

BARB'S Wire

September 15, 2014

“Challenges are what make life interesting; overcoming them is what makes life meaningful.”

— Joshua Marine

I have always looked at challenges as opportunities to learn and grow. This year provides us with many challenges and opportunities. Steps are being taken to prepare for our Higher Learning Commission visit. The committees have been appointed and meetings have commenced. We are reviewing and revising our catalog and APM to assure that the information presented is appropriate and accurately reflects our processes and our institution. The critical thinking project added a new cohort of faculty this year. Existing standing committees are moving forward with renewed vigor with plans for improvements and alignment in assessment plans. Several programs are preparing for accreditation reviews. The Department of Labor grant for Advanced Manufacturing is making steady progress in curriculum development, employee engagement, and student recruitment. We have another busy year ahead of us!

Vice President of Learning: We experienced an unanticipated change in the VP of Learning position, as explained at recent meetings or email. I want to assure you that numerous individuals have stepped up to assist during the interim and we have already posted and are advertising nationally for the position. We have had a number of inquiries about the position and have already received some applications. The previous selection committee will reconvene the last week in October to begin the review of applicants. During the interim, Dr. Bullock and I will share various responsibilities for the position. Dr. Bullock is coordinating the development of the spring schedule, spring textbook adoption and orders, and will handle student suspension issues. He will attend the CAO/CSO AATYC and ADHE meetings. I will handle PAFs, budget requests, and other administrative duties. Dr. Robledo and Dr. Tully-Dartez are heading up the Catalog committees. Dr. Tully-Dartez and Phil Ballard will be working on the Academic Assessment Plan initiated by Dr. Ayers. Marguerite Rogers will provide the ongoing continuity in the CAO office.

Commencement Speaker for the December 2014 graduation is Dr. David Rankin, President of Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia.

Outdoor Expo: Expo sponsorships in the amount of \$111,150 were received to support the Foundation, scholarships and college initiatives. Special thanks to title sponsor Apex Redi-Mixed Concrete. We had 59 total sponsors – \$25,300 in-kind sponsors; \$85,850 total cash sponsors. We also had 92

exhibitors and vendors, 43 Rib Cook-off teams competed (300 rib racks grilled and sold), 200 registered participants in the Major Ronald Culver Hero 5k run/walk, 80 photo entrants, 15 duck calling competitors, as well as great entertainment: It was a remarkable day for everyone. **Thank you to ALL 405 volunteers!**

Campus Conversations: Again this year, we will be holding a series of informal “conversations” on the east and west campuses to visit about some specific topics, but also to talk about issues of concern to you. The time and place for the fall “conversations” are:

East Campus – WFD Room 121 – 10:45 a.m.

September 25, 2014 – Thursday

November 20, 2014 – Thursday

West Campus – WHT Room 108 – 8:30 a.m.

September 26, 2014 – Friday

November 21, 2014 – Friday

United Way Campaign: Dr. Tim Kirk, SouthArk’s United Way loaned executive and campaign chair, is kicking off the 2014 campaign at SouthArk. We appreciate all of you that donate to the United Way. This agency provides funds to support so many valuable organizations and agencies in our area.

Fall Enrollment Update: The **UNOFFICIAL** enrollment for the fall of 2014 is 1698, an increase of 4% in headcount from fall 2013 (1632). Our student semester credit hour (SSCH) production and Full Time Equivalent (FTE) also increased. Other community colleges in AR reported a slight increases or decreases in enrollment. This is a trend being experienced across the U.S. Most colleges are attributing the decrease to an improving economy and changes in financial aid policies.

DOL Grant: SouthArk received \$3.9 million for Advanced Manufacturing as part of the SW Arkansas Community College Consortium – one of seven community colleges. As the lead college, SouthArk is responsible for establishing the overall procedures for grant implementation, defining outcomes, assuring fiscal accountability, and establishing an evaluation and reporting system. As the SWACCC TAACCT grant approaches the end of its first year, our Consortium colleges are putting the finishing touches on the groundwork for the debut of new programs in advanced manufacturing. Our area industries expect a significant percentage of our advanced manufacturing workforce to retire over the next five years, but the workers who fill those positions will need more skills than ever before. We have used employer input to develop the curriculum. They have told us they need workers with basic computer and algebra skills, communication skills, welding skills, knowledge of electronic instrumentation and logic controllers. SouthArk is rolling out new programs in Industrial Technology/Mechatronics, including an exciting opportunity for students to obtain the NCCER core credential (blue card) while completing their coursework. In addition, through curriculum alignment and our prior learning assessment procedure, employees of various local industries who completed specific non-credit trainings in the last year could be eligible for college credit once enrolled at SouthArk.

The Stepping Stones Program began in 2010, after Murphy Oil and the Murphy Foundation gave South Arkansas Community College grants to fund a pilot program. Many exciting changes have occurred in the past few months including the program becoming operationalized and adopting a new name, **Academic and Career Achievement Program (ACAP)**. Effective fall 2014, ACAP accepted a new cohort of students and hired an additional instructor, Gary Hall. The program now has 21 students total and 10 of these students will participate in on-campus internships this semester. Interns will work in various SouthArk departments including Health and Natural Sciences, Information Technology, Library, Performing and Media Arts, Maintenance, and the Bistro. ACAP is designed for individuals who have Intellectual Disabilities (ID) or Developmental Disabilities (DD), and who can benefit from the community college experience.

Facilities/Plant Updates:

Heritage Plaza construction is nearing completion. Pavers are being installed and installation of landscaping underway. A dedication of the plaza is being planned for early November. **East Campus** will see some changes in the next few months. A land survey has been completed and a tree crop bid begun. We will be clear cutting a 2 acre section to make room for the proposed Advanced Manufacturing Training Center which will be located north of the Workforce Center. In addition, the remaining 14 acres will have select cutting of the pines to allow more growth for the other hardwoods. We are also removing 3 storage buildings to provide a more open and clean campus area. And, an architectural RFQ is being prepared to secure architects for development of the AMTC plans.

The Summit Street parking lot is finally nearing completion. The asphalt and irrigation installation is complete, so we are able to use it for parking. The landscaping is underway with grass and trees to be planted. The City has the Summit Street repair/overlay in their queue.

The McWilliams (Callahan) house roofing and exterior repairs bid has been awarded so renovations should commence soon. The master plan for the house is almost complete, so we anticipate a presentation by the architect in the near future. This project is funded through a grant through Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC) which Cynthia Reyna helped to secure for SouthArk.

SouthArk Independent Living Laboratory: This laboratory is the house located at 421 Wesson Street next to the Health Science Center parking lot. Renovations are complete. We have received a number of donations of furnishings. A hospital bed will be relocated to the lab. This facility will be used with various health science programs and with the Academic and Career Achievement Program (ACAP). They will begin utilizing the Independent Living Lab in their curriculum this fall.

East Campus - Advanced Manufacturing Training Center: We are in the process of receiving bids to harvest trees on the

east campus. We will be clear cutting a small area for an Advanced Manufacturing Training Center and select cutting the other 14 acres. We will be reviewing qualifications of architects for the AMTC project in early October. The proposed plans are for a metal building approximately 60x150 with three classrooms, four offices, and a large open bay laboratory space. More information on this project will be forthcoming as plans are developed.

University Transfer Center: Southern Arkansas University-Magnolia continues to partner with South Arkansas Community College to offer the bachelor degrees on our west campus in El Dorado. Courses for the BS in Education degree in Elementary Education were offered in 2013-14 and will continue in the spring. In addition, courses toward a BS in Criminal Justice are offered on campus this fall. Through these partnership programs, SAU faculty teach courses and advise students at the SouthArk campus. This affords our graduates an opportunity to further their education without traveling to Magnolia. The programs are designed for nontraditional students with courses being offered at night, weekends, and online. We also continue to partner with UAMS for the delivery of the Masters of Nursing program which is offered using our interactive video classroom.

Emergency Notification System: The Alertus emergency notification system is in place and was tested this past spring. The blue light emergency phones have been installed on both campuses and will be "live" in the next month. The emergency alert beacons are installed in all buildings. The desktop notification is on most college computers. The notification solution is available for download for faculty and staff. The notification solution is on all instructors' stations. The Emergency Operations Plan documents have been placed in classrooms and offices. We are planning to test our emergency plan this fall with an evacuation drill, so please review the evacuation plans! More information will be forthcoming as the plans are developed.

SHOUT OUTS!

Thanks to Sterling Claypoole for coordinating another poignant and moving 9/11 Service of Remembrance event on our campus.

Congratulations to Vernita Morgan for being selected as a fellow in the American Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges' Project ACCCESS (Advancing Community College Careers: Education, Scholarship, and Service). The program is designed to provide mentoring and professional development for two-year college mathematics faculty.

Thanks again to everyone who volunteered and participated in the **SouthArk Outdoor Expo!** Cynthia and her team once again organized a tremendous event.

Thanks to Cathy Harrell, Mike Roberts and Denise Robledo for assisting with the Mexican Consulate's office on campus last weekend.

It is another GREAT and EXCITING YEAR at SouthArk!

Barbara R. Jones

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

September 24, 2014 – Wednesday

- Foundation Board Meeting
Noon – El Dorado Conference Center

September 25, 2014 – Thursday

- Campus Conversations
10:45 a.m. – East Campus
Center for Workforce Development, Room 121

September 26, 2014 – Friday

- Campus Conversations
8:30 a.m. – West Campus
Whitfield Building, Room 108

October 21, 2014 – Tuesday

- 3:45 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting
Administration Building Board Room

November 6, 2014 – Thursday

- Lecture Series – Inge Auerbacher Holocaust Survivor
7:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

November 8, 2014 – Saturday

- Mistletoe Market
9:00 a.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

November 11, 2014 – Tuesday

- WWII Documentary
6:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center
Murphy Hall III

November 19, 2014 – Wednesday

- Foundation Board Meeting
Noon – El Dorado Conference Center

November 14, 2014 – Friday

- Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Induction Ceremony
6:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

November 18, 2014 – Tuesday

- 3:45 p.m. Board of Trustees Meeting
Administration Building Board Room

November 20, 2014 – Thursday

- Campus Conversations
10:45 a.m. – East Campus
Center for Workforce Development, Room 121

November 21, 2014 – Friday

- Campus Conversations
8:30 a.m. – West Campus
Whitfield Building, Room 108
- Student Recognition Ceremony
7:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center
Murphy Hall I

December 8, 2014 – Monday

- RN Pinning Ceremony
6:30 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

December 11, 2014 – Wednesday

- LPN Pinning Ceremony
6:30 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center
- El Dorado Christmas Parade
7:00 p.m.

December 16, 2014 – Tuesday

- Employee Holiday Reception
11:30 a.m. – El Dorado Conference Center

December 18, 2014 - Thursday

- Commencement
7:00 p.m. – El Dorado Conference Center