Congratulations to the Class of 2012

Southwest Student Selected to Visit NASA

Memphis Mayor Delivers State-of-the-City Address at Southwest
The President’s Message

College News

Southwest’s Class of 2012 is Encouraged to be a Part of the Solution

The 2012 AAfPE Southeast Regional Conference Takes Place

Music and Theatre Students Tour London

2011 Memphis Grizzlies/Southwest Poetry Slam First Place Winner

Southwest Student Selected to Visit NASA

The Carter Godwin Woodson Award of Merit Ceremony

SMARTS Convenes 2012 Spring Orientation Meeting

TN Achieves Program Kicks Off at Southwest

Memphis Mayor’s 2012 State of the City Address Delivered at Southwest

Phi Theta Kappa Launches the Pledge to Completion Signing Campaign

Southwest Tops the College Division 2011 Race for the Cure® Fundraising Teams

Our College Hosts the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows

Engineering Technologies Department Visits Jabil

Outnumbered Male Project Attracts Local Minority Male High School Students

Southwest Now Magazine

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Southwest dramatically changed its focus based on personnel reductions, increased accountability for results and continuous efforts to enhance improved retention and graduation rates. An evolving culture is emerging that strongly emphasizes transformational leadership, student success, improved customer service, greater efficiency and effectiveness regarding institutional processes.

College transformation requires effective leadership at all levels since leadership drives performance and fosters accountability. On March 30, 2012, Southwest unveiled a leadership development program in which all employees in leadership positions participated. The program is designed to enhance skills for diversity, collaboration, change, and customer care. It provides hands on instruction regarding becoming an effective leader, managing teams, and improving organizational performance. The program, initially offered to Deans, Executive Directors, Department Heads and Directors, will be expanded to include leaders below the Director level within the coming weeks. This leadership program consists of 14 modules covering topics ranging from understanding how emotions affect performance to building a customer oriented culture. The program, built on the Six Second emotional intelligence model is utilized by various organizations known for developing leaders including FedEx, Microsoft, IBM, and numerous colleges and universities around the globe.

With respect to student retention, the College has developed an institutional plan designed to improve retention and graduation. Faculty, staff and administrative representatives are involved in implementing, monitoring and evaluating student outcomes based on our plan.

In an effort to enhance efficiency and effectiveness regarding College processes, two major developments have occurred—a significant reduction in processing financial aid applications and the installation of a state-of-the-art telephone system. In addition to Southwest’s increasing enrollment, the number of students receiving Federal funds has increased by 71 percent over the last six years. Based on an influx of students and a decrease in staff, the College endeavored to streamline many of its processes by requesting that students assist us by submitting required financial aid documents early. Southwest has pledged that prospective students who submit their FAFSA and required Southwest documents by June 1 will have their financial aid processed and completed by July 30. Additionally, Southwest has created a “dashboard” which combines registration and financial aid information in one location for our students’ convenience.

The tremendous volume of students receiving financial aid and contacting us via telephone led Southwest to examine admissions and financial aid processes and provide upgraded and improved service to our increasing population. An antiquated phone system has been replaced with innovative technology which allows call back capability to students and dramatically reduces wait time. Southwest purchased a new cutting edge phone system solution that provides callers with more options when contacting our institution. With the new system, callers are informed of their position in the queue and the wait time before an agent is available. If callers choose, they may leave their phone number, and the system will contact them when an agent is available thereby securing their position in the queue.

In our Call Center, agents are now able to communicate with each other and provide timely information quickly to serve our students. With respect to our switchboard operators, the system provides versatility to the Call Center and key personnel at the College. The new system provides switchboard operators accurate information regarding the availability of call center agents and college personnel that students are attempting to contact. A component of the new phone system features Interactive Voice Recognition (IVR) which offers students 24/7 self-service access via the phone. Students will be able to access their admissions status as well their account balance. This new system will provide a more customer friendly experience for our students as well as employees who utilize the system. Documents, which had previously required in-person submission, are immediately processed electronically into our student information system. Lastly, staff has been involved in process and service-oriented training to better assist students with the enrollment process.
In addition to our focus on internal processes, Southwest continues to experience success in meeting the workforce needs of our employers. The College has embarked on a signature program, *Industrial Readiness Training*, designed for individuals at all levels of preparedness, is especially effective for those who are underemployed and unemployed. Additionally, unemployed personnel recently discharged from the military will benefit from this program. Individuals are tested using the WorkKeys pretest, which measures reading, mathematics, and locating information. Using this pre-test, individuals are scored into three categories: Gold, Silver and Bronze. Unfortunately, many of our community’s residents rank in the Bronze category, which creates ineligibility for most industrial jobs. All participants are required to take a mechanical test to assess their manufacturing aptitude. One of the key concepts in this program requires instructors to begin with soft skills and progress to hard skills training. Thus, this program prepares participants for manufacturing readiness while ensuring that they understand and can apply the soft skills necessary for acquiring and retaining employment.

In response to a request by a local employer and our city and county mayors, Southwest designed a program that targeted WorkKeys Bronze Level applicants (the lowest certification qualifying an applicant for the lowest number and quality jobs). After two pilot classes, this rigorous and intensive 49-hour training program produced an 86.8 percent completion rate, with 84.5 percent of the completers immediately hired while many of the remaining students were interviewed and sought by other companies. Importantly, no one failed or was dropped from the program; however, some decided that the program did not represent a good fit. The exciting aspect of this venture stems from the fact that prior to enrolling in our pilot classes, many potential workers had previously been rejected in the initial screening. Southwest informed the company that, “Our mission and strength is to accept students where they are and elevate them where they need to be.” With a large bronze-level workforce in Memphis, this program holds extraordinary potential for our city, county, and the southwest region of Tennessee.

These job skills are desperately needed by our city and county in order to attract and retain new and emerging industries. Frequently, when new companies arrive in the Mid-South, they discover a local workforce woefully underprepared to meet the challenging and complex tasks required in today’s industrial environment. Despite holding high school diplomas, most of our local workforce remains ill equipped in basic skills to meet the needs of a challenging environment. They need additional and timely training. For this reason, Southwest Tennessee Community College developed its Industrial Readiness Training program.

The Industrial Readiness Training program has the following goal: *To provide education and training to the local workforce, thus providing a larger qualified applicant pool to meet the hiring needs of local businesses and industry from the Mid-South.*

To meet this goal, we propose the following objectives:

1. The program must be expandable.
2. The program must be attractive to industry by improving current employee skills.
3. The program will support the Tennessee Technology Center and local industry and serve as a bridge to the community.
4. The program will integrate the industrial needs of the community into degree and certificate programs through Prior Learning Assessment (PLA), thus increasing the education of our local workforce and providing a quicker pathway to achieving a degree.

We are confident regarding the viability this program offers based on the above explanation. As an example of its success, a major local employer faced an immediate need of 150 employees, with an expected need of 400 additional employees over the next year and a half. This employer received thousands of applicants, and only two percent were even minimally qualified. The company’s turnover rate was high and quality control difficult. The program Southwest developed achieved overwhelming success with the vast majority of participants completing the program and becoming immediately employed. In fact, this company will now hire only those applicants who complete this program. Other companies are currently seeking our support to assist their companies. Progress occurring internally and externally will allow us to remain viable and responsive to the educational needs of students, employers and communities in Shelby and Fayette Counties and the surrounding Mid-South region, which solidifies our belief that Southwest is indeed “Your Best Choice.”

Cordially,

Nathan L. Essex
President
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Numbering 1,791; our largest graduation class ever, the candidates of Southwest’s 2012 graduating class had marched three-point symmetry into the Landers Center arena in Southaven, MS and taken their seats to receive their seal of approval on May 5. They had, after all, done the work and put in the time said student speaker Erin Mullinax. “We all spent countless hours bent over textbooks, wrote what felt like thousands of papers and took just as many tests. But most of all we all reached for our dreams and no matter how many obstacles were thrown in our way, we overcame them all and made it here today,” Mullinax proudly said to her fellow classmates.

Commencement speaker, the Honorable Mark Luttrell, Shelby County Mayor, took a vicarious look at the challenges the graduates experienced in their pursuit of a college degree, “the many hours put into papers, note taking, doing research ... it finally all paid off,” said Luttrell. Having met that benchmark, he set a goal for the graduates’ future success. “Now that you are here, I welcome you to ‘be a part of the solution.’ For years you’ve been the recipient of the wisdom of the faculty of this great school. Now with the degree of challenges that lie ahead of you, we ask you to be a solution to all the
issues that face us as a society,” he said, laying out edicts: “Challenge yourself to perfect your abilities; use your toolbox of knowledge and experience; learn to let go, learn the jargon, learn the culture, best practices, and a range of career opportunities; and build relationships.” He added, “Cultivate those relationships; they will be your way to continued success.”

There are often graduating students who’ve overcome extreme odds to reach this pinnacle. Among those Southwest President Nathan Essex recognized was Maria Gonzalez, an immigrant from Mexico who knew no English until she enrolled in the English as a Second Language Program. Gonzalez graduated with a 3.61 GPA. Robert Hale, laid off from the casino industry, persevered to graduate summa cum laude and was employed by MLGW. Also, dually enrolled Christopher Michael Taylor received two technical certificates; one in Electrical/Electronic Fundamentals and the other in Industrial Computer Fundamentals. He also received a diploma from Bolton High School. In addition, graduates who served in the armed forces were honored.

Special guest U.S. Congressman Steve Cohen also extended congratulations to Southwest’s Class of 2012.
Twenty-five conferees from the states of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee attended the 2012 American Association for Paralegal Education Regional Conference (AAfPE), hosted for the first time by Southwest on March 29-31.

The conference offered a range of sessions including the use of SoftChalk – software that allows for the incorporation of technology tools into the delivery of lectures and the positioning of materials online to make them interactive. Additional sessions comprised the following topics: Online Cheating, Counseling Foreign Student/International Service Missions, Open Discussion on Membership Guidelines, Scholarly Journal Committee, Regional Update, Bloom’s Taxonomy as a Guide for Outcomes, Mindmiester, and FERPA and Our Responsibilities: When to Provide Information and When to Keep a Secret.

The primary focus of the conference, according to Dr. Patricia Nozinich, professor of Paralegal Studies for Southwest, was on faculty development. “We discussed new technology and different ways to present material that might be more effective. We also talked about new types of projects that might lend themselves to better marketing or better retention. We took an overall look at how to make the program better, not just from the teaching perspective, but the administrative perspective, as well as the marketing perspective,” said Nozinich.

The assembly also discussed and received feedback regarding the national organization and credentials for approval by the American Bar Association (ABA). Many of the colleges in the region, Nozinich indicated, want to incorporate technology in alternative delivery methods, i.e., online. According to Nozinich, there are some limitations placed on courses offered via alternative delivery methods because of the approval process and guidelines imposed by the ABA. The ABA guidelines seek to ensure that the content of courses taught in an alternative delivery format is equivalent to that presented in a traditional classroom setting so that students aren’t short changed.

Not surprisingly, Southwest has a very strong Paralegal Studies Program with active participation from its advisory board and the legal community. Professor of Paralegal Studies Gwynne Hutton, J.D., said of the program, “We work closely with the community. Our advisory committee is very active. We try to keep them informed. I think if you communicate with everybody, they will help you when you need it.”

Speaking of “help when you need it,” Dr. Nozinich also credits Southwest’s Culinary Arts Program for their contribution to the overwhelming success of the conference. “The attendees have done nothing but rave about how good the food was and how wonderful the services have been. I am so proud of the culinary group,” Nozinich said.

Southeastern Director for AAfPE Kye Haymore, from Georgia Piedmont Technical College, said the conference was a wonderful experience. “The paralegal studies program here has hosted a wonderful event... They’ve got great facilities. The culinary arts people are fabulous,” she said.

Robert Mongue, from the University of Mississippi, facilitates the Scholarly Journal Committee session during the AAfPE conference hosted by Southwest.
Southwest Music and Theatre Students Tour London

Hands-on or experiential learning is generally touted as the most effective form of education, and students from Southwest’s Music Appreciation and Theatre Appreciation classes couldn’t agree more as they had the opportunity to apply and observe classroom concepts during live theatre performances while touring London, England, during spring break.

The International Studies Department at Southwest provided partial scholarships for 13 students to study abroad in London where they attended lectures from Jheri Hardaway of Kingston University and Andrew Stewart of the University of Surrey. The students toured the National Gallery, the National Theatre – where they saw “Travelling Light,” the Bush Theater – where they saw “Snookered” and “Les Miserables” at the Queen’s Theatre, the opera, “Rusalka” at the Royal Opera House, toured the London Eye and then went on a Thames Riverboat Cruise. They also toured Shakespeare’s birthplace, Oxford University, Stratford on the Avon, Shakespeare’s Globe, the British Museum, and saw “The Lion King” while in the historic city for nine days on March 2-10.

Assistant Professor Levi Frazier, who teaches Theatre Appreciation, collaborated with Instructor Valetta Brinson, who teaches Music Appreciation – both from the Communications, Graphics and Fine Arts Department, to oversee the study arrangements.

“We taught about the various aspects of music, the elements of opera, musical theater, things to listen for when listening to music such as the elements: form, genre, rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumentation, timbre, tempo, and various music periods - Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque and Romantic Periods,” explained Brinson. “My students also studied the history of Shakespeare, costumes for the Elizabethan stage, the similarities between theatre and religion, and basic acting.

International Studies scholarship recipients from the Music Appreciation class were Portia Knight, Loren Sanford, Tujuana Perkins and Michelle Resendez. Scholarship recipients from the Theatre Appreciation class were Earlean Sanders, Justin Schweiger, Pamela Williams, Rachel Roberson, Jefffrey Centobie, Heather Dufrene, Larry Foster, Vernon Patton and Laura Pitts.

2011 Memphis Grizzlies/Southwest Poetry Slam First Place Winner

The Power of the Spoken Word

Snap, snap, and more snaps; that is the sound of approval in the world of the spoken word. Southwest was the presenting sponsor of the Memphis Grizzlies Poetry Slam, where 27 students from across the Mid-South presented their spoken word lyrics in front of a panel of five judges and an audience filled with supporters on December 3.

Tachele Anderson was the winner, representing White Station High School. Anderson was awarded a trip to New York, but most importantly a full scholarship to Southwest with a $100 per semester book stipend. Her poem was simply called “I Believe in Myself” – but with a twist. Anderson says, “It’s not just simply saying that you believe in yourself, you have to put some effort into it.” She says that getting a scholarship to Southwest is “great, especially since money is a key issue for college.” Her goal is to major in biology and one day become an OB/GYN. Other results were second place, Khadejah Fleming, representing East High School, winning a Dell laptop computer and third place, La’reka Ayers, representing Hillcrest High School, winning an iPod Touch.

The contestants were welcomed by Vanessa Dowdy, director of Recruitment for Southwest. The emcee for the event was D.J. Big Sue from K-97 (WHRK) Radio. The contestants overcame individual competitions at their respective high schools to make it to the finals. The theme for the slam was “Believe in Myself.” The theme became apparent when each student began to speak about self-empowerment, self-determination, motivation and some spiritual connections. The students personalized each piece by exposing a part of themselves unaware to the audience; struggles with self-confidence, drugs and peer pressure. Other students spoke of their physical appearance and the challenges associated with their bodies.

Additional sponsors included International Paper, Wing Stop, and the National Basketball Academy. The panel of judges included: Amanda Morris, representing International Paper; Lauren Johnson, representing Fox-13 News; Daniel Holmes, representing Guardsmark, Inc.; Jeffery Williams, representing Wing Stop; and Entrepreneur Eddie Dowdy, II.
Erin Mullinax, of Southwest Tennessee Community College, has been selected to travel to a NASA Center this spring to participate in a three-day on-site event. She has been selected as one of 92 community and junior college students from across the nation to be part of the National Community College Aerospace Scholars (NCCAS) program. Students completed four Web-based assignments during the school year, maintaining an 88 average to qualify for the experience. They will apply what they have learned during the year to work with NASA engineers.

Mullinax learned of the opportunity with the NCCAS program through membership in Southwest’s Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. “I am an engineering major and I am very interested in NASA. I grew up in the space shuttle era. My grandfather always made us get up and watch the launches. It interested me and when I saw it was for engineering majors, I thought it was a good opportunity to get involved with NASA and get my name out there,” said Mullinax.

Laid off from her job during the recession, she enrolled at Southwest 17 years after completing high school. Focusing on her interest in math, the engineering curriculum at the college challenged and satiated her passion for problem solving. Mullinax dove full throttle into the college culture and now serves as president of the Honors Academy, vice president of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the Service-learning Club, and was recently named to the 2012 Phi Theta Kappa All-Tennesseee Academic Team.

The program is a three-day on-site event at either Johnson Space Center in Houston or the Jet Propulsion laboratory in Pasadena, CA. It offers students from across the nation the opportunity to interact with each other as they learn more about careers in science and engineering. While at NASA, students form teams and establish fictional companies interested in Mars exploration. Each company is responsible for developing a prototype rover, designing a line drawing of the rover, and forming the company infrastructure, including budgeting and communications functions, and will prepare presentations.

The on-site experience at NASA includes a tour of facilities and briefings by noted NASA employees including astronauts.

“If you had told me three years ago that I would be going to NASA in May and graduating with honors, I would have thought ‘you are out of your mind,’” said Mullinax, who is being courted by such institutions as Yale, Kentucky State, and Austin Peay State universities, among others.

National Community College Aerospace Scholars is a program based on Texas Aerospace Scholars, originally created by the state of Texas in partnership with NASA and the Texas educational community. Both programs are designed to encourage community and junior college students to enter careers in science and engineering and ultimately join the nation’s highly technical workforce. With this program, NASA continues the agency’s investment in educational programs that attract and retain students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; disciplines critical to NASA’s future missions.
Local Theater Director/Playwright is the Recipient of the Carter Godwin Woodson Award of Merit

Ekundayo Bandele, founder and executive/artistic director of Hattiloo Theatre, playwright, actor, and community activist, was honored with the Southwest Tennessee Community College Carter Godwin Woodson Award of Merit during the annual award ceremony on February 7 at the Union Avenue Campus Theater.

The award was created in 1988 to recognize individuals, groups, or agencies who have contributed to, preserved, or promoted the African-American experience and who support Dr. Woodson’s legacy of “historical accuracy through inclusion.” A linguist and historian, he is considered “the father of Black history.” The recipient of the award must work or live within Southwest’s service area or be connected with the college in a significant way.

Reared in New York, Bandele, the 2012 Woodson award recipient, attended Southwest and Tennessee State University. Later, he settled in Memphis, immersing himself in the arts; writing and self-producing plays, and writing a novel. His writings comprise the novel, Tales Go Around, and several stage-plays – Judas’ Hands and If Scrooge Was A Brother. He has directed numerous plays, most notably August Wilson’s Fences. He also portrayed the character Booth in Suzan-Lori Park’s Pulitzer Prize winning play, Topdog/Underdog. Bandele sees himself standing on the middle ground, connecting black people and white people through the art of theatre.

His civic involvement includes serving on the boards of the Benjamin Hooks Institute for Social Change at the University of Memphis and the Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau. He is a graduate of Leadership Memphis’ Executive Class of 2010. For his contributions to Memphis, he has received visionary awards from the Center City Commission, the United Way of the Mid-South, J.U.G.S, and Impact Memphis, in addition to a Congressional Certificate of Honor. Memphis Business Quarterly named him a “Power Player” in 2011, and in 2008, he was voted one of “12 Who Made a Difference” by The Commercial Appeal. He was also recently named one of the Tri-State Defender’s “Men of Excellence.”

The awards ceremony honoring Bandele included participation by Willie Berry - a musical prelude, Associate Director, Honors Academy MaLinda F. Wade - the welcome and occasion, Executive Director of Library Services Carolyn Head - poetry reading, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs Barbara Roseborough - presentation of the award, and President Nathan Essex – remarks.

Ekundayo Bandele (left) receives the Carter Godwin Woodson Award of Merit as presented by Barbara Roseborough.
Willing to guide and advise, Southwest faculty and staff, some for a second time, volunteered for SMARTS – Southwest Mentors Advancing Retention, Teamwork, and Success – a faculty-staff mentoring program. Into its second year, the mission of SMARTS, according to Executive Director for the Office of Student Retention and Graduation Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, is to develop supportive relationships between faculty/staff and students to provide campus advocates, resource information, guidance, and problem-solving methods to encourage students to advance toward completion of a certificate or degree, and ultimately a career choice. The group met on January 27 on the Macon Cove Campus in the Farris Building, Rooms A & B, to match the student mentees with mentors.

Noticeably, more mentees are participating in the 2012 SMARTS Program than did last year. The reasons for the increased interest, based upon the comments mentees presented on the Student Information Sheets, Dr. Calhoun reported, is that they need direction and someone who they can depend upon to provide accurate information about navigating the college service areas, including academic advising.

Asked to relate the successes of last year’s program, she responded, “The persistence of students is our goal. We are very pleased to see the results: 14 mentees and 20 mentors launched SMARTS in spring 2011; 78 percent (11 mentees) completed the program – three graduated and eight persisted or continued enrollment in Spring 2012, one year later.”

In the fall of 2011, 22 mentees and mentors participated in SMARTS. For the spring of 2012, participation almost doubled; 40 mentees and 30 mentors are engaged in the mentoring program. Persistence rates will also be determined for these semesters.

Outlining some of the activities planned this year in order to obtain qualitative data related to the mentees’ perception of their SMARTS experience, Dr. Calhoun said, “We host a focus group.” The focus group is also utilized to build community among the mentees and to assess needs or problems with the mentoring process or other areas that can be addressed by bringing in staff from various departments with accurate information to share. One example, Dr. Calhoun pointed out, was regarding inaccurate information students discussed at a focus group concerning financial aid and graduation. An added information session was convened with staff from those areas to provide valid answers for the students.

Mentees are required to participate in a career shadowing experience with their mentors and upon the completion to write a reflection paper to share its impact with the mentor and the department. Also, social events are planned for enjoyment and to bring mentors and mentees together in an informal setting – in the fall, a Saluqis basketball game, and this spring a play produced by SMARTS Mentor Levi Frazier. At the end of the semester mentees receive a certificate of completion and are also acknowledged at the annual Honors Convocation.

Dr. Calhoun capsulized the program by saying, “The basic outcome for the SMARTS program is to increase student persistence and access to college-level academic programs in order to move students closer to completion and graduation. … The self-esteem and confidence of students in their abilities to succeed in college and their personal lives add a tremendous amount of value to the mentoring process both through tangible and intangible means.”
Over a four-day period, several hundred future students and their parents gathered at Southwest’s Macon Cove Campus to get more information about a new initiative to help students achieve the goal of completing college called TN Achieves. It began in 2008 in Knox County Public High Schools and the success of their efforts led to expanding the program to 25 counties across Tennessee.

TN Achieves provides high school graduates with an opportunity to receive up to $3,000 annually for community college tuition. The grant is classified as “last dollar” funds to be used only to pay the balance of the students’ tuition and fees. The funds are paid directly to the college.

Vanessa Dowdy, director of Recruitment for Southwest, was contacted by TN Achieves Executive Director Krissy DeAlejandro in Fall 2011, to assist in coordination and facilitation of the meetings. Applications for the program were sent to more than 1,900 area high school students in Memphis and throughout Shelby County. The students have the choice of attending Southwest or the Tennessee Technology Center to receive funds from this program. This program is especially helpful for those students who may not be eligible for FAFSA assistance possibly due to their parents’ income. Students in this category will be able to use the full funding of $3,000 per year. In addition to these meetings, Southwest financial aid specialists also provided two days of assistance for completing the FAFSA form.

Southwest recruiters Cortney Ward and John Berger each assisted with the facilitation of one meeting. Ward recalls that one of the parents spoke of his gratitude for this program. He has two sons, one already in college, and could hardly afford to finance the education of his second.

Dowdy commented, “This is a great opportunity for Southwest to enhance our enrollment. Fifty percent of the students eligible to receive the funding could possibly attend Southwest.” She added, “Southwest faculty and staff mentors will assist with providing guidance for these students to ensure that they complete their goal of graduation.”

Vanessa Dowdy, along with TN Achieves Memphis/Shelby County Coordinator Kaci Murley, hand out information to potential students and their parents prior to the meeting.
The mantra “This is our moment. This is our time.” was continually resounded as Memphis Mayor AC Wharton delivered his 2012 State of the City Address from the Verties Sails Gym on Southwest’s Union Avenue Campus on January 23, a historical event for the College. Southwest President Nathan Essex welcomed the standing-room only crowd by saying, “This event is meaningful to Southwest because we are working very closely with, as are other institutions, both Mayor Wharton and Shelby County Mayor Mark Luttrell on several initiatives to attract and expand businesses, to improve college attainment, and diversify our workforce.”

Mayor Wharton underscored what he deemed four key priorities that have the power to change the trajectory of Memphis for the next four years: (1) Create safe and vibrant neighborhoods, (2) Grow prosperity and opportunity for all, (3) Invest in our young people, and (4) Advance a culture of excellence in city government.

The mayor also announced initiatives that will be launched in the next 100 days: Appointment of a strike force to implement Memphis neighborhood reinvestment strategies - neighborhoods are the connective tissue that ties together our work on jobs, education, public safety, and quality of place; development of procedures to determine the condition of Memphis parks – partner with neighborhood groups to oversee and operate them; move to create a new seven-acre park on the riverfront – embark on a place-making process to find consensus about how to protect the riverfront while making it more attractive and vibrant; plan to move ahead with community policy programs, re-entry programs for former felons, alternative programs for juvenile offenders, and the placement of more cameras in high-crime areas.

Regarding education, the mayor said, “Our progress as a city can be no faster than the progress in education. ... In the next 100 days, I will convene a special task force to evaluate the best strategies for early childhood development and to make recommendations for investing the money now allocated to school funding so our children are ready for school and life.”

Also on the program were John Pugliese, senior director of Marketing Communications for the Memphis Grizzlies, Dr. William Evans, CEO of St. Jude Research Hospital, and Pat and Gina Neely of the Food Network’s “Down Home with the Neely’s.” The Central High School ROTC conducted the Presentation of Colors, while Melrose High School Senior Class President Justin K. Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance and Keia Johnson sang both the national anthem and “Memphis Lives in Me.”
Statistics show the surest way for anyone to land a job in their chosen field is to finish college and earn a degree or certificate. And that’s exactly what students at Southwest are promising to do -- pledging to complete their degrees and certifications before leaving the community college for transfer or to enter the job market. Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Honor Society is heading the Community College Completion Corps (C4), the national student-led education initiative to raise awareness of the importance of college completion not only for students, but also for the communities they serve.

Students of the Southwest PTK Honor Society encouraged all students of Southwest this spring to actively make the decision to complete by making a pledge. PTK faculty sponsors Dr. Twyla Waters, Dr. Joan McGrory, and Angela Payne designed a pledge that resembles a short survey. In eight multiple-choice questions, students are asked if they have completed all developmental requirements, a first college-level class, a full course load of four college classes, then two semesters, three semesters, four semesters, and finally a college degree. The quick questions ask the student to indicate that they have already completed this requirement or to pick a timeframe of six months, one year, two years, or longer. According to Dr. McGrory, the pledge is short and simple but it encourages students to (a) make an active decision to complete, (b) measure success through incremental steps toward completion, and (c) set the expectation of length of the commitment.

Payne led students in conducting a two-day campaign drive during the first week of classes on the Macon Cove Campus. PTK members Mia Atkins, Karla Dailey, Ty Garrison, Erin Mullinax, Audrea Vaughn, and Tumira Wicks volunteered and encouraged students to take the pledge. As an extra incentive, students who signed the pledge or completed it online were entered into a drawing for a $100 book voucher at the Southwest bookstore. Payne remarked that the student members of PTK took the pledge seriously while also having fun as they encouraged others to complete the pledge. “It was a positive note for the start of the semester,” she stated.

Nationally, community colleges are implementing various campaign strategies. Southwest’s Chapter of PTK in collaboration with the Office of Student Retention and Graduation will encourage students to take the completion pledge through many channels including a banner signing ceremony held at the PTK initiation ceremony and widespread outreach to all students in the ACAD1100 Academic Success course through the leadership of Dr. Marguerite Jackson-Jones, and the team of ACAD1100 instructors. Moreover, Southwest clubs will be challenged to continue this pledge drive with Phoenix Worthy, Student Activities coordinator, leading the effort.

“Phi Theta Kappa’s national degree completion campaign sets the stage for transforming our college culture into one that not only takes pride in being the largest community college in Tennessee; it also desires to exemplify the kind of campus atmosphere that exudes excitement at just the thought of graduating thousands of students who are ready to start a career or seek a bachelor’s degree. The Office of Student Retention and Graduation is delighted to work with Southwest’s PTK advisors and other departments to provide a creative means of focus for students as they ascend from possibility to the reality of completion,” said Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, executive director of the Office of Student Retention and Graduation.
Southwest’s Race for the Cure® Team took first place in the College Division for the 2011 Mid-South Race for the Cure®. Radiologic Technology major Janet Cooper gives an account below of the narrowing contest.

In 2010, the Radiology Club, ‘The Skeleton Crew,’ had several people interested in combining efforts to form a team for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure®. We registered, had nine people in the race, and ended up in third place in the College Division for fundraising! We were excited!

In 2011, we registered as a team again. I (club president Janet Cooper) attended the fall ‘Presidents’ meeting for the Student Activities groups and, after announcing the Radiology Club’s intent to have a team, discovered there were several other groups also planning to race. I suggested combining groups, and Erin Mullinax (Honors Club/Phi Theta Kappa) said she would help. We checked online and found that an employee group headed up by Carol Tyler (Shipping and Receiving) had already registered. They were willing to merge and make it an all-Southwest effort.

Flyers were created and posted around the college. Instructor and Service-Learning Club Advisor Cheryl Green put out the word in her classes, the three team captains grabbed friends and coworkers, and soon we had over 20 members – and donations were steadily coming in. With help from Student Activities Coordinator Phoenix Worthy, we gave Southwest t-shirts to everyone who registered by a set date. Since University of Memphis Head Basketball Coach Josh Pastner had a team in our same division, I made ‘Beat the Tigers’ a goal to drum up excitement and encourage team members to seek donations. But really, the main goal was to assist in this worthy cause and bring together the Southwest community. We continued to build in numbers and by the day of the race, October 29, 32 people were registered representing the Honors and Radiology clubs, Phi Theta Kappa, Service Learning, instructors, support staff, and students who didn’t belong to any club but just wanted to join in.

On the day of the race, our team was in third place for fundraising. We were able to continue to raise funds until November 30, so we kept up the push by sending out emails and Facebook notifications. We played leapfrog with Rhodes Field Hockey Team for several days, dropping scarily to fifth place at one point, but rebounded quickly as we kept sending encouraging messages to the team members, who came through with more donations from family members and friends. We beat the Tigers and rallied into first place and were there at the end of the day on November 30. The top fundraisers for our team, each of whom garnered over $250 in sponsorships, were Susan Wilson (Engineering Technologies), Carol Tyler, and Janet Cooper.

We are already talking about how to make our team better next year, and the team members say they really enjoyed getting to work with each other. Carol Tyler says she does not normally run into students during her day, and it was a good experience to be able to work with us and build on our enthusiasm. The student team captains will be graduating come spring, but we hope to get enough of a head start that the 2012 team will be bigger and better.

Displaying the first place fundraising trophy for the College Division teams of the Race for the Cure® are (left to right) Lana Harris (Purchasing), Carol Tyler, Susan Wilson, Andrea Kent (student), Aaron Estelle (Honors Academy) and Sarah Estelle (spouse), Janet Cooper, Southwest President Nathan Essex, and Erin Mullinax.
Southwest Hosts the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows

Representing Brazil, Chile, Cote D’Ivoire, Ecuador, Indonesia, Mauritius, Myanmar (Burma), Pakistan, and South Africa, the 2011 Hubert H. Humphrey Fellows from Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College in Nashville, TN, visited Southwest on November 17. The convoy was given a guided tour of the Union Avenue Campus by Dr. LaDonna Young, associate professor for the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, as well as education and site coordinator for the GEAR UP Program, who focused on the challenges a community college faces in an urban environment.

The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship brings accomplished mid-career leaders from developing nations to the U.S. for an academic year to study, gain professional experience, and foster cultural exchange.

Nancy Dixon, director of the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship program at Vanderbilt University, said, “They all create their own IPP (Individual Program Plan). That’s where they set their individual goals for the year and dig deep into their area of interest, anywhere from special education to program evaluation, teacher training, policy and advocacy – anywhere under the umbrella of education.”

In 2011, there were nine countries represented with 10 scholars:

- Sonia Barbosa Dias, a researcher at the Center for Studies and Research, Culture and Community Action in Sao Paulo, Brazil.
- Alonso Silva, executive director of the Opportunity to Transform Through Education Foundation in Santiago, Chile.
- Davry Jean, a pedagogy inspector for the Ministry of National Education in Cote D’Ivoire.
- Kouadio Didier Charles Kobena, an inspector of Special Education for the Gender Equality Promotion Directorate in Cote D’Ivoire.
- Maura Sandoya, volunteer teacher in Language and Communication for the Laura Vicuña School Center in Quito, Ecuador.
- Tomy Bawulang, a researcher and consultant for Educational Development in the Regional Development Planning Body of Sangihe, Indonesia – focused on educational quality.
- Marie Margaret Li Yin, a senior coordinator at Mauritius College of the Air in Mauritius.
- Aye Myint Than, director of Education Programs for Save the Children in Myanmar (Burma)
- Sobia Alam, a principal at the INFAQ Foundation CDSS Korangi Academy, a private school in Karachi, Pakistan.
- Catherine Arendse, a financial controller and HIV/AIDS program facilitator for Metropolitan Foundation in Cape Town, South Africa.

“In the U.S., I am on the right track. I have dynamic people helping to direct me,” said Catherin Arendse, from South Africa.

Southwest’s Executive Director of the Office of Retention and Graduation Dr. Cynthia Calhoun and Coordinator for Carl Perkins Tech Prep and International Studies Shayla Guy made presentations and engaged the group in a question and answer session.

“We take so much for granted in the U.S. The community college concept is not common in foreign countries and could prove to be a great reform measure for some of the countries represented on this trip. I am excited about the possibility of future partnerships that may develop from the Humphreys Fellows visit,” said Dr. Young.

It was all smiles and waves as the Humphrey Fellows from Vanderbilt University greeted their hostess, Dr. LaDonna Young (third from the right).
On November 18, some faculty and students from Southwest’s Engineering Technologies Department visited Jabil, a global leader in collaborative design manufacturing, that provides customized end-to-end electronics and electromechanical design, comprehensive product management and robust post-manufacturing repair services to customers in diverse industry segments (http://www.jabil.com/careers/index.html).

We took several students and faculty members to Jabil to see their operations. Steve Sours, manager of operations, gave us the history of Jabil and an idea of their culture. He said they may be hiring many test technicians in the coming months as they get new business. They currently have contracts to build products for IBM, Apple, NetApp, and others. Sours said their business has grown 40 percent in the last couple of years during this down economy, which is impressive. Jabil focuses on the technical ability and quality of its workforce to compete with lower cost contract manufacturers. Therefore, the company is looking for technicians – more than just assemblers. They are having trouble finding a qualified workforce, which is why they have been willing to give us tours and meet with us.

We were shown how they build and test their network servers. A lot of their testing techniques are covered in our CPET 2324, Computer Networks and Systems course (ping, net route, PXE boot, loop back tests…). David Becerra, Business Unit manager, said his most challenging job is to find the “root cause” of any problem he is trying to solve.

Jabil emphasizes ESD (electro-static discharge) protection. We wore ESD smocks and shoe straps. They use ESD wax on the concrete floors. They are also moving to solid state drives (similar to flash drives).

At the end of the two-hour tour, several students gave Human Resources Manager Cindy Raburn their resumes. The students were interested in what they saw. It was a great opportunity for them to see how their education could be put to work. It was good for the faculty to see the technology we teach in the classroom being used in local industry.

Faculty Attendees: Specialist Dierdri Williams, Instructor Yolanda Jackson, Adjunct Instructor Steve Browning, Assistant Professor Janet Sykes, Specialist James Warwick, and Lisa Jones.

Student Attendees: Dorothy Mitchell, Franklin Muhammad, Miles Davis, Tory Oya, Aaron Andres, Avonettra Hunt, Calvin Davis, and Ismaiel Kayali.

For a first-hand view of an electrical manufacturing operation, staff and students from Southwest’s Engineering Technologies Department made a site visit to a Jabil location in Memphis.
Southwest’s Outnumbered Male Project Attracts Local Minority Male High School Students

More than 125 young minority male high school students arrived on Southwest’s Macon Cove Campus on November 11 for the purpose of gaining valuable knowledge about the College. The Outnumbered Male Project program was spearheaded by Southwest recruiter Cortney Ward. Ward coordinated with Craigmont, Kingsbury, Westwood, Northwest Prep, and Wooddale high schools to bring nearly 40 male students from each school to Southwest, where they had an opportunity to hear from successful minority men from different walks of life.

The students were welcomed by Southwest President Nathan Essex, who encouraged each student to get an education beyond high school. Whether it be a trade school, another college, or preferably Southwest, Essex explained that with new innovations in technology, a high school diploma is just a stepping stone. He let them know that Southwest is a good choice for pursuing an education beyond high school because the college offers a variety of programs at an affordable cost.

Steven Leake, program coordinator for Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management, was the next speaker. Leake told the students that one of the most important skills they will need in life is to have a good work ethic. He said that one of his motivating factors was to “make his parents proud.” “Education can take you anywhere you want to go. It is amazing what you can do if you apply yourself,” he continued. He told them to work hard, go to school and don’t get trapped by outside influences.

The keynote speaker was Keith McGee, current pastor of St. Mark Baptist Church and former chief administrative officer for the City of Memphis, whose enthusiastic tone captured the attention of the group. He told the students that he started from humble beginnings; his father was from South Memphis and his mother from Water Valley, Mississippi – they were poor. He started grass-cutting at age 10, graduated from high school, went to college, and after a good employment history – eventually became an executive for the City of Memphis. McGee explained that it took hard work and said, “Responsibilities expand as you grow.” One of his first jobs was as a deputy jailer for the Shelby County Sheriff’s Department. McGee told the group “I have seen the best and brightest minds behind bars.” He said that one of his mentors, LB Snow, told him “the biggest room in the world is room for improvement.” There were five things that he wanted the men to remember: (1) Aspire to greatness, (2) Build on what you have, (3) Connect with positive people who are doing positive things, (4) Discipline yourself, and (5) Engage only in things that help your cause.

Trial Attorney Robert Gatewood Jr. was next at the podium. He spoke about the challenges that he faced growing up in poverty. He referenced the television show “Good Times” and stated that he felt that they were not poor because at least they had Kool-Aid. Gatewood attended then Memphis State University on an academic scholarship. He had a free ride to get his degree, but due to a lack of discipline, he did not attend classes and his first semester grades were horrible. He said that he had a “man in the mirror” moment and he would turn things around during the spring semester. The problem with that plan, he stated, was “Spring;” clothes got lighter and shorter, he got distracted and lost his scholarship. That led Gatewood to the Air Force, a welcomed opportunity to get away and grow up. He was 18 years old and for the first time saw life beyond Memphis. After the Air Force and understanding discipline, he eventually got back in college to become a lawyer. Gatewood worked two jobs, did some mentoring and was president of his fraternity; his grades started to suffer because of too many obligations. He
said that it was an encounter with a professor that changed his perspective. The professor reminded him of what his current role was, a student. “The main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing” was what the professor told him. Gatewood told the students to remember that and also remain focused.

The next speaker was Dr. Leslie Gordon, a health department dentist who grew up in Jamaica and attended Howard University. Gordon told the group that in his home country, a high school education is not free and the young men in the room are fortunate to get a free education. He encouraged them to choose a profession based on interest rather than looking at the amount of money it could pay. “If you set goals, work hard and maximize your potential, you should be successful,” he stated.

Southwest Students Place in the Fall 2011 Engineering Poster Contest

Southwest produced three winners in the Fall 2011 Engineering Education Service Center Poster contest. The theme was “Grand Challenges for Engineering.” Danielle Rikard and Kristin Baltimore were awarded Second Place and Laura Morris was awarded Honorable Mention.

This year’s entries portrayed inspiration, excitement, wonder and curiosity. “Students from all over the U.S. submitted 301 entries that demonstrated their vision, insight into the future and ideas for motivating the next generation of engineers,” reported Celeste Baine, director of the Engineering Education Service Center.

“The judging this year was the most difficult that I had encountered. The posters were amazing and I must have gone through them a dozen times to try to narrow down the results,” Baine stated.

Financial Aid Counselor Al Canady briefly addressed the group on how to pay for college. He reminded them of the importance of filling out a FAFSA form by January 1 to maximize the amount of funding they may receive. Recruiter John Berger followed Canady with insight on the necessary steps on how to apply for college.

Ward closed the program and thanked all who attended. Ward says that he wanted this project to increase college awareness among young minority male students and also give the young men a living visual example of what they could become. “We constructed this program to increase our minority male population at Southwest! This is one of my greatest passions,” says Ward. This was a very powerful program and he hopes to continue the project with another program in the Spring inviting other schools in the district.
The Lumina Foundation recently launched the Latino Student Success Initiative, a collaborative partnership designed to strengthen ventures in key metropolitan areas that show promise in improving the post-secondary attainment of Latino students. Southwest Tennessee Community College is the post-secondary partner of the Tennessee collaborative in this new initiative that includes: the Tennessee Higher Education Commission – lead organization, the City of Memphis Mayor’s Office, Memphis Talent Dividend, Latino Memphis, Kingsbury High School, and the Greater Memphis Chamber.

“These types of partnerships are vitally important to helping the United States remain economically competitive,” says Juan Sepúlveda, director of the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. “Over the last decade, we’ve gone from having the highest proportion of college-educated workers to now being ranked 10th. Reaching world-class levels of college attainment will require us to find ways to assure that dramatically more students have the opportunity to succeed in higher education.”

Latinos are the fastest-growing student population in America and this new effort is focused on leveraging the critical connection between their educational attainment and the future of the national economy. Under the project, Lumina will provide a total of $7.2 million over a four-year period to 12 partnerships in 10 states with significant and growing Latino populations. Each collaborative will receive $600,000 during the four-year period.

“The City of Memphis is glad to have the support of the Lumina Foundation in the critical area of post-secondary success,” says Mayor A C Wharton Jr. “Sixty percent of a city’s success is based on the percentage of college graduates in the population and this grant will assist us in creating more college graduates among Memphis’ growing Latino population.”

The projected outcome is to position Memphis as a prime location to affect the state’s college attainment rate, given Memphis’ distinction as the city with the largest and most rapidly growing Latino population in Tennessee.

“As the primary post-secondary institution participating in the Latino Student Success Initiative, Southwest will enhance current and develop new services geared toward the Latino population at Kingsbury High School. A mentor/case manager will be housed at Southwest to facilitate student matriculation and retention as they navigate the academic pathway from high school through post-secondary education,” said Executive Director of Special Academic Programs for Southwest Angela Ventura-Wooten.

She pointed out that college access, readiness and success services will include student participation in Dual Enrollment; Career Exploration; Admissions, Financial Aid and Academic success workshops; and Summer Bridge programs while at their high school. While attending Southwest, students will be involved in intensive case management and advising, connection to college services, and assistance with transfer to four-year institutions.
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Karen Gordon Mills came to Memphis on November 3 to announce the SBA’s new CAPLines lending program – a revolving line of credit that helps small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working capital needs. Mills was appointed by President Barack Obama and unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the 23rd administrator of the U.S. SBA. The agency reports that yearly it helps leverage nearly $100 billion in federal contracts to small businesses and supports free counseling and technical assistance to more than one million entrepreneurs.

Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) at Southwest Director David Doyle arranged a tour of the center’s client, Evaporcool, a local small green manufacturer and the site where Mills highlighted the new CAPLines lending program in Memphis. Local small manufacturers, like Evaporcool, can benefit from CAPLines to help them grow and create jobs in the Memphis area. “This new loan program, that’s been streamlined for the banks, will make it easier for manufacturing companies to find the financing needed to get its products to market,” said Doyle.

Evaporcool helps companies reduce their energy and maintenance costs while at the same time extend the life of their HVAC systems. Through their patented technologies, Evaporcool has brought the concept of evaporative cooling into the 21st century, creating the most efficient and technologically-advanced pre-cooling system ever developed for commercial HVAC. This privately-owned company with 30 employees makes all their products in the local Memphis area.

“As businesses like this grow and find new customers, we need to do everything we can to make sure they have the working capital they need to scale up and create jobs. That’s why I was proud to announce that SBA recently re-engineered our CAPLines program. Banks are already starting to use it to put more capital in the hands of small businesses,” said Mills.

She also indicated that in 2011, Tennessee had a record year for the issuance of SBA loans and that Shelby County led the state in SBA loans.
U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officers Present Career Information at Southwest

The Homeland Security Grant Program and Career Services at Southwest collaborated to bring a presentation by U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officers (CBPO) on careers in Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to the Macon Cove Campus on October 12. The top priority of CBP is to keep terrorists and their weapons from entering the United States. CBP officers and agents enforce all applicable U.S. laws, prohibiting narcotics, agricultural pests and smuggled goods from entering the country. While welcoming all legitimate travelers and trade, it identifies and arrests those with outstanding criminal warrants.

The following provided short presentations:

• CBPO Walter Rodgers -- Law Enforcement and Customs Role
• CBPO Ryan Walters -- Border Protection
• CBPA John Green -- Agricultural Terrorism
• CBPO Cynthia Lopara -- Careers in Customs, Qualifications, etc.
• CBPO Donald Morris -- K-9 Demonstration

The officers discussed qualifications for employment with CBP. They also provided details of their daily responsibilities and encounters while protecting our borders and shores. On a typical day last year, CBP officers welcomed 1.1 million people at the nation’s 327 land, air and seaports, while almost 2,800 were apprehended at and between the ports of entry for illegal entry. The officers have a strong presence at the Memphis International Airport particularly since Memphis is a shipping hub, transporting merchandise all over the world for companies like FedEx and UPS.

Southwest Homeland Security Grant Coordinator Donald Drewry said one of the more interesting presentations was the K-9 demonstration by CBPO Donald Morris. “He described how the dog does his job and then provided a demonstration by placing several boxes on the floor for the dog to check,” Drewry said. “One of the boxes contained drugs. The dog immediately found the box with the drugs. He was rescued from a pound and is not an attack-trained canine, but works well because he is allowed to play with a wrapped up towel if he is successful. The dog has located millions of dollars in drugs. All of the canines used have to be friendly and want to please their master,” Drewry explained.

A Question and Answer session was conducted after the presentations.
The Maxine A. Smith Center is the newest jewel in the Southwest crown. Precious jewels are forged through years of the earth’s pressure and then need to be unearthed, cut, and polished to perfection. The pressure for the Center’s construction began years ago with a stormy groundbreaking ceremony. Nature can be unpredictable, and no matter how much you plan, nature always has the last word. Storms and pressure are also what forged the person in which the Center is named.

Maxine A. Smith is a noted educator and community activist. Smith graduated from Booker T. Washington High School at age 15 in 1945. She went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in biology from Spelman College in 1949 and a master’s degree in French from Middlebury College in Vermont. Because of her race, Smith was denied admission to graduate school at the University of Memphis, the former Memphis State University. She then became involved in the work of the Memphis Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which had been organized by Robert R. Church, Jr., and other leaders of the African-American community in 1918. The unpredictable groundbreaking storm may have been nature’s way of acknowledging the impressive person who was being honored on that day.

Southwest Tennessee Community College honored Smith on August 18, 2009 when it opened the new, three-story, 67,300-square-foot, $19.5 million Maxine A. Smith Center housing 21 classrooms, eight computer labs, an academic support space, science labs and a student lounge. In an article from *The Commercial Appeal*, Smith stated that it all strikes her as “pretty amazing,” even for the woman who was named the most influential African-American in Memphis in a 1977 survey. She tries to explain her transition from the city’s unwelcome conscience to someone worthy of having a college campus named after her. She guesses it’s because “I’m so deeply rooted in education -- that’s what got me in all this mess.”

The center replaced the former Southeast Center which was located at another site in a building leased from a shopping center complex. The Maxine A. Smith Center at 8800 East Shelby Drive is located in an area which borders the neighborhoods of Germantown, Collierville, southeast Memphis and northwest Mississippi, including Olive Branch. This location has become
one of the fastest growing areas in metro Memphis and is close to the Southwind community which is home to the PGA FedEx St. Jude Classic. According to statistics provided by the Institutional Research Department at Southwest, enrollment at the Center is up compared to the Southeast Center it replaced. Based on fall enrollment numbers during the last three years of the Southeast Center, the average number of students was approximately 1,756. On the other hand, the MAS Center is currently averaging 1,991 students based on recent fall enrollment numbers. That is a 13 percent increase in the number of students now utilizing the replacement center. The MAS Center also experienced high enrollment in the College’s Maymester term with the English class offered being near capacity. All of the classrooms in the Center are capped at 24 students and have 90 percent capacity solidifying the phrase “we built it and they came.”

Harry Taylor, executive director of Extended Programs, who also serves as the Center’s director discussed what makes this Center unique. “One of the things we did was start on a high note, believing that this could be an ideal facility in which we could make sure it maintained its integrity in that it would always be a facility which has an atmosphere that was conducive for teaching and learning,” says Taylor. What the Center has done is not to place the responsibility on a single person, “It’s not just the students, faculty and staff, but we all play a role in creating this environment. We attempt to guarantee that our students are provided a safe, clean, comfortable environment set for teaching and learning. In return, we ask that the students respect Southwest for the opportunity that they have been provided for learning by coming to class ready to learn.”

The Center has developed a culture of support that everyone has bought into, faculty, staff and most importantly students. The faculty has been supportive of students by offering tutorials in addition to the academic support center. If a student needs additional work after class, faculty members have found open classrooms to offer the student extra tutoring time. The faculty makes sure that everybody has an opportunity to learn and they teach students at their level, and don’t place everyone in the same egg carton, according to Taylor. “Campus police also play an important role in the success of the Center; not only do they keep the students and staff safe, but they also are knowledgeable about what is happening at the Center. It is important for the security of the Center that Campus Police/Public Safety is aware. Our students are always encouraged to wear their Southwest ID, and as an incentive for compliance if the student is in need of a Scantron, they can receive it free if wearing their ID,” Taylor added. He further states that it is beneficial to both the student and Center. “Believe it or not, the cost of a Scantron can mean the difference in a student’s appreciation of the learning experience,” says Taylor.

The Maxine A. Smith Center has been especially beneficial to Southwest’s Workforce Development and Corporate Training Department. The Center is located near a large number of corporations including Comcast and FedEx, and the nearby residential community has shown significant growth over the past years, which has brought in major retailers and other smaller companies. One of the shortcomings in corporate training is the shortage of available space during prime working hours. Corporations are finding that the MAS Center is available for them to host training for their employees. According to Taylor, during down times when classrooms are open, they embrace those corporations that need the technology the Center provides to facilitate workforce development and corporate training for their employees. There is even a dedicated area used to facilitate Workforce Development efforts and the OSHA partnership with Mississippi State University has developed other relationships with companies bordering the Center.

Due to timely construction, the Center was able to put in place innovative technology related to network technology. The Cisco Networking Lab at the Maxine A. Smith Center is equipped with state-of-the-art local-area networking (LAN) switches, network routers, equipment mounting racks, an equipment mounting rack patch panel, and network servers. Cabling runs are installed to connect the desktop PCs in the lab to the equipment mounting rack patch panels. The equipment is perfectly suited for the types of hands-on activities performed by Cisco students and conforms to the specifications provided by the Cisco Networking Academy program. According to Dewey Sykes, associate professor of technologies and an Oracle Academy certified instructor, “It is possible for each student to sit at his or her computer and perform configuration activities on the switches and routers installed on the mounting racks. The classroom facilities are state-of-the-art and more closely resemble an actual production networking environment; this setup acclimates students to an environment similar to ones they are likely to encounter in the workplace.”
Community colleges like Southwest don’t just serve one community. Sure, we have a geographic area from which most of our students come, but community isn’t just about a place. Within that geographic community, there are many constituencies - united by common purpose, identity or activity - that look to community colleges to meet their particular needs. One of the most active and most important communities in the Memphis area is our small business community, whose needs Southwest looks to meet in a variety of ways, both through traditional academic instruction as well as workshops and outreach.

Brenda A. B. Smith, associate professor and coordinator of Academic Administration, Transfer and Articulation Programs at Southwest, came to Southwest with experience in small businesses and has had a long and storied career with the college throughout which she has continued to draw on her formative professional experiences. With 32 years of classroom experience and an MBA with a focus on accounting and marketing, she’s taught everything from entry-level accounting to operations management, but she has a particular interest in teaching current and potential small business owners.

“When I taught my small business class, we actually developed a business plan and [some] of my students had the opportunity … to present their business plans to the Tennessee Small Business Administration. One student’s plan won honorable mention and another student’s plan won $4,000 of seed money.”

“At that time, the Tennessee Small Business Administration had a conduit for helping many of the students who won.

Also Continuing Education offered classes to business students that were intensive workshops on specific areas of starting and running your own business (such as taxes),” said Smith. She notes, however, “Students found it hard to keep up with their academic work while doing all of these other outside things that they needed to do. So we tried to bridge them from the classroom to that, but they found it difficult to take classes on the academic side and also take classes that may possibly be on the weekend.”

Smith had until recently been teaching a course in Small Business Management but had to stop because of other duties at the college. The course is back on the schedule for this coming fall. “I’m hoping to revive that course,” she said.

Smith notes, “the Tennessee Small Business Development Center that we have is an invaluable resource that bridges academics and the real world of entrepreneurship.”

Executive Director David Doyle, a former realtor and experienced small business development consultant, heads the Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) at Southwest. “Contractually [we serve] Shelby and Fayette counties, but since we are a federal program, we see clients from north Mississippi and Arkansas as well,” said Doyle. “Most of our funding comes from the federal government - from the Small Business Administration - and our offices, telephones and all that come from the state through Southwest and our match dollars come from the city. I guess you could say we are a federal, state and city program.”

The TSBDC serves both clients looking to start a business and also current business owners looking to improve their current operations. “Probably 75 percent of our business right now is start-ups and that’s who we primarily see at workshops. The existing businesses - we have a different menu of workshops for them. We’d like to start seeing more existing businesses.”
“When you have an existing business, we have various tools that can help them as well, such as ProfitCents. We can take an existing business and look at their financials and see where they are now as compared to the industry average. We can compare and show them how they can improve their business to get to that industry average,” said Doyle. “That’s a very important tool for small businesses.”

“As a result of the economy, people are looking for a backup or some way to secure their future outside of their current career or job, and there’s nothing wrong with having a business on the side for that. So, we teach people how to start businesses on shoe strings, without a lot of money - how to put a label on something and sell it online and things like that.”

According to a 2009 Small Business Administration report, small employers account for over 97 percent of the state’s employers and 45.1 percent of its private sector employment. A lower cost of living makes Memphis a good place to start a business. “You have a lot more discretionary income in Memphis than you do in say the [San Francisco] Bay area,” says Doyle. “But, the resources are the same. Memphis is really starting to look at the resources they have available here to create new businesses ... Congress and the state are saying the same thing.”

The TSBDC has a variety of ways in which they can help current or potential small business owners. “If they’ve never been in business before, it’s a requisite that they attend one of our business start-up workshops and we have a couple of those a month. Then, once they’ve attended the workshop, I’ll assign them to a counselor and they’ll begin the process of writing their business plan,” said Doyle. “Depending on the type of business they’re getting into, there are a number of other types of workshops that they can attend, like bookkeeping, government contracting and customer service is always one that existing and startup businesses can use. There’s also Quickbooks, Sales and Use - they need to know the state law on how to collect sales tax - webpages, and financial projections. We have a whole menu of classroom workshops.” There are also many, many more available online for business owners to choose from.

“We take people through a process - the entire planning process - we take them through each step and they don’t go into business unless there’s some prospect for success,” said Doyle. “In fact, 87 percent of the people who come through us are in business after five years.” That is a particularly remarkable statistic when you take into account that, according to the Small Business Administration, over 50 percent of small businesses nationwide fail within the first five years.

Doyle and his group do not discourage people looking to start a new business, no matter how far-fetched that idea may seem, though sometimes as they go through the process, prospective business owners will realize that perhaps their initial idea wasn’t as solid as they first thought. “They’ll back away from it and then come back with a better idea later on.”

“After they develop a business plan, then, given their credit situation and the type of business they’re in, I can give them three or four different lenders they can talk to. They go out, get the applications from the lenders and then come back and we complete the applications together.” Business owners who use the TSBDC’s services have been so impressive, Doyle recently saw one of his mentees show up in a bank’s presentation on successful business pitches. “That’s my client!” said Doyle “They said he was very impressive.”

For more information on the TSBDC and their workshops, you can visit their website at www.tsbdc.org.
Dr. Ralph Knowles recently received the 2011 Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Philanthropy for his exemplary efforts toward the culinary arts program at Southwest.

When his son Randall passed away in 1997, Dr. Knowles and his wife wanted to honor their son and his culinary legacy. Dr. Knowles made a trip to Memphis from Pensacola, FL, and met with the Office of Institutional Advancement and the Director of Hospitality Management, Chef Steven Leake. Before he left, he established a scholarship endowment in honor of his son, Randall Knowles. This scholarship endowment is the second largest personal endowment in the college’s history and the largest personal endowment for the culinary arts program.

Dr. Knowles is interested in the progress of his scholars and has an active interest in the college and its success, and he shares that interest with others. Despite his long-distance relationship, he never misses an opportunity to share his and his son’s story with others. Because of his voluntary leadership and philanthropy, others have been inspired to make similar scholarship gifts.

Dr. Knowles received his award from the Chancellor after having lunch in the newly renovated culinary arts institute. He also enjoyed a tour of the institute.

The focus is on four scholarships: Full Time College Ready, Part-Time Completers, Disadvantaged At-Risk and Book Scholarships. To find out how you can make a difference in the life of a student and receive numerous recognition opportunities, please call (901) 333-4997 or go online to http://www.southwest.tn.edu/foundation/scholarshipFund.htm and click on Make A Gift, Donate On-Line.

The Foundation Scholarship Campaign continues and sponsorship opportunities still exist.

Debra Dale Dawson, Graduated in 1999 in Business, Employed at the Memphis Public Library as a Senior Clerk
Tiffany Prewitt, Graduated in 2010 in Education, Employed with the City of Memphis
Dr. Steve Austin, Graduated in 1976 in Natural Sciences, Employed with Families, Inc. as a Psychiatrist
Debra Hammond, Graduated in 2007 in Education, Employed with Memphis City Schools as an Interventionist
Larry D. Harber, Graduated in 2009 in Computer Science, Employed with Volunteer State Community College as an Associate Professor
Geraldine Robertson, Graduated in 2000 in Human Services
Terrence K. Flenorl, Graduated in 2012 in Information Technology, CEO, Immaculate Hand Car Wash
Victor M. Velazquez, Graduated in 2006 in Liberal Arts, Employed as a Patient Assistance Coordinator, Stamford CT
Melody Freeman, Graduated in 2012 in Psychology, Employed with Americorps TNCC

If you want to be featured here or in any of our publications, or just want to catch up with other alumni, go online to http://www.southwest.tn.edu/alumni/form.htm and complete the form. We want to hear from you!
The 2012 Faculty and Staff Awards Reception Review

Working hard all year for most of us has its dividends, yet some individuals especially stand out and receive recognition from their co-workers and supervisors. It is at Southwest’s annual Faculty and Staff Awards Reception that these individuals are honored. The 2012 reception was held on April 27 at its usual venue, the Verties Sails Gym. The following awards were presented:

**SUPPORT STAFF AWARDS**
Support Staff Employee of the Year - Tilicia L. Washington
Support Staff Professional Growth - Brandi N. Martin
Support Staff Service to the College - Cathy L. Farr
Kenneth W. Mathis Environmental Service Award - Bonnie Carol Fisher

**POLICE SERVICES/PUBLIC SAFETY AWARDS**
Director of Public Safety Award of the Year - Police Officer Kristoffer D. Billington
Distinguished Service Award - Police Officer Ronald L. Ross
Officer Appreciation of the Year Award - David C. Boone

**PASO (PROFESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ORGANIZATION) AWARDS** - for “Service to the College, Our Students and Our Community” were presented to the following:
- Barbara Helton
- Lennon Pearson
- Sherri Scott
- Betty Kimbrough
- Major Barbara Holmes
- Teresa Calloway

**FACULTY AWARDS**
Farris Award - Amy Waddell
Curriculum and Instruction - Ken Carpenter
Service to the College - Amanda Banker
Professional Growth and Development - Annette Fournet
International Studies Globalization - Tamara McColgan

Service to the College-Classified Staff Award - Cathy Farr
Community Service Award - Dr. Joan McGrory
Leadership Activities Award - Cynthia Abadie

**DIVISIONAL VICE PRESIDENT’S AWARDS**
Academic Affairs Provost’s Award - Continuing Education
- Harry Taylor
- Ronald Wells
- Amy Shead
- John Churchill
- David Penna
- Alyanna Alsham-Brooks
- Yvonne Martin
- Cortez Nunley

Financial and Administrative Services Vice President’s Award - Korrick M. Brown
Information Technology Services Vice President’s Award for Excellence - Scott Martin
Student Services and Enrollment Management Vice President’s Award for Excellence - Thalia Wilson
Institutional Advancement Vice President’s Award for Excellence - Robert Jackson
Human Resources and Affirmative Action Executive Director’s Award for Excellence - Loretta Bartlett

**JIM WILLIS SPIRIT AWARD**
Dewayne G. Benson

Dewayne G. Benson (left) is presented the Jim Willis award by President Nathan L. Essex.
By Dr. Joan McGrory
Phi Theta Kappa Faculty Sponsor

In January 2012, Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) encouraged students to participate in the Community College Completion Corps (C4) “Take the Pledge” campaign by holding a prize drawing for one lucky student who completed the pledge/survey. C4 is a national student-led education initiative to raise awareness of the importance of college completion. To support this effort, Student Services and Enrollment Management – in conjunction with the Southwest Follett Campus Bookstore – donated a $100 gift voucher that could be used at the campus bookstore. The deadline for entry was January 25, and entries were collected from both online and paper surveys.

In PTK’s first meeting of 2012, a name was drawn. Congratulations to Helen McKinney! She had this to say about the “Take the Pledge” campaign:

Question: Did you always know that you were going to college or did you make this decision at a later point? If at a later point, what prompted the decision?

Answer: When I was younger, college never seemed like an option for me. It was not until after facing real life challenges that I realized the importance of going to college. I chose to go to college to better myself as a person and give myself a more firm financial future.

Southwest Student Reaps Reward from Phi Theta Kappa’s Promotion of the “Take the Pledge” Campaign

Two Southwest Students Named to Phi Theta Kappa All-Tennessee Academic Team

Congratulations to Erin Mullinax and Ivory Bryant for being named to the Phi Theta Kappa All-Tennessee Academic Team. Students who earn a position on the team receive a full tuition scholarship to any Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) institution. To qualify, students must first meet the high standards of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and must also be chosen from a pool of qualified applicants that best answer a series of essay questions. Southwest Tennessee Community College nominates two members for this prestigious scholarship. Of the over 90,000 community college students in the state of Tennessee, only 26 were given the honor of membership on the 2012 All-Tennessee Academic Team.

Southwest Ranks in Top Ten

Southwest was listed in the top ten percent of the 2011 Associate Degree Producers for African-Americans in Business Operations Support and Assistant Service published in the Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, May 10, 2012 issue.
Southwest’s Academic Support Center Earns High Praise During Recertification

The Academic Support Center (ASC) at Southwest has been approved for re-certification through the College Reading & Learning Association (CRLA)’s International Tutor Training Program Certification (ITTPC). ITTPC certifies tutor training programs in postsecondary educational institutions, authorizing each certified tutor training program to certify that its tutors have met the approved ITTPC tutor training program requirements. It has been endorsed by the Council of Learning Assistance and Developmental Education Associations (CLADEA), National Association for Developmental Education, and the Commission XVI of the American College Personnel Association. (http://www.crla.net/ittpc/about_ittpc.htm)

Overall comments:

This is a very strong program, both in the training and support provided for the peer tutors and in the variety of options and resources provided to the students. It sounds as though the physical and organizational structure of the program allows for excellent oversight of the tutors. The built-in requirement that Level III tutors provide training materials and help supervise the level I tutors insures that the research and training practices are innovative and fresh, and that the new tutors always have someone available to mentor them.

As a thanks for the re-certification, Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, Executive Director of Student Retention and Graduation under which the ASC is directed, responded, “With the awarding of continued certification through August 2016 for the ASC’s tutoring program and training, we are placed among hundreds of institutions with premier learning centers both nationally and internationally. Therefore, we are very pleased with the outcome. Additionally, we must share this achievement with our outstanding faculty who support us with subject matter workshops and teaching materials to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students as they persist toward successful completion of their courses. And we definitely must include our Provost, Dr. Joanne Bassett, for her commitment to the growth and continuous improvement of the ASC.”

Kenneth A. Carpenter, Sr. Tapped as Featured Author

Southwest Associate Professor of Natural Sciences Kenneth A. Carpenter, Sr. was honored recently as the “Featured Author” on the Bluedoor Publishing Company website, bluedoor.com. Bluedoor is a small company with a team of professionals who offer individualized publishing support to academic authors.

Carpenter co-authored two laboratory manuals: Human Anatomy & Physiology I and Human Anatomy & Physiology II, and authored the Introduction to Human Anatomy & Physiology Laboratory Manual, published by Bluedoor. He received both his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Biological Sciences from Tennessee State University. He began teaching in 1978 at Southwest and has made numerous academic contributions since then.

Having developed online and hybrid courses for Anatomy and Physiology I and II and the Anatomy and Physiology Student Tutorial, which offers a 24/7 online tutorial aimed at increasing student retention, Carpenter considers his lab manuals as simply “another approach to assist students in their learning and as a way to solidify their futures in the sciences.”

As an educator who believes in equal opportunity for all students, Carpenter established the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship to assist students with tuition and textbooks. He is a member of the Human Anatomy & Physiology Society (HAPS), a past board member of the Alpha Memphis Education Foundation (AMEF), the founder of the Annual Sickle Cell Run/Walk, and serves as a mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters.
Saluqis Athletics: Moving in the Right Direction

In 2011-12, the Southwest men’s and women’s basketball, baseball and softball teams all finished in the top half of the conference for the first time ever and there are reasons to believe the Saluqis and Lady Saluqis can compete for conference and region championships in all four sports in the not-too-distant future.

Under the direction of legendary Head Basketball Coach Verties Sails Jr., who won his 700th game this season, the men’s team was again one of the top teams in the conference, finishing with a 14-7 overall record and TCCAA regular season runner-up with a 12-6 record. Unfortunately, the Saluqis’ season came to an end in the Region VII tournament quarterfinals when they were upset by Cleveland State.

Top players for the Saluqis this season were sophomores Antwon Oliver and Nate Rucker, both of whom were named to the All-TCCAA first team. Oliver led the team with averages of 15.3 points and 7.0 rebounds per game while Rucker added 10.0 points and 5.2 rebounds. In addition, three players were named second team All-TCCAA: sophomore guard D’Alvin Brown (7.8 points per game), freshman forward Tavin Cummings (9.8 points and 5.1 rebounds per game), and freshman guard Marshun Newell (10.6 points, 4.9 rebounds and 2.1 assists per game).

The women’s basketball team, led by 15th-year Head Coach Andrea Martre, got off to an outstanding start this season, winning 15 of their first 16 games and were ranked 20th in the NJCAA’s Division 1 Poll. The Lady Saluqis finished with a 19-10 overall record including 10-8 in the conference and lost to Volunteer State in the region tournament quarterfinals.

Sophomore guard Amber Dunlap, the team’s lone first-team All-TCCAA pick, led the Lady Saluqis with averages of 15.4 points, 3.4 assists and 2.1 steals per game. Sophomore center Jenisha Jackson (9.0 points, 7.1 rebounds and 3.2 blocked shots per game) along with sophomore guards Erica Ousley (13.0 points and 2.7 assists per game) and Kandi Granger (9.0 points per game) were named to the second team. In addition, Jackson was named the NJCAA Division 1 Player of the Week for December 5-11 after posting a triple-double with 20 points, 13 rebounds and a Southwest record 12 blocked shots against Jackson State and following that with 19 points, 11 rebounds and six blocks against Columbia State.
The softball team, under yours truly, Keith Gentry, who has guided the Lady Saluqis to 30 wins in the last five of his nine seasons as coach, had a 31-31 record this spring and finished fourth in the Region VII tournament, an all-time best. In the tournament, we defeated Motlow State in the second round for our first tournament win ever then followed that with a victory over number four seed Columbia State before losing to the runner-up team Walters State.

Freshman pitcher Haylee Power and freshman centerfielder Makayla Rice were named second team All-TCCAA. Power was the team’s top hitter with a .394 batting average, nine home runs and 51 runs batted in and as a pitcher set a new Southwest single season record with 26 wins. Rice batted .342 and finished tenth in the nation with 46 stolen bases. Other Lady Saluqis who had outstanding seasons were freshman first baseman Caroline Jacobs, who batted .381 and set a new Southwest single season record with 74 hits, freshman catcher/outfielder Ali Hare (.375 batting average), sophomore third baseman/catcher Heidi Molder (.331 batting average), and sophomore shortstop Stephanie Steen (.314 batting average). Steen also finished her career as Southwest’s second all-time leading hitter with 117 base hits.

First-year Head Baseball Coach George Sykes led the Saluqis to a 20-35 overall record and fifth-place in the region tournament, their best record and region finish since the 2008 season. After defeating Roane State in the tournament play-in game, Southwest lost to regular season champion Columbia State before defeating Jackson State in walk-off fashion by scoring five runs in the bottom of the ninth inning. The Saluqis then lost to eventual tournament runner-up Columbia State for a second time to end their season.

The Southwest baseball team also moved their home field to USA Stadium in Millington, Tennessee just north of Memphis. With this move, the Saluqi baseball program now has without a doubt the top baseball facility in the conference and possibly the entire NJCAA. The USA Stadium complex, the former training site for USA Baseball for 10 years, includes a 5,000 seat stadium, a locker room for Southwest players and coaches and also a practice field adjacent to the stadium.

Freshman outfielder Ty Michelotti was a second team All-TCCAA selection. He was second on the team with a .363 batting average and led the team with five triples, three home runs and 24 runs batted in. Other top players were freshmen shortstop Gadier Charriez, who led the team with a .374 batting average, sophomore pitcher Luke Deaton, who led the team with five wins and 59 strikeouts, and freshman pitcher Jerry Tatum, whose 3.36 earned run average and six saves were team bests.
Memphis’ James Justice Wins Slam Dunk Competition

Former Craigmont High and Southwest Tennessee Community College basketball standout James Justice is the nation’s slam dunk champion.

Justice won Thursday night’s State Farm College Slam Dunk & 3-Point Championship in New Orleans.

He was en route today from the competition to Martin Methodist College in Pulaski, Tenn., where he’s a senior guard for the school’s NAIA RedHawks. The 165-pound Justice has a vertical jump of 52 inches and is listed as 5 feet 10.

The Memphis native beat Auburn’s Kenny Gabriel and Miami’s (Fla.) DeQuan Jones, both 6 feet 8 players, in the final round of the championship held at Tulane in advance of the NCAA Final Four.

“It’s a true David and Goliath story,” said Nashville lawyer Byron Trauger, chairman of Martin’s board of trustees.

Justice was the only player selected to be in the competition by fan voting on Facebook. For the first time in the event’s 24 years, fans nominated players as the “2012 Dark Horse Dunker” by submitting YouTube video.

Justice’s former coach at Southwest, Verties Sails, led a local effort to encourage fans to vote for Justice online.

Martin Methodist, about 180 miles east of Memphis, is a four-year college with 1,100-students founded in 1870. Its RedHawks teams play in the TranSouth Athletic Conference, where Justice is the player of the year.

In New Orleans on Thursday night, Justice slam dunked forward and backward and after passing the ball from hand to hand between his legs.

He’s the son of Debra and James Justice of Memphis.

To view the YouTube video of the slam dunk, visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS737iP9AzY&feature=player_embedded.
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