



The River's Edge

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BRTC Announces Groundbreaking Highway Safety Project

A new project funded by a \$300,000 grant is a unique undertaking, the first of its kind in the country, according to the project's director, Steve Shults, instructor in the college's Law Enforcement Training Academy and Criminal Justice program. The project, designed to reduce highway fatalities and injuries, features the purchase and staffing of a mobile unit for training law enforcement officers and for use in Field Sobriety Checkpoints throughout the region.



Chris Hankins and Steve Shults

Referred to as the 'BAT,' or Blood Alcohol Testing Mobile, the mobile unit and related costs are funded through federal monies channeled through the Arkansas State Police Highway Safety Office.

allows the college to expand educational options at the same time we are helping to make our highways safer—a major plus for the college and for the public." He expressed his appreciation to Shults for his leadership in the project.

The project has three main goals, Shults noted: to give police officers refresher courses in Field Sobriety Training, to add a block of instruction (in the college's LETA training) on how to safely and legally conduct sobriety checkpoints, and to provide a field tool (the mobile unit) that no police department could otherwise afford, assisting them in the processing of impaired drivers at the scene of sobriety checkpoints.

"BRTC is very excited about this new opportunity," said BRTC President Richard Gaines. "This project

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Important Dates

- March 6
Health Fair
- March 8
PTK Induction
- March 12
Advisory Board Dinner
- March 15
Holocaust Survivor Visit
- March 16
Foundation Board Mtg
- March 27
Foundation Gala
- April 6
Good Friday (campus closed)

Historian, 'Chautauquan,' Entertains and Enlightens Audiences

Distinguished historian and 'Chautauqua' performer Jim Armstead of California addressed several audiences at Black River Technical College last week during Black History Month activities. His visit to Pocahontas was funded by the Eddie Mae Herron Center and the BRTC Foundation through its SEAS (Special Event and Activity Support) program.

Armstead is a retired professor with the Naval War College and currently teaches at Stanford University. His expertise is in the field of European studies and national policy.

BRTC English instructor Gary Buxton, also a Board

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Gary Buxton and Dr. Jim Armstead

Turnout 'Great' for College Goal Sunday



Pictured from left, BRTC Financial Aid Officer Mary Anderson, and Williams Baptist College representatives Ann Williams and Barbara Turner assist prospective students with financial aid applications.

The first Arkansas College Goal Sunday was a huge success, according to Financial Aid Director Carolyn Collins who coordinated the event on the campus of Black River Technical College in Pocahontas, Sunday, February 18. BRTC was one of 30 sites across Arkansas to host College Goal Sunday, an event designed to assist prospective college students and their parents in completing required financial aid documents including the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), regardless of where they plan to attend college.

"The turnout far exceeded any expectations we had," said Collins. "With it being the first year for the

event we really had no idea what to expect, but we were pleasantly surprised and excited about the number of people who participated." There were 66 people who attended at the BRTC campus, with 48 students being represented. These numbers surpassed the turnout at many other sites across the state that represented a much larger population area, according to statistics reported by Statewide Coordinator Scott Medlin.

"I want to thank everyone who helped to promote College Goal Sunday and who volunteered during the event," said Collins. "It was successful because of the cooperation and assistance of everyone involved."

Historian Continued from Page 1

member at the Eddie Mae Herron Center, was instrumental in bringing Armstead to the community. The program finale came Friday evening with a public Chautauquan performance of "Thaddeus Dunkley," a black cowboy wrangler on the Goodnight Loving Trail in Texas during the 1870s-1880s.

Following his portrayal of the cowboy, Armstead continued the performance aspect by remaining in character as he responded to audience questions, weaving humor and interactivity into his responses.

Earlier that day, Dr. Armstead spoke to the BRTC Serendipity group on the topic of "Driving Forces" that shape and control societies and policies. The forces he identified are Tribalism, which works against disparate groups of people becoming unified; Nationalism, a force that supports the unification of disparate groups because of the potential for mutual benefits; Fundamentalism (not religious fundamentalism), a basic belief in some mythical past to which people yearn to return in order to re-gain a per-

ceived stability; and Globalism, the force by which ideas spread around the world in an incredibly short period of time, leading to unfettered opportunity for the exchange of goods and services.

Armstead also spoke to student groups from BRTC and from area high schools in a morning presentation on the history of Chautauqua, a movement which began with the development of towns and cities in the late 19th century, and lasted through the advent of radio. Chautauquans have played an important role in the preservation of history through the oral tradition. This presentation included the interweaving of historical events the students are currently studying.

The guest speaker also attended the EMH Center potluck on Thursday evening, and spoke briefly at this event.

Organizers estimate approximately 300 people attended one or more of his presentations during his visit to Pocahontas.



From left, Sandy Hudson, Howard Dunn, Pianist Glenda Blasini, Ben Johnson, and Shannon Jones. BRTC's Kimbrough Quartet performed at the Rolling Hills Country Club February 10 during the Beta Sigma Phi Valentine party. The Kimbrough Chorus along with the Quartet also performed on Valentine's Day in the BRTC Student Lounge for students as well as faculty and staff.

Hankins Hired for New Position



Chris Hankins

Chris Hankins of Jonesboro has been hired to fill the new position of Blood Alcohol Testing Project Instructor. He has spent the past 11 years with the Jonesboro Police Department, the last six serving as Patrol Sergeant. Hankins graduated from Black Rock High School, Arkansas State University, and the Law Enforcement Training Academy in Camden. He has served as an adjunct instructor at the BRTC/Paragould campus.

Students Accept Scholarship Offer



Amanda Linebaugh

Three local high school seniors have accepted Academic Distinction Scholarships to attend Black River Technical College this fall, according to the office of Financial Aid. They are Amanda Linebaugh, Chris Logan and Tiffany Bullard.

Linebaugh is a senior at Sloan-Hendrix High School in Imboden. The daughter of Anthony and Patsy Mitchell and Kelly and Tracy Linebaugh, she plans to major in nursing.



Chris Logan

The son of Scott and Cindy Logan, Chris plans to pursue college basics at BRTC, then transfer to a four-year university to major in Biology-Pre-med. He is a Walnut Ridge High School senior.

Hoxie High School senior Tiffany Bullard is the daughter of Noel and Shane Bullard. After completing college basics at BRTC, she plans to transfer to a university and major in Biology, eventually becoming a Dental Hygienist.



Tiffany Bullard

The Academic Distinction Scholarship is awarded to students based on their ACT scores or rank in class. The scholarship covers the full cost of tuition, and is renewable at BRTC if the student meets certain GPA requirements. Students may be eligible for transfer scholarships at a four-year institution once they leave BRTC, pending approval of the university to which they transfer.

Hwy Safety Project

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Although other communities around the nation, Texarkana for example, may have the mobile unit, this project is the only one in which the project is an integral part of an educational institution. "We have tried to take the program others have established, and then build on it, with the educational component, making ours the only one of this type anywhere in the nation," Shults explained. "We are the first educational institution to take on such a project to bring the equipment on-site to assist and provide a support person. This unit will be available to any law enforcement agency in the state, but we plan to focus on north-east Arkansas."

The college has named Black Rock native Chris Hankins as the project's instructor. He is a veteran officer with the Jonesboro Police Department.

Shults said he will be working with Hankins over the coming weeks and months to develop lesson plans and other training activities. "He will be attending training sessions and shadowing at the CJI (Criminal Justice Institute). I want him to know his business, top to bottom."

In the meantime, the mobile unit is under preparation. Shults said he has been consulting with Taylor Ambulance Company of Newport, one of the top five largest ambulance producers in the United States, to develop specifications for bid.

The unit, about 40 feet in length, will contain everything needed to conduct field sobriety and drug impairment evaluations.

In addition to work in sobriety checkpoints, Hankins will be responsible also for educational outreach to area public schools, and will make the unit available at various public events, such as fairs and other festivals.

Machine Shop Offers Career Opportunities

More than seventy students from fourteen area high schools and home schools learned of career opportunities for trained machinists during a Machine Shop Career Day held at BRTC on February 15. The event highlighted BRTC's certificate program in Machine Shop, taught by Gary Meier. BRTC Recruiter Joniece Trammel coordinated the activity.

"Career Day was held to provide interested students an opportunity to visit the campus and hear about our Machine Shop program, as well as to learn of career opportunities for those who complete a one-year certificate in this field," Trammel said.

Area machine shop owners and

members of the program's Advisory Council spoke of the extensive local job market, particularly in Jonesboro, Paragould and Brookland. Machinist



Gary Meier pictured with guests on career day explaining the machine shop program.

jobs are widely available also in central and western Arkansas for those willing to relocate. Salaries start at \$10 or more per hour, ranging up to \$25 per hour in certain

markets.

Leading the students on campus tours were Dr. Martie Shull, Instructional Specialist for Career and Technical Education programs, and Angie Caldwell, Division Chair for Technical Education. The Dietetics Department provided lunch for the visiting students.

Former BRTC student and machinist David Statler also spoke to the students, as did current Machine Shop students.

Trammel expressed her appreciation to all those who assisted in this activity. "I am hopeful that several of those attending may take a closer look at this academic program when they enroll this fall," Trammel said.

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Mission Statement

Black River Technical College is an institution of higher learning committed to a partnership with the individual and the global community to provide lifelong learning experiences, seeking always to empower those it serves to achieve their academic, vocational, and personal development goals.

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From the President's Desk



Richard Gaines

Being small does not prevent our college from being first. Announcement in this issue of *The River's Edge* that we are the first college in the nation with an education-based life-saving highway safety program featuring a state-of-the-art mobile unit is proof that small colleges such as BRTC can achieve great things.

We are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the 40-foot custom-made mobile unit, referred to as the "BAT Mobile." This unit will allow us to

provide to law enforcement agencies an on-site tool that can help reduce drug-impaired driving on our highways. That is good news for all of us.

This program, funded by a \$300,000 grant from Arkansas State Police's Office of Highway Safety, will also enhance our Law Enforcement Training Academy curriculum and it will make possible community outreach education programs at area schools and community events. This activity will have positive impact not only on immediate highway safety concerns, but also on future generations. We look forward to blazing this trail among institutions of higher education.

BRTC Foundation Gala

March 27

For tickets see Vickie French

Chris Moore Named New Ambassador



Chris Moore

Chris Moore of Maynard has been selected as a new BRTC Ambassador for the Spring 2007 semester, according to Kim Bigger, Coordinator of the Ambassador Program. Moore is enrolled in the Auto Collision Repair Program and plans to graduate in May with hopes of eventually starting his own business. As an ambassador, Moore will receive a full tuition scholarship for the semester while serving the college in various capacities.

"The purpose of the Ambassador Program," explains Biggers, "is to provide recognition and scholarship assistance to deserving students while building awareness of opportunities available at Black River Technical College." To qualify, students are required to maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average and be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours per semester. Once nominated by faculty and staff, students are asked to submit a letter of educational objectives, a resume, three personal references, and a state employment application. They are then interviewed by a panel of BRTC employees before final selection is made.

For more information about the BRTC Ambassador Program, contact Biggers at 870-248-4000, ext. 4012 or email kim.bigger@blackrivertech.edu.