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Southwest Now Magazine

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2012 TECTA Program Celebration

Southwest Students Explore Genomics and Biomanufacturing in France

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Southwest has made great strides in improving its focus on college processes, customer service and college-wide leadership effectiveness. The fall registration process was the most efficient one in years. Students who submitted the required documents in a timely fashion were processed without untimely delays. Improved customer service was evident based on minimal complaints by students. Two key words are guiding our customer service focus throughout the College—**Courtesy and Respect**. Both are important to the culture we are establishing in the College and vital to our capacity to serve our students effectively. Increased leadership and employee accountability for achieving desired results also are paramount to our success in responding to the educational needs of students, employers and our communities.

**Industrial Readiness**

Workforce Development is critical to economic growth and development and the quality of life for our citizens. Southwest has embarked on one of the most exciting workforce initiatives which has attracted national and international recognition to the College’s Industrial Readiness Program. Most importantly, it is creating employment opportunities for unemployed, underemployed citizens while also supporting the needs of business and industry. Southwest is working closely with city and county government through the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) to meet the growing needs of local business and industry in Memphis, Shelby and Fayette counties. Scientific Management Techniques (SMT) and Southwest Tennessee Community College collaborated to design and deliver a highly effective solution to the industrial skills shortage in the Memphis market. This model has national implications for solving the skills gap within the next year.

Stephen Berry, President of SMT, stated, “It has become clear that ‘solution driven’ community colleges like Southwest, collaborating with local industry, are positioned to deliver targeted training that will dramatically improve workforce skills as well as deliver the requisite productivity improvement for manufacturers. Working with Memphis manufacturing stakeholders, Southwest is proactively leading the way and delivering the model solution for other schools. Schools are working closely with manufacturers and workforce professionals to improve employability and industrial performance.”

The hands-on training curriculum developed by SMT is unique in the industry. With hands-on training aids and interactive exercises, SMT trains to specific skill sets required for students to become productive members of the manufacturing team. Graduates are driving productivity for local manufacturers and feedback from Memphis employers is remarkable. The skill assessment component is critical to the program’s success. The hands-on assessments identify mechanical instinct and aptitude pre-training; post-training assessments provide data to quantify the effectiveness of the training program and identify graduates as job-ready.

**Retention and Graduation**

Southwest continues its emphasis on retention and graduation with a number of new initiatives:

- Project Finish Line, the College’s attempt to reclaim over 2,000 students who completed 45 credit hours or more with no degree or certificate over the last three years.
- Southwest Mentors Advancing Retention, Teamwork and Success (SMARTS), faculty and staff mentor new and returning students to increase semester-to-semester persistence until graduation.
Additionally, we are focusing efforts on recruiting African American males who are underrepresented in Memphis as well as many higher education institutions across the nation. Our 2.12 million dollar grant through the Department of Education has allowed Southwest to implement the M.O.S.T. Program (Men of Southwest Tennessee) designed to attract and retain increased numbers of African American males.

Since implementation in March 2012, Project M.O.S.T. has successfully focused attention to the needs of many of Southwest’s African-American male students and established what is referred to as a “Haven for Success” in which the students can express themselves openly within an environment of support and encouragement that specifically accommodates their ethnicity. Meeting one of its benchmarks, the program successfully developed and implemented a two-week Summer I.C.E. (Introduction to College Excellence) Initiative. Currently, the program has more than 140 men accepted and actively participating which actually exceed the annual targeted number of 120.

The program serves men from diverse backgrounds and experiences; those that recently received GEDs, first-time freshmen, first-year traditional and transfer students, and non-traditional students as well. By maintaining an atmosphere of learning, respect, and self-awareness, Project M.O.S.T. continues to grow as the students embrace the program as demonstrated through their commitment and pride which also serves to attract their peers to become interested in this program.

Program staff currently administers a battery of assessments that identify academic levels, career interests, and possible barriers to success. To assist our students, an array of support services is provided. Transportation assistance is provided via MATA bus passes, monthly stipends are issued to those who meet the established criteria, and employment needs are addressed by providing job listings. Additionally, presentations on career opportunities, job search techniques, and the importance of possessing essential soft skills are provided. By all measures, this program is highly successful as Southwest continues its focus on meeting the educational needs of our students.

Facilities
Based on the College’s increased desire to serve our community, a number of facility expansion initiatives are emerging:

- A new Nursing, Natural Sciences and Biotech facility on our Union Avenue Campus to meet the critical nursing shortage in Memphis/Shelby County
- A Fundraising campaign for a Corporate Training Center to enhance and expand our Industrial Readiness Program at our Macon Cove Campus
- A new Whitehaven Center to provide greater access for students residing in the Whitehaven community
- A Hospitality Regional Training Center to allow the College to provide certification and training for Tennessee and surrounding states
- A Parking Garage on Union Avenue Campus to accommodate the expansion needs of our Union Campus

The evolution of these facilities will position Southwest to become one of the premier community colleges known for its responsiveness to students, employers and the community.

Cordially,

Nathan L. Essex
President
Southwest Tennessee Community College
When the call went out for mentors almost two years ago, the Southwest family rallied to support SMARTS (Southwest Mentors Advancing Retention, Teamwork, and Success), and has continued to strongly back the program ever since. SMARTS matches students with faculty/staff mentors who work in departments closely related to the students’ interests. Mentors provide career advice and guidance to students in developing and formulating attainable academic and career goals. The Fall 2012 SMARTS Mentor Orientation was held on September 21 at the Macon Cove Campus.

The Office of Retention and Graduation, under which the SMARTS Program is governed, disseminated mentor toolkits and its executive director, Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, presented an overview of the program’s criteria along with mentors’ responsibilities.

Launched in the spring of 2011, SMARTS partners faculty/staff mentors with student mentees to form support teams whose goal is to increase access to college-level education, academic program completion, and student involvement with faculty, staff and peers. Throughout the semester mentors and mentees interact, engaging students in the development of social relationships and connecting them to college programs and activities.

Clearly, SMARTS provides huge dividends for mentees. However, faculty/staff mentors find it equally satisfying. Eighty-six percent of the Fall 2012 mentors are returning for a second or third semester. The payoff is remarkable: many of them see it as a way to make a difference in students’ lives and support the college’s “Student Persistence” endeavor. “Serving as a SMARTS’s mentor has brought real joy to my life. Under the leadership of Dr. Cynthia Calhoun the program has been very beneficial to the mentees. As a mentor, I have been able to direct my mentees to other programs on campus, to establish high rapport, to teach time management, and to be there for any need that arises in the semester. I encourage faculty and staff to be a part of this great endeavor,” said Assistant Professor of Languages and Literature Patricia Ward.

Executive Director of Information Technology Services Michael Boyd expressed his sentiments saying, “The SMARTS program is a great opportunity to build a partnership between the mentor and mentee. I have been a mentor since SMARTS began and I have enjoyed seeing the students succeed in their classes and in life.” He added, “The students have someone to help them, as well as hold them accountable. Just this past semester, I was able to help my mentee, who had reached the maximum hours for her financial aid, get a scholarship so that she could stay in school and graduate. If we had not built our relationship via SMARTS, she might not have called me and let me know of her dilemma. I encourage everyone to get involved in SMARTS. The relationships could last a lifetime.”

For more information on how you can become a mentor, contact the Office of Retention and Graduation at either (901) 333-4265 (Macon Cove Campus) or (901) 333-5950 (Union Avenue Campus).
You may have seen them from a distance and wondered, “What are those things?” Though they are great for hanging out between classes and working on assignments, the students didn’t have a problem figuring out that the big blue umbrellas are solar power stations.

Student reporter David Brock explained it this way in The Southwest Source’s, Fall 2012 | Vol. 6: Issue 1, article, Green Energy Has Found Southwest:

Southwest Tennessee Community College has installed new outside power stations on select campuses. These power stations are Southwest red and blue, and are called Solar DOK’s (pronounced dock). They each resemble a patio set with an umbrella; the umbrella portion is made up of solar panels. All of them are freestanding and each has four 110 V outlets and two USB power ports located on the masts above the table portion. Running completely on the power of the sun, they are 100 percent solar powered green energy and were constructed from recycled materials. These power stations do have the ability to charge cell phones, laptops, or any small electronic device, as well as an area to study, work, or just visit with friends.

For a third year Southwest is perched high on the list of Military Friendly Schools® – top 15 percent in 2011, top 20 percent in 2012, and again Victory Media, the premier media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life, named Southwest to the coveted Military Friendly Schools® list for 2013.

This list honors the top 15 percent of colleges, universities and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace America’s military service members, veterans, and spouses as students and ensure their success on campus.

“Inclusion on the 2013 list of Military Friendly Schools® shows Southwest’s commitment to providing a supportive environment for military students,” said Sean Collins, director for G.I. Jobs and vice president at Victory Media. “As interest in education grows, we’re thrilled to provide the military community with transparent, world-class resources to assist in their search for schools,” Collins added.

The 1,739 colleges, universities and trade schools on the 2013 list exhibit leading practices in the recruitment and retention of students with military experience. These schools have world-class programs and policies for student support on campus, academic accreditation, credit policies, flexibility, and other services to those who served.

Millington Center Director Ronald Wells attributes a large part of the College’s excellent relationship with military students to Pat Flakes, technical clerk for the Millington Center. He praised her tireless dedication in assisting students with admission, registration, military tuition assistance applications, and other administrative issues.
Southwest’s Annual Fall Career Fairs may well be an indicator that the job outlook is getting brighter for Mid-Southerners. A combined total of more than 30 businesses came out to discuss employment opportunities at the college’s Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses on September 19 and 20.

“While we are still collecting feedback from participants, we can tell you that we saw an increase in the number of students and employers who participated in both events … plus an improvement in the overall preparedness of Southwest students,” commented Director of Career Services Brenda Williams.

The event was the largest since the recession hit. Regulars like FedEx Express, Flinn Broadcasting Corp., and AFLAC were joined by some first timers. Amber Reaves, marketing manager and office assistant for Fowler Engineering, was there to recruit drafters. Fowler is a structural engineering firm located in northern Mississippi that specializes in designing structural systems. “We are looking for structural drafters. We need people to be able to actually illustrate our plans that we send out to architects,” said Reaves.

Fowler uses a variety of software programs in its operation, but is partial to Revit, a BMI (Building Information Modeling) program. “It is almost like a videogame – it’s 3-D and you can walk through, turn it around and zoom in on a certain beam or structure. It’s becoming the standard for our profession,” Reaves explained. “So we are really looking for someone who is interested in learning that software or already has experience with it.”

This year the Homeland Security Grant Program teamed up with Career Services to expand the Fall 2012 Career Fair to include homeland security-related organizations. There were recruiters from local and federal agencies who are involved in homeland security. These included: Memphis Police Department (MPD), Shelby County Sherriff’s Office, TSA (Transportation Security Administration), FBI, Tennessee National Guard, University of Memphis ROTC, and MLGW.

“The career field in homeland security encompasses multiple career fields from law enforcement officers, to scientific researchers, to critical infrastructure workers. The participation by homeland security-related organizations exposed over 1,500 students to a variety of these career opportunities and allowed personal interaction with representatives from agencies who are currently hiring. The event was a great success,” said Donald Drewry, Homeland Security Grant Program coordinator for Southwest.

Mid-South law enforcement agencies demonstrated firsthand how exciting a career in law enforcement can be. Lieutenant L.A. Currin of the MPD said, “We wanted to present the image that the police department is broad. We have a wide range of job possibilities, not just answering calls or taking reports. An officer may be recruiting – we brought a super awesome recruiting vehicle with all the lights, bells and whistles. We have a license-plate-reader car equipped with a camera so if a car is driving past, we can capture the license plate and pull up all kinds of data about the vehicle’s owner.”

Some of the other technology MPD demonstrated included:
- DUI Simulation
- Impaired Driver Obstacle Course
- Sky Cop
- Dog Unit
- Firearms Training Unit

“We’re putting a different spin on fighting crime and we’re making it more interactive for the officers themselves, and making it more fun for the officers as well. Because [youth] nowadays are technology savvy, we wanted them to see that we have technology, too. If they’re into computers, we have computers. If they’re into programming, we have programming. ... We want to show them the kinds of things we offer as a police department,” Lt. Currin concluded.
Budget shortages and advancing technology are two major reasons many libraries are supplementing and replacing their traditional library services and resources with mobile and virtual offerings. Southwest’s Library Services is on par with this change, providing laptops for two-hour use; mobile document scanners for two-hour use, Playaways (audio books) for seven-day use, and audio MP3s for seven-day use.

Vivian Stewart, associate director of Library Services for Southwest, says technology is the driving force behind the change in the way library services are currently offered and utilized. “Because it is constantly changing and we can’t avoid it. Students tend to accept technology more than the traditional resources because it is easier to listen from a mobile device than to sit down and read. There are still some that love holding books, but slowly they will change as the technology changes.”

Stewart says the most “in demand” product/service that Library Services offers is the use of e-books (a book composed in or converted to digital format for display on a computer screen or handheld device – Merriam-Webster.com). “You are not bound by the hours of operation of having to come in and use them on site or check them out and return by a due date. It is very convenient to have access from home,” Stewart said.

Technology is changing and evolving all the time, still, Southwest library patrons have no real problems in staying current in the use of new library resources. “Most training is at the point of checkout, through Library Instruction classes and our Facebook and YouTube videos,” Stewart pointed out.

With Google and other search engines right at your fingertips, it leaves one to wonder whether the number of library patrons increased or decreased in the past few years. But, Stewart indicated the college’s patron count is up as students are working independently at the library’s computers. “We are happy that they are using our resources,” Stewart commented.

“Students can access our mobile site, search our catalog, and renew materials. They can use Playaways, one-click digital or MP3s to listen to books, checkout our mobile scanner and use it from any computer onsite,” she said.

Administrative Webmaster Content Coordinator Teresa Calloway is a great fan of the Playaways. “I first learned of the Playaways (the all-in-one audiobook) from an April 2010 Southwest Scoop article. I really like the convenience of a pre-loaded ready to use audiobook. For me it’s easier than downloading an e-book. I love listening to Playaways when I walk or work around the house,” said Calloway, who is currently listening to Chasing Darkness by Robert Crais.

Playaways measure a tiny 3 x 2 inches. They come in both fiction and nonfiction. Because they are so small, “they can fit into a purse, backpack, pocket or your jacket,” Executive Director of Library Services Carolyn Head commented earlier.

Southwest’s Library Services staff keeps up with all the new tools that are out there through staff development training and viewing their own Facebook and YouTube videos.

What’s in the future for library technology? Stewart foresees “smaller, faster gadgets along with more traditional books and DVDs moving to a streaming format.”
Southwest’s Fitness and Wellness Program Continues to Thrive

Southwest’s Fitness and Wellness program has expanded under the direction of Cheryl Green, who now coordinates the program following the recent retirement of Associate Professor of Education Neal Cordel. Over the past two years, Cordell spearheaded the development of the 24-hour fitness facilities at the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses. Cooking classes, weight loss competitions, and health awareness seminars were some of the activities the program offered to motivate the Southwest community to choose a healthy lifestyle.

The program continues to thrive under the leadership of Green, a fitness buff. “I feel very blessed that my parents laid a foundation that allowed me to grow up seeing physical activity as important, and understanding the importance of eating a balanced diet. … My parents made sacrifices to pay tuition so I could attend the University of Chicago’s Laboratory School. … The physical education rotation at the University of Chicago consisted of swimming, gymnastics, and games – I grew up seeing swimming and gymnastics as normal activities for every child.”

Green holds Group Exercise and Health/Fitness Instructor Certifications through the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM). She studied psychology and exercise science at the University of Miami in Florida, played seasonal intramural sports, participated in aerobics and worked as a consultant for a popular weight loss program. “My job entailed three components: helping people figure out how many calories they should consume for their weight loss or weight management goals; directing them to pre-packaged products to help them get started with their goal; and teaching nutrition classes to help clients manage their weight loss or weight management goals with foods that can be purchased at any grocery store, or while dining out,” Green said.

Regarding healthier eating, Green’s father believed that pork was the culprit behind a lot of hypertension on his side of the family, so her mother fed them a diet mostly of beef and minimal fried foods. “I believe my parents’ decision to not have pork products in our home and not to fry most meats has, at least, in part, contributed to the fact that my blood pressure reading typically runs less than 110/70,” she stated.

Green has held a series of jobs and was involved in multiple activities centered on nutrition and fitness which, no doubt, contribute to the continual success and results Southwest employees enjoy in the college’s Fitness and Wellness Program. Her goals for 2012-2013 are to:

- Explore ways that the Fitness and Wellness Program can help with student retention and engagement goals. “I understand that some colleagues are uncomfortable with the idea of exercising with students, while others welcome the opportunity. I am considering the idea of a one-time back-to-school student/faculty/employee Zumbathon, or a student/faculty/employee boot camp. Years of leading group fitness classes that require me to work out with students has shown me that students still respect faculty and employees who exercise with them as the professionals we are; and they tend to see us as positive examples and more approachable when we engage in activities with them,” commented Green.

- Develop daily yoga classes. “Midday yoga classes will help anyone who participates be more energetic and focused, while reducing or aiding in the prevention of hypertension and a plethora of health issues,” said Green.

- Consistently offer a variety of fitness classes. “Many colleagues enjoy the boot camp classes and others have requested lower impact classes, and yet others enjoy Zumba classes. “I would like to keep a section of each format available on both main campuses for colleagues,” Green stated.

- Offer at least two workshops (one on each campus) that include nutrition and recreational sports information.

- Ensure the exercise equipment is sanitary and is functional.
Students Get Job Hunting Tips on How to “Dress to Impress”

Though showing up on time may be the first “make it-or-break it” step in acing that big job interview, what you wear to the interview runs a close second. To help students properly prepare for Southwest’s annual Fall Career Fair held September 19 (Union Avenue Campus) and September 20 (Macon Cove Campus), and score a winning first impression, the Career Services Department recently sponsored “Dress to Impress.”

“After speaking with area hiring managers and human resource professionals regarding the inappropriate outfits being worn by job applicants in general, we wanted to make sure that Southwest students had the resources to make a great first impression. Area image and staffing professionals were invited to come on campus to provide information, answer questions and show examples of appropriate interview outfits for men and women. Representatives were asked to dress in appropriate interview attire so that students could see real people wearing actual outfits,” stated Southwest Career Services Director Brenda Williams.


Lou Geater was on hand representing Office Team, a subsidiary of Robert Half International, a recruiting and staffing firm. “We wanted to come out and share what some of the common do’s and don’ts of the interview dress code are. We see a lot of people that come in all the time that are dressed very professionally. But then, we see people that commit some of those fashion faux pas. … A lot of people get confused on what to do and what not to do,” Geater stated.

He says guys never go wrong dressing in a business suit and that it is better to dress conservatively rather than take chances. For ladies, the Office Team representative recommends professional skirts or slacks and a professional coat, blouse or business suit as well. “Some of the faux pas that we see all of the time are people showing up in jeans for an interview or T-shirts. Tattoos are a big deal for some people. We always recommend that people wear a long-sleeved shirt to cover up any tattoos,” he commented.

Office Team set up a display featuring attire and accents both acceptable and unacceptable to wear to a job interview. The overall response to the event was positive Williams stated, “Overall, we were pleased with the participation of image consultants and the interview attire resources they provided to Southwest students. Through events such as this, Career Services hopes to inform, empower and prepare Southwest students to be successful in a competitive job market.”

Career Services plans to expand the events in the future in order to increase awareness regarding appropriate interview attire and engage more students.
Southwest Instructor Performs at the International 2012 AIDS Conference

Soprano Valetta Brinson, an instructor of Communications, Graphics and Fine Arts for Southwest was featured this year in two performances of Voices of Haiti: A Post-Quake Odyssey in Verse in July at the Corcoran Gallery of Art and College of Art and Design in Washington, D.C., for the International 2012 AIDS Conference. “Voices of Haiti: A Post-Quake Odyssey in Verse, a multimedia exploration of Haiti’s earthquake, brings more coverage of the Haiti issue,” said Brinson.

The work, first performed in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on February 4 earlier this year, grew out of a year-long Pulitzer Center commission report on Haiti after the earthquake – exploring the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS.

Brinson is a native of Memphis and has performed in the United Kingdom, Japan and throughout the U.S. She specializes in the music of Bach, Mozart and Strauss and has performed with the Nashville Opera Association, Mississippi Opera Association and Opera Memphis in such productions as Der Rosenkavelier, Madama Butterfly, Gianni Schicchi, Die Zauberjlote and Falstaff.

The performance also featured poet, Kwame Dawes, composer and performer Kevin Simmonds, and the photography ofAndre Lamberston.

A Southwest Connection in a National Computer Programming Competition

Eighteen-year-old Joshua Ferrell of Bartlett, TN, won fifth place in the SkillsUSA national championship competition in computer programming. The National SkillsUSA contest, held in Kansas City, MO, took place on June 25. The event was a showcase for career and technical education students across the nation.

Joshua recently graduated from Bartlett High School and had been attending classes at Southwest Tennessee Community College in the dual enrollment program. “We are very proud of Joshua’s accomplishments,” said Landon Pilant, Joshua’s advisor at Bartlett High School. “He and the other students that participated in the computer programming competition are true champions in their dedication to excellence in their trade and their leadership skills.” Joshua graduated in May with over 28 college credits and his Cisco Academy Certification in Computers. He is now attending the University of Tennessee-Knoxville Chancellor’s Honors program continuing his studies in computer science.

During the competition, Joshua and other gold medalists from each state worked against the clock with each other, proving their expertise in occupations like electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting and web design. All contests are run with the help of industry, trade associations, and labor organizations; and test competencies are set by industry.

SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry, working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA chapters help students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations excel. The organization has more than 300,000 students and instructors as members.
The TBR Vice-Chair Addresses Project M.O.S.T.

Project M.O.S.T. (Men of Southwest Tennessee) converged on their Union Avenue Campus meeting room, which has become known as the “M.O.S.T. Haven of Success” (MHS) located in C-204, for their first Fall 2012 Success Meeting. Following the successful two-week Summer 2012 Leadership Series launched with an inspiring talk by Southwest President Nathan Essex, the highlight of the meeting was a dynamic, down to earth, and insightful talk from the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) Vice-Chair Gregory Duckett.

Duckett, also senior vice president and corporate counsel for Baptist Memorial Health Care System, shared with the men of M.O.S.T. how his career started from very humble beginnings as a young boy growing up in a South Memphis community considered, to be low-to-medium income. Emphasizing the many challenges that he faced and struggled to overcome, Duckett indicated he never imagined he’d accomplish the many things he has, but he never stopped struggling. “Never let your past or present circumstances dictate your ability to succeed in the future,” stated Duckett.

Among some of his other notable accomplishments, Duckett served as:

- Director of Memphis Housing and Community Development
- State Counsel to U.S. Senator Albert Gore, Jr.
- Clinton-Gore Transition Team Member
- Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Memphis
- One of only two TBR Board members to be appointed to serve full terms by both Democratic and Republican Governors
- Shelby County Election Commission Chairman
- Board Member of the Memphis Branch, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

The M.O.S.T. meeting room reached a near capacity crowd of highly enthusiastic African-American male students who committed to put forth their best efforts to be the best students they can be. Program Director Kariem-Abdul Salaam noted that the roughly sixty (60) men in attendance represented only about 25% of those who have agreed to be a part of M.O.S.T. “Due to conflicts with class and work schedules, many of them could not attend, but have affirmed their commitment to the program,” said Salaam. Among those in attendance, he said, “there was overwhelming support to build upon their intrinsic motivations, rise above mediocrity, and set a higher standard of academic achievement and leadership skills development that serve to enhance retention and graduation efforts.”

Project M.O.S.T Success meetings will be held regularly throughout the semester featuring targeted seminar topics that are congruent with the program’s vision and mission. “The M.O.S.T. staff, Danesha Ward, Verties Sails, III, and Paul Robinson, deserve to be recognized for the great job they’re doing to ensure the success of the program,” said Salaam.

Ward, Counselor/Case Manager with the M.O.S.T. program, presented an informative discussion on How to Be a Successful College Student. “She also recently developed our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/stccprojectmost, to establish more communication opportunities with our students. Please visit the site and “like” us. Many of our upcoming events and program services will be listed on this website,” said Salaam.

M.O.S.T. has experienced tremendous growth and garnered outstanding support from senior staff, administrators, faculty, and staff from across the college as well as from the broader community.

For more information call 901-333-5469 or send an email to ksalaam@southwest.tn.edu.
For a third time, Southwest hosted the Tennessee Board of Regents Quarterly Meeting. The first meeting was held on June 27-28, 2002, the second time in March 2007 on the Union Avenue Campus and most recently, June 28-29 on the Macon Cove Campus in the Bert Bornblum Library. The venue was transformed into a multipurpose meeting gallery. “I thought the meeting went really well. Just the physical facility is one that I think really enhanced the discussion and conversation. It is a great building. It is a good place to be and the setup has worked really well,” said TBR Chancellor John Morgan about the meeting site.

Key items on the agenda comprised: the Report of the Finance and Business Operations Committee, which included approval of tuition and maintenance fees (4.8% increase) and approval of the funding for operations for the 2012-2013 fiscal year; the Report of the Personnel and Compensation Committee Meeting that included faculty promotional increases and approval of the system compensation plan recommendations (2.5% increase for employees). All key items were approved.

Greeting the assembly, Southwest President Nathan L. Essex accentuated Southwest’s unique position as a community college and its mission and commitment to the Mid-South in the wake of the current challenges. “We have a unique opportunity since the merger to serve an urban, suburban, and a rural community. Also, we are experiencing unparalleled challenges. We remain highly focused on our mission of ‘Anticipating and responding to the educational needs of students and employers in our community – in Memphis, Shelby/Fayette County and the surrounding Mid-South Region.’ The college is experiencing a transformational period which we believe will better position us to respond to the challenges that we face,” President Essex stated. He enumerated change strategies such as the Transformational Leadership Program that emphasizes emotional intelligence, the Customer Service Program for staff, a new customer-friendly telephone system, and cross-functional training.

Tonya Braden, senior instructor for the Business System Program at Tennessee Technology Center at Memphis (TTCM), who attended day one of the meeting, commented...
on the agenda items that were of most interest to her. “Everyone has to give some thought to the economy and the cost of living increases; those types of things are interesting, as well as articulation for students. And they’ve mentioned reversed articulation. I thought that was really interesting and beneficial,” said Braden.

At the outset of the second day, University of Memphis President Shirley Raines conveyed what she considered critical upcoming topics. “The reports that will happen in business and finance and in academic affairs about retention rates are very important to us – and frankly, your [Southwest’s] partnership with us in dual enrollment, as well as transfer students. You know, we receive as many transfer students for the University of Memphis as we do beginning freshmen. So that partnership is very important to us and I hope that will also get emphasized here, “said Dr. Raines.

Articulation agreements, versus going to work, may be less weighty for Tennessee Technology Center (TTC) graduates, according to TTC Vice Chancellor James King. “We have one of the better articulation agreements in this country from schools like TTCs to the community colleges. … Even though the articulation agreement is a solid articulation where the student can get as much as 30 hours of college credit for attending a TTC,… Most of them still want to work right now. And I don’t blame them. If I was in their situation, I would be the same way, too. But we want them to know it’s available for them when they get ready for it,” said Vice Chancellor King.

Regarding the increase of tuition and fees, Chancellor Morgan commented, “I don’t think anyone ever feels good about raising fees and tuition. But, we understand the need for it. We understand that there are some things we just have to do and have to accomplish.”

TTCM co-sponsored the meeting. The potential impact of salary compensations on the hiring process was of particular interest to TTCM Director Roland Rayner. “I was really interested in the equity study and the compensation. Of course, there is more and more difficulty in hiring quality faculty and staff. Anytime we can enhance their pay scale, it gives us more latitude to go out and try to obtain some of the best and brightest faculty and staff, said Rayner.

### Entering Southwest Students Surveyed on College Experience

What constitutes quality in the community college experience? Research shows that for many groups of students, the more actively engaged they are, the more likely they are to learn, to persist with their studies, and to attain their academic goals. Student engagement, therefore, is a valuable measure for assessing the quality of colleges’ educational practices and identifying ways they can help more students succeed. Southwest Tennessee Community College has joined this effort.

Beginning in mid-September, students in randomly selected classes at Southwest and many other community colleges across the nation had the chance to share their views by participating in the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE). The survey generally takes 45 minutes to complete. Survey items focus on students’ first impressions of the college with “front-door” experiences like registration, assessment, and orientation; the nature and quality of their earliest interactions with instructors, advisors, and other students; and how the college supports their learning in the first few weeks of the term. Results from the survey will be used to help Southwest understand students’ critical early experiences and improve institutional practices that affect student success in the first college year.

Additional information about SENSE is available at www.enteringstudent.org. To speak with the SENSE representative at Southwest, contact Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, executive director, Student Retention and Graduation, at (901) 333-5950, ccalhoun@southwest.tn.edu.
Southwest implemented the Fitness and Wellness Program in 2010 and has available 24-hour fitness facilities at the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses. Building on the enthusiasm for fitness and health, the theme for the 2012 Summer Institute, held June 14-15, was Healthy Technology. “The reason I chose that theme is because it is different and relates to health. I see that Southwest is promoting health throughout the campus community. So I thought we’d focus on health issues,” explained the Coordinator for the Summer Institute Kim Perry and specialist for Distance Education. “I had Health Awareness Facilitator Susan Payne come out to discuss some of the Women Coalition issues regarding health. ... All the meals from breakfast through lunch focused on health. You notice, we have a lot of fruit; no unhealthy beverages. I tried to make sure everything that I did reflected the health theme,” said Perry.

As many as 63 sessions were offered with topics such as: Set Your Heart on Health, Classroom Management, Handling Conflict in Global Teens, Teaching Methods to Captivate Your Students, and The fifth Dimension to Customer Service, etc. Sessions were taught by Southwest faculty. “They brought a wealth of knowledge to share with their own colleagues and others. To show them some best practices and some really successful principles that they’ve applied in their classrooms,” said Coordinator for Academic Administration/Articulation and Transfer Programs Brenda Smith. “The responses were overwhelmingly positive. The question is ‘What are you going to do next year,’” she added.

The annual Summer Institute is a time for not only Southwest faculty but others to sharpen their tools for the upcoming year. Laura Damm, QEP assessment coordinator/trainer for East Mississippi Community College, near Starkville, Mississippi, attended because she heard Southwest Assistant Professor of Business and Legal Studies Joan McGrory’s presentation on the automated Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) process at the Mississippi Association of Institutional Research (MAIR). Damm wanted to learn more. “Anything that can make my job easier or make the job easier for the faculty, I’m very interested in learning about,” said Damm.

Also attending the institute was Jenny Cockrill, director of Academic Enhancement from Belhaven University in Jackson, Mississippi. Her manager attended the MAIR conference, too, and wanted Cockrill to attend the summer institute to learn more about Southwest’s SLO process. Cockrill also sat in on a session on International Studies.

Additionally, Dr. McGrory facilitated a session about inserting YouTube videos into quizzes “To have more of an engaging and interactive assessment of critical thinking, as well as demonstration of tactics.” She continued, “It was well received and we had a lot of fun. I am just really encouraged by all of the knowledge that’s here today. ... I started a pilot this summer in class. I use it for attendance reporting and to ask students if they had gotten their textbooks yet. It allowed me to hold up my textbook and to actually show it so that they knew that they had the right one.”

McGrory is hopeful that YouTube video integration will have a positive impact on student retention here at Southwest. “It lends a human touch. Just this morning, I stopped by the Starbucks and had a young man walk up to me to say, ‘Hello Dr. McGrory,’ and started talking to me. I had no clue who he was because he was an online student. He’d seen me [via video] and felt a connection that was strong enough to come up and start talking. So I think a lot of times, it’s these things that are not so tangible that make the whole package,” said McGrory.

Southwest has a major focus on student success. Lisa Henriksen, coordinator for Academic Web Services, provided some insight. “We have many sessions that are specifically designed for student success. Even outside of the sessions that have student success in their titles, such as Financial Aid FAQ’s, they’re [faculty are] learning so much about how to answer those questions and how to help the student overcome the hurdles that keep them from getting into the classes in the first place. Being able to answer the basic questions the students ask them – that’s the most important thing,” Henriksen explained.
Perkins IV Orientation Welcomes New CTE Freshmen

Carl Perkins /Tech Prep Coordinator Shayla Guy, Special Academic Programs Manager Chandra Johnson, Angelo Jones and Tujuana Perkins, the staff of Perkins IV—a federally funded Special Academic Programs grant, hosted their second Career and Technical Education (CTE) Freshmen Orientation on June 2. Entering freshmen who had completed Letters of Intent were inducted into the Perkins IV Bridge Program.

The program is intended as a pilot to enhance Southwest’s commuter environment through the use of learning communities. Students in the program receive support through nontraditional academic interactions such as case management, “Lunch and Learn,” and Perkins IV Study Breaks.

The students designed a Shield of Honor to illustrate their commitment to student learning, and were provided an overview of college success skills, the Kuder battery of tests, and informed of any missing documentation that was preventing enrollment. During the closing ceremony, the entering freshmen recited the following pledge:

Perkins Articulated Student Commitment Pledge

Today I stand focused and ready
Today I stand determined to grow
I commit to academic habits, helping me learn what I need to know
Today I meet my fellow freshmen and extend to them a warm hello
I understand that part of my success, is measured by my cohort’s growth
So as we journey on to classrooms, study groups, make mistakes and laugh...
As one group, we will travel this path
Today I commit to give my all
And stay the course, no matter how hard
Today I stand determined to be
A SOUTHWEST STUDENT ready to achieve!

This event was made possible by a U.S. Department of Education grant under Title I of the Carl D. Perkins Act of 2006. For any student that completed a Letter of Intent in high school, please email Tujuana Perkins trperkins1@soutwest.tn.edu for additional information regarding the receipt of the articulated credit.

Recent high school graduates attended the Perkins IV Orientation for entering freshmen.
Southwest’s Nursing Students Attend TNA Legislative Summit

Southwest’s nursing students attended the Tennessee Nursing Summit (TNA) Legislative Summit in Nashville. The details are in the “TNA Legislative Summit on Capitol Hill Proves Great Success” reprint from the “Tennessee Nurse” - Summer 2012 Edition below:

State Representative Matthew Hill welcomed around 1,100 attendees to the Tennessee Nurses Association annual Legislative Summit on April 10 at the War Memorial Auditorium in Nashville. The enthusiastic nursing students, registered nurses, and nursing faculty from 19 schools of nursing across the state attended the event to learn about becoming more involved in health policy development and the legislative process during the morning. In the afternoon, attendees visited with their legislators to voice their opinions on current bills of interest to TNA that would impact nursing practice in the state.

The event was sponsored by Pfizer and the University of Phoenix Nashville Campus. Exhibitors at the event included Aquinas College, Emory University School of Nursing, Memorial Health Care System, Regents Online Campus Collaborative, Tennessee Rural Partnership, The Gideons International and University of Phoenix Nashville Campus. The Tennessee Nurses Association sincerely appreciates the support from these organizations.

Brittany Conley, president of the Tennessee Association of Student Nurses, also delivered greetings and conducted the Roll Call of schools with students attending.

Sharon Adkins, MSN, RN, TNA executive director; and Wilhelmina Davis, Manager, TNA Government Affairs, presented Legislative 101/Current Issues.

A legislative update on TNA bills of interest was given so attendees could discuss important bills introduced in the current general assembly with their legislators during appointments they had scheduled with them in the afternoon. Davis explained to the students why TNA opposed or supported bills of interest and gave them talking points to use when discussing the legislation.

Carole R. Myers, Ph.D., RN, chair of the TNA Government Affairs and Health Policy Committee, presented The Future is Now. Following Myers’ presentation, Adkins presented a session entitled The Legislative Process: View Committee Meetings “In Person.”

“Spending time at the Legislature is always an eye opening experience for students and nurses alike,” said Sharon Adkins, MSN, RN, executive director, Tennessee Nurses Association. “It is exciting to see their enthusiasm when they realize the role they can play in policy development.”

The attendees received information on how a bill is passed into law, the general basics of becoming involved in health policy development, and how to contact legislators.

Founded in 1905, TNA is the only full-service professional organization for the state’s 80,000 registered nurses. The mission of TNA is to promote and protect the registered nurse and advance the practice of nursing in order to assure a healthier Tennessee.

During the afternoon of Nurses Day on the Hill, students had the opportunity to meet with their legislators to discuss current bills that would affect nursing. A TNA display was in Legislative Plaza and members of the TNA Government Affairs and Health Policy Committee were on hand to talk with legislators and students. Mary Jo Cheuvront, center, member of the TNA Government Affairs and Health Policy Committee, enjoys visiting with, from left, Kristen Eisan and Stacie Whitten, first semester nursing students at Southwest.
2012 TECTA Program Celebration

The care and education of children, particularly when they are young and impressionable, require patience, commitment, and other skill sets that are sometimes innate but most often taught. The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance (TECTA) program at Southwest offers professional development and support to prepare teachers for work with children from birth to 12 years old. Twenty three TECTA participants completed their training and a ceremony honoring their achievement was held on June 18 on the Macon Cove Campus.

“Many child care providers want to provide a quality education to children. The providers we are recognizing today, not only want to provide quality education, they took educational steps to ensure they are. … They have worked hard to put their college knowledge into practice each day. Their dedication to reviewing their own work and making changes based on new knowledge is improving the lives of young children and their families every day,” said Director of Southwest TECTA program Elizabeth Wilson welcoming friends and family members who came out to celebrate their love ones’ achievement.

Executive Director of Special Academic Programs Angela Ventura Wooten congratulated them and Orientation Coordinator Rosella Wales recited an original poem. TECTA State Management Director Katari Coleman said in a written statement, “At TECTA, we have always supported efforts made toward the attainment of quality on behalf of young children and families. Accreditation and CDA attainment are two high types of recognition of quality that are bestowed on providers. We at TECTA are grateful that you took the journey and made the effort. We thank you for your continued dedication despite the obstacles!”

Well-traveled and just recently returned from a study-abroad trip to Paris, France, Dr. LaDonna Young, associate professor of Social Behavioral Sciences, addressed for a second time the TECTA completers. Recapping some of her experiences, she gave an analogy using the Arc of Triumph saying, “The Arc of Triumph is this massive building; on one side is old Paris, beautiful in all its splendor. On the other side is new Paris; the 21st century Paris with all its possibilities. … So I say to you today, you’ve conquered the old Paris, you’ve made it to the top. But I challenge you to go to the other side. You’ve conquered the CDA. What about an associate degree, a bachelor’s degree, a master’s degree, or doctoral degree? … You have to dare to go to the other side.”

Of the completers, 14 students earned the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential; eight family child-care providers earned the prestigious accreditation from the National Association for Family Child Care, and one provider earned the Tennessee Early Childhood Program Administrator Credential.

The 2012 TECTA Program completers earned the Child Development Associate Credential, the National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation, and the Tennessee Early Childhood Program Administrator Credential.
Southwest Students Explore Genomics and Biomanufacturing in France

Southwest’s International Studies - Study Abroad Program flew a team of eight BIOT 2990 students and faculty to Paris, France on May 15-22 for a study-abroad project that included tours and lectures at Universite D’Evry-Val-D’Essonne (Evry) and Genepole®, France’s leading biopark. Both Evry and Genepole® were of particular interest because of their research and advances in genomics, biomanufacturing and synthetic biology.

This team of eight, typifying the diversity Southwest promotes, comprised three African-American students - Felesia Shaw, Doretha Corely, and Debra Bonds; two Latinos - Elisa Alicea and Marina Arredondo; and one mixed Native-American Katherine Levanhagen; along with faculty members Dr. Amy Waddell, associate professor and project leader, and Dr. Juliann Waits, assistant professor, both for Natural Sciences. Associate Director of Advertising and Media Relations Brenda Rayner accompanied the team to document and publicize the project.

On the first day, they visited Evry where in an interview Dr. Said Mammar, director of IBISC and vice president of International Cooperation for Evry, explained, “The mission of Evry is to allow the young people in South Paris to have easy access to higher education.” He indicated Evry has about 10,000 students. Though the university has a doctoral program and awards both master’s and bachelor’s degrees, it also grants what he termed the University of Two-Year Technology Degree. Mammar says about 2,500 students earn the two-year technology degree annually. He went on to say, “We have partnerships with industry and institutes. Most of them give money to the university in the form of a training tax.” The university works with one main partner, Genepole®, which encourages the development of research in genomics and related sciences and technology.

Two research scientists on faculty delivered captivating lectures: Dr. Patrick Midoux, director of the Centre de Biophysique Moleculaire CNRS and a biomedical expert, discussed Gene and Drug Delivery of Small Molecules, Nucleic Acids Transfer by Non-viral Systems, and Gene transfer with Ultrasound Assisted - Gas Microbubbles. Research outcomes suggest that the ultrasound-assisted gene delivery method holds promise for certain clinical applications for gene therapy; and Dr. Patrick Curmi, first vice president of Scientific Council, presented on Tubulin Dynamics/Physiology-Pathology, DNA Investigation, and Biotechnology: Diamond Nanoparticles. Curmi is involved in the manufacture of fluorescent diamond nanoparticles for use in biology /medicine. He led the group on a tour of the laboratories and showed them a flask of ground synthetic diamonds used in his research.

The visit to Genepole® was equally fascinating. “What I enjoyed most … was the visit to Genepole®. It was most outstanding with 66 companies … It was exciting just knowing that you can pave a career within one of the companies,” said Biotech Student Doretha Corley.

Founded in 1998, Genepole® encompasses research labs, biotech companies, technical facilities and teaching and training facilities (Genepole®, 2011 Directory). Dr. Eric Lameignere, director of Genopole® Entreprises, lectured on the dynamics of the biopark and its 20 academic laboratories, 66 biotech companies, 942 patents on file, and incubation opportunity for startup initiatives.

The study abroad trip also included visiting other scientific venues like the Musée Pasteur (Louis Pasteur Museum) and Cite des Sciences & de L’industrie, a science and technology museum. But, any trip to France would be incomplete without a tour of the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, and Versailles. Not to disappoint, the team viewed Paris atop the Eiffel Tower and crammed in a night cruise on the Seine River.

Assessing the eight-day tour, Dr. Amy Waddell said, “I would like for my students to walk away with an enhanced appreciation for scientists around the world, and for other cultures. I want them to have enlarged their knowledge of the history of other parts of the world by having gone to the Louvre and the Eiffel Tower. I would also hope that they’ve acquired a better perception for what it means to be a scientist. That science is not the same all over the world, and that there are political views involved.”

The study abroad program at Southwest is a component of International Studies whose mission is to promote international experiences and global understanding through visits, exchanges, study, instruction, and service. Partial funding was provided by the Homeland Security Program which provides students with an opportunity to explore academic and career paths.
Southwest Holds First Adjunct Faculty Appreciation

Southwest held its first Adjunct Faculty Appreciation on May 3 in Nabors Auditorium on the Macon Cove Campus. It was an opportunity to recognize the contributions that the adjunct faculty make to the overall educational process at Southwest. Provost and Executive Vice President Joanne Bassett welcomed the group and presented the occasion. Music selections were provided by Valetta Brinson, instructor for Communications, Graphic and Fine Arts, and one of her students, Darin James.

The venue was exquisitely decorated in Southwest’s typical grace and elegance. The attendees enjoyed a delicious meal while Associate Vice President Barbara Roseborough discussed – Do Adjunct faculty Matter? /How Do Adjunct Faculty Factor Into the Funding Formula.

Coordinator Brenda Smith, Academic Administrator/Articulation and Transfer Programs, presented awards to the following members of the faculty for their outstanding commitment and dedicated service to Southwest:

– Joseph S. York
– Saundra Y. Thompson
– Gwendolyn Harbert
– Tim D. Brown
– Robert VanKeuren

Project Alpha Comes to Southwest

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation designed to provide education, motivation and skill-building on issues of responsibility, relationships, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases for young males. The conference was held at our Union Avenue Campus on May 19. Kenneth Carpenter, associate professor of Natural Sciences, was the conference organizer.

The conference got underway with opening remarks from Patricia Burnett, director of Upward Bound, and Gregory Cofield, president of Alpha Delta Lambda Chapter. Students viewed the S.T.A.T.S (Sex, Teens, AIDS-Take 'EM Serious) video before attending sessions with the presenters. Young males were exposed to a range of topics from the Project Alpha Curriculum that included Responsibility, Respect and the Role of the Male in Relationships, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Protecting Yourself and Your Partner and HIV Testing.

The workshops and informational sessions were conducted by Jamie Russell and Jay Johnson, outreach coordinators for Rapid HIV Testing for Le Bonheur Hospital; Anitha Nair, training coordinator of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program for Le Bonheur Hospital; Trevor Thompson, founder and CEO of the Sickle Cell Foundation of Tennessee; George Tolbert, chief consultant/founder of GGT2 P.O.U.R.S; Clarissa Gay, University of Tennessee, Memphis student intern for the Upward Bound Program at Southwest.

Young males attending the conference were from Olive Branch, Booker T. Washington, Bolton, Ridgeway, Carver, Whitehaven, Wooddale, East, Sherwood, and Central high schools, and Stax Soulsville Charter School.

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated is the first intercollegiate fraternity established by African Americans. Founded on December 4, 1906, on the campus of Cornell University, Alpha Phi Alpha currently has over 680 active Alpha chapters in North and South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, the West Indies, and the Virgin Islands.
Southwest Assistant Professor Scouts International Cinema in Berlin

By Levi Frazier

All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin. And therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words “Ich bin ein Berliner (I am a Berliner)!”

— John F. Kennedy

Attending and participating in the XXVII. Black International Cinema Berlin 2012 from May 2-6 brought President John Kennedy’s words to life in a way that defies any description I can create.

Attendees, filmmakers, panelists and entertainers from around the globe gathered once again in the hallowed building in front of which President John F. Kennedy delivered his speech that forever etched him into the hearts of the German people. In Memphis, my friends and I are fond of saying how close we got to King in the 1968 March or even where we were when he got shot. Similarly, a plethora of stories emerge when Berliners are asked where they were when our 35th president stood in front of Rathaus Schöneberg on June 26, 1963. One volunteer at the festival said his mother brought him to the gathering in a stroller, though he remembers nothing. Turning into a game of one-upsmanship, a petite videographer for the festival stated that her mother brought her in the womb. She got no takers.

An enchanting city, beautiful weather and a spectacular film festival all contributed to the best five successive days I can recall. Upon arriving at the festival, I was greeted by the festival director, Professor Donald Muldrow Griffith. He and his wife, Gayle Mckinney Griffith, started the festival 27 years ago when they moved from Chicago to Berlin. After huge smiles and a warm greeting, he quickly ushered me into the hall where the opening session would be held in which I was on the program to speak. When I entered the ornate room, it had the feel of a mini UN assembly where a host of international speakers were gathered to bring about world peace via the arts. And to my own constant amazement, I was one of the speakers. Finally, the time came and I not only relayed Donald’s great contribution to both young and old filmmakers but also his contribution to international peace, assistance, and understanding through arts and culture.

The rest of the festival was just as rich as the opening ceremony. It included a body of film work that would satisfy the pickiest palate. One of my favorites was DAR HE: THE LYNCHING OF EMMETT TILL. Mike Wiley, winner of numerous best actor awards, played over 36 characters in this film which is based on his one-man stage presentation by the same name. Blacks, whites, males, females, judges, sheriffs and murderers were all played by Wiley with the greatest aplomb.

Aside from my opening address, my other direct involvement in the festival came on Saturday evening when I was one of seven panelists invited to speak about the social and political effects of the visual and performing arts. Resorting to devil’s advocate as I often do in my classes, I quoted German theatre artist, Bertolt Brecht, and stated that art was not a mirror to reflect life but a hammer to mold and shape life. I got all agreeable nods, with the exception of performing artist, Elana Katz, who agreed to disagree. The battle was on! As it turned out, her father, a classical musician with some close association with the Holocaust, had considerable angst over quite a period of time about creating or playing work that had no social relevance. He further despaired over the work if it had no direct relation to Jewish culture and was considered entertainment for entertainment sake. Apparently, as a loving daughter, she suffered along with her father as he grappled with this concept until he finally made peace with himself by accepting that his work could be entertaining and that there is merit in entertainment, just as there is merit in work produced to make social statements.

Thanks to my own personal Berlin experience, as a result of this festival, and to the stirring words of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy 50 years ago, I can now claim dual citizenship and truly say, “Ich bin ein Amerikaner, und Ich bin ein Berliner (I am an American and I am a Berliner).”

Levi Frazier is an assistant professor of Communications, Graphics and Fine Arts at Southwest.
Everyone wants to be innovative, though few folks actually achieve innovation. Frankly, in the educational world, few institutions are capable of flexibility, much less innovation.

The juxtaposition is that our ‘customers,’ those companies that hire our students, are constantly innovating.

That is particularly true for those in manufacturing, in which innovation is an essential element of not only growth, but of survival. At the same time, the ability to innovate boils down to the company employing a workforce capable of executing on the innovative ideas. That is, the companies’ frontlines, a full 85 percent of the workforce.

It is no secret that providing a continual pipeline of qualified new workers to companies is a challenge. More, most companies look to community residents to fill these roles, as the companies should. These workers are longtime members of the communities, they raise their families there, and, yes, the workers typically go to school in that community.

Most of the workers are not four-year university graduates, instead earning degrees and certificates from local two-year colleges. In that light, it’s not unreasonable to suggest that any community with a vibrant industry sector will showcase an equally vibrant community college system.

Community colleges can have a unique relationship with industry, one that allows the community college insight into the constant change and market pressures of the industries. Even with that flexibility, most community colleges still cannot react in enough time to provide a solution.

However, innovative methods can help us marry the ‘right now’ solutions-driven necessities and the longer-term educational goals of the school.

In Memphis, Tennessee, for example, several of our largest industry representatives tell us they need help. Employees are retiring, the companies are growing, the technology is changing, and these companies are challenged with finding job-ready employees. These needs have been heightened by several new companies coming into our region. The growth excites us, of course, but requires solutions. Some of the companies are looking outside our community to fill the openings, an option we feel is unacceptable.

In response, we at Southwest Tennessee Community College designed a program that is targeted to applicants, who are not even being considered by the companies due to low scores...
in basic workforce skills. This program, called Industrial Readiness Training (IRT), focuses on both mechanical skills training and soft skills or attitudinal training in an intensive, fast-paced 49-hour course.

As an essential component, each company acts as our partner in creating the curriculum for the IRT cohort. The employees of the companies tell us the skills in which we should focus; they visit the classes and talk to the students. They see the progress firsthand.

The impact is obvious. From January to August 2012, the program placed over 150 participants in livable-wage jobs. After hiring over 50 IRT graduates, one local manufacturing company was so impressed with the students’ ability to almost immediately add value, the executive leadership increased the starting wage of IRT graduates by two dollars per hour.

Most poignant, in my mind, is what the students have told me after they complete the course and begin a new career. One graduate, a 48-year-old man, said “I’ve never been able to get out of poverty all my life; this class has allowed me to change my attitude, to see that it was about me, not them, and to finally make a livable income for my family.”

Another graduate told me, “I just got my kids back last week because I can now support them. This program has changed my life, and generations of my family to come.”

No one suggests that a 49-hour course will graduate fully qualified frontline workers, but it’s a good start. Southwest will continue to expand its programs, work with local partners like the Workforce Investment Network, and will engage industry to earn their continued and expanded trust and involvement.

The vision is that the IRT program will become our industries’ first stop in hiring new employees, looking to Southwest to help fix on-the-ground workforce challenges now, not later.

Working with your customers to fix their challenges at their desired pace of change is not just innovation, it is groundbreaking. Southwest Tennessee Community College is taking the lead in serving as a national role model of innovation for the corporate community.
Southwest’s Study Abroad Program provided the rare opportunity for six Biotechnology Program students and two associate professors of Natural Science to go on an eight-day study abroad trip to Paris, France, which included a never before granted tour of Genopole®, France’s leading biopark center on gene research. The BIOT 2990 International Studies - Study Abroad France program team set their sights on the best Paris had to offer – from the newest stem cell and gene research to the ancient sculptures and paintings on exhibit at the Louvre, one of the world’s largest and most visited art museums.

Southwest’s team was comprised of students Debra Bond, Doretha Corely, Felesia Shaw, Elisa Alicea, Marina Arredondo, and Katherine Levanhagen; associate professors of Natural Sciences, Dr. Amy Waddell, lead faculty, and Dr. Juliann Waits, recently appointed department chair of Natural Sciences; and of course yours truly, Brenda Rayner, associate director of Advertising and Media Relations, who went along to document this adventure.

With such a huge “show-and-tell,” where does one begin? Mais oui, pour cette occasion (But yes, for this occasion)... we will share pictures and excerpts from our daily itinerary.

May 15 - We arrived in Paris around 10:00 a.m. central European time and checked in the Ibis Hotel. After making it through the daunting task of room assignments and settling in to unpack, we headed out on foot to explore local restaurants for an evening meal. Not far from the hotel we found La Plage and Alex, the owner, (sporting his well-fitting Levi jeans – very fashionable for French men) beckoned us in, as we stood outside the restaurant attempting to read the French menu. The food was great and the restaurant’s warm-wood finish along with Alex’s cheery personality compelled us to make several return trips.

May 16 - Despite jetlag from a nine-and-a-half-hour flight and a seven-hour time difference, we had an early breakfast at the hotel (throughout our visit) and headed for – to any committed biotechnology student – an adventure of a life time. We visited University d’Evry for presentations on the latest advancements in stem cell research. Established in 1991, Evry’s campus has contemporary architectural styles encompassing asymmetrical contoured buildings with skylight roofs and sculptured landscaping. We joined a class of international students for lectures from two French research scientists on faculty with University
**May 17** - After breakfast, Dr. Waddell conducted day one of the lecture series, Laboratory Management and Ethics. However, it was hard to focus as the students anticipated touring Le Musée du Louvre (the Louvre Museum). Tourists from all over the world photographed the glass pyramids and water fountains in front of the once 12th Century chateau converted to a museum as they stood in line for tickets to see works by Leonardo DaVinci, including the exhibit of Saint Ann – considered DaVinci’s ultimate masterpiece; Claude Monet; Pablo Picasso; Vincent Van Gogh; Michael Angelo; and Renoir, among the Louvre’s most celebrated artists, according to museum officials. The museum houses splendid ancient Egyptian artifacts, and Roman, Greek, and Islamic paintings, sculptures, and works of art, and antiquities; sarcophagus (decoratively painted caskets), crown jewels, gold embroidered painted ceilings, and massive dazzling chandeliers – too much for the eye to behold in a single setting.

**May 18** - After Dr. Waddell’s lecture, the team went to the Palace of Versailles to see its enchanting gardens which, according to palace officials, form one of the most famous world heritage monuments and stands out as the finest and most complete achievement of the 17th Century. The flowers were not yet in bloom, but we enjoyed the beautiful white marble statues that dwarfed the tallest of us and the bountiful fountains embellished with mythological centerpieces that appeared poised to ride into the heavens as we walked in the Gardens and Park of Versailles. The evergreen topiaries were artistically and geometrically crafted with patterns that seemed to twist and wind into infinity. We took a break for lunch and returned to tour the interior of the palace which was equally stunning with magnificent fireplaces surrounded by marble and golden pillars topped with ornate mantles, portraits of former kings, sculptures and some remnants of royal furnishings.

**May 19** - An excellent biotechnology professor like Dr. Waits couldn’t pass up an opportunity to present a lecture on French scientists while in France, especially since some of the museums honoring them were on our itinerary. Following the presentation on Madame Curie (Marie Sklodowska Curie, the first woman scientist to win worldwide acclaim and one of the great scientists of the twentieth century), Louis Pasteur and others, we headed for one of the most moving sites on our “Tour De France,” Notre Dame de Paris (French for Our Lady of Paris). We were fortunate enough to time our trip to actually observe a homily in the sacred cathedral. Beautiful pink flowers trimmed the lawn’s entrance. Again we joined the long line of pilgrims wanting to glimpse inside the great edifice. The cathedral’s treasury houses a shrine with the purported “Crown of Thorns” worn by Jesus at the crucifixion. There was a hushed beauty that drew many onlookers to tears. Several of the students in our group were Catholic and were overtaken by the experience.

**May 20** - Again we mixed learning with pleasure as we visited the science museum, Cité des Sciences at de l’Industrie which offers interactive exhibits, shows, activities, forums, lecture cycles and a multimedia library that explores how science interfaces with our everyday lives.

**May 21** - It rained and rained but our group raised our umbrellas and tracked to the metro RER (French: Réseau Express Régional, “Regional Express Network”) for the exciting tour and lecture at Genopole® Enterprises which encompasses research labs, biotech companies, technical...
facilities and teaching and training facilities. Genopole® builds and coordinates research clusters in genomics, post-genomics and related sciences. The biopark comprises 66 biotech companies and has filed 942 patents. The group sat in on a lecture by Dr. Eric Lameignere, director of Genopole® Enterprises.

May 22 – This was the final day of our trip in which we toured the Pasteur Institute Museum. It was like walking back in time to see his scientific instruments and the lavish home in which he and his family lived. His body is laid in a vault beneath the Institute Pasteur, which we toured.

There was no better way to end a trip than going atop the Eiffel Tower and overlooking Paris in its entire splendor, followed by a night cruise on the Seine River. We boarded the cruise boat, Les Vedettes De Pont-Nuef, from the company bearing the same. The famous monument, Arc de Triomphe, stood directly across from Les Vedettes De Pont-Nuef. It looked stately and glorious against the Parisian sky as a parade of military men clad in dress uniform marched around it in honor of those who fought and died for France in the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars.

While cruising down the Seine, famous landmarks of Paris such as the Eiffel Tower, the Museum and the Notre-Dame Cathedral could be seen along the shore line. We were hoping to see the Eiffel Tower lit up, but it was still dusk when we cruised past it – maybe another time.

The night air was brisk and the walk to our hotel, which would be our last, was bitter sweet. The next morning we headed back to the United States to recount tales of journey with family and friends.
The Southwest Foundation Announces New Fundraising Initiatives

The Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation announced its new fundraising initiatives following the June Board of Directors meeting. The Foundation will focus its energies on five initiatives, two of them capital. For more information on any of the campaigns, please contact Rose Landey, executive director, institutional development at 901-333-4577.

1. Business and Industry Training Center Campaign

Southwest Tennessee Community College proposes to build and design a 12,000 to 15,000 square-foot, two-story facility on the Macon Cove Campus. This building will house five testing rooms, four 21st century classrooms including one 50-seat classroom, a multipurpose conference center to accommodate 100 people, eight offices and an executive conference/training room designed for video/teleconferencing. This workforce development center will be designed to offer training for the entire workforce, from frontline workers to executives. The estimated cost of building and equipping the facility, including testing rooms and classrooms is $3,500,000, including all planning, permit, engineering and architectural.

To pay for the facility, Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation has launched the “AIM Southwest” capital campaign to raise $3,000,000.

2. New Facility for Culinary Arts/Hospitality Management Facility

Southwest Tennessee Community College proposes to purchase and renovate an existing facility with approximately 10,000 square feet of useable space. This building will house state-of-the art culinary arts and hospitality management training facilities. Ideally, the space will be utilized for both credit and non-credit classes allowing Southwest to offer world class culinary and hospitality classes such as cake decorating, wedding planning, etc. The estimated cost of this purchase and renovation is $2.5 million.

3. Athletic Fundraising

With intense budget pressures, Southwest Tennessee Community College must look to alternative measures to support its athletic programs. Fundraising will focus on capital and operating needs and scholarship support.

4. Book Scholarship

Purchasing books remains a difficult task for many of our students. Oftentimes, they are forced to choose between buying their books or paying their utility bill, and books in class determine success or failure. Funding only goes to students who receive little to no financial aid yet still demonstrate a financial need. Priority goes to those students who are within 12 to 24 hours of completion. This is most impactful way to aid a student with the smallest donation.

5. General Scholarship Support

With the recent changes in financial aid, this on-going need has worsened. Daily, someone comes into the Foundation office seeking assistance. There simply aren’t enough funds to currently meet the needs. The Foundation must increase scholarship support especially in general scholarships to aid the largest number of students.

Dr. Ralph Knowles Receives 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.

(l. to r.) TBR Chancellor John Morgan, Dr. Ralph Knowles, and Southwest President Nathan Essex
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Collisionworx Gets TSBDC’s Rising Star Award

After an 18-year career in the automotive repair industry, Mike Whitlock partnered with his wife, Pattie, to open their own business, Collisionworx. The couple was recently presented the Rising Star Award, given annually to a small business that has demonstrated success using the business planning, training and face-to-face counseling services of the Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) at Southwest.

The Whitlocks met with a TSBDC counselor in April 2008 to discuss how the center could assist them with achieving their dream of owning an automotive repair shop. They started with a business plan, which after several revisions, was completed by May 2008. The couple then started seeking a lender.

The TSBDC counselor put them in contact with the Tennessee Small and Minority-Owned Business (SMOB) program, which provides loans to startup companies. They applied for and were awarded an SMOB loan in July 2008.

Mr. Whitlock then proceeded to look for locations. After finding a suitable building, the Whitlocks again met with their TSBDC counselor to review the lease. Their next step was preparing the building for the business.

Collisionworx opened in January 2009 with 4 employees. The first year saw steady sales growth, but was still below breakeven. During this time, Mr. Whitlock took additional jobs to keep the doors open. His lender, Pathway, Inc., was able to work with him on his payments during this time. The TSBDC counselor was in contact with Pathway and the Whitlocks on the progress of the business, and its probability of showing a profit in the near future. The counselor also discussed alternative marketing methods that the Whitlock’s could use to increase their business.

By March 2010, Collisionworx was showing a profit and had added several employees. In April 2011, Mr. Whitlock again contacted TSBDC for assistance in developing a loan package for an expansion. Working on a tight deadline, they were able to project the impact of buying a competitor’s assets and building, and turning it into Collisionworx Express. Pathway, Inc. was again the lender.

In June 2011, Pathway agreed to lend the Whitlock’s $1.2 million to purchase the competitor and set it up as Collisionworx Express. It opened August 1, 2011, with 5 employees. The Whitlocks now have a total of 17 employees between the two locations. Sales are expected to remain strong with the two locations providing an operating synergy that will drive sales and reduce operating expenses.

Pictured (L to R), Pattie and Mike Whitlock proudly display the Rising Star Award.
Southwest Executive Appointed a National Judge for the Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award

Donald C. Fisher, Ph.D., executive director/CEO of the Mid-South Quality/Productivity Center (MSQPC), a partnership between Southwest Tennessee Community College and the Greater Memphis Chamber, has been appointed to serve as one of six National Judges for the Secretary of Veteran’s Affairs Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award in Washington, D.C. The award recognizes “Best Practice” for the Veteran’s Affairs (VA) hospitals and other VA organizations nationally.

The award is based on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria of which Fisher has authored 10 books on Baldrige Assessments. In addition, Fisher served for eight years as a Judge for the President’s Quality Award, during the Clinton Administration; served as a judge for two years for the Secretary of the Air Force Quality Award; as a judge for the Mauritius Quality Award for the Republic of Mauritius; and as a judge for the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence (TNCPE) for 15 years; among others. In addition, he was invited during 2010 and 2011 by the Royal Thai Government to work with their Baldrige-based Thailand Quality Award (TQA) and to develop a third award level of their national award applicants.

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs’ Robert W. Carey Performance Excellence Award is an annual award sponsored by the secretary. The award is named in memory of Robert W. Carey, a publicly recognized VA quality leader and a champion for excellence in the federal government. It recognizes organizations within the department that have implemented management approaches that result in sustained high levels of performance and service to the veterans we serve.

The foundation for the award is the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. These criteria are designed to help organizations use an integrated approach to organizational performance management that results in:

1. Delivery of ever-improving value to customers and stakeholders, contributing to organizational stability;
2. Improvement of overall effectiveness and capabilities; and
3. Organizational and personal learning

Southwest Receives a National Top Safety Ranking

Southwest ranks in the top 10 percent of America’s Colleges and Universities for campus safety, according to the StateUniversity.com – U.S. University Directory. Colleges and universities are ranked for campus safety on a scale that accounts for severity of a crime as well as frequency of crime.

The campus crime statistics published on StateUniversity.com are taken from crime reports submitted by college/university law enforcement between January 1 and December 31, 2010.

To view Southwest’s listing, visit http://www.stateuniversity.com/rank/safety_score_rank/3.
End of an Era: Hall of Famer Verties Sails Jr. Steps Down

Legendary Southwest Men’s Basketball Coach and Athletic Director Verties Sails Jr. retired June 30, ending a 33-year coaching career at the college in which he led the Saluqis to a 709-276 record, 16 Tennessee Community College Athletic Association (TCCAA) championships and ten region championships, and National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) tournament appearances.

“Coach Sails is a living legend,” said Southwest President Nathan Essex. “His accomplishments on the court have been recognized locally, statewide and nationally. While his basketball accomplishments are outstanding, he has served as a father figure for many aspiring student athletes. He has assisted them not only on the court but also with important life lessons off the court. We will certainly miss Coach Sails’ presence at Southwest and wish him and his family an enjoyable retirement.”

Sails was named TCCAA Coach of the Year 13 times and was inducted into the TCCAA Hall of Fame in 1994. In addition, Sails was inducted into the African-American Hall of Fame in 2010, the Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame in 2005, the NJCAA Hall of Fame in 2004 and the Memphis Amateur Sports Hall of Fame in 2004. During his career at Southwest, Sails coached numerous players who went on to play at four-year colleges and also professionally including Lester Hudson and McKinley Singleton, who both played in the National Basketball Association.

“I’ve been overwhelmed with emotion because this has been my life,” said Sails. “However, all good things must come to an end. I would like to thank all of the players who entrusted their lives to me over the years and also the students, faculty and staff who’ve supported us. I’ve enjoyed these 33 years and hope we’ve done some things to make the school proud.”

In 1979, Sails was named the Saluqis’ head basketball coach at (then) Shelby State Community College after serving as assistant coach at (then) Memphis State University for five years under Head Coach Wayne Yates. He was previously head coach at Melrose High School in Memphis, where he compiled a 132-35 record and led the Golden Wildcats to the Tennessee State Championship in 1974 with a perfect 35-0 record. Sails was twice voted High School Coach of the Year while at Melrose (1970 and 1974).
Southwest Welcomes International Students to the Baseball Program

The Southwest baseball team will have a more international flavor in 2012-2013 with the addition of six student-athletes from outside the United States which include four from Venezuela and two from Canada. “As a group, these young men are very respectful and very humbled to be here,” said Saluqi Head Baseball Coach George Sykes. “They really want to contribute both in their academics and in their performance on the baseball field.” These new members of the Southwest Saluqi baseball program are:

- Justin Atkinson – Canada
- Andres Borges – Venezuela
- Alejandro Carrillo – Venezuela
- Miguel Coronel – Venezuela
- Ryan Forletta – Canada
- Jhosue Mendoza – Venezuela

Southwest Names Interim Men’s Basketball Coach

Former University of Tennessee and Dallas Mavericks player, Kevin Whitted, has been named interim men’s basketball coach at Southwest.

Whitted attended E.A. Laney High School in Wilmington, North Carolina, where he is the school’s all-time leading scorer. After playing three seasons at Tennessee, Whitted went on to play professionally for the Mavericks and also in Europe. After retiring in 1999, Whitted successfully coached the Atlanta Vision of the American Basketball Association and the Wilmington Sea Dawgs of the Premier Basketball League and served as an assistant coach for the Fort Wayne Mad Ants and the Springfield Armor of the National Basketball Association’s Developmental League.

“Coach Whitted brings a wealth of NBA experience to Southwest,” said Southwest President Nathan Essex. “His accomplishments are enormous. We are fortunate to have a coach of his caliber working with our young men.”

As CEO of Kevin Whitted Basketball Services and the founder of the Kevin Whitted School of Basketball, he has focused on developing both young and professional players through individual and specialized training. In addition, Whitted is a Nike Skills trainer and has worked with several NBA players’ summer camps throughout the country.
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Southwest Study Abroad students toured the world-famous Louvre Museum in Paris.