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We welcome your comments and/or suggestions for future articles.

Please forward inquiries to Robert G. Miller, publisher and editor, via e-mail to: rgmiller1@southwest.tn.edu...or call him in Southwest’s Communications and Marketing Department at (901) 333-4368.

Southwest Now Magazine is published semi-annually in the fall/winter and spring/summer.
UnitedHealthcare and Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation are partnering to ensure Southwest gets healthy. Approximately 100 people on the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses participated in blood pressure, weight and body fat screenings, and blood sugar and cholesterol tests when the Healthy Lifestyles program sponsored by UnitedHealthcare and the Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation kicked off on March 28.

The screenings were just the first of a series of health awareness programs under the Healthy Lifestyles program designed to educate, promote and encourage healthier behaviors. The year-long program will focus on nutrition, weight management, health awareness and exercise in a fun environment. Prizes will be awarded throughout the program.

Healthy Lifestyle demonstrations were held on April 4 on the Macon Cove Campus and April 5 on the Union Avenue Campus. Presentations included a healthy cooking demonstration, a nutrition segment, a diabetes information class, and a group exercise demonstration.

Watch for more events on this year-long program. For more information contact Coach Neal Cordell at tcordell@southwest.tn.edu.

UnitedHealthcare

Alumni News Update

Sylvester Tate, a 1985 graduate and President/CEO of Tate Computer Systems, was recently chosen as 2011 Alumni of the Year. While serving in the military, Mr. Tate attended night classes and graduated with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electronic Technology from Southwest Tennessee Community College in 1985. He continued his education at the University of Memphis where he concentrated on Electronic Engineering, and in 1988, he opened Tate Computer Systems.

This retired Navy veteran and consummate self-made man displays his commitment to Southwest graduates in numerous ways. As the President/CEO of Tate Computer Systems, Tate has created jobs and grown a business that has been able to provide jobs and career opportunities for more than 30 full-time employees and soon that number will grow to 50. Many of those employees are Southwest graduates. In addition, Tate served as President of the Alumni Association, and in 2008, he and his wife created an endowed scholarship to assist Southwest students with their tuition. He also currently serves as a Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation board member.

At the Macon Cove Campus, despite threatening storms, Chef Steven Leake gave a cooking demonstration and explained the value of proper nutrition and what consumers should look for when it comes to food purchasing. He fielded questions about the differences in beef cuts; and fish, whether farm raised or freshly caught. Leake demonstrated how to prepare fresh dressing and sauces by blending extra-virgin olive oils and fresh herbs. At the end of the demo, participants were treated to salmon drizzled with a light basil sauce. Jeremy Burnett presented the demonstration at the Union Avenue Campus.

Health care professional Kristy Merrit also spoke to the group at the Macon Cove Campus about how to live with diabetes. She explained testing for diabetes, monitoring blood sugar levels, and proper nutrition after diagnosis. Diane Howell presented the demonstration at the Union Avenue Campus.

If you want to be featured here or in any of our publications or just want to catch up with other alumni, go on-line to http://www.southwest.tn.edu/alumni/form. html and complete the form. We want to hear from you!
As we continue to face double digit budget reductions, we also continue to make strides in meeting the educational needs of our students. For example, the College’s 2011 graduating class consisted of a record high seventeen hundred students. In spite of this budget reduction, the College is expected to serve its’ community with a more efficient organizational structure, improved processes, high priority on customer service, teamwork, curriculum development, innovative programs, faculty/staff development, and improved retention and graduation rates among others. In response to current budget reductions, a Voluntary Buyout Program has been implemented which will contribute significantly to our capacity to meet a nine million dollar budget reduction mandate. The College also has an approved Reduction in Force (RIF) Plan that will be implemented in the foreseeable future.

Structural changes and a talented faculty and staff will create a stronger organization. The College is positioned to continue to grow and expand services to meet the changing needs of our community. With added emphasis on technology, program development, lifelong learning, diversity, recruitment, retention, and community service, the College will continue to make a major contribution to the economic growth and development of our community and increasingly become a focal point for community outreach. New facilities should greatly enhance the College’s capacity to meet the academic needs of students, employers, and our communities in Shelby and Fayette counties.

Faculty and staff who remain with the College will perform multiple tasks, form effective work teams and continue the College’s tradition of providing educational service opportunities to our students. The College prides itself on ensuring that the educational needs of students, employers, and our community are met. Student educational needs will be addressed through innovative and creative teaching strategies designed to facilitate graduation and completion of coursework within a three-year time frame.

Southwest will focus increased attention to student retention by ensuring that creative course offerings occur consistently and student engagement receives high priority. Several programs have been initiated to facilitate higher retention and graduation rates among our students. Student cohorts and block scheduling have been established as pilot programs. These pilots are led by a team of faculty who are deeply committed to assisting students in completing remedial and developmental courses within one semester. Their efforts should allow unprepared students to complete their degrees or certificates within the desired three-year time frame. Additionally, a Southwest Mentors Advancing, Retention, Teamwork, and Success Program (SMARTS) has been initiated which partners faculty and staff members with students. The primary purpose of this program is to increase student access to college level education, academic program completion, and to increase their involvement with faculty, staff, and peers. Lastly, this program will recognize deserving students at student award ceremonies.

The 2011 Faculty and Staff Awards Reception was held in its usual venue, the Verties Sails Gym on April 29. This year’s event honored award recipients, retirees and others participating in the voluntary buyout. The following awards were presented:

**SUPPORT STAFF AWARDS - PRESENTED BY WILLIAM YOUNGSON**
- Support Staff Professional Growth Award - Jon Clark
- Support Staff Service Award - Joan Franks
- Kenneth W. Mathis Environmental Service Award - Wendy Jackson
- Support Staff Employee of the Year - Elizabeth Golden

**POLICE/PUBLIC SAFETY AWARDS - PRESENTED BY JAMES BOLDEN**
- 2011 Director of Public Safety Award of the Year - Administrative Secretary Kathy Reel
- 2011 Distinguished Service Award - Police Officer Jeffrey Boyle
- 2011 Officer Appreciation of the Year Award - Security Officer Toya Pryor

**Faculty Awards - Presented by Joyce Johnson**
- Instruction and Curriculum Development - Dr. Joanne Bassett
- Leadership Activities - Dr. Joan McGrory
- Professional Growth and Development - Joyce Johnson
- Farris Award - Carl Swoboda

**Vice Presidents Divisional Awards**
- Academic Affairs Provost’s Award - Presented by Dr. Joanne Bassett
  - Nevin Robbins
- Financial and Administrative Services Vice President’s Award - Presented by Ronald Parr
  - Barbara Holmes
- Information Services Vice President’s Award for Excellence - Presented by Dr. Joanne Bassett
  - Norma Terri
- Student Services and Enrollment Management Vice Presidents’ Award for Excellence - Presented by Dr. Carol Tosh
- Support Staff Service Awards - Presented by William Youngson
  - Vanessa Dowdy
- Institutional Advancement Vice President’s Award for Excellence - Presented by Karen Nippert
  - Mary Nell Hutchins
- Human Resources and Affirmative Action Executive Director’s Award for Excellence - Presented by Paul Thomas
  - Wilma Randle
- Jim Willis Spirit Award - Presented by President Nathan L. Essex
  - Vanessa Dowdy

Southwest President Nathan L. Essex (left) presents the esteemed Jim Willis Spirit Award to Vanessa Dowdy.
Southwest’s Early Childhood Education Center Earns National Accreditation

Recent Accreditation Places Our Center in the Top Eight Percent in the Nation

The Early Childhood Education Center at Southwest’s Union Avenue Campus has earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals. “We’re proud to have earned this mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards,” said Center Director Mary Palmer, who also teaches in the college’s early childhood degree program. “NAEYC Accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible.”

Palmer describes the mission of the Southwest centers (at both the Union Avenue and Macon Cove campuses) as serving “as academic and support services for students attending Southwest, as well as faculty, staff and parents from the community.” And she is quick to say, “We aren’t daycare.” Most of the center employees have bachelor’s or master’s degrees in early childhood education, several have associate degrees, and the rest have the nationally recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. To earn NAEYC Accreditation, The Early Childhood Center went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related accreditation criteria. The program received NAEYC Accreditation after an on-site visit by NAEYC assessors to ensure that the program meets each of the 10 program standards. NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits during their accreditation, which lasts for five years.

In the 25 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. More than 7,000 programs are currently accredited by NAEYC – approximately 8 percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs. “The NAEYC Accreditation system raises the bar for child care centers and other early childhood programs,” said Dr. Jerlean E. Daniel, executive director of NAEYC. “Having earned NAEYC Accreditation is a sign that The Early Childhood Education Center is a leader in a national effort to invest in high-quality early childhood education.”

In light of a declining budget, the following College Strategic Goals will remain a high priority:

**Goal One:** Strengthen and enhance the College’s impact in the community.

**Goal Two:** Provide access and a strong commitment to meet the needs of a diverse community.

**Goal Three:** Provide educational programs and services that enhance effective learning.

**Goal Four:** Creatively manage and optimize current resources and expand sources of support.

With a talented faculty, a highly committed administration and a responsive staff, I am confident that Southwest will remain a viable resource to our communities in Memphis, Shelby, and Fayette counties and the surrounding Mid-South region.

Cordially,

Nathan L. Essex
President
Southwest Tennessee Community College

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**SOUTHWEST**

TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Southwest's very own Dr. LaDonna Young is one of this year's honorees.

Dr. Young, assistant professor of Education at Southwest, joined the college in January 2000 and is a graduate of Christian Brothers University. She received a master's degree in teaching and a doctorate in higher and adult education from the University of Memphis. The former interim chair of the Education Department and Honors Academy director also serves as director of the GEAR-UP Program.

A passion for teaching and learning afforded Dr. Young opportunities to travel and teach in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, with the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) in 2009. She is looking forward to taking a delegation of education majors to Senegal in the fall of 2011 through the college’s International Studies Program. Known for her humorous, “old school” approaches to teaching, Dr. Young cites her influence on students and those she mentors as her first love and greatest legacy to date.

Dr. LaDonna Young Named Woman of Excellence

Over the past three years, the Tri-State Defender has had the pleasure of honoring 150 female professionals and leaders distinguished by their remarkable civic contributions and career achievements. Southwest’s very own Dr. LaDonna Young is one of this year’s honorees.

Dr. Young, assistant professor of Education at Southwest, joined the college in January 2000 and is a graduate of Christian Brothers University. She received a master’s degree in teaching and a doctorate in higher and adult education from the University of Memphis. The former interim chair of the Education Department and Honors Academy director also serves as director of the GEAR-UP Program.

Amidst a sea of black regalia, glad hearts and hopeful spirits soared as family and loved ones awaited the announcement of their names, signaling their turn to walk across the stage to receive that piece of paper proclaiming “I did it!” More than 1,700 graduates marching to the traditional Pomp and Circumstance were encouraged to “Have a Plan” by Commencement Speaker Joseph DeVivo and to “Change the World” by Student Speaker Tinisia Branch during the Southwest Tennessee Community College 2011 Commencement Ceremony on May 7 at the DeSoto Civic Center in Southaven, MS.

President Nathan Essex and Commencement Student Speaker Tinisia Branch

Southwest President Nathan L. Essex welcomed family members and friends and applauded the outstanding efforts and accomplishments of graduates. Among them was Jacqueline Bain, awarded a Dietetic Technician degree 30 years after an earlier, unsuccessful attempt to go to college when she graduated from high school. Bain was privileged to graduate concurrently with her daughter, Kristen, who earned an Associate of Science degree in teaching.

Also recognized for overcoming tremendous odds was Robert Hunt, who bravely served his country in the U.S. armed forces from 1995 to 2007. Hunt was discharged due to an injury he sustained while deployed in Iraq. Matriculating through Southwest, Hunt served as vice president of the International Studies and Veterans clubs and held membership with the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, graduating with a 3.79 GPA. All graduating members of the armed forces were commended.

Other students President Essex commended were those who had dually enrolled in high school and Southwest. John McDaniel earned both an Associate of Arts degree in general education while also earning a high school diploma. Ariel Anderson, Lindsay Avis, Callie Goldsby, Josue Medrano, and Kristin Harris were awarded technical certificates in electrical/electronics fundamentals as well as high school diplomas.

Powerful business leader, Joseph DeVivo, asked the question “Do you have a plan?” in his address to the Southwest graduating class of 2011. DeVivo detailed the events of his life, both disappointing and rewarding that led to his current position as President of the Tri-State Defender.

A passion for teaching and learning afforded Dr. Young opportunities to travel and teach in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, with the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) in 2009. She is looking forward to taking a delegation of education majors to Senegal in the fall of 2011 through the college’s International Studies Program. Known for her humorous, “old school” approaches to teaching, Dr. Young cites her influence on students and those she mentors as her first love and greatest legacy to date.

Honorees were selected based upon the following criteria: African-American woman executive, business owner, community or non-profit leader, proven success within profession/industry, positive role model whose contributions encourage others and highly active in community service or organizational involvement leading to positive impact on the lives of others. The Tri-State Defender hosted its 4th Annual Women of Excellence “High Tea” Awards Reception on April 29 at the Memphis Botanic Garden.
of Smith & Nephew Orthopaedics, Inc. He culminated his message with ten pieces of advice from his personal experiences: (1) Listen to your inner voice, (2) Find your passion, (3) Be dependable, (4) Put your company first and your career second, (5) Try to learn every day, (6) Take on the company’s largest problems, (7) Include your family in your work, (8) Focus on the job you have, not on the job you want, (9) Don’t worry, and (10) Live to be debt free. He also added “Give back to your community.”

Eloquent and commanding, Southwest Student Speaker Tinisia Branch, a sociology major, encouraged her classmates to think of their diplomas, as she once heard Tom Brokaw, former TV journalist and NBC anchor, say – as “tickets to ‘change the world.’” Branch remarked, “Each and every one of us has the opportunity to change the world. … graduates of 2011 take your tickets and change the world!” Branch served as President of the Honors Academy and Services Learning Club.
The Spring Career Fair Welcomes New Vendors

Southwest hosted its annual “Spring Fling/Career Fair,” April 13 and 14, and it was a great opportunity for Southwest students to mix and mingle on the plaza and breezeway at the Union Avenue and Macon Cove campuses while exploring career opportunities. This year, over half of the vendors, 11 out of 20, were first-time participants. Among them were Nike, Ann Taylor-Wolchase, Taco Bell, and Whole Health Chiropractic.

Administrative Assistant for Career Services Shirley Dozier-Martin indicated that normally a cross-section of the Memphis area business community is invited to participate in the Career Fair. “Our objective is to expose our students/graduates to employers who are interested in hiring them. By virtue of the fact that they participate, indicates that employers recognize the value in our product – potential employees who possess the skills needed to be successful in entry-level positions,” said Dozier-Martin.

According to the Southwest Career Services staff, the overall feedback from employers was positive. Most were able to identify several potential and interested candidates. Several vendors, they said, expressed their pleasure in seeing many of the attendees dressed appropriately and presenting themselves in a positive way.

Representatives from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development were on hand at the Union Avenue event to provide a preview of the new Career Coaches – mobile centers with services similar to those offered at the Tennessee Career Centers. “The Career Coaches will soon be making appearances all over the state in order to reach out to job seekers and employers alike,” said Brenda Williams, director of Career Services for Southwest. “We look forward to having them visit Southwest in the near future.”

Ann Taylor (specialty apparel retail chain stores for women)-Wolchase displayed professionally-dressed mannnequins to showcase appropriate attire for the interview as well as the workplace. They talked with students and stressed the importance of good grooming and professional appearance, no matter what kind of position they were seeking.

The Latest on Southwest Grants

The past three months have been a very busy time for the College as we pursue grant funding that will allow us to initiate new and innovative programs that will support student success. The College has submitted eleven different proposals that we hope to hear are funded soon. We will certainly keep you informed when they are announced.

Summer is also a great time of year to catch up with several of our current grant programs and see what they are doing. Among the recent grant awards is the Southwest Tennessee Community College Leadership Bridge Program funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This grant provides Southwest Tennessee Community College an opportunity to introduce students to career opportunities within the area of homeland security. The Leadership Bridge Program is open to underrepresented students in good standing at Southwest, especially those seeking degree/career paths in Science, Technology and Engineering and Math (STEM)-related disciplines. The program requires a commitment of time on the part of the student outside of the classroom and provides a stipend for each student to meet any personal expenses associated with participation. The monthly activities include, but are not limited to: Field Trips- (local Homeland Security agencies and organizations); Lecture Series (speakers in various homeland security disciplines); First Aid Training; CPR Training; and participation in emergency management exercises and university visits.

The Summer 2011 program activities include 48 students from various summer high schools and college programs. So far the students have met with Memphis and Shelby County Health Department officials and are scheduled to meet with representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard in July. Both visits will explore STEM-related career possibilities. There are tentative plans in August to visit a Department of Human Services (DHS) Center of Excellence at Jackson State University in Jackson Mississippi, as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Vicksburg. If time permits, the trip will be extended to include a visit to another DHS Center of Excellence at Alcorn State University, which is completing on-site research on recovery and sustainability for minority businesses. In late July, the students will also participate in the Emergency Management Summit at Southwest. Donald Drewry is the Program Coordinator for the Leadership Bridge Program, Homeland Security Grant.

Additionally, the Department of Education’s TRIO UPWARD BOUND (UB) Program at Southwest is in full swing. Thirty students are currently participating in the 2011 summer program. You may see them (or have already seen them) at many of Memphis’ landmarks.

So far during this summer session UB participants have visited the National Civil Rights Museum, Circuit Playhouse, Stax Museum and the Pink Palace. The Upward Bound Program gives students the skills and motivation necessary to successfully complete their high school education and prepare them for college. This goal is achieved through students’ overall improvement on standardized test scores, consistent program participation, and enrollment in postsecondary education in the fall term following their expected graduation date from high school. The Upward Bound Program allows eligible participants to get a taste of college life by residing in the dorms with roommates for five weeks (through the courtesy of the University of Memphis) and also take part in various recreational and social activities. The students are transported by bus to the Union Avenue Campus for their summer classes. Willie D. Clark, Jr. is the Director for the Upward Bound Program at Southwest Tennessee Community College.

We will see you next time when we review what has been submitted and awarded to the College!
It is wonderful, the feeling you get by helping students graduate and reaching their goals. Anderson highlights the role of being the center's director is seeing the students through their educational journey.

Anderson's tenure at Southwest, especially in the Show Exhibition, demonstrates her outreach by connecting with community schools; this led to partnerships with various organizations like the Exchange Club, the Frayser Community Association and the Ed Rice Community Development Corporation, which was involved in the dual-enrollment program where they can receive technical certification or an associate degree along with their high school diploma. The Gill Center is a prominent location for students enrolled in the Emergency Medical Technician, Phlebotomy, and a technical certificate or an associate degree along with the dual-enrollment program where they can receive technical certification or an associate degree along with their high school diploma.

Anderson contacted Memphis Light Gas and Water to install floodlights on the poles to make sure that the students felt safe. Teamwork between staff, administration, and Police Services has made the students and general public feel safe in the area.

The Gill Center continues to play an integral role in the community and still collaborates with local organizations like the Exchange Club, the Frayser Community Association, and the Ed Rice Community Center. Anderson says, “I’d like to think that the Gill Center is the community’s college; the Frayser community’s college.” It’s here for everyone no matter if it’s a youth group, or someone who is actually attending classes, an older adult who is coming back to either be retrained or to just take some continuing education kinds of classes.”

Anderson’s tenure at Southwest, especially in the Frayser community, has not been in vain. One of the highlights of being the center’s director is seeing the students graduate and reaching their goals. Anderson says, “It is wonderful, the feeling you get by helping someone achieve their goal and reach their potential. Sometimes they do not realize they had potential when they first came.” She has seen students come and go, and now she sees those students’ children coming to Southwest and that also now includes grandchildren. She says, “The parents will send their children back to her telling them they need to talk to Ms. Pat. It’s a compliment to have someone feel that you are worthy enough to have their children come back and talk to you about their education, career, and life progression.”

The center itself has also seen some changes since Anderson first arrived 10 years ago. The gym contained a mound of dirt, there was old laundry equipment and clothing, the lights were out and balls were in the ceiling from being used for batting practice. The center was previously the home site for the Saluki Baseball team and the field still holds reminders from the past; worn out bleachers and a tattered scoreboard. The academic building also fell into a state of disrepair...“had not been painted in years, the floors looked terrible, and the furniture was old and worn,” according to Anderson. Now there is a new library, new elevator, the floors are clean, and interior and exterior paint have been updated. Extra lighting has also been added for security purposes. Anderson contacted Memphis Light Gas and Water to install floodlights on the poles to make sure that the students felt safe. Teamwork between staff, administration, and Police Services has made the students and general public feel safe in the area.

The Gill Center continues to play an integral role in the community and still collaborates with local organizations like the Exchange Club, the Frayser Community Association, and the Ed Rice Community Center. Anderson says, “I’d like to think that the Gill Center is the community’s college; the Frayser community’s college.” It’s here for everyone no matter if it’s a youth group, or someone who is actually attending classes, an older adult who is coming back to either be retrained or to just take some continuing education kinds of classes.”

The class engaged in dialogue about the differences in the healthcare systems and healthcare education in the USA and Denmark. “Our students learned about the universal healthcare system there [Denmark] where everybody has coverage. But, they pay almost 50 percent of their gross income in taxes,” said Vines.

According to Vines, a unique difference in Danish healthcare education and that of the USA is there is no licensing exam. “The nurses over there [Denmark] are all baccalaureate prepared. The nursing program is three-and-a-half years in length. But, there is no licensing exam. Once you finish school, you are a nurse,” said Vines. She did however point out that their nursing program is built around theorists requiring the students to complete projects, engage in research and write papers. The nursing student’s skill sets are developed during their hospital clinicals where they shadow nurse educators, Vines explained.

Southwest nursing student Letha Grandberry summed up the differences in the two countries approaches to healthcare by journaling, “…There are many differences in the healthcare in Denmark and America but the mission is the same: saving lives while delivering safe and practical nursing care. The education for nurses is also different. The approach and level of nursing education is different. The healthcare system in Denmark seems to focus around ‘we’ and not ‘I’ when it comes to making sure all citizens have health insurance.”

As the International Studies Program (ISP) at Southwest continues to gain momentum and scope, more and more disciplines are opting to expose students to knowledge from an expansive global perspective. Recently, ISP provided study-abroad scholarships for a team of nursing students to do a comparative analysis of the Danish healthcare system. The students, under the instruction of Southwest Department Chair of Nursing Mary Vines, and assisted by Executive Director of Grants Kristie Goldsmith, flew to Copenhagen on March 5, traveling by train to their Odense, Denmark, destination. The Saturday arrival left Sunday free for sightseeing before settling down to Monday classes. The group toured the Hans Christian Andersen Museum, containing exhibits of the famous Danish author and poet noted for his children’s stories, along with other points of interest.

When visiting a foreign country, one generally observes customs, traditions and trends. Southwest nursing student Jenifer Walker fascinated by the Danes’ daily commute, wrote in her journal, “We used the local bus transit system and the first thing I noticed after leaving the hotel was the large number of people who ride bikes to work, school, or for other needs. The bike lane is as busy in the morning hours as their road system. Although we exited at the wrong bus stop, it was a great experience to walk the remaining part of the trip.”

The Gill Center is the community’s college; the Frayser community’s college. Anderson says, “I’d like to think that the Gill Center is the community’s college; the Frayser community’s college.” It’s here for everyone no matter if it’s a youth group, or someone who is actually attending classes, an older adult who is coming back to either be retrained or to just take some continuing education kinds of classes.”
The 2011 Annual Convention of the Tennessee Region of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) recently hosted at Southwest 11 of the state’s community colleges and students from Union University’s alumni chapter to award student accomplishments and to make plans for next year. Noted Dr. Twyla Waters, associate professor, Southwest Paralegal Studies, “The conference enables students from across the state to meet in fellowship and discuss projects … supporting the honors study topic and giving faculty advisors opportunities to exchange ideas for supporting these top-notch students.”

Dr. Joanne Bassett, provost and executive vice president of Southwest, welcomed the students, followed on the podium by PTK international president and community college student Matt Detweiler with an update on new initiatives and member benefits. He discussed CollegeFish.org, an online matching service for pairing students with universities, and the Competitive Advantage program. Dr. Art Fowler of Hiwassee College concluded the evening with an explanation of the election process for statewide officers.

Beginning day two of the convention, Dr. Dave Strong of Dyersburg State Community College and the Tennessee Regional advisor for PTK met with attendees to discuss initiatives for the upcoming year; many of them emphasizing community college completion and encouraging students to visit. The students then descended on the 24 attending universities and discussing projects … supporting the honors study topic: The Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, and Promise, and delivered real-world examples of changes in our society related to advances in the flow of information.

At awards time, Upsilon Delta (Southwest chapter) members received the ‘Chapter of Light’ award by going “above and beyond” requirements of the Honors in Action program with their teddy bear collection and stocking stuffer drives for Marines in Iraq. They also received the Icarus Award for those who, like Icarus, the son of Daedalus, fly too close to the sun — only to crash into the sea — for having such a wildly successful donation of stocking stuffers they incurred a nearly $600 charge in shipping costs.

Southwest students and faculty also earned individual recognition and awards in the Tennessee Regional Anthology writing competition:

- Fiction - 2nd place Lynn Reichard
- Nonfiction - 1st place Danessa Winfrey
- Nonfiction - Honorable Mention Eunice Buchanan, Anitre Littlejohn, Chantal Scalzo
- Poetry - 3rd place LaVonda Campbell
- Poetry - Honorable Mention Porsha Hymon

Two members, Valentina Taylor and Jonathan Willis, were recognized as Southwest representatives to the All-USA Academic Team; and Dr. McGrory earned the Horizon Award for distinguished service given by new faculty advisors.

The convention culminated in an awards banquet with keynote speaker Ronald Maxey, DeSoto bureau chief for The Commercial Appeal. Maxey delivered a thought-provoking presentation on the PTK Honors Study topic: The Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, and Promise, and delivered real-world examples of changes in our society related to advances in the flow of information.

Southwest Hosts Planning and Awards Segment of the 2011 Phi Theta Kappa Tennessee Regional Convention

Gill Center Spotlight

By Robert Jackson

Nestled in the northern portion of the greater Memphis area, sits one of Southwest Tennessee Community College’s hidden jewels, the Elbert T. Gill Center. The Gill Center at 3833 Mountain Terrace Road is located in the heart of Frayser, situated in a quiet residential setting surrounded by trees. The area is also home to Nike’s newest state-of-the-art distribution center, along with other industries.

The terrain and layout of Memphis that we know now no longer resembles the past. The north Memphis community of Frayser is the western tip of a peninsula created by the Loosahatchie and Wolf Rivers as they converge into the Mississippi River just north of downtown Memphis. Mud Island is the peninsula’s southwest tip. Because it is situated between the 3rd and 4th of the Mississippi River’s Chickasaw Bluffs, early settlers called it “The Point.” In 1858, a circuit riding Methodist minister began a four church preaching circuit through North Shelby County. After several years of meetings outdoors, a small wood chapel was built. Called The Point Chapel, it was located near what is now the southwest corner of the Gill Center campus.

The center is named after Elbert T. Gill Jr., and was dedicated in September 1983. Dr. Gill, a chiropractor, prominent businessman in the Frayser community and a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives 85th – 94th General Assemblies, was instrumental in helping gain access to the land for the College. The property has 33.6 acres, a two-story main building with 14 classrooms, biology lab, state-of-the-art library, new computer lab, gym and baseball field. In 2008, the Gill Center celebrated 25 years of service to the Frayser community. The center operations began under the former Shelby State Community College system. Representatives from the Gill family, city and state government, Frayser community leaders and the Southwest staff were all on hand to mark that occasion. Dr. Gill was unable to attend the event, but his wife proudly addressed the crowd and accepted his accolades. Dr. Gill, now in his 80’s, is no longer active due to health issues.

Patsy Anderson serves as the Gill Center’s director, and also serves as director for the Millington site. Patsy began working for Shelby State Community
Employability and Career Skills” unit.

Developing interviews for students attending Cordova High School in support of Business Instructor, Linda Williams “Developing Employability and Career Skills” unit.

Southwest Career Services staff members conduct mock interviews for students attending Cordova High School in support of Business Instructor Linda Williams’ “Developing Employability and Career Skills” unit.

Community Outreach
Career Services receives many requests to assist local community and government organizations as well. During the past semester, they could be found conducting “Mock Interview” sessions for students at Cordova High School as well as for inmates soon to gain release from the local Federal Corrections facilities. Career Services brought their resume critique and career counseling services to those attending the AARP “Fabulous at Fifty Plus” exposition and are often asked to participate in high school and middle school Career Days. To assist those in the community, Career Services now hosts The Networking Roundtable Group, which is a free non-profit group that exists to help those who find themselves changing careers for any number of reasons. The Career Transition group led by Paul Phillips meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Macon Cove Campus. Those interested in learning more about this group and the larger network of groups which meet throughout the city should visit their website at http://networkingaroundtable.net/Home/Page.html. Additionally, Career Services has been collaborating with the Citadel Memphis Radio Group to hold job fairs each year that are open to the general public.

To learn more about the fantastic and exciting things happening in Career Services visit their website at: http://www.southwest.tn.edu/career-services/ where you can read the new Career Services e-newsletter as well.

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Southwest Hosts Student Success Workshop

As a catalyst for transformational change in student engagement at Southwest, the Office of Student Retention and Graduation hosted the “Student Success: From the Starting Gate to the Finish Line” workshop on March 18. The workshop was presented by Arleen Arnsparger, the project manager of the Initiative on Student Success for the Center for Community College Leadership (CCSSE), a research and service project of the Community College Leadership Program in the University of Texas at Austin (UT) College of Education.

Since 1992, the Center for Community College Leadership (CCCL) has conducted surveys of entering first-year students at community colleges throughout the nation as part of the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SEDE). Every year, thousands of students complete the survey in colleges across the country. The SENSE survey asks students what they think the college is about and whether they feel it is a good match for their needs and expectations. The survey also asks students about their campus and course experiences, mentors, friends, and how they are learning. The survey is free and available for online and paper administration.

The SENSE 2008 Key Findings include a number of reasons. The Career Transition group led by Paul Phillips meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Macon Cove Campus. Those interested in learning more about this group and the larger network of groups which meet throughout the city should visit their website at http://networkingaroundtable.net/Home/Page.html. Additionally, Career Services has been collaborating with the Citadel Memphis Radio Group to hold job fairs each year that are open to the general public.

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Student Success - Key Findings, Group Discussions; What Matters Most for Entering Students Success - Key Findings, Group Discussions and Closing Discussion.

After a video presentation of survey responses from students across the country regarding their initial college expectations and experiences along with other relevant first-year experience data, attendees were asked: What are Southwest’s strengths – What does the college do well? How do you know – What data support your perspective? Responders indicated Southwest offers:

- Quality teaching - based on a student survey
- High quality child care - substantiated by a four-star rating
- High quality accredited programs - validated by high placement rates and employer feedback
- Strong academic support service - supported by documentable results
- An abundance of technology available to students - evidenced by twenty-first century classrooms
- Effective peer tutoring - data indicates improvements in grades, etc.

The Heart of Student Success, a report of 2010 findings by CCSSE, offered the following strategies to “Promote Learning That Matters:”

- Strengthen classroom engagement,
- Integrate student support into learning experiences,
- Expand professional development focused on engaging students,
- Focus institutional policies on creating the conditions for learning.

Presenters Arleen Arnsparger (standing center) conducts a group discussion during the March 18 Student Success workshop.

“Whatever we are doing today is really fostering some conversation – so that as you get data about your own students, you’ll be able to put that in context and have really good conversations about what you are doing that’s working for certain students that you need to build upon,” said Arnsparger, “and what you aren’t doing that students need that you can start to target and pay attention to. Exactly what has the data for the past two years said about Southwest students?”

The seminar was interactive and inclusive offering the following session: CCCSE Overview - Southwest CCCSE [Community College Survey of Student Engagement] Data. Southwest conducted surveys in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. Data for the past two years is being gathered, Key Findings and Group Discussions; SENSE [Survey of Entering Student Engagement] and Entering Students - Key Findings, Student Voices and Group Discussion; What Matters Most for Entering Students Success - Key Findings, Group Discussions and Closing Discussion.

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Visiting Danish Students Enjoy Southwest and the City of Memphis

Danish students from Naestved, Denmark, a city with a population of about 41,810, made an annual visit to Memphis every spring. This year’s 23 students and two instructors (their first visit to the Bluff City and only four in the group had visited the USA before) were overcome recently with southern hospitality, said tour leader Felicia Hankins, Southwest study-abroad graduate and International Studies Program part-time staff member. Southwest generally assigns a staff person to accompany the visitors on their outings during their stay in Memphis, something, that, according to Hankins, the Danish instructors said does not usually happen when they visit other countries. “They kept saying over and over again that they usually have to work so hard to keep the students all together, but they did not have a problem this time,” Hankins said. The extra pair of hands and the familiarity of the city that the Southwest staff normally provides, help make the Danish visits go smoother.

Southwest’s Danish guests visited the Gibson Guitar Factory and as “always” Elvis Presley’s Graceland. CiCi’s Pizza’s eat all you want buffet was also a big hit along with seeing this season’s winning Memphis Grizzlies at the FedEx Forum. A new site on the tour was the recently built Harley Davidson Company located in Southaven, Mississippi. As business majors, the Danish students were intrigued by the business owner, an optometrist who changed careers and opened the Harley Davidson Company. “They were excited about that,” said Hankins. “And of course they got to see the motorcycles.” Whetting these business students’ appetite for entrepreneurship, Chef Steven Leake and Center of Emphasis Director Jeremy Burnett spoke with them about the ice carving business.

And one of the most pleasurable aspects of their visit is the time the guests get to spend with their host families. “They love spending time with their host families. That is a highlight for them as well,” said Hankins.

Once students complete 12 college-level credit hours, they may be eligible to participate in the Cooperative Education (Co-op) or the Technical Scholar Intern program. These invaluable programs allow students to gain real-world work experience related to their major, while earning academic credit from Southwest. Employers benefit by gaining access to motivated college students who are eager to put their training and new ideas to work. Additionally, the programs allow area businesses to meet temporary staffing needs and screen students for potential permanent hire. While most Southwest study-abroad enrollees Co-op work for local companies, the college has partnered with the Disney College Internship Program for several years and regularly sends students to work at their Florida theme park.

Employer Services

To assist Mid-South employers with their staffing needs, Career Services offers free online job postings, on-campus recruiting, career fair participation and targeted employment information sessions. The no cost online full-time and part-time job listings are maintained in-house and frequently updated to ensure timely communication with students and alumni. It is not unusual for alumni once established within their career field, to reach back to Career Services as a hiring resource. “We are very fortunate to have successful alumni, who benefitted from the training they received at Southwest, and now want to help someone else achieve their career goals,” said Williams.

Many employers attend the semi-annual Career Service Career Fairs to meet face-to-face with students, share information about what they are looking for in new hires, and increase overall company awareness. If an employer has an immediate hiring need, Career Services can be both flexible and responsive in providing assistance. An example is the recent Luxottica Optical Job Fair and Employment Assessment event that took place on the Macon Cove Campus. Luxottica Optical was able to recruit and screen over 350 applicants to meet their hiring needs. The college’s central location and large capacity meeting facilities were strong considerations in Luxottica Optical choosing to partner with Southwest.

A new recruiting trend utilized by DISH Network, Johnstone Supply and Memphis Marriott Downtown, is being referred to as “employer information sessions.” These popular sessions provide a format where employers can speak directly to a targeted group of students pursuing specific majors. Employer representatives share pertinent information about company culture, expectations and hiring procedures while allowing students to ask questions in a semi informal environment. A newly formed partnership between Career Services and the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of the Mid-South has benefitted the entire Southwest community. The BBB recently held “Identify Theft” and “Avoiding Consumer Scams” presentations on both main campuses and consumer awareness articles written by BBB President, Randy Hutchinson, are now included in the College’s online newsletter for faculty and staff, the Southwest Scoop.

In a more supportive role, the Career Services team assists faculty and staff by collecting and reporting job placement data, sometimes as required for academic program accreditation. They frequently collaborate with faculty to host employer campus visits as well as going on company tours. Recently visited facilities include the Nike Distribution Center, Memphis Marriott Downtown (with several Hospitality Management classes) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Finance Center in Millington, which currently employs several interns.
Career Services, a Southwest Gem for All

By Teresa Calloway

A small group of dedicated Southwest employees play a vital role to many. The group better known as Career Services provides comprehensive professional career services to students, alumni, Mid-South employers, faculty, staff, and the community as a whole. With such a broad mission, the Career Services Department team strives to achieve it in a multitude of ways.

Student and Alumni Services

Career Services’ primary responsibility is to assist students and alumni with anything career related from the time they step foot on campus until the time they graduate and beyond. Their student and alumni services include job postings, career fairs, job readiness presentations, resume assistance, career planning assessments, mock interviews, job search strategies and career counseling.

Students are encouraged to begin checking out Career Services full-time and part-time job listings early on, to learn about actual positions in the Mid-South they could qualify for while working on their degree and after graduation. To provide students with an opportunity to engage face-to-face with local employers and to learn more about specific job requirements, Career Services holds Career Fairs in the spring and fall semesters at both the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses. “In addition to learning about employer expectations, Career Fairs are an excellent place for our students to begin practicing those all important networking skills,” said Brenda Williams, Career Services director, “which can translate to increased employment opportunities down the line.”

Another way Career Services helps prepare students to enter the workforce is by coordinating on-campus presentations by industry experts such as “Professional Interview Skills” and “Job Hunting with the Memphis Business Journal.”

Resume assistance and review services are provided by appointment with Career Services or online through OptimalResume™. Information about all services is available online through the Career Services website, which includes an e-newsletter and details on upcoming special events.

Southwest Tennessee Community College recently sent a team of students to the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature (TISL) held annually in Nashville, Tennessee. TISL hosts the mock legislative session which provides a forum for college students to learn first-hand the legislative process. It requires participants to draft, file, and present legislation at the TISL General Assembly.

During the last General Assembly, Southwest’s team drafted and filed 11 bills. Six passed both chambers. The remaining bills passed in one chamber but did not come to the floor in the other chamber because of time constraints. “I wanted this team to not only learn about the legislative process but also to come away with the knowledge that each of them can make a contribution to that process. I expected the team to work hard and to do well and I was not disappointed,” said Patricia Nozinich, professor of Paralegal Studies at Southwest.

Paralegal Studies major, Carla Rodgers, received a Carlisle Award, 10 of which are given to students whose performances in the General Assembly are deemed outstanding. Rodgers served as the Senator from Southwest. “When Professor Nozinich told me I was going to be in the Senate, I was nervous at first. I knew I had to be ready to present all of our bills if they came up and hoped that the other Senators I had developed a relationship with would support the bills. It all worked out and I enjoyed it so much,” said Rodgers.

Southwest also distinguished itself in the Advanced Moot Court (AMC) Competition, fielding a two-person team to compete along with 15 teams from other Tennessee colleges and universities. Jonathan Willis, a Paralegal Studies student, represented Southwest as a one-person team, when at the last moment, his team member was unable to attend the competition. Willis argued both the appellant and appellee’s sides of the two issues raised in the mock appellate case to advance to the final round of the competition, along with a four-person team from Vanderbilt University. He won the case and the competition, bringing the AMC championship home to Southwest. Willis summed up his experience by saying, “TISL helped me to realize that every person, no matter how insignificant they may feel, has a voice in our government, and if he or she chooses to use it, has a very powerful voice.”

“This was the college’s first time to participate in this mock appellate competition,” said Nozinich. “To have Jonathan Willis not only participate in but win the competition was a proud moment. Southwest can be proud of the students who participated in TISL and AMC this last session. Each of them exemplified the quality of our students at Southwest.

Members of the Southwest TISL team are (from left): Sabrina Ransfer, Jonathan Willis, Jessica Whittington, Elizabeth Tunstall, Danesha Winfrey, Elizabeth Gutierrez, Tujuana Perkins, and Carla Rodgers.
As attention has focused on the importance of retention to the success of the college, and new programs are being introduced to that purpose, there is one that has always, and continues to be, exceptionally responsive to our students’ needs. The Academic Support Center (ASC), with labs and equipment available in five locations, offers comprehensive tutoring to all Southwest students, free of charge, in nearly every credit program that Southwest offers. Over the years, the ASC has made the crucial difference in passing or failing – and dropping out of college – for many students.

The programs we have recently introduced offer different approaches directed toward solving different, specific needs that prospective students have encountered both before and after registering,” said Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, executive director of Student Retention and Graduation. “We are more and more discerning of the importance of the gaps in their grasp of the ‘expectations of college,’ often taken for granted as understood by the students. And that makes the ASC even more effective as it goes right to the essentials: tutors working with students to bring them to a thorough understanding of the subject.”

The ASC coordinators are Glenda McCuddy (Macon Cove Campus and Whitehaven Center) and Dorothy Hurt-Blue (Union Avenue Campus and the Maxine A. Smith and Gill centers). And they enjoy their work. As Blue remarked, “Every day we help people change their lives for the better.”

Describing one incident, McCuddy said a student came in just the other day and said, “You have wonderful math tutors.” Crying and talking, she said she didn’t do well on her first test and was about to give up and drop the course. “Then, I came to the ASC and two wonderful math tutors helped me understand math.” She said she made an A on her second test. She told me how happy she was. And she kept on crying. In a similar anecdote, Hurt-Blue added that a student came in and said she had just dropped her Data Entry class. Asked why, she said she was failing. Persuaded to give it another try – she had just come from the Records Office and was able to change her mind – she worked with the ASC tutor … and finally made a B in the course. She is back in school this semester.

“Tutoring” in the ASC offers much more than the word usually conveys. In addition to one-on-one assistance, students have free access to computers, printers, DVDs, and most required textbooks, and the computer labs are equipped with a full range of technology. That includes the specific types of electronic assistance for specific courses. “We have most of the software used in the courses taught at Southwest,” McCuddy said. Study areas are also available in some locations for study groups to quietly work together.

The professional tutors on staff at the ASC are committed to helping students become independent learners and achieving their academic goals. Usually, the tutors have bachelor’s or master’s degrees; many are employed in business or industry. The ASC also provides Scholarship Tutors. The minimum educational requirement for them is completion of 15 hours and...
ration is also integrated into the tutoring and classroom sessions. “We try to give them a leg up,” said Clark. “Most of the students at those four high schools don’t think about taking the ACT until their senior year. We try to tell them to start their sophomore or junior year. In addition to the 20 Saturdays during the academic year, Upward Bound also includes a summer session. The summer session is our assimilated college live style program,” said Clark. “They have to apply based on their grades, attitude and behavior in the 20 Saturday sessions. They spend five weeks there. We bus them from Richardson Towers [at University of Memphis] to this campus, where they take classes that will prepare them for the fall.”

The summer program also includes community speakers, such as WREG’s Markova Reed, and trips to see local museums and theater productions. The summer program culminates in an academic trip to another city. Chicago and Nashville have been previous destinations; this year’s trip is to St Louis. “We try to expose them to some things that they normally wouldn’t come in contact with,” says office manager and 20-year veteran of Upward Bound, Wendy Boyd. “We had a parent who lived in Frayser who’d never been out of Frayser, so where was their kid going to go?”

“We visit the colleges, we see the sights. It’s a good time to have them think and talk about what they want to do and where they want to go,” added Clark. “It’s one thing to have them on a Saturday then have them go back to their neighborhood and whatever is going on there. When we have them for that summer, that’s the time when we can really influence them.”

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, is another program at Southwest which aims to influence high school students by preparing them for college. GEAR UP was created as part of the 1998 amendment to the same law that created Upward Bound. As implemented in Memphis, GEAR UP is a partnership between Memphis City Schools (MCS), LeMoyne-Owen College, the University of Memphis, and Southwest.

Unlike Upward Bound, which takes in students as they enter into high school, each GEAR UP grant identifies a group of students and works with them from an even earlier age. “This cohort that we’re working with now, started when they were in the 7th grade,” said Vanessa Dowdy, Southwest’s GEAR UP site coordinator for the Macon Cove Campus. Those students are now high school juniors.

As with Upward Bound, GEAR UP targets students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to college. “The target is selected because of their test score. There is a report card that comes out on every school. So from that list we take some of the lowest performing schools and those are the ones that we work with,” said Dowdy. “Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is another program built into GEAR-UP that promotes rigorous course—work — AP [Advanced Placement] classes — and provides a special time in the day when students work on oral presentation and their ability to communicate. That segment of students is the ones that they allow us to tutor.” GEAR UP at Southwest also offers an online mentoring service which is staffed by students from the Southwest Ambassadors program.

This might lead you to think that this means that many of those in the grade are left out of the program, but Dowdy says GEAR UP has another way to reach out to their cohort, “Every student in that grade is a part of the cohort, even if they transfer in from another school. What we do is bring them into the 21st Century a 3.0 GPA. They tutor in return for tuition fees and a book allowance. The ASC is certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).

Students enter the ASC as “walk-ins” and do not need to make an appointment. Students taking online classes can login to their courses from the labs, and computer assistance and tutoring are available, if needed. Tutorial software covering basic skills in writing, reading, and math is accessible for students requiring this sort of help. All computers have Internet access and are equipped with laser printers. Most labs made available to students at the centers have PCs with Windows Operating System and Microsoft Office application software, and some have Mac computers with graphic arts software, scanners and copiers. However, hardware and software may vary by location.

The ASC also offers online tutoring in math and, this spring, added Calculus I to the list of courses. For more information about online tutoring or about hours and locations, go online to www.southwest.tn.edu/asc or call (901) 333-4107 (Macon Cove) or (901) 333-5054 (Union Avenue).

The newly upgraded Southwest Fitness Center, under the auspices of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program, has opened its doors. The center, located on the Macon Cove Campus in the Thornton Building, Room 104, is a workout facility for the faculty and staff. “We’ve added plenty of weights – we have treadmills, bicycles, and we are open for the use of our faculty and staff,” said Troy (Neal) Cordell, associate professor of Education and Legal Studies and coordinator of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program.

According to Cordell, this facility is available for use by anyone who is an employee of Southwest. “We have a key pad on the door, now, allowing access to the room 24 hours a day or as long as the College is open.”

Brandon Russell, a temporary employee for Southwest, works out at the end of the day.

The mission of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program at Southwest is to promote and support health-enhancing lifestyles of its employees by providing opportunities to enhance health-related awareness, increase personal knowledge, influence attitudes, and change behavior, leading to a higher level of personal wellness.

Fitness activities, including indoor/outdoor walking trails, exercise classes, weight training, basketball and more, are available at all Southwest locations. Visit http://www.southwest.tn.edu/wellness/ to find out the specific activities and the times they are offered at each location.

Questions about the Healthy Employee Wellness Program and Brown Bag Fitness Lunch topics can be directed to Neal Cordell by e-mail at tcordell@southwest.tn.edu or by calling (901) 333-4620.
Southwest Hosts the Fifth Annual Conference on International Education

Held in Southwest’s ultramodern Bert Bornblum Library and the Farris Building on February 11, the theme for the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) Fifth Annual Conference on International Education was “International Education: Set Your Course.” TnCIS represents 19 colleges and universities devoted to making international education and cultural understanding a central goal of higher education throughout the state of Tennessee. The purpose of the annual conference is to expand study abroad and international educational opportunities for students throughout the state.

The keynote speaker for this year’s event was Dr. Eric Gottlieb, an associate professor of mathematics for Rhodes College, who was awarded a Fulbright at the Instituto de Matematicas y Fisica at the Universidad de Talca in Talca, Chile, where he taught and conducted research. The conference was supposed to be a two-day event; however, day one was cancelled due to the large amount of snow that pounded the state. Despite the inclement weather, the Chattanooga presenters indicated the conference was worth their effort. “Meeting someone who had gotten the Fulbright to Chile and being able to interact with colleagues from other schools,” Dr. Lammert said, were the highlights for her. “The highlight for me was the speaker from China,” said Dr. Gartman. “I thought it was very interesting, just the statistics about the upper-level of education in China, and the involvement with America.”

Other session topics included “China Strategy: How to Link American and Chinese; Planning, Budgeting, and Reconciling Study Abroad Trips Using Excel Institutions; and Round Table Discussion: Student Behavioral Issues in Study Abroad.” Individuals not getting to present were invited to have their papers posted on the Internet.

Southwest Reaches Out to Young People in Need

By Justin McGregor

For anybody who stops to think for even a moment about what a community college does, the necessity for a community college to do high school outreach becomes readily apparent. Some of that outreach comes in the form of direct recruiting, but much of it comes through mentoring and preparing high school students for the realities of college life. Two federally funded programs here at Southwest Tennessee Community College, Upward Bound and GEAR UP, are among those meeting these challenges.

Upward Bound at Southwest currently recruits from four schools: Carver, Frayser, Hamilton and Manassas high schools. “All of those are below the average for state, local and county expectations for what students should do, so those are our target schools,” said Dr. Frank Clark. “They just got out of college when everybody in your neighborhood is successful from working in factories,” says Upward Bound Director Willie Clark. “They just got jobs that didn’t require a college education and they’re making good money. It’s an experience to try to convince a young person who really does want to go to college, [when] there’s someone saying ‘you know, I make $25 an hour dealing with these boxes.’ Well you can make more than that. You have a mind for math or English, you can do more than that.”

Upward Bound and GEAR UP are among those meeting these challenges. Upward Bound at Southwest currently recruits from four schools: Carver, Frayser, Hamilton and Manassas high schools. “All of those are below the average for state, local and county expectations for what students should do, so those are our target schools,” said Dr. Frank Clark. “They just got out of college when everybody in your neighborhood is successful from working in factories,” says Upward Bound Director Willie Clark. “They just got jobs that didn’t require a college education and they’re making good money. It’s an experience to try to convince a young person who really does want to go to college, [when] there’s someone saying ‘you know, I make $25 an hour dealing with these boxes.’ Well you can make more than that. You have a mind for math or English, you can do more than that.”

To help these students overcome their challenges, Upward Bound offers a series of 20 Saturday sessions, consisting of a mix of tutoring and classroom instruction. The classroom sessions cover math, science, English and a foreign language. These Saturdays also include tutoring sessions to assist students with other coursework. American College Testing (ACT) prepa-
Southwest Students Can Earn College Credits for On-the-Job and Real Life Experiences

Quite often, students acquire significant knowledge and skills during their daily work routines. Now, there is a national effort to capture, encapsulate, and document these on-the-job experiences and convert/translate them into college credit. Southwest, in collaboration with the Council for Adult & Experiential Learning (CAEL), is offering an incredible opportunity for students to gain college credit for documented workforce training and life experiences that can possibly count as credit toward a degree at Southwest. CAEL is a national, non-profit organization which creates and manages effective learning strategies for working adults through partnerships with employers, higher education, the public sector, and labor.

Students may have acquired learning through work, employer training programs, military service, independent study, non-credit courses, volunteer or community service, and open source courseware study. To earn college credit for that acquired knowledge, students only need to demonstrate that the knowledge is at the college level.

The last and most significant aspect of the program’s success is something that you won’t find in an instruction manual and something that is not easily replicated and can’t be faked. That is a genuine care and concern for the students. “We take great pride in the ones who come through our office,” said McColgan. “It’s a pride that includes ownership which is reflected in staff persons such as Kristina McDaniel, office supervisor for the International Studies Program at Southwest, who speaks of the students with motherly endearments referring to them as her babies. Some of them are old enough to be her mother. McDaniel is the stable ground referring to them as her babies. Some of them are old enough to be her mother. McDaniel is the stable ground contact at the college who remains behind to make sure if something goes wrong, as a liaison, she is available to contact families and the necessary authorities. “We want to make sure, should we need to, that we can access all of their records that we have in our office,” said McColgan.

A testament to the effectiveness of the International Studies Program at Southwest is evident in the career choice of Felecia Hankins, a study abroad student who graduated in 2010. Unsure about a career path, Hankins was transformed by her study abroad experiences. After having earned six study abroad credit hours, she made the decision to pursue a bachelor’s degree in international studies at the University of Memphis. “She didn’t know what she wanted to do with herself. She went abroad, and now she is a whole different person. She came back full of life and passion,” said McColgan. Hankins says her ultimate goal is to someday become a director of an international studies program at a post-secondary institution.

ISP has nearly four years now behind it in which a significant number of students have gone overseas and experienced the global international culture. “They’re coming back to Memphis and they’re so excited about it,” said McColgan. “Their lives have changed so much that it sort of catches on.” These students discuss their experiences with their friends and family. They’ve become voices for Southwest’s international studies helping to market the program through campus-wide presentations during international activities and throughout the year.

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Bigger crowd, more works to auction, a respectable “treasury” generated by the sales to support Honors Academy activities – and a good time had by all. “The evening was all we could ask for,” said Doug Branch, director of the Honors Academy. The auction was held at Burke’s Books on Cooper on January 29, with students, faculty and friends donating some 65 original paintings, photographs and other art works.

Included were works by well-known and highly regarded photographer Annette Fournet, instructor at Southwest, as well as photographs by several of her students. Other photographs included winter-scapes by Thad Cockrill and an abstract of snow by Robby students, faculty, staff, friends of the college, and families and the staff at Southwest with travel to foreign destinations such as Asia, Europe, South America and Africa. The college has been abuzz all year with ISP activities ranging from “Show and Tell,” a platform from which students displayed souvenirs, photos and trinkets from their international travels, to the “International Race,” a competition modeled after the hit CBS TV program, The Amazing Race, in which contestants scurried from place to place in search of hidden clues leading to a secret campus destination.

The highest bid was for Edelstein’s painting, and the second highest was for the painting donated by Doorley. The more than $1,400 realized from the auction will be used, in part, to fund a student trip to the Southern Regional Honors Council in Little Rock, Arkansas, in late March, as well as several other Honors Academy activities.

Attendance was “at least 75,” said Branch, including students, faculty, staff, friends of the college, and Cooper-Young neighbors dropping in during their evening strolls. “We are delighted with the results of the auction,” said Branch. “Our Honors students want the college family to know how much they appreciate the support given them in activities such as this that help further their education.”

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Southwest’s Fourth Annual smART on Cooper ... “the Best Ever!”

Southwest’s International Studies Program Grows Exponentially

By Brenda Rayner
Southwest Receives National Recognition for Community Service

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Southwest Culinary Institute Debuts at Southwest Tennessee Community College

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Blue light emergency phones are located throughout the parking lot and are easy to use, said department director James Bolden. “Pick up the phone, depress the ‘talk’ button on the blue phone box, and you will be connected with the safety dispatcher.” He also advised, “speak clearly, and don’t yell, as you give the following information: your name, location, and the nature of your emergency.” Stay on the line with the dispatcher until the police services/public safety officer arrives, and be ready to give the dispatcher any further required information.

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It’s a New State-of-the-Art Culinary and Hospitality facility for Metro Memphis and the Mid-South

- Southwest Culinary Institute offers cutting-edge kitchen, classroom and catering services in a modern, dedicated facility in the Fulton Building on the Macon Cove Campus in Memphis
- Start your future culinary and hospitality career today
- Good paying jobs abound in hospitality
- It’s affordable: much less than the cost of an average private culinary school

Contact Chef Steven Leake at the Southwest Culinary Institute at (901) 333-4096 for more details.

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Call (901) 333-5000 or visit us online at www.southwest.tn.edu

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February 1, 2011 marked the 100th birthday for Reverend Jacie Morris. For some individuals, hearing about someone reaching the century mark may not seem like anything spectacular. Life expectancy has increased over the past years, partially due to medical breakthroughs, so now we see more individuals reaching the century mark. What made this birthday different from others would be where the celebration was held and the connection to Southwest.

The celebration was held in one of the most active places in Memphis, the Southwest Child Care Center on the Union Avenue Campus. This place, filled with six-week to five-year-old children and the staff, is where Reverend Morris loves to be. He has hung his hat daily there for more than 12 years, being a foster grandparent, a role that takes great patience and care. There is no monetary compensation for being a foster grandparent; it is strictly a volunteer effort.

The Foster Grandparent Program has operated in Memphis since 1972 and has been sponsored by Porter-Leath since 1985. Porter-Leath is a non-profit organization that is committed to serving at-risk children and families in the Memphis area. Founded in 1850 as an orphanage, it has since grown to six program service areas. One of these programs is Generations, which brings children in need together with low-income seniors in a mutually beneficial experience. The volunteers spend an average of 20 hours per week reading, mentoring and sharing their time with children at schools, Head Start centers, hospitals, day care centers and residential treatment centers in Memphis and Shelby County.

Reverend Morris has been a member of the Foster Grandparent Program for 25 years; 13 years at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital and the remaining at Southwest. On this special occasion, he received many accolades, including salutations from City of Memphis and Shelby County government officials, letters from Porter-Leath, and even a flag from the White House. He was surrounded by his wife, niece, Porter-Leath and Southwest staff members, and - let’s not forget - the many day care children, who all sang “Happy Birthday.” One of the guests included Carolyn Qualls, whose granddaughter, Jasmine, attended the center beginning at the age of nine-months. Jasmine is now ten, and Carolyn makes it a point to visit the center each year to see Reverend Morris.

International Studies Department Holds Orientation for Students Bound for 2011 Study Abroad

The International Studies Department at Southwest held an orientation on January 28 for more than 75 students who will study abroad in four countries this year. The number of students studying abroad this year has more than quadrupled the first group of 12 students who studied in South Africa and Mexico during the summer of 2008.

Center of Emphasis Director Jeremy Burnett brought a new twist to the orientation this year – conducting a food demonstration on dining etiquette for travel abroad. Students were asked to sample a variety of foods such as pickled asparagus, cheeses from around the world, and Italian meats. Also, during the orientation, International Education Program Office Supervisor Kristina McDaniel and Coordinator Felicia Hankins gave the students travel tips and information on luggage weight and fees, airline etiquette, and cultural differences. To keep students on the right track, Student Activities Director Nikita Ashford gave her usual “make Southwest proud” pep talk, along with general behavior guidelines.

The Southwest short-term program destinations include:

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<th>Destination</th>
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<th>Instructors</th>
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<tr>
<td>London, England</td>
<td>Oral Communication</td>
<td>Evelyn Little</td>
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<tr>
<td>London, England</td>
<td>Theater Appreciation</td>
<td>Levi Frazier</td>
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<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Nursing Management</td>
<td>Mary Vines</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>Intro to Biology II</td>
<td>Joyce Johnson</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>Survey of World Civilization II</td>
<td>Mary Pratt</td>
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<tr>
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<td>World Geographic Regions</td>
<td>Judy Hatmaker</td>
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Students get a taste of international cuisine during dining etiquette activity in preparation for traveling abroad.

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The International Studies Program (ISP), a passport to a global perspective, has gained unparalleled popularity. Launched in 2007-2008 with only 12 students, Southwest’s ISP has more than quadrupled, providing study abroad scholarships for more than 82 students this year. Consistent with its vision to “be an exemplary model for two-year colleges and others in both Tennessee and across the nation,” ISP has generated enormous interest and excitement for the students, their families and the staff at Southwest with travel to foreign destinations such as Asia, Europe, South America and Africa. The college has been abuzz all year with ISP activities ranging from “Show and Tell,” a platform from which students displayed souvenirs, photos and trinkets from their international travels, to the “International Race,” a competition modeled after the hit CBS TV program, The Amazing Race, in which contestants scurried from place to place in search of hidden clues leading to a secret campus destination.

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Students successfully completing the course will be eligible to submit their portfolio for assessment and credit recommendations toward a degree at Southwest.

Students possessing any of these types of training may be excellent candidates to participate and move more quickly towards completing their degree at Southwest. Online classes begin every two weeks throughout 2011.

Students may have acquired learning through work, employer training programs, military service, independent study, non-credit courses, volunteer or community service, and open source coursework study. To earn college credit for that acquired knowledge, students only need to demonstrate that the knowledge is at the college level.
Held in Southwest’s ultramodern Bert Bornblum Library and the Farris Building on February 11, the theme for the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) Fifth Annual Conference on International Education was “International Education: Set Your Course.” TnCIS represents 19 colleges and universities devoted to making international education and cultural understanding a central goal of higher education throughout the state of Tennessee. The purpose of the annual conference is to expand study abroad and international educational opportunities for students throughout the state.

The keynote speaker for this year’s event was Dr. Eric Gottlieb, an associate professor of mathematics for Rhodes College, who was awarded a Fulbright at the Instituto de matematicas y fisica at the Universidad de Talca in Talca, Chile, where he taught and conducted research. The conference was supposed to be a two-day event; however day one was cancelled due to inclement weather, the Chattanooga weather, the Chattanooga, Dr. Lammert said, “As a member of the Advising Committee for TnCIS and of the Planning Committee for the conference, I needed to be here yesterday morning (February 10).” Both were scheduled to present on Study Abroad: How Studying Abroad Has Changed My Life. Dr. Gartman was also scheduled to present a service learning paper titled, Everyone’s Invited: A Campus-Wide Foreign Service Project.

Despite the inclement weather, the Chattanooga presenters indicated the conference was worth their effort. “Meeting someone who had gotten the Fulbright to Chile and being able to interact with colleagues from other schools,” Dr. Lammert said, were the highlights for her. “The highlight for me was the speaker from China,” said Dr. Gartman. “I thought it was very interesting, just the statistics about the upper-level of education in China, and the involvement with America.”

Other session topics included – China Strategy: How to Link American and Chinese; Planning, Budgeting, and Reconciling Study Abroad Trips Using Excel Institutions; and Round Table Discussion: Student Behavioral Issues in Study Abroad. Individuals not getting to present were invited to have their papers posted on the Internet.

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For anybody who stops to think for even a moment about what a community college does, the necessity for a community college to do high school outreach becomes readily apparent. Some of that outreach comes in the form of direct recruiting, but much of it comes through mentoring and preparing high school students for the realities of college life. Two federally funded programs here at Southwest Tennessee Community College, Upward Bound and GEAR UP, are among those meeting these challenges.

Upward Bound is a program that was created for the package of educational programs known as TRIO, part of the Johnson administration’s Higher Education Act of 1965. The program is designed to help low-income, underprivileged, first-generation college bound young people learn about the opportunities that exist in going to college and prepare them for the transition from high school to college in the hopes of helping them complete a post-secondary education.

“Even though times have changed, the insecurities are still there about being the first person in their family to go to college, what college expects of you, and what are you going to get out of college when everybody in your neighborhood is successful from working in factories,” says Upward Bound Director Willie Clark. “They just got jobs that didn’t require a college education and they’re making good money. It’s an experience to try to convince a young person who really does want to go to college, [when] there’s someone saying ‘you know, I make $25 an hour dealing with these boxes.’ Well you can make more than that. You have a mind for math or English, you can do more than that.”

Upward Bound at Southwest currently recruits from four schools: Carver, Frayser, Hamilton and Manassas high schools. “All of those are below the average for state, local and county expectations for what students should do, so those are our target schools,” said Clark. “We try to have a broad reach because we want the students to know we exist for them and that there are teachers who will say, ‘Well I’ve got this kid who is really good in math, or English, and she just needs that extra ‘umph.’” To help these students overcome their challenges, Upward Bound offers a series of 20 Saturday sessions, consisting of a mix of tutoring and classroom instruction. The classroom sessions cover math, science, English and a foreign language. These Saturdays also include tutoring sessions to assist students with other coursework. American College Testing (ACT) prepa-
ration is also integrated into the tutoring and classroom sessions. “We try to give them a leg up,” said Clark. “Most of the students at those four high schools don’t think about taking the ACT until their senior year. We try to tell them to start their sophomore or junior year.”

In addition to the 20 Saturdays during the academic year, Upward Bound also includes a summer session. The summer session is our assimilated college life style program,” said Clark. “They have to apply based on their grades, attitude and behavior in the 20 Saturday sessions. They spend five weeks there. We bus them from Richardson Towers [at University of Memphis] to this campus, where they take classes that will prepare them for the fall.”

The summer program also includes community speakers, such as WREG’s Markova Reed, and trips to see local museums and theater productions. The summer program culminates in an academic trip to another city. Chicago and Nashville have been previous destinations; this year’s trip is to St Louis. “We try to expose them to some things that they normally wouldn’t come in contact with,” says office manager and 20-year veteran of Upward Bound, Wendy Boyd. “We had a parent who lived in Frayser who’d never been out of Frayser, so where was their kid going to?”

“We visit the colleges, we see the sights. It’s a good time to have them think and talk about what they want to do and where they want to go,” added Clark. “It’s one thing to have them on a Saturday then have them go back to their neighborhood and whatever is going on there. When we have them for that summer, that’s the time when we can really influence them.”

GEAR UP, which stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, is another program at Southwest which aims to influence high school students by preparing them for college. GEAR UP was created as part of the 1998 amendment to the same law that created Upward Bound. As implemented in Memphis, GEAR UP is a partnership between Memphis City Schools (MCS), LeMoyne-Owen College, the University of Memphis, and Southwest.

Unlike Upward Bound, which takes in students as they enter into high school, each GEAR UP grants identifies a group of students and works with them from an even earlier age. “This cohort that we’re working with now, started when they were in the 7th grade,” said Vanessa Dowdy, Southwest’s GEAR UP site coordinator for the Macon Cove Campus. Those students are now high school juniors.

As with Upward Bound, GEAR UP targets students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to go to college. “The target is selected because of their test score. There is a report card that comes out on every school. So from that list we take some of the lowest performing schools and those are the ones that we work with,” said Dowdy. “Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) is another program built into GEAR-UP that promotes rigorous coursework — AP [Advanced Placement] classes — and provides a special time in the day when students work on oral presentation and their ability to communicate. That segment of students is the ones that they allow us to tutor.” GEAR UP at Southwest also offers an online mentoring service which is staffed by students from the Southwest Ambassadors program.

This might lead you to think that this means that many of those in the grade are left out of the program, but Dowdy says GEAR UP has another way to reach out to their cohort, “Every student in that grade is a part of the cohort, even if they transfer in from another school. What we do is bring them into the 21st Century according to the same cohort.”

The newly upgraded Southwest Fitness Center, under the auspices of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program, has opened its doors. The center, located on the Macon Cove Campus in the Thornton Building, Room 104, is a work-out facility for the faculty and staff. “We’ve added plenty of weights – we have treadmills, bicycles, and we are open for the use of our faculty and staff,” said Troy (Neal) Cordell, associate professor of Education and Legal Studies and coordinator of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program.

According to Cordell, this facility is available for use by anyone who is an employee of Southwest. “We have a key pad on the door, now, allowing access to the room 24 hours a day or as long as the College is open.”

The Southwest Fitness Center Is Up and Running

The center is equipped with Xbox and new up-to-date exercise videos such as line dancing, hip-hop and Zumba. Groups or individuals can come in, through use of the key-pad, and exercise at any time whether early mornings or late at night. The facility is not equipped with a shower, so Cordell says use after working hours is advisable.

The fitness center will complement the recently announced Healthy Lifestyles Program Grant which will have an exercise component. “We started the grant in April. We had our initial testing at the end of March. Every semester we will give new information about eating guidelines and innovative exercise programs that we will bring to the fitness center,” said Cordell.

The mission of the Healthy Employee Wellness Program at Southwest is to promote and support health-enhancing lifestyles of its employees by providing opportunities to enhance health-related awareness, increase personal knowledge, influence attitudes, and change behavior, leading to a higher level of personal wellness.

Exercise activities, including indoor/outdoor walking trails, exercise classes, weight training, basketball and more, are available at all Southwest locations. Visit http://www. southwest.tn.edu/wellness/ to find out the specific activities and the times they are offered at each location.

Questions about the Healthy Employee Wellness Program and Brown Bag Fitness Lunch topics can be directed to Neal Cordell by e-mail at tcordell@southwest.tn.edu or by calling (901) 333-4107 (Macon Cove) or (901) 333-5054 (Union Avenue).
As attention has focused on the importance of retention to the success of the college, and new programs are being introduced to that purpose, there is one that has always, and continues to be, exceptionally responsive to our students’ needs. The Academic Support Center (ASC), with labs and equipment available in five locations, offers comprehensive tutoring to all Southwest students, free of charge, in nearly every credit program that Southwest offers. Over the years, the ASC has made the crucial difference in passing or failing – and dropping out of college – for many students.

“The programs we have recently introduced offer different approaches directed toward solving different, specific needs that prospective students have encountered both before and after registering,” said Dr. Cynthia Calhoun, executive director of Student Retention and Graduation. “We are more and more discerning of the importance of the gaps in their grasp of the ‘expectations of college,’ often taken for granted as understood by the students. And that makes the ASC even more effective as it goes right to the essentials: tutors working with students to bring them to a thorough understanding of the subject.”

The ASC coordinators are Glenda McCuddy (Macon Cove Campus and Whitehaven Center) and Dorothy Hurt-Blue (Union Avenue Campus and the Maxine A. Smith and Gill centers). And they enjoy their work. As Blue remarked, “Every day we help people change their lives for the better.”

Describing one incident, McCuddy said a student came in just the other day and said, “You have wonderful math tutors.” Crying and talking, she said she didn’t do well on her first test and was about to give up and drop the course. “Then, I came to the ASC and two wonderful math tutors helped me understand math.” She said she made an A on her second test. She told me how happy she was. And she kept on crying. In a similar anecdote, Hurt-Blue added that a student came in and said she had just dropped her Data Entry class. Asked why, she said she was failing. Persuaded to give it another try – she had just come from the Records Office and was able to change her mind – she worked with the ASC tutor … and finally made a B in the course.

“Tutoring” in the ASC offers much more than the word usually conveys. In addition to one-on-one assistance, students have free access to computers, printers, DVDs, and most required textbooks, and the computer labs are equipped with a full range of technology. That includes the specific types of electronic assistance for specific courses. “We have most of the software used in the courses taught at Southwest,” McCuddy said. Study areas are also available in some locations for study groups to quietly work together.

The professional tutors on staff at the ASC are committed to helping students become independent learners and achieving their academic goals. Usually, the tutors have bachelor’s or master’s degrees; many are employed in business or industry. The ASC also provides Scholarship Tutors. The minimum educational requirement for them is completion of 15 hours and
Career Services, a Southwest Gem for All

By Teresa Calloway

A small group of dedicated Southwest employees play a vital role to many. The group better known as Career Services provides comprehensive professional career services to students, alumni, Mid-South employers, faculty, staff, and the community as a whole. With such a broad mission, the Career Services Department team strives to achieve it in a multitude of ways.

Student and Alumni Services

Career Services’ primary responsibility is to assist students and alumni with anything career related from the time they step foot on campus until the time they graduate and beyond. Their student and alumni services include job postings, career fairs, job readiness presentations, resume assistance, career planning assessments, mock interviews, job search strategies and career counseling.

Students are encouraged to begin checking out Career Services full-time and part-time job listings early on, to learn about actual positions in the Mid-South they could qualify for while working on their degree and after graduation. To provide students with an opportunity to engage face-to-face with local employers and to learn more about specific job requirements, Career Services holds Career Fairs in the spring and fall semesters at both the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses. “In addition to learning about employer expectations, Career Fairs are an excellent place for our students to begin practicing those all important networking skills,” said Brenda Williams, Career Services director, “which can translate to increased employment opportunities down the line.”

Another way Career Services helps prepare students to enter the workforce is by coordinating on-campus presentations by industry experts such as “Professional Interview Skills” and “Job Hunting with the Memphis Business Journal.”

Resume assistance and review services are provided by appointment with Career Services or online through OptimalResume®. Information about all services is available online through the Career Services website, which includes an e-newsletter and details on upcoming special events.

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Southwest Tennessee Community College recently sent a team of students to the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature (TISL) held annually in Nashville, Tennessee. TISL hosts the mock legislative session which provides a forum for college students to learn first-hand the legislative process. It requires participants to draft, file, and present legislation at the TISL General Assembly.

During the last General Assembly, Southwest’s team drafted and filed 11 bills. Six passed both chambers. The remaining bills passed in one chamber but did not come to the floor in the other chamber because of time constraints. “I wanted this team to not only learn about the legislative process but also to come away with the knowledge that each of them can make a contribution to that process. I expected the team to work hard and to do well and I was not disappointed,” said Patricia Nozinich, professor of Paralegal Studies at Southwest.

Paralegal Studies major, Carla Rodgers, received a Carlisle Award, 10 of which are given to students whose performances in the General Assembly are deemed outstanding. Rodgers served as the Senator from Southwest. “When Professor Nozinich told me I was going to be in the Senate, I was nervous at first. I knew I had to be ready to present all of our bills if they came up and hoped that the other Senators I had developed a relationship with would support the bills. It all worked out and I enjoyed it so much,” said Rodgers.

Southwest also distinguished itself in the Advanced Moot Court (AMC) Competition, fielding a two-person team to compete along with 15 teams from other Tennessee colleges and universities. Jonathan Willis, a Paralegal Studies student, represented Southwest as a one-person team, when at the last moment, his team member was unable to attend the competition. Willis argued both the appellant and appellee’s sides of the two issues raised in the mock appellate case to advance to the final round of the competition, along with a four-person team from Vanderbilt University. He won the case and the competition, bringing the AMC championship home to Southwest. Willis summed up his experience by saying, “TISL helped me to realize that every person, no matter how insignificant they may feel, has a voice in our government, and if he or she chooses to use it, has a very powerful voice.”

“This was the college’s first time to participate in this mock appellate competition,” said Nozinich. “To have Jonathan Willis not only participate in but win the competition was a proud moment. Southwest can be proud of the students who participated in TISL and AMC this last session. Each of them exemplified the quality of our students at Southwest.

Members of the Southwest TISL team are (from left): Sabrina Ransfer, Jonathan Willis, Jessica Whittington, Elizabeth Tunstall, Danesha Winfrey, Elizabeth Gutierrez, Tujuana Perkins, and Carla Rodgers.
the Danish students will survey new students for the first time using SENSE to learn more about our students’ experiences during the first three to four weeks of the semester. “All of these surveys are embraced by Southwest to directly affect the decisions we make to provide quality academic programs, student-centered learning, and exceptional support services,” said Dr. Calhoun. “The outcome is to increase our students’ chances to persist successfully through graduation. We are committed to a full cultural transformation for how we use this data, how we approach our responsibilities and take into account the end result more than ever before.”

Visiting Danish Students Enjoy Southwest and the City of Memphis

Danish students from Naestved, Denmark, a city with a population of about 41,810, make an annual visit to Memphis this spring. The year’s 23 students and two instructors (their first visit to the Bluff City and only four in the group had visited the USA before) were overcome recently with southern hospitality, said tour leader Felicia Hankins, Southwest study-abroad graduate and International Studies Program part-time staff member. Southwest generally assigns a staff person to accompany the visitors on their outings during their stay in Memphis, something that, according to Hankins, the Danish instructors said does not usually happen when they visit other countries. “They kept saying over and over again that they usually have to work so hard to keep the students all together, but they did not have a problem this time,” Hankins said. The extra pair of hands and the familiarity of the city that the Southwest staff normally provides, help make the Danish visits go smoother.

Southwest’s Danish guests visited the Gibson Guitar Factory and as “always” Elvis Presley’s Graceland. CiCi’s Pizza’s eat all you want buffet was also a big hit along with seeing this season’s winning Memphis Grizzlies at the FedEx Forum. A new site on the tour was the recently built Harley Davidson Company located in Southaven, Mississippi. As business majors, the Danish students were intrigued by the business owner, an optometrist who changed careers and opened the Harley Davidson Company. “They were excited about that,” said Hankins. “And of course they got to see the motorcycles.” Whetting these business students’ appetite for entrepreneurship, Chef Steven Leake and Center of Emphasis Director Jeremy Burnett spoke with them about the ice carving business.

And one of the most pleasurable aspects of their visit is the time the guests get to spend with their host families. “They love spending time with their host families. That is a highlight for them as well,” said Hankins.

Once students complete 12 college-level credit hours, they may be eligible to participate in the Cooperative Education (Co-op) or the Technical Scholar Intern Program. These invaluable programs allow students to gain real-world work experience related to their major, while earning academic credit from Southwest. Employers benefit by gaining access to motivated college students who are eager to put their training and new ideas to work. Additionally, the programs allow area businesses to meet temporary staffing needs and screen students for potential permanent hire. While most Southwest student work enrolled in Co-op work for local companies, the college has partnered with the Disney College Internship Program for several years and regularly sends students to work at their Florida theme park.

Employer Services

To assist Mid-South employers with their staffing needs, Career Services offers free online job postings, on-campus recruiting, career fair participation and targeted employment information sessions. The no cost online full-time and part-time job listings are maintained in-house and frequently updated to ensure timely communication with students and alumni. It is not unusual for alumni once established within their career field, to reach back to Career Services as a hiring resource. “We are very fortunate to have successful alumni, who benefitted from the training they received at Southwest, and now want to help someone else achieve their career goals,” said Williams.

Many employers attend the semi-annual Career Service Career Fairs to meet face-to-face with students, share information about what they are looking for in new hires, and increase overall company awareness. If an employer has an immediate hiring need, Career Services can be both flexible and responsive in providing assistance. An example is the recent Luxottica Optical Job Fair and Employment Assessment event that took place on the Macon Cove Campus. Luxottica Optical was able to recruit and screen over 350 applicants to meet their hiring needs. The college’s central location and large capacity meeting facilities were strong considerations in Luxottica Optical choosing to partner with Southwest.

A new recruiting trend utilized by DISH Network, Johnstone Supply and Memphis Marriott Downtown, is being referred to as “employer information sessions.” Employers and students nearing graduation from the Physical Therapist Assistant Associate of Applied Science Degree program come together at the targeted Job Fair held on Southwest’s Union Avenue campus.

These popular sessions provide a format where employers can speak directly to a targeted group of students pursuing specific majors. Employer representatives share pertinent information about company culture, expectations and hiring procedures while allowing students to ask questions in a semi informal environment. A newly formed partnership between Career Services and the BBB recently held “Identify Theft” and “Avoiding Consumer Scams” presentations on both main campuses and consumer awareness articles written by BBB President, Randy Hutchinson, are now included in the College’s online newsletter for faculty and staff, the Southwest Scoop.

In a more supportive role, the Career Services team assists faculty and staff by collecting and reporting job placement data, sometimes as required for academic program accreditation. They frequently collaborate with faculty to host employer campus visits as well as going on company tours. Recently visited facilities include the Nike Distribution Center, Memphis Marriott Downtown (with several Hospitality Management classes) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Finance Center in Millington, which currently employs several interns.
Employability and Career Skills” unit.

Community Outreach

Career Services receives many requests to assist local community and government organizations as well. During the past semester, they could be found conduct- ing “Mock Interview” sessions for students at Cordova High School as well as for inmates soon to gain release from the local Federal Corrections facilities. Career Services brought their resume critique and career counseling services to those attending the AARP “Fabulous at Fifty Plus” exposition and are often asked to partici- pate in high school and middle school Career Days. To further assist those in the community, Career Services now hosts The Networking Roundtable Group, which is a free non-profit group that exists to help those who find themselves changing careers for any number of reasons. The Career Transition group led by Paul Phillips meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the Macon Cove Campus. Those interested in learning more about this group and the larger net- work of groups which meet throughout the city should visit their website at http://networkingroundtable.net/ Home/ Page.html. Additionally, Career Services has been collaborating with the Citadel Memphis Radio Group to hold job fairs each year that are open to the general public.

To learn more about the fantastic and exciting things happening in Career Services visit their website at: http:// www.southwest.tn.edu/career-services/ where you can read the new Career Services e-newsletter as well.

Southwest Hosts Student Success Workshop

As a catalyst for transformational change in student engagement at Southwest, the Office of Student Retention and Graduation hosted the “Student Success: From the Starting Gate to the Finish Line” workshop on March 18. The workshop was presented by Arleen Arnsparger, the project manager of the Initiative on Student Success for the Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), a research and service project of the Community College Leadership Program in the University of Texas at Austin (UT) Col- lege of Education.

The seminar was interactive and inclusive offering the following session: CCCSE Overview - Southwest CC- SSE [Community College Survey of Student Engage- ment] Data. Southwest conducted surveys in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. Data for the past two years is being gathered, Key Findings and Group Discussions; SENSE [Survey of Entering Student Engagement] and Entering Students - Key Findings, Student Voices and Group Discussion; What Matters Most for Entering Students Success - Key Findings, Group Discussions and Closing Discussion.

After a video presentation of survey responses from students across the country regarding their initial col- lege expectations and experiences along with other rel- evant first-year experience data, attendees were asked: What are Southwest’s strengths – What does the college do well? How do you know – What data support your perspective? Responders indicated Southwest offers:

- Quality teaching - based on a student survey
- High quality child care - substantiated by a four-star rating
- High quality accredited programs - validated by high placement rates and employer feedback
- Strong academic support service - supported by documentable results
- An abundance of technology available to students - evidenced by twenty-first century classrooms
- Effective peer tutoring - data indicates improvements in grades, etc.

The Heart of Student Success, a report of 2010 find- ings by CCCSE, offered the following strategies to “Promote Learning That Matters:”

- Strengthen classroom engagement,
- Integrate student support into learning experiences,
- Expand professional development focused on engaging students,
- Focus institutional policies on creating the conditions for learning.

Scholars Program.” Dowdy and Union Avenue Campus Site Coordinator Dr. LaDonna Young hosted the College Awareness Conference in the fall and GEAR UP Day in the spring that included shadowing a college student, the 21st Century Scholars program, and business plans which they then pitch to a “banker” in order to secure funding. Southwest employees have served in the banker role as well as people from such diverse local employers as Medtronics and BellSouth. Spending so much time with a group of students allows the leaders of both of these groups an opportunity to really get to know their young charges. “I love the students,” said Dowdy, “I love working with them, I really do. I love giving them those ‘ah-ha!’ moments and seeing their eyes light up when the bulb goes off.”

As you might imagine, there is some overlap between GEAR UP and Upward Bound programs. “Some of our students are a part of Upward Bound and they come to the Saturday classes. We eliminated the Saturday Academies this year and took on homework coaches,” said Dowdy. “For the past three years, we’ve offered a leadership and business component during the summer.” As part of that program students form mock companies for which they have to develop products and business plans which they then pitch to a “banker” in order to secure funding. Southwest employees have served in the banker role as well as people from such diverse local employers as Medtronics and BellSouth. Spending so much time with a group of students allows the leaders of both of these groups an opportunity to really get to know their young charges. “I love the students,” said Dowdy, “I love working with them, I really do. I love giving them those ‘ah-ha!’ moments and seeing their eyes light up when the bulb goes off.”

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You can read the new Career Services e-newsletter as well.

Scanned this QR code with a QR reader on mobile device to access our Career Services website. You can download a QR-Code Reader at www.2dscan.com.
Southwest Hosts Planning and Awards Segment of the 2011 Phi Theta Kappa Tennessee Regional Convention

The 2011 Annual Convention of the Tennessee Region of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) recently hosted at Southwest 11 of the state’s community colleges and students from Union University’s alumni chapter to award student accomplishments and to make plans for next year. Noted Dr. Twyla Waters, associate professor, Southwest Paralegal Studies, “The conference enables students from across the state to meet in fellowship and discuss projects … supporting the honors study topic and giving faculty advisors opportunities to exchange ideas for supporting these top-notch students.”

Dr. Joanne Bassett, provost and executive vice president of Southwest, welcomed the students, followed on the podium by PTK international president and community college student Matt Detweiler with an update on new initiatives and member benefits. He discussed CollegeFish.org, an online matching service for pairing students with universities, and the Competitive Advantage program. Dr. Art Fowler of Hiwassee College concluded the evening with an explanation of the election process for statewide officers.

Beginning day two of the convention, Dr. Dave Strong of Dyersburg State Community College and the Tennessee Regional advisor for PTK met with attendees to discuss initiatives for the upcoming year; many of them emphasizing community college completion and encouraging students to visit. The universities and encouraging students to visit. The convention culminated in an awards banquet providing a university education.

ors Study topic: The Democratization of Information: Power, Peril, and Promise, and delivered real-world examples of changes in our society related to advances in the flow of information.

At awards time, Upsilon Delta (Southwest chapter) members received the ‘Chapter of Light’ award by going “above and beyond” requirements of the Honors in Action program with their teddy bear collection and stocking stuffer drives for Marines in Iraq. They also received the Icarus Award for those who, like Icarus, the son of Daedalus, fly too close to the sun – only to crash into the sea – for having such a wildly successful donation of stocking stuffers they incurred a nearly $600 charge in shipping costs.

Southwest students and faculty also earned individual recognition and awards in the Tennessee Regional Anthology writing competition:

- Fiction - 2nd place Lynn Reichard
- Nonfiction - 1st place Danesha Winfrey
- Nonfiction - Honorable Mention Eunice Buchanan, Anitre Littlejohn, Chantal Scalzo
- Poetry - 3rd place LaVonda Campbell
- Poetry - Honorable Mention Porsha Hymon

Two members, Valentina Taylor and Jonathan Willis, were recognized as Southwest representatives to the All-USA Academic Team; and Dr. McGrory earned the Horizon Award for distinguished service given by new faculty advisors.

Southwest Tennessee Community College concludes the evening with an explanation of initiatives and benefits.

Nestled in the northern portion of the greater Memphis area, sits one of Southwest Tennessee Community College’s hidden jewels, the Elbert T. Gill Center. The Gill Center at 3833 Mountain Terrace Road is located in the heart of Frayser, situated in a quiet resi
dential setting surrounded by trees. The area is also home to Nike’s newest state-of-the-art distribution center, along with other industries.

The terrain and layout of Memphis that we know now no longer resembles the past. The north Memphis community of Frayser is the western tip of a peninsula created by the Loosahatchie and Wolf Rivers as they converge into the Mississippi River just north of downtown Memphis. Mud Island is the peninsula’s southwest tip. Because it is situated between the 3rd and 4th of the Mississippi River’s Chickasaw Bluffs, early settlers called it “The Point.” In 1858, a circuit riding Methodist minister began a four church preaching circuit through North Shelby County. After several years of meetings outdoors, a small wood chapel was built. Called The Point Chapel, it was located near what is now the southwest corner of the Gill Center campus.

The center is named after Elbert T. Gill Jr., and was dedicated in September 1983. Dr. Gill, a chiropractor, prominent businessman in the Frayser community and a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives 85th – 94th General Assemblies, was instrumental in helping gain access to the land for the College. The property has 33.6 acres, a two-story main building with 14 classrooms, biology lab, state-of-the-art library, new computer lab, gym and baseball field. In 2008, the Gill Center celebrated 25 years of service to the Frayser community. The center operations began under the former Shelby State Community College system. Representatives from the Gill family, city and state government, Frayser community leaders and the Southwest staff were all on hand to mark that occasion. Dr. Gill was unable to attend the event, but his wife proudly addressed the crowd and accepted his accolades. Dr. Gill, now in his 80’s, is no longer as active due to health issues.

Patsy Anderson serves as the Gill Center’s director, and also serves as director for the Millington site. Patsy began working for Shelby State Community College’s hidden jewels, the Elbert T. Gill Center.

Gill Center Spotlight

By Robert Jackson

Center Director Patsy Anderson takes the time to assist a student in the computer lab.
College in 1972, as a clerk typist in the secretarial pool. In her years of service, she has seen a lot of growth and change. Anderson recalls working in various locations throughout the city - Whitehaven, Collierville and Cordova during a period when the college used other locations to host classes. She was appointed the director of the Gill Center in 2000. With Anderson’s leadership, the campus population has grown from a humble beginning of 86 students to a high enrollment of 1,475 students in 2004. Currently, there are approximately 1,200 students attending classes at the Gill Center.

The student population at the Gill Center is comprised of a varied population of high school students to older adults who are looking for education to either help them find a job or enhance skills in their current position. High school students from Trezevant, Frayser and Raleigh-Egypt schools are involved in the dual-enrollment program where they can receive a technical certificate or an associate degree along with their high school diploma. The Gill Center is a prominent location for students enrolled in the Emergency Medical Technician, Phlebotomy, and Computer Software Specialist technical certificate programs. The center also offers all developmental programs. The center itself has also seen some changes since Anderson first arrived 10 years ago. The gym contained a mound of dirt, there was old laundry equipment and clothing, the lights were out and balls were in the ceiling from being used for batting practice. The center was previously the home site for the Saluqi Baseball team and the field still holds remnants from the past; worn out bleachers and a tattered scoreboard. The academic building also fell into a state of disrepair…“had not been painted in years, the floors looked terrible, and the furniture was old and worn,” according to Anderson. Now there is a new library, new elevator, the floors are clean, and interior and exterior paint have been updated. Extra lighting has also been added for security purposes. Anderson contacted Memphis Light Gas and Water to install floodlights on the poles to make sure that the students felt safe. Teamwork between staff, administration and Police Services has made the students and general public feel safe in the area.

The Gill Center continues to play an integral role in the community and still collaborates with local organizations like the Exchange Club, the Frayser Community Association and the Ed Rice Community Center. Anderson says, “I’d like to think that the Gill Center is the community’s college; the Frayser community’s college. It’s here for everyone no matter if it’s a youth group, or someone who is actually attending classes, an older adult who is coming back to either be retrained or to just take some continuing education kinds of classes.”

When visiting a foreign country, one generally observes customs, traditions and trends. Southwest nursing student Jennifer Walker fascinated by the Danes’ daily sightseeing before settling down to Monday classes. The group toured the Hans Christian Andersen Museum, containing exhibits of the famous Danish author and poet noted for his children’s stories, along with other points of interest.

As the International Studies Program (ISP) at Southwest continues to gain momentum and scope, more and more disciplines are opting to expose students to knowledge from an expansive global perspective. Recently, ISP provided study-abroad scholarships for a team of nursing students to do a comparative analysis of the Danish healthcare system. The students, under the instruction of Southwest Department Chair of Nursing Mary Vines, and assisted by Executive Director of Grants Kristie Goldsmith, flew to Copenhagen on March 5, traveling by train to their Odense, Denmark, destination. The Saturday arrival left Sunday free for class on March 7 was held at the University College Lillebaelt where Southwest’s students made presentations on the American healthcare system followed by a four-hour discussion facilitated by Vines to an international class of 17, that was comprised primarily of Danish students with a few from Finland, Romania, and Turkey. Southwest student Kimberly Briggs felt the atmosphere in the classroom was a little strained at first and wrote in her journal, “They looked as nervous as we did. They were all sitting on one side and we were sitting on the other side. I guess it wasn’t that bad,” wrote Briggs. “Their teacher didn’t come because she was sick, so Mrs. Vines stepped in. Well isn’t that something! Teaching all the way in Denmark! Ha!”

The class engaged in dialogue about the differences in the healthcare systems and healthcare education in the USA and Denmark. “Our students learned about the universal healthcare system there [Denmark] where everybody has coverage. But, they pay almost 50 percent of their gross income in taxes,” said Vines.

According to Vines, a unique difference in Danish healthcare education and that of the USA is there is no licensing exam. “The nurses over there [Denmark] are all baccalaureate prepared. The nursing program is three-and-a-half years in length. But, there is no licensing exam. Once you finish school, you are a nurse,” said Vines. She did however point out that their nursing program is built around theories, requiring the students to complete projects, engage in research and write papers. The nursing student’s skill sets are developed during their hospital clinicals where they shadow nurse educators, Vines explained.

Southwest nursing student Letha Grandberry summed up the differences in the two countries approaches to healthcare by journaling, “...There are many differences in the healthcare in Denmark and America but the mission is the same: saving lives while delivering safe and practical nursing care. The education for nurses is also different. The approach and level of nursing education is different. The healthcare system in Denmark seems to focus around ‘we’ and not ‘I’ when it comes to making sure all citizens have health insurance.”
The Spring Career Fair Welcomes New Vendors

Southwest hosted its annual “Spring Fling/Career Fair,” April 13 and 14, and it was a great opportunity for Southwest students to mix and mingle on the plaza and breezeway at the Union Avenue and Macon Cove campuses while exploring career opportunities. This year, over half of the vendors, 11 out of 20, were first-time participants. Among them were Nike, Ann Taylor-Wolfchase, Taco Bell, and Whole Health Chiropractic.

Administrative Assistant for Career Services Shirley Dozier-Martin indicated that normally a cross-section of the Memphis area business community is invited to participate in the Career Fair. “Our objective is to expose our students/graduates to employers who are interested in hiring them. By virtue of the fact that they participate, indicates that employers recognize the value in our product – potential employees who possess the skills needed to be successful in entry-level positions,” said Dozier-Martin.

According to the Southwest Career Services staff, the overall feedback from employers was positive. Most were able to identify several potential and interested candidates. Several vendors, they said, expressed their pleasure in seeing many of the attendees dressed appropriately and presenting themselves in a positive way.

Representatives from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development were on hand at the Union Avenue event to provide a preview of the new Career Coaches – mobile centers with services similar to those offered at the Tennessee Career Centers. “The Career Coaches will soon be making appearances all over the state in order to reach out to job seekers and employers alike,” said Brenda Williams, director of Career Services for Southwest. “We look forward to having them visit Southwest in the near future.”

The Spring 2011 program activities include 48 students from various summer high schools and college programs. So far the students have met with Memphis and Shelby County Health Department officials and are scheduled to meet with representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard in July. Both visits will explore STEM-related career possibilities. There are tentative plans in August to visit a Department of Human Services (DHS) Center of Excellence at Jackson State University in Jackson Mississippi, as well as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Vicksburg. If time permits, the trip will be extended to include a visit to another DHS Center of Excellence at Alcorn State University, which is completing on-site research on recovery and sustainability for minority businesses. In late July, the students will also participate in the Emergency Management Summit at Southwest. Donald Drewry is the Program Coordinator for the Leadership Bridge Program, Homeland Security Grant.

Additionally, the Department of Education’s TRIO UPWARD BOUND (UB) Program at Southwest is in full swing. Thirty students are currently participating in the 2011 summer program. You may see them (or have already seen them) at many of Memphis’ landmarks.

So far during this summer session UB participants have visited the National Civil Rights Museum, Circuit Playhouse, Stax Museum and the Pink Palace. The Upward Bound Program gives students the skills and motivation necessary to successfully complete their high school education and prepare them for college. This goal is achieved through students’ overall improvement on standardized test scores, consistent program participation, and enrollment in postsecondary education in the fall term following their expected graduation date from high school. The Upward Bound Program allows eligible participants to get a taste of college life by residing in the dorms with roommates for five weeks (through the courtesy of the University of Memphis) and also take part in various recreational and social activities. The students are transported by bus to the Union Avenue Campus for their summer classes. Willie D. Clark, Jr. is the Director for the Upward Bound Program at Southwest Tennessee Community College.

We will see you next time when we review what has been submitted and awarded to the College!
of Smith & Nephew Orthopaedics, Inc. He culminated his message with ten pieces of advice from his personal experiences: (1) Listen to your inner voice, (2) Find your passion, (3) Be dependable, (4) Put your company first and your career second, (5) Try to learn every day, (6) Take on the company’s largest problems, (7) Include your family in your work, (8) Focus on the job you have, not on the job you want, (9) Don’t worry, and (10) Live to be debt free. He also added “Give back to your community.”

Eloquent and commanding, Southwest Student Speaker Tinisia Branch, a sociology major, encouraged her classmates to think of their diplomas, as she once heard Tom Brokaw, former TV journalist and NBC anchor, say – as “tickets to ‘change the world.” Branch remarked, “Each and every one of us has the opportunity to change the world. … graduates of 2011 take your tickets and change the world!” Branch served as President of the Honors Academy and Services Learning Club.

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The Southwest Class of 2011 Challenged to “Have a Plan” to “Change the World”

Amidst a sea of black regalia, glad hearts and hopeful spirits soared as family and loved ones awaited the pronouncement of their names, signaling their turn to walk across the stage to receive that piece of paper proclaiming “I did it!” More than 1,700 graduates marching to the traditional Pomp and Circumstance were encouraged to “Have a Plan” by Commencement Speaker Joseph DeVivo and to “Change the World” by Student Speaker Tinisia Branch during the Southwest Tennessee Community College 2011 Commencement Ceremony on May 7 at the DeSoto Civic Center in Southaven, MS.

Southwest President Nathan L. Essex welcomed family members and friends and applauded the outstanding efforts and accomplishments of graduates. Among them was Jacqueline Bain, awarded a Dietetic Technician degree 30 years after an earlier, unsuccessful attempt to go to college when she graduated from high school. Bain was privileged to graduate concurrently with her daughter, Kristen, who earned an Associate of Science degree in teaching.

Also recognized for overcoming tremendous odds was Robert Hunt, who bravely served his country in the U.S. armed forces from 1995 to 2007. Hunt was discharged due to an injury he sustained while deployed in Iraq. Matriculating through Southwest, Hunt served as vice president of the International Studies and Veterans clubs and held membership with the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society, graduating with a 3.79 GPA. All graduating members of the armed forces were commended.

Other students President Essex commended were those who had dually enrolled in high school and Southwest. John McDaniel earned both an Associate of Arts degree in general education while also earning a high school diploma. Ariel Anderson, Lindsay Avis, Callie Goldsby, Josue Medrano, and Kristin Harris were awarded technical certificates in electrical/electronics fundamentals as well as high school diplomas.

Powerful business leader, Joseph DeVivo, asked the question “Do you have a plan?” in his address to the Southwest graduating class of 2011. DeVivo detailed the events of his life, both disappointing and rewarding that led to his current position as President of the Southwest Class of 2011 Challenged to “Have a Plan” to “Change the World”

Dr. LaDonna Young Named Woman of Excellence

Over the past three years, the Tri-State Defender has had the pleasure of honoring 150 female professionals and leaders distinguished by their remarkable civic contributions and career achievements. Southwest’s very own Dr. LaDonna Young is one of this year’s honorees.

Dr. Young, assistant professor of Education at Southwest, joined the college in January 2000 and is a graduate of Christian Brothers University. She received a master’s degree in teaching and a doctorate in higher and adult education from the University of Memphis. The former interim chair of the Education Department and Honors Academy director also serves as director of the GEAR-UP Program.

A passion for teaching and learning afforded Dr. Young opportunities to travel and teach in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa, with the Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS) in 2009. She is looking forward to taking a delegation of education majors to Senegal in the fall of 2011 through the college’s International Studies Program. Known for her humorous, “old school” approaches to teaching, Dr. Young cites her influence on students and those she mentors as her first love and greatest legacy to date.

Honorees were selected based upon the following criteria: African-American woman executive, business owner, community or non-profit leader, proven success within profession/industry, positive role model whose contributions encourage others and highly active in community service or organizational involvement leading to positive impact on the lives of others. The Tri-State Defender hosted its 4th Annual Women of Excellence “High Tea” Awards Reception on April 29 at the Memphis Botanic Garden.
Southwest’s Early Childhood Education Center
Earns National Accreditation

The Early Childhood Education Center at Southwest’s Union Avenue Campus has earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals. “We’re proud to have earned this mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards,” said Center Director Mary Palmer, who also teaches in the college’s early childhood degree program. “NAEYC Accreditation lets families in our community know that children in our program are getting the best care and early learning experiences possible.”

Palmer describes the mission of the Southwest centers (at both the Union Avenue and Macon Cove campuses) as serving “as academic and support services for students attending Southwest, as well as faculty, staff and parents from the community.” And she is quick to say, “We aren’t daycare.” Most of the center employees have bachelor’s or master’s degrees in early childhood education, several have associate degrees, and the rest have the nationally recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. To earn NAEYC Accreditation, The Early Childhood Center went through an extensive self-study process, measuring the program and its services against the 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related accreditation criteria. The program received NAEYC Accreditation after an on-site visit by NAEYC assessors to ensure that the program meets each of the 10 program standards. NAEYC-accredited programs are also subject to unannounced visits during their accreditation, which lasts for five years.

In the 25 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. More than 7,000 programs are currently accredited by NAEYC – approximately 8 percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs. “The NAEYC Accreditation system raises the bar for child care centers and other early childhood programs,” said Dr. Jerlean E. Daniel, executive director of NAEYC. “Having earned NAEYC Accreditation is a sign that The Early Childhood Education Center is a leader in a national effort to invest in high-quality early childhood education.”

Recent Accreditation Places Our Center in the Top Eight Percent in the Nation

In light of a declining budget, the following College Strategic Goals will remain a high priority:

**Goal One:** Strengthen and enhance the College’s impact in the community.

**Goal Two:** Provide access and a strong commitment to meet the needs of a diverse community.

**Goal Three:** Provide educational programs and services that enhance effective learning.

**Goal Four:** Creatively manage and optimize current resources and expand sources of support.

With a talented faculty, a highly committed administration and a responsive staff, I am confident that Southwest will remain a viable resource to our communities in Memphis, Shelby, and Fayette counties and the surrounding Mid-South region.

Cordially,

Nathan L. Essex
President
Southwest Tennessee Community College
As we continue to face double digit budget reductions, we also continue to make strides in meeting the educational needs of our students. For example, the College’s 2011 graduating class consisted of a record high seventeen hundred students. In spite of this budget reduction, the College is expected to serve its’ community with a more efficient organizational structure, improved processes, high priority on customer service, teamwork, curriculum development, innovative programs, faculty/staff development, and improved retention and graduation rates among others. In response to current budget reductions, a Voluntary Buyout Program has been implemented which will contribute significantly to our capacity to meet a nine million dollar budget reduction mandate. The College also has an approved Reduction in Force (RIF) Plan that will be implemented in the foreseeable future.

Structural changes and a talented faculty and staff will create a stronger organization. The College is positioned to continue to grow and expand services to meet the changing needs of our community. With added emphasis on technology, program development, lifelong learning, diversity, recruitment, retention, and community service, the College will continue to make a major contribution to the economic growth and development of our community and increasingly become a focal point for community outreach. New facilities should greatly enhance the College’s capacity to meet the academic needs of students, employers, and our communities in Shelby and Fayette counties.

Faculty and staff who remain with the College will perform multiple tasks, form effective work teams and continue the College’s tradition of providing educational service opportunities to our students. The College prides itself on ensuring that the educational needs of students, employers, and our community are met. Student educational needs will be addressed through innovative and creative teaching strategies designed to facilitate graduation and completion of coursework within a three-year time frame.

Southwest will focus increased attention to student retention by ensuring that creative course offerings occur consistently and student engagement receives high priority. Several programs have been initiated to facilitate higher retention and graduation rates among our students. Student cohorts and block scheduling have been established as pilot programs. These pilots are led by a team of faculty who are deeply committed to assisting students in completing remedial and developmental courses within one semester. Their efforts should allow unprepared students to complete their degrees or certificates within the desired three-year time frame. Additionally, a Southwest Mentors Advancing, Retention, Teamwork, and Success Program (SMARTS) has been initiated which partners faculty and staff members with students. The primary purpose of this program is to increase student access to college level education, academic program completion, and to increase their involvement with faculty, staff, and peers. Lastly, this program will recognize deserving students at student award ceremonies.

The President’s Message

Southwest President Nathan L. Essex (left) presents the esteemed Jim Willis Spirit Award to Vanessa Dowdy.
Development Update  

By Rose Landey

UnitedHealthcare and Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation are partnering to ensure Southwest gets healthy. Approximately 100 people on the Macon Cove and Union Avenue campuses participated in blood pressure, weight and body fat screenings, and blood sugar and cholesterol tests when the Healthy Lifestyles program sponsored by UnitedHealthcare and the Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation kicked off on March 28.

The screenings were just the first of a series of health awareness programs under the Healthy Lifestyles program designed to educate, promote and encourage healthier behaviors. The year-long program will focus on nutrition, weight management, health awareness and exercise in a fun environment. Prizes will be awarded throughout the program.

Healthy Lifestyle demonstrations were held on April 4 on the Macon Cove Campus and April 5 on the Union Avenue Campus. Presentations included a healthy cooking demonstration, a nutrition segment, a diabetes information class, and a group exercise demonstration.

Alumni News Update

Sylvester Tate, a 1985 graduate and President/CEO of Tate Computer Systems, was recently chosen as 2011 Alumni of the Year. While serving in the military, Mr. Tate attended night classes and graduated with an Associate of Applied Science degree in Electronic Technology from Southwest Tennessee Community College in 1985. He continued his education at the University of Memphis where he concentrated on Electronic Engineering, and in 1988, he opened Tate Computer Systems.

This retired Navy veteran and consummate self-made man displays his commitment to Southwest graduates in numerous ways. As the President/CEO of Tate Computer Systems, Tate has created jobs and grown a business that has been able to provide jobs and career opportunities for more than 30 full-time employees and soon that number will grow to 50. Many of those employees are Southwest graduates. In addition, Tate served as President of the Alumni Association, and in 2008, he and his wife created an endowed scholarship to assist Southwest students with their tuition. He also currently serves as a Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation board member.

At the Macon Cove Campus, despite threatening storms, Chef Steven Leake gave a cooking demonstration and explained the value of proper nutrition and what consumers should look for when it comes to food purchasing. He fielded questions about the differences in beef cuts; and fish, whether farm raised or freshly caught. Leake demonstrated how to prepare fresh dressing and sauces by blending extra-virgin olive oils and fresh herbs. At the end of the demo, participants were treated to salmon drizzled with a light basil sauce. Jeremy Burnett presented the demonstration at the Union Avenue Campus.

Health care professional Kristy Merrit also spoke to the group at the Macon Cove Campus about how to live with diabetes. She explained testing for diabetes, monitoring blood sugar levels, and proper nutrition after diagnosis. Diane Howell presented the demonstration at the Union Avenue Campus.

Watch for more events on this year-long program. For more information contact Coach Neal Cordell at tcordell@southwest.tn.edu.

Features

Southwest’s International Studies Program Grows Exponentially

Southwest Reaches Out to Young People in Need

Career Services, a Southwest Gem for All

Gill Center Spotlight

The Latest on Southwest Grants

Kudos

Dr. LaDonna Young Named Woman of Excellence

Southwest’s Early Childhood Education Center Earns National Accreditation

The 2011 Faculty and Staff Awards Reception

Alumni News Update

Blast from the Past . . . An Update on Southwest Tennessee Community College Alumni

Nancy Matthews, graduated in 1997 in Office Systems Technology, employed at the University of Memphis. Aiesha Dickey, graduated in 2005 in Computer Engineering Technology, recently finished a tour with the United States Army. Charlie Tipton, graduated in 2005 in Criminal Justice, employed as a Detention Officer. Rosaire Daigle, graduated in 2008 in Psychology, employed as a Graduate Assistant at the University of Memphis. Steve Austin, MD, graduated in 1976 in Natural Sciences, employed as a Psychiatrist for Families, Inc. Taalibah Oseye, graduated in 2005 in Accounting, employed in Accounts Receivable for Merial Limited. Tiffany Prewitt, graduated in 2010 in Education, employed by the City of Memphis.

If you want to be featured here or in any of our publications or just want to catch up with other alumni, go on-line to http://www.southwest.tn.edu/alumni/form. htm and complete the form. We want to hear from you!
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- Transferable classes to a four-year university.
- Ample scholarship opportunities.
- 92 percent of (2009-2010) Southwest graduates are working.
- Some internships with local companies offered.
- Dual enrollment for high school students—a chance to get a head start on college while earning high school credits necessary for graduation.
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Important Student Success Workshop Held at Southwest