will give the Foundation the opportunity to match both gifts with Title III matching money.

The OTC Foundation met on February 15, 2008. With several fundraising opportunities to choose from, the Foundation Board of Directors chose to hold a Bingo Night, which will be planned for the month of July. Foundation Board member, Von Michael, Director of Development, Amber Childers, and Development Assistant, Mitzi Overturf, visited with the special events staff at Pulaski Technical College in North Little Rock, to discuss the steps they took that resulted in their successful Bingo Night held in September.

The next OTC Foundation Board meeting is being planned as a lunch meeting at Noon on Friday, June 13, 2008 in the Board Room.

The last day to raise Scholarship Endowment funds that can be matched with the Title III grant money is Tuesday, September 30, 2008. Therefore, the Foundation Board will meet again on September 19, 2008, to make the final decision on how much of the total available cash balance to transfer to the restricted scholarship endowment account in order to maximize the Title III Matching money.

**4. TITLE III RETENTION WORK IMPROVING STUDENT SUCCESS** As you recall, this is our fifth and final year for our Title III program. It ends on September 30. The grant was to help us focus on improving student success as measured by



**5. ACHIEVING THE DREAM INITIATIVE (AtDI)** Our proposed AtD work plan and budget (\$400,000) for the next four years has been developed, reviewed and refined by our coach and data facilitator and turned into national AtD headquarters for review and approval. Our first year was a planning year. Years two through five are project initiative years. Our second year begins on July 1, so we hope to hear back from the reviewers in the next few weeks.

Dr. John Brockman, AtD Coach, and Dr. Mike Flores, Data Facilitator, made their third visit to the OTC campus during the second week of March and met with the president and core team members. They reviewed our draft of the proposed AtD Work Plan and Budget and provided much helpful advice in improving the proposal.

The three main strategies that we are proposing in our work plan have not changed since my last report. In summary we are going to (1) Pilot a standard, traditional instructor-led Intermediate Algebra course with an additional amount of instruction (80-minute periods instead of 50-minute periods) to compare with the current format of Intermediate Algebra courses that are taught in the "I Can Learn Math" computer laboratory (more time on task); (2) Pilot a comprehensive orientation procedure that involves all first time, first year, entering Freshman (This second year will be a research and development year for this component.); and (3) Pilot a combined Basic Grammar and Basic Composition course (combining two developmental courses into one) based on the theory that students may learn grammar rules better in a writing course (Successful students will have to meet the performance outcomes of both courses).

**5. PRELIMINARY SUMMER AND FALL 2008 ENROLLMENT REPORT**

While it is too early to speculate about next fall's enrollment numbers, our number of enrollments to date for the Summer terms and for the fall look very encouraging especially when compared to enrollment numbers at this same time a year ago. Ms. Linda Johnson, Registrar, provided the following report today:

May 20, 2008			May 18, 2007		
Semester	Students	SCH	Semester	Students	SCH
Fall 2008	324	3826	Fall 2007	224	2510
Summer I	116	482	Summer I	99	434
Summer II	385	2145	Summer II	235	1281
Summer III	69	249	Summer III	64	271

The SCH in her report indicates "semester credit hours" in which these students have enrolled. For every 30 SCH, we are credited with one full-time equivalent (FTE) student. We are very pleased with the way these numbers look.



Our Customized Workplace Courses have been going well also. At General Cable, six employees have tested for either an entry examination or a promotion test in their respective at the plant. We do all the employee testing for General Cable. We recently completed a class in "Programmable Logic Controllers" (PLC) for CoorsTek in Saline County for five employees. And, an intermediate PLC class started on May 5<sup>th</sup>. This year we have completed three classes at SWATLC in Arkadelphia for 36 employees in Clark County area industries. Locally, Primeline Inc. in the Jones Mill Industrial Park has contracted with OTC to provide computer numerical control (CNC) machine tool training for five new employees in a pre-employment class. All students successfully completed the class and all five of them were hired after the training.

Our non-credit Continuing Education classes have also been popular. Ed 2 Go classes have gone well, and we have had 44 students enroll in various Ed 2 Go classes between July, 2007 and the present. Conversational Spanish I has been offered this summer and fall with 10 students in the class. Welding Basics has been offered this fall and spring semester with a total of 11 in the class. This welding class has been a successful evening class for area adults almost every term.

**7. THE STATUS OF THE CURTIS CRAFT COMPLAINT** The activities related to defending ourselves against the Curtis Craft lawsuit have suddenly intensified over the last month or so. In my last report, I detailed the many documents that we had requested of Plaintiff and the many that Plaintiff had requested of us. We spent two weeks, a lot of man hours, and several large trees that had been converted to copy paper in complying with Plaintiff's request for documents.

That work was completed and all the requested documents were delivered to our attorney, Assistant Attorney General Ka Tina Hodge, on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The A.G.'s office forwarded the requested documents before April 30, as requested. Plaintiff has failed to provide us with the documents we requested and Ms. Hodge has had to write two additional letters requesting them and threatening to notify the Court of non-compliance. As of last Friday, Plaintiff had not provided us any documents as requested. I think today was the last deadline she gave them.

On Tuesday afternoon, June 3, Dr. Robertson and I are scheduled to spend some time in the AG's office with our attorney reviewing material the Plaintiff has submitted, reviewing the case, and otherwise preparing us for depositions. The depositions are scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. We learned today that Plaintiff's attorney has also requested depositions for Mr. Billy Francis, CPI Director, who worked under Mr. Craft and who took his place after he left, and for Mr. Jimmie Lea. Ms. Hodge, our attorney, will be in touch with Mr. Francis and Mr. Lea to set up meeting times so they can prepare properly for the depositions.

As you will recall, we have received the final scheduling order to confirm the trial date of Monday, October 27, 2008 in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas, Hot Springs Division.



AATYC Survey of Two-Year Colleges on						
Summer Hours						
5/1/08						Closed Fridays = **
						Closed half day Fridays = *
College	Hours		Comments			
ANC	8:00-4:30	M-F				no change
ASUB	8:00-5:00	M-F				no change
ASUMH	8:00-5:00	M-F				no change
ASUN	8:00-4:30	M-F				no change
BRTC	7:00-5:00	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning May 5, Ending August 4			**
CCCUA	8:00-4:30	M-F				no change
EACC	Stagger Times	Start 7, 7:30 or 8:00 End 4:30, 5:00, or 5:30	Monday-Thursday Friday 8 until Noon			*
MSCC	10 Hours Days	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning June 2nd, Ending July 31st			**
NAC						
NPCC	7:30-5:30	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning May 19, Ending August 7			**
NWACC	8:00-5:00	M-F				no change
OTC	8:00-4:30	M-T, Friday 8-1	Offices may be open 7-7 M-T & F 7-1 to give supervisors & employees flexibility of 4-day week			*
OZC	7:00-5:30	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning May 12 thru July 31			**
PCCUA	7:00-5:30	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning May 19			**
PTC	8:00-4:30	M-F				no change
RMCC						
SACC	8:00-5:00	M-F				no change
SAUT	7:00-5:30	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning May 12, Could extend through academic year due to high price of gas.			**
SEARK	M-F Flexible	scheduling done by the President's Cabinet within each department				*
UACCB	7:30-5:30	M-T, Friday 8-Noon	Beginning June 2, Ending August 1			*
UACCH	7:00-5:30	M-T	Beginning May 4, Ending July 27			**
	Two shifts where possible so offices are open for 10 hours					
UACCM	7:00-5:30	M-T, Closed Friday	Beginning June 2, Ending August 4			**



# Memo

**To: Members of the Board of Trustees**  
**From:** Barry Ballard, President **BB**  
**Date:** March 19, 2008  
**Re:** Update on Various Issues

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Below is a list of significant items, accomplishments, and activities at Ouachita Technical College about which I think you will be interested. The items are in no particular order. Separate from this report but included with the Board Agenda packet are several things that you should review in advance of our Board retreat that is set for 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 25, 2008 in the First Presbyterian Church of Malvern (Fellowship Hall), 707 Martin Luther King Blvd.

**1. CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW BUILDING IS PROGRESSING** The progress on the construction of the Instructional Technology classroom building is going well. The inside of the building has changed a lot over the last two months. Almost all the windows have been installed in the two main sections. The glass storefronts for the front and back of the center entry space will be done in about a month. The roofing on both the east and west wings are complete including the gutters, but downspouts will be installed after masons finish all their work. The roofing for the stairwells at the ends of each wing will start next week. The block and brick masonry for both stairwells was finished this week and the masonry contractor will now start on the screens for the electrical transformer and for the screens for the external HVAC compressor units at the back of the building.

All the framing is finished and most of the sheet rock is in place. Sheet rock is now going up in the second floor of the west wing (W2) and it will be finished this week. The painters have started painting on the first floor of the east wing (E1) and the ceiling grid is up in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the east wing (E2). Lighting fixtures are being installed in both E1 and E2. Finishing and painting of sheetrock will continue into next week after which the electricians will follow with the installation of light fixtures. The HVAC and plumbing rough-in work is all complete.

We have a tentatively scheduled a walk through and preliminary punch list for June 27, 2008 and the general contractor says everything is on schedule to be ready by then. The flooring is supposed to finished on that same date. They hope to pour concrete on the stair treads next Monday. If so, we possibly can get the Board in the building for a tour on Tuesday afternoon after the planning retreat but before the regular meeting at 5:00 p.m. As I mentioned in an earlier report, our managers meet weekly with the contractor and the architect to keep good communication going and to solve problems early.

The Contractor plans to make all punch list corrections and have the building finished on July 15, 2008 and get a Certificate of Occupancy in a day or two thereafter. The Board of Trustees meets on July 29, 2008 to accept the building and authorize final payment. A dedication, ribbon cutting, and public open house will be planned in late August or early September after all the furniture and a little landscaping has been installed and the building has been used for a few days. We plan to start school in the new building on Monday, August 18, 2008.

## **2. OTC's ADULT AND WORKFORCE PROGRAMS SERVE MANY STUDENTS**

So far this school year OTC's Adult Education Center has tested and graduated 44 students and 3 more have been tested and are awaiting test results. Of the 44 graduates, 18 are honor graduates (scored 600 or higher on the 800 point exam). OTC counselors go frequently to the Workforce Center to work with the GED graduates and try to recruit them to continue their education at OTC. GED honor graduates are eligible for scholarships at the college.

The Adult Education Center continues to work with Arkansas Department of Community Corrections (ADCC) Omega Unit here in Malvern. A part-time teacher in the Work Readiness class has been added this semester. Because of the high client numbers now at the Omega Unit, the amount of employability training the clients can get has been reduced to only one week. At the end of their training, the residents leave the unit to return to their homes with the knowledge of job search, resume writing, and interviewing skills. The "residents" report to the ADCC that they put a high value on the training they get from our program because the work readiness skills helped them prepare for the job market. Two full-time Adult Education instructors have also been assigned to this program at the Omega Unit to work with the adult basic students. Many students compete for and receive their GED while at Omega. For FY 07-08, we have had 837 residents go through the program.

In the Workforce Training operation we now have over 150 students in the Electrical Apprenticeship program. We have recently started a GED program for those electrical apprentices who never completed high school. They now see the advantage of completing the GED while they are working toward their journeyman electrical license.



Using our Adult Education grant funds, we are now working with Pactiv and have established a basic skills class in their plant. The Adult Education program furnishes a certified teacher and equipment at no charge. The plant manager has set certain criteria for the various jobs in the plant and we use the WIN software to assess their achievement level. If the employees want to bid up for a certain job at Pactiv, they have to meet specified and documented skill levels. If they do not have the required skill levels for the new job, they come to the Basic Skills class which is held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 4:30 pm until 7:30 pm.

The Adult Education Center has served approximately 1,116 different students who have enrolled in the program since last July 1 of this school year. This total includes students from the following programs: WAGE, Community Correction, Career Pathways WAGE, and Pre-nursing and from the adult education center in ABE and GED classes.

In the Workforce Training area customized courses and resources have been developed for General Cable where six employees have tested for either an entry examination or a promotion test. Our instructor has just completed a PLC class for CoorsTek, in Saline County, for five employees. We have sponsored three PLC classes at SWATLC in Arkadelphia for 36 employees of area industries. In addition, Primeline Inc., has contracted with OTC to provide pre-employment training in computer numerical control (CNC) for five prospective employees. All five completed the training and were hired by the company.

Continuing Education courses have also been going well this year. OTC's **Ed2Go** classes have had 33 students enroll in various **Ed2Go** subjects since the beginning of the school year. Conversational Spanish I was offered last summer and fall with 10 students in the class. Welding Basics has been offered last fall and spring semesters with a total of 11 in the class. We offered Instant Piano during the month of February, 2008 with 9 in the class.

In our Early Childhood Education area 80 students have completed classes in six Child Care Orientation courses. In the course for Framework: Curriculum and Activities there were 7 completers. In the two Pre-K-ELLA courses there were 50 students who completed. And, in the Index Training Math and Science course there were 11 completers. The enrollment in this Early Childhood Education program continues to grow and we have excellent faculty in this specialty.

### **3. DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, FUND RAISING, AND FOUNDATION UPDATE**

The actual cash total for each account as of March 5, 2008, is as follows:

Scholarship Endowments	\$218,990
Instructional Technology Center	\$ 43,635
<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>\$ 37,359</u>
Total	\$299,984

This total is up from our last report that showed a total of \$296,142.

The OTC Foundation Board of Directors met February 15, 2008. The Board discussed various options for a major fundraiser to be conducted by the OTC Foundation and ultimately decided on hosting a Bingo Night at OTC. The revenue from the event would go toward the Scholarship Endowment Fund.

Below are the amounts of gifts/pledges received during the month of February broken down by the following categories: Pledges by Payroll Deduction, One-Time Gifts, and Annual Pledges, as well as by Designation.

The Development Office recently conducted an annual campaign with employees and the results were as follows:

Payroll Deductions (three-year pledges)			
Scholarship Endowment (26 pledges)	\$25,194		
Unrestricted (11 pledges)	\$ 7,020		
IT Center (1 pledge)	\$ 156		
TOTAL (38 pledges)	\$32,370		\$10,946 per year \$415 /pay period
Annual Pledges (three-year pledges)			
Unrestricted (1 pledge)	\$ 1,000		
IT Center (1 pledge)	\$ 30		
TOTAL (2)	\$ 1,030		\$343 per year
One-Time Gifts			
Scholarship Endowment (4)	\$ 195		
Unrestricted (1)	\$ 100		
IT Center (1)	\$ 20		
TOTAL (6)	\$ 315		

#### **4. TITLE III RETENTION WORK RESULTS IN MORE STUDENT SUCCESS**

This is our fifth and final year for our Title III program. The grant was to help us focus on improving student success as measured by improved student retention and graduation rates. Ms. Kathy Lazenby, Retention Specialist, works tirelessly to help students have learning success and stay in school until graduation.

The research on student retention and learning shows that when students participate in learning communities, they learn more, stay in school longer, and otherwise tend to become successful students. We have used learning communities on a limited basis and have had some success with them. We want to use them more. OTC's recent application to National Summer Institute on Learning Communities at The Evergreen State College was accepted. A team consisting of Linda Johnson, Terri Colananni, Sharon Seals, Christina Yednock, and Kathy Lazenby will be going in June. During the institute, a strategic plan will be drafted to make more use of learning communities at OTC. The goal is to organize learning communities starting with our developmental courses and Principles of Collegiate Success course where we have high rates of student failures.



Changes have recently been made to OTC's Conditional Admissions contract and to the Early Alert form. The Conditional Admissions contract was amended to reward students who were caring at least a "B" average. Students who stayed on task and make satisfactory progress in the math lab no longer have to attend tutoring or put extra time in the lab. Students who had a "B" average or above will no longer have to go to tutoring. The Early Alert criteria were adjusted so it is only used for alerting the staff about attendance problems and failing grades and not for classroom behavior management problems.

The Fall 2007 cohort group of conditionally admitted students was 57 students in size and 88% of them finished the semester satisfactorily and only two of them actually flunked out. Out of the 50 who finished the semester, 91% returned for the Spring 2008 term. Their GPA was 3.11 with developmental courses included and 2.86 without the developmental courses. Two students were no longer under the terms of their Conditional Admissions contract and 24% were only enrolled in a single developmental math course.

Spring 2008 students who are enrolled conditionally have already had three counseling visits. Fall 2007 students have been contacted to remind them of their Conditional Admissions requirements and have been requested to come in at least once during the semester. Numerous informal visits have been made as students who are Conditionally Admitted are seen in the student union and in the hallways.

The retention specialist routinely meets with students who are struggling with grades. During these counseling visits, students are given suggestions on ways to improve grades, e.g., use of free tutoring OTC provides, using of study buddies, improved attendance, time management, and the like. Students have also received advice about dealing with personal issues, e.g., parenting, relationships, budgeting, and the like. Some students have been referred to community agencies such as for family counseling, health issues, and such.

Midterm grades have been posted and a report has been received that shows all students who are failing or making low grades in two or more courses. These students are being contacted so that they can be given advice on grade improvement such as using tutoring sessions, getting extra help from faculty, etc. Students who are so far behind that a passing grade this term is not possible are being recommended to withdraw by the April 4<sup>th</sup> drop date, after which they cannot drop courses or withdraw from school just to avoid an F grades going on their transcripts.

The academic progress of the Precision students has been monitored. Currently all of them have at least a "B" average and seem to be adjusting well to college and campus life. Two courses have been added to the summer schedule to accommodate the need for them to be full time students to maintain their unemployment benefits. The last group of Precision employees was laid off on



March 14 and they are being advised as they come in. They will start college this summer. Training has been provided to more of OTC's student advisors so they will know how to work with the Precision students so that they can qualify for and maintain the TAA financial benefits while in college.

**5. ACHIEVING THE DREAM INITIATIVE (AtDI)** In February, OTC's Achieving the Dream (AtD) core team leaders attended the national Achieving the Dream, "Strategy Institute" in Atlanta, Georgia. This was a great opportunity to meet other AtD schools with varying progression in their perspective grant years. The team came back energized and refreshed with many ideas that helped lead the grant writing.

In February, OTC's AtD team held three focus groups to obtain qualitative data that would provide beneficial input for the future strategies of the college. The first focus group consisted of a group of students that are considered very 'involved' with OTC. The second group consisted of valued members of the community, and was hosted at OTC during a lunch. The last group consisted of the core team members and division chairs and was held at an external location to foster more of a 'retreat' environment to incorporate AtD with strategic planning. At the planning retreat, the members sorted through the various ideas from the previous focus groups and incorporated many of these into the AtD grant proposal and strategic plan.

Dr. John Brockman, AtD Coach, and Dr. Mike Flores, Data Facilitator, made their third visit to the OTC campus during the second week of March and met with the president and core team members. They reviewed our draft of the proposed AtD Work Plan and Budget and provided much helpful advice in improving the proposal.

Three main strategies were developed during the Core Team's planning retreat and they include:

- A. To pilot a standard, traditional instructor-led Intermediate Algebra course with an additional amount of instruction (80-minute periods instead of 50-minute periods) to compare with the current format of Intermediate Algebra courses that are taught in the "I Can Learn Math" computer laboratory.
- B. To pilot a comprehensive orientation procedure that involves all first time, first year, entering Freshman.
- C. To pilot a combined Basic Grammar and Basic Composition course (combining two developmental courses into one) based on the theory that students may learn grammar rules better in a writing course. Successful students will have to meet the performance outcomes of both courses.

The implementation of these strategies is being planned in an effort to improve student learning, improved student retention, and improving the percent of developmental students who progress to the credit bearing math and English



courses. It is also hoped that these strategies will be especially helpful to improving success and retention rates of minority students.

These strategies will be reviewed in more detail with the Board at the planning retreat.

**5. THE STATUS OF THE CURTIS CRAFT COMPLAINT** The Curtis Craft lawsuit is still progressing slowly. On March 17, 2008, Assistant Attorney General Ka Tina Hodge wrote a letter to Curtis Craft's attorney, John Walker, to transmit two documents that had also been filed with the Federal Court.

The first document was Defendants Rule 26 Initial Disclosures that I wrote about in my last report. In this document we listed the names of individuals likely to have discoverable information about the case and that we plan to use to support our defense. The letter also listed the documents that we will use to support our defense.

The second document, the first set of interrogatories, is huge set of requests for the production of information and documents that the plaintiff plans to use to support his complaints. First, this document requests from Plaintiff Craft a list of all persons, including expert witnesses, that will be used to support the claim including their name, address, telephone number, and occupation and a description of the nature of the testimony they are likely to provide. The document also requests that Plaintiff Craft describe in detail each and every act of any OTC employee which he claims constitutes any form of Race Discrimination or Retaliation against him and about which he will testify at trial, including descriptions, for each act, the date of the act, how it occurred, and the names of the persons present when he alleges such acts occurred. The document requests detailed information on any previous civil litigation for which he has been a party. The document requests detailed information about any employment or self-employment Plaintiff Craft has had since leaving OTC including job descriptions, duties, titles, earnings, and contact information for any supervisors. The document requests Plaintiff Craft provide detailed information on each and every job for which he has applied since leaving OTC including contact information for the organization. The document requests that he produce documents evidencing the plaintiff's income and sources of income since leaving including state and federal tax returns, pay stubs, 1099 Forms, and W-4 forms. The document requests that he detail each claim of actual or compensatory damages, state the amount of the claim, the periods they cover, and how the damages were calculated. The document requests that he detail the facts upon which he bases any claim for emotional and physical distress, humiliation, and harm-to-reputation including the names and contact information for each person he believes has knowledge of facts that supports his claim, and has knowledge of related damages and details about the amounts of claimed damages. The Document requests lists of all health care providers that he has consulted related to alleged emotional distress and a detailed description of each visit to a provider (dates, length of visit, reason for visit, medication prescribed, amount charged for the visits, and copies of bills,

statements, receipts for each). The document requests that he provide copies of any and all reports, treatment plans, letters, notes, or other documents prepared by any physician, psychologist, counselor, or other practitioner concerning examination and treatment relating to any emotional, mental, and/or physical condition claimed to have been experienced as a result of defendants' actions alleged in his complaint. The document requests that he provide an executed (signed and witnessed) medical authorization allowing the disclosure of protected health and medical information. Finally the document requests that he also provide other documents, evidence, exhibits, affidavits or otherwise which he intends to introduce at trial or refer to during the course of the trial to support his complaints.

The final scheduling order was issued on January 7, 2008 to confirm the trial date of Monday, October 27, 2008 in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas, Hot Springs Division.

Asst. A.G. Ka Tina Hodge remains confident that we will prevail in both the federal court and with the Claims Commission, for which she will provide defense counsel on both. Curtis Craft has not yet filed a claim with the Arkansas Claims Commission. He may wait until after the trial. Though the AG's office pushed for a speedy trial, we were disappointed that the Court set it so late – six months later than we had hoped. Our attorney remains confident that the suit can be successfully defended in every respect. She invites any Board member to call her at 501-682-1307 to discuss anything about the case.

**END** This concludes my report for this period. We look forward to being with you at the planning retreat next Tuesday, March 25th after lunch and having you on campus for the regular Board meeting at 5:00 p.m. that day. A light dinner snack with sweets and beverages will be available for you after 4:30 p.m. that day. Future Board meetings are scheduled in 2008 on June 3, July 29, September 30, and December 2. Thanks again for your commitment, many contributions, and support.



# Memo

**To: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**From:** Barry Ballard, President **BB**

**Date:** January 23, 2008

**Re:** Update on Various Issues

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Below is a list of significant items, accomplishments and activities at Ouachita Technical College about which I think you will be interested. The items are in no particular order.

**1. CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW BUILDING IS PROGRESSING** The progress on the construction of the Instructional Technology classroom building is going well. The appearance of the building has changed a lot over the last two months. All the bar joists and support structure for the roof has been put in place and the insulation and royal blue metal roofing is finally going up. The roofing on the east wing is just about complete. The roofing and insulation for the west wing should start next week if we can get some good weather without much wind.

The brick work is going well and is on schedule. As soon as the window openings have all been bricked, the windows can be installed. The contractor plans to start installing windows soon. Within a few weeks, the roof should be on and the windows will be installed.

The Contractor is now installing the metal studs that form the walls and doorways in the interior of the building. This work has now been completed on most of the first floor. The second floor installation will start right away. The HVAC and Electrical contractors are now working in the building and they need the wall structure up so they can finish their rough-in work. Drywall installation is scheduled to begin February 1<sup>st</sup>. The Contractor will advise the Architect when will be a good time at the end of January when the engineers can come and inspect the work prior to drywall and ceilings being installed. The Contractor plans to do much of the finish site work and



parking lot work when the students and faculty are gone on Spring Break, March 24-28 and after school is out May 9 through June 1st.

Since December, Dr. Roger Coomer has been conducting weekly meetings with the contractor and architect. Other OTC managers frequently attend when issues come up in their respective areas. The president attends most of these meetings when he can. We learned in last week's meeting a few more specifics on anticipated completion dates. The anticipated completion date for the flooring is June 27<sup>th</sup> and the walkthrough to develop the punch list would be conducted on June 30<sup>th</sup>. The Contractor plans to have the building finished on July 15, 2008 and get a Certificate of Occupancy as soon as possible thereafter. The Board of Trustees meets on July 29, 2008 to accept the building and authorize final payment. A dedication, ribbon cutting, and public open house will be planned in late August or early September after all the furniture and a little landscaping has been installed and the building has been used for a few days. We plan to start school in the new building on Monday, August 18, 2008.

**2. OTC's EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM ON TARGET** According to Isabel V. Sawhill, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institute in her article *Kids Need an Early Start* stated that "High-quality programs have produced short-term gains in cognitive functioning and longer-term gains in school achievement and social adjustment. Recent reviews of the literature by the Rand Corporation, by Steven Barnett at Rutgers University, and by a team of researchers at the University of Wisconsin conclude that early interventions, especially with disadvantaged children, have produced a variety of positive results. Those results include higher school achievement, less retention in grade, a reduced need for special education at a later age, and less crime. The study estimates that the most effective programs create savings to the government of \$13,000 to \$19,000 per child above the cost of the pre-school programs themselves. The best results come from programs that begin early, include children from the most disadvantaged homes, and provide intensive education and other services over a lengthy period."

Having read and adopted the mindset of these research studies, The Center for Workforce Excellence at Ouachita Technical College is working to expand the scope of our Early Childhood Practitioners' Program within our Professional Studies course listings to meet the newly adopted policies within the ABC (Arkansas Best Chance) Early Childhood Programs here in Arkansas. Dr. Blake Robertson and Janet Massey, Instructor, of OTC have met with the Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Judy Harrison, and the Chair of Family and Consumer Sciences, Dr. Patti Miley, of Henderson State University here at the College last month. These talks were begun not only to meet the requirements of the State ABC, and to respond to the spirit of the research cited above, but to offer our Associate of Applied Science Degree program - Early Childhood Practitioner's students a stepping stone at a convenient and nearby university to continue their search for knowledge of how to work and educate younger children. We believe that an articulation agreement between OTC and HSU will soon ensure that all course work in OTC's Early Childhood program will transfer as credit toward HSU's Bachelor Degree program. By state and federal policy, all ABC



Programs and Head Start Programs must ensure that their teachers have all obtained their Bachelor's degree by 2010.

**3. DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, FUND RAISING, AND FOUNDATION UPDATE** The following shows the actual cash total for each account as of January 22, 2008.

Scholarship Endowments	\$217,616
Instructional Technology Center	\$ 43,250
Unrestricted	\$ 35,276
<hr/>	
Total	\$296,142

This total is up from our last report that showed a total of \$280,947.

Significant contributions to the OTC Foundation for this period include a \$2,000 pledge payment from Elk Horn Bank, a \$5,000 pledge payment and a \$1,000 outright gift from Mr. Joe Keith, and a donation of \$4,000 and a 1981 Cadillac DeVille from Mr. Harold Davis of Saline County. The vehicle will be used by the Ouachita Area High School Career Center for instructional purposes.

In December, the College hosted its annual Holiday Open House/Jingle with Kringle. Funds raised from photos taken with Santa Claus were \$489.17, benefiting the Scholarship Endowment Fund.

Tax information letters and receipts were mailed to all full-time employees that contributed through payroll deduction for 2007. The total amount of funds contributed annually through payroll deduction is \$10,533.64.

The next OTC Foundation Board meeting is being planned as a lunch meeting at Noon on Friday, February 15, 2008 in the Board Room.

The last day to raise Scholarship Endowment funds that can be matched with the Title III grant money is Tuesday, September 30, 2008.

**4. ACHIEVING THE DREAM INITIATIVE (ATDI)** The Achieving the Dream initiative is going well. We had a working visit with our AtD Coach, Dr. John Brockman in December. He met with our team and me in separate meetings and provided us good advice and encouragement. This was his second visit with us on the OTC campus.

The Core, Data, and Communication teams have been meeting and are currently working on their perspective areas. The following are AtD events that have taken place recently or are scheduled in the near future:



1. AtD Coach Brockman made his second visit to the OTC campus during the second week of December, 2007 and met with the president and team members providing them much helpful advice.
2. Three different AtD focus groups were conducted with faculty and staff in mid-December, 2007. These focus groups provided good input data that is still being analyzed.
3. A student focus group is being planned for Friday, February 1, 2008.
4. Six members of the Expanded Core Team will participate in the National Achieving the Dream Strategy Institute on February 5-8 in Atlanta, Georgia during which a draft implementation plan with strategy options will be written.
5. AtD Conversations with community leaders, a type of focus group, will be conducted at lunch on Thursday, February 21, 2008 at the College.
6. Members of the Expanded Core Team will participate in a state-wide Strategy and Policy planning with the AtD State staff at the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Little Rock, on March 12, 2008.
7. OTC Board retreat with the Executive Staff and Achieving the Dream Core Committee for Strategic Planning on Tuesday, March 25, 2008.

**5. THE STATUS OF THE CURTIS CRAFT COMPLAINT** The Curtis Craft lawsuit is still progressing slowly. On December 17, 2007, Assistant Attorney General Ka Tina Hodge wrote a letter to Curtis Craft's attorney, John Walker, to transmit a proposed joint Rule 26(f) report. The Court required that a Rule 26(f) conference be conducted by January 2, 2008 and a Rule 26(f) report filed by January 16, 2008. Under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, the parties have to agree as to how the mandatory disclosures will be handled, how the discovery of the evidence is to be acquired and handled, and the schedule of events related to the trial. The parties have agreed that:

1. Mandatory disclosures will be made by February 15, 2008,
2. That discovery may include EEOC records; personnel records of Plaintiff and other OTC employees; grievance records; Board policies and procedures; depositions not limited to those of plaintiff, Plaintiff's physicians, Defendants, and witnesses named by either party, and Plaintiff's medical records,
3. The parties may request information from electronic or computer-based media,
4. Hard copies of documents will be provided by either party upon submission of a written request for the production of documents by the other party,
5. Discovery, including depositions, must be completed by June 16, 2008,
6. There is no objection to the proposed trial date of October 27, 2008, in Hot Springs, Arkansas, Robert T. Dawson, U.S. District Judge,
7. The deadline for joining other parties and amending the pleadings would be February 4, 2008, and
8. The deadline for filing motions would be June 2, 2008 and motions to compel must be filed no later than 45 days prior to the trial date (Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>).

The final scheduling order was issued on January 7, 2008 to confirm the trial date of Monday, October 27, 2008 in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Arkansas, Hot Springs Division.



Asst. A.G. Ka Tina Hodge remains confident that we will prevail in both the federal court and with the Claims Commission, for which she will provide defense counsel on both. Curtis Craft has not yet filed a claim with the Arkansas Claims Commission. He may wait until after the trial. The AG's office pushed for a speedy trial, but I was disappointed that the Court set it so late – six months later than we had hoped. Our attorney remains confident that the suit can be successfully defended in every respect. She invites any Board member to call her at 501-682-1307 to discuss anything about the case.

**END** This concludes my report for this period. We look forward to having you on campus for the next Board meeting on Tuesday, January 29, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. A light dinner snack with sweets and beverages will be available for you after 4:30 p.m. that day. Future Board meetings are scheduled in 2008 on March 25, June 3, July 29, September 30, and December 2.

Other dates to remember include:

1. The next OTC Foundation Board meeting is being planned as a lunch meeting at Noon on Friday, February 15, 2008 in the Board Room.
2. The annual Institutional Trustee Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, February 19, 2008 in Little Rock. Under State law, members of institutional boards of trustees are required to get eight hours of continuing education annually on topics determined by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, whose members are also required to participate. More details will be forthcoming.
3. OTC Board retreat with the Executive Staff and Achieving the Dream Core Committee for Strategic Planning on Tuesday, March 25, 2008. This is the same day as the regular March Board meeting to minimize the number of trips.
4. The OTC campus will be closed during the last two days of Spring Break on March 27 and 28, 2008 which are holidays (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Presidents Day) that the staff works but reschedules to the Spring Break week when the faculty and students are off. These are dates that were previously approved by the Board when the school calendar was approved.
5. A two-day Governance Leadership Institute conducted in San Antonio, Texas on April 13-15, 2008 (Hilton Palacio del Rio) by the Association of Community College Trustees. The College would pay your expenses to attend this optional conference more details of which are disclosed on the attached flyer.
6. OTC Graduation ceremony is on May 10, 2008, 2:00 p.m. at the Malvern High School Auditorium.
7. The Adult Education GED graduation is scheduled for June 26, 2008, 7:00 p.m., at the Malvern Community Center.

We hope to see you at these special events. Thanks again for your commitment, many contributions, and support.