



February, 2012

“The community college of South Arkansas will increase opportunity, stimulate growth, and improve the quality of life. This college is now simply a dream, but its reality could change the lives of you and your neighbors. Together as one institution, we can meet the future.” ~ from merger campaign brochure/Committee to Form the Community College for South Arkansas, 1992.

SouthArk’s 20th Anniversary ~ a time of celebration and reflection: As most of you know, South Arkansas Community College was formed by the merger of Oil Belt Technical College and Southern Arkansas University – El Dorado Branch through a vote of the citizens of Union County approving a millage. The vote took place in March, 1992. Thus, we will hold the kick-off birthday party for the college the end of March. Plans for 20 events to celebrate the 20th anniversary are being finalized by a planning committee. Many of these are events we typically host (i.e., Arts in April, chorale concerts, SGA events, etc.); however, they will have a special bent toward the 20th anniversary year. More information on the birthday party and other events will be forthcoming in the next few weeks. I think that we can be proud of all that the college and the faculty/staff that have been a part of this college for the past 20 years have accomplished and for making the “dream become a reality.”

Spring Enrollment: The **OFFICIAL** final enrollment for the spring of 2012 is pending some data “clean up,” but is hovering at a little over 1770. The semester credit hour (SSCH) production remains at about the same level as last fall. From anecdotal comments from other presidents in SW Arkansas, this is good. Other community colleges have experienced a slight decrease in enrollment. Thank you to everyone involved – recruiters, advisors, faculty and staff that make SouthArk a great place to work, learn, and grow! It takes everyone working together to make the college and students successful.

The SouthArk Bookstore: We welcome Mr. Robert Riddle, as the new SouthArk Bookstore Manager. We are excited about the management experience Mr. Riddle brings to the job. The Bookstore plans to carry both the *El Dorado News Times* and the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* beginning later this month. Also new this semester, the Bookstore is offering *Bistro Bucks* to students and employees (those with student IDs). The student can purchase a declining balance amount in \$100 increments with their eligible financial aid or with cash for use in the College’s Bistro Café.

2012-2013 Budget Planning: The College is beginning to develop its Operating Budget for the upcoming 2012-13 fiscal year. As you are aware, we do not anticipate an increase in appropriations. However, we encourage you to work with your Deans and Directors in developing an accurate and appropriate budget to meet the needs of our students. As always, we will work to seek various sources of external funding to “fill the gap” of funding such that we may provide the needed resources for our programs and students.

Stepping Stones: Our Stepping Stones pilot project, a program developed for young adults (19-29) with developmental challenges, is making progress. Various opportunities are beginning to materialize for these students. Our case manager, Beth Burns, has met with several community representatives that have offered internship possibilities for students. The program is expanding and generating great interest in our community. Kudos to our case manager!!

Grants: With limited state resources, faculty and staff have been busy seeking external sources of funding this year. In addition to those noted in November’s *Barb’s Wire* and those below, employees have also written for grants through Abermarle and the Murphy Foundation. Cynthia Reyna will be happy to work with you to seek grant funding for a classroom innovation or special project to support student learning, retention, and completion.

- a) **College and Career Readiness Planning Program (Student Services):** SouthArk received \$106,637 from the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) to fund a College and Career Readiness Planning Program (CCRPP). The CCRPP specifically targets Union County high school students who are underserved for the purpose of improving the “college-readiness” and “college-going” culture. A College Bound Academy will be established to cover ACT preparatory skills training for students selected from El Dorado, Junction City, Norphlet, Parkers Chapel, Smackover, and Strong High Schools. A new College & Career Coach/Transfer Advisor position has been developed to work closely with our Union County high schools. Tim

Johnson is filling this position. He will be instrumental in helping promote this program and add a greater SouthArk presence in these schools.

- b) **Vanguard Mini-Grant:** Physical Sciences Instructor Linda Bates received a Vanguard mini-grant fund from the SouthArk Foundation. This funding supports innovative teaching and learning techniques for students. The award of \$850 will provide for high-tech digital-probes and computer software that will enable students to investigate experimental phenomena in the physical sciences lab.
- c) **Plum Creek Foundation:** SouthArk was awarded an \$8,900 grant from the Plum Creek Foundation in January. Funds will purchase simulation manikins for the practical nursing program in Warren. The grant proposal was submitted by Keitha Davidson, Nursing Program Director. Congratulations!

Campus Projects: The Conference/Student Center, Whitfield Building, and Health Science Centers were reviewed by architects last week. A few minor items remain to be addressed, but these projects are soon to be finished. We appreciate your patience during the construction, moves, and lingering repairs and projects over the past year. The west campus continues to expand with its recent purchase of property (5 buildings) immediately west of Brookshire’s and also the house and lot (Preston property) immediately west of the Health Science Building. The AREON technology hut will be located on the back of this property. We are assessing the houses to determine feasibility of repair and repurposing or whether it is more fiscally responsible to demolish the structures.

Bellwether Award: The Arkansas Rural Nursing Education Consortium (ARNEC) was a Community College Futures Assembly Bellwether Award finalist recipient this year. The ARNEC program was presented at the conference assembly in Orlando, Florida and received much attention and many inquiries from community colleges across the nation. South Arkansas Community College is one of the eight consortium schools in ARNEC. Last year, ARNEC was second in the state for pass rates on the NCLEX-RN examination among all thirty registered nursing programs in the state.

Developmental Education Strides: We are “cautiously optimistic” and extremely excited about the great strides that have been made in the Developmental Education courses this past fall, as noted below. As we discussed earlier in the year, we must have “courageous” conversations using student learning outcomes data, and we must make changes to improve student success. The results listed below are for all levels of Developmental Math (3), Reading (2), and Writing (2). Math increased significantly with the changes in textbook, face-to-face teaching, new classroom/laboratory, and scheduled laboratory/practice time. Reading II success has increased significantly and is holding steady. We expect some improvements in Writing I and II with adoption of learning communities and other best practices. A “pat on the back” goes to all the faculty teaching in these areas. Keep up the good work!

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Fall 2011
Math	49.40%	54.10%	43.20%	34.00%	46.80%	69.30%
Reading	60.20%	74.20%	56.90%	67.20%	75.60%	72.70%
Writing	68.40%	78.20%	61.20%	74.90%	67.10%	66.70%

Annual Fund Drive: The SouthArk Foundation annual fund drive is underway. Gifts from the community continue to be received. The college employee drive was completed in December. Compliments go to Casey Martin and her team in the Conference/Student Center that had 92% participation of employees. To date (July-January), a total of \$78,000 has been received from all donors to the annual fund. Add to these gifts the Taylor bequest gift of \$247,962 for a total of \$326,000 received this fiscal year. You know how scholarships and support for college projects make a difference in the lives of our students. THANK YOU!

“Morale is the state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope. It is confidence and zeal and loyalty. It is elan, esprit de corps and determination.”~ General George Catlett Marshall

I am proud to say that SouthArk faculty and staff have an “esprit de corps” - the common spirit existing in the members of a group and inspiring enthusiasm, devotion, and strong regard for the honor of the group (Merriam’s Dictionary). You enthusiastically work together to achieve the mission and goals of the college. You provide learning opportunities through credit and non-credit offerings, wrap-around support services, as well as community service activities. You show care and compassion for students and for each other. You work hard but also enjoy fun times through employee activities such as the Christmas party, spring picnic, Relay for Life,

and working on the Christmas parade/float. At times we might lose our enthusiasm, passion, or inspiration for our work because of various demands on our time and life. If so, it is always good to *reconnect* with the reason you chose to work in higher education – to help our students become more educated and workforce ready – to improve the quality of life for our citizens – to enrich and enhance lives through appreciation for culture, arts, and the world around us. I know my passion is rekindled when our students walk across the stage at graduation, or proud families watch their loved one “pinned,” or when we recognize students for academic or organizational achievements...or when a faculty/staff member’s grant or presentation proposal is selected or they are recognized for outstanding service. I know you do not hear it often enough...but thank you for all you do. We do **great work every day at SouthArk!**

Upcoming Events:

February

- Sunday, February 19 – Arkansas College Goal Sunday
- Saturday, February 25 – African American Family & Friends Day – 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- Tuesday, February 28 – College Transfer Fair
- Wednesday, February 29 – Student Forum – 11:00 a.m. – Library Auditorium
- Thursday, February 15 – Students-in-Recital – 12:00 p.m. – Conference Center

March

- Tuesday, March 13 – Women’s History Day Event – 6:30 p.m. – Conference Center
- Wednesday, March 14 – Foundation Board Meeting – Noon – Conference Center
- Tuesday, March 20 – Board of Trustees Meeting – 3:45 p.m. – East Campus – Center for Workforce Development – Conf. Room 103
- Thursday, March 29 – 20th Anniversary Kick-off Birthday Party – 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. – Conference Center
- Friday, March 30 – PTK Induction Ceremony – 6:00 p.m. – Conference Center

April

- Wednesday, April 4 – Spring Fling/Student Appreciation sponsored by SGA
- Thursday, April 12 – Lecture Series – Collins Tuohy – 7:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- Sunday, April 15 – Spring Chorale Concert – TBA
- Tuesday, April 17 – Board of Trustees Meeting – 3:45 p.m. – Administration Building Board Room
- Sunday, April 22 – Writers’ Ink Awards Ceremony – 2:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- April 24-26 – Students’ Starving Artist Exhibit /Sale
- Thursday, April 26 – Students-in-Recital – 12:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- Friday, April 27 – Student Recognition Ceremony – 6:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- Saturday, April 28 – 20th Anniversary Gala/Employee Recognition – 6:00 p.m.

May

- Friday, May 11 – Commencement – 7:00 p.m. – Conference Center
- Tuesday, May 15 – Board of Trustees Meeting – 3:45 p.m. – Administration Building Board Room
- Wednesday, May 23 – Foundation Board Meeting – Noon - Conference