A dance, dinner and auction will be among the festivities as the South Arkansas Community College Foundation hosts An Evening With the Stars, honoring Friends of the College and Distinguished Alumni on May 2. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. at the El Dorado Conference Center.

“The SouthArk Foundation Board of Directors is honored once again to celebrate the support and accomplishments of our ‘Stars’—important figures who have helped make this educational institution vibrant and solid,” Foundation President Greg Withrow said.

Friend of the College William R. Howard and Outstanding Alumni Greg Taylor and Melissa Jerry will be recognized.

“We look forward to acknowledging the philanthropic work of William R. Howard and celebrating the achievements of our Outstanding Alumni,” college president Dr. Barbara Jones said. “These individuals will be written into the college’s history.”

Howard is retired from Lion Oil. A Hampton

Circuit Judge Carroll to speak at Spring Commencement

Circuit Judge Robin J. Carroll will be the keynote speaker for Spring Commencement exercises at South Arkansas Community College at 7 p.m. on May 9 at the El Dorado Conference Center.

More than 350 students will graduate.

Carroll is the Fourth Division circuit judge for the 13th Judicial District, covering Calhoun, Cleveland, Columbia, Dallas, Ouachita and Union Counties. He was elected without opposition in 2012. Carroll first was elected prosecuting attorney in 2006, and was re-elected without opposition in 2010.

He is a 1995 graduate of the University of Arkansas-Little Rock School of Law. Carroll graduated from

Donation

Program director Keitha Davidson speaks to members of the Roberts family whose 3-year-old son Nolan Roberts (being held above) was injured in a car accident earlier this year. The registered-nursing class raised more than $800 and donated it to the Roberts to offset medical expenses. Nolan Roberts is the grandson of SouthArk information technology specialist Mike Roberts.
“Spring is nature’s way of saying ‘Let’s party!’”—Robin Williams

My daffodils, irises and tulips have bloomed, and the leaves on the trees are unfurling. The azaleas are just about ready to open, too. The colors of spring are vibrant and beautiful after the dreary greys of winter. Spring makes me feel more alive and excited about the many possibilities of life. The longer days of sunlight enable me to be out on the walking paths and swinging a golf club after the long, cold and dark winter days. I am, like nature, reinvigorated!

Williams was right—spring makes you want to party. We are not exactly partying at SouthArk, but we have held or have many exciting events planned on campus this spring, as you will note in this newsletter. Spring Fling was a great kick-off to spring—a beautiful and fun day! Arts in April has a robust lineup of events that should awaken your cultural appetite, and we’re proud about our next Lecture Series event featuring Shannon Miller, gold medal Olympian.

Even more significant than these great cultural and recreational activities, we are celebrating the many successes of our students! We have seen an increase in pass rates of our developmental skills students. We give accolades to the hard work and dedication of our math, reading, and writing instructors for using innovations, assessments and research, to determine new ways to reach and engage students to assure their success and progression toward completion. Kudos to our advisers, tutors and The Learning Center staff for assisting students in the life and learning process, as well. We have seen improvements in our program areas, as assessments are used to determine that student learning outcomes have been achieved. Our programmatic outcomes continue to be at or above the state or national averages on external licensure or registry exams in our health-science areas. Students in these high-demand, high-wage fields are finding employment soon after graduation, another measure of success. Our programs often have 90 to 100 percent pass rates, which are reflective of the dedicated study of our students and the diligent preparation, instructional delivery and consistent student engagement and support by our faculty.

We anticipate anxiously the possible festivities we will host at the new Heritage Plaza. Construction began in March and should be complete by September. We look forward to hosting activities in the plaza in the fall! We also look forward to the completion of the new parking lot at Summit and Block in May.

The celebrations continue with the SouthArk Foundation’s Evening with the Stars event on May 2. This biannual event recognizes the achievement of two of our alumni as well as a friend of the college. The big celebration follows the next Friday with our May commencement ceremony. This always is a highlight in our academic year—a time to celebrate with our students their successful academic achievements and the accomplishment of their life goals.

Spring is my favorite time of year. It is an exciting time at SouthArk, filled with many celebrations for our students, staff and community. I hope you will join us for the many occasions to celebrate this spring at SouthArk!
native, he was stationed at the U.S. 3rd Army Head- quarters in England under Gen. George Patton during World War II. Shortly after the war he met the woman who would become his wife, the late Cacilia Howard, in Germany, where he lived for three years.

Mr. Howard is a graduate of the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville with bachelor’s and master’s degree in accounting. He and his wife relocated to El Dorado after he graduated college and both worked at Lion.

An accomplished scuba diver, Mr. Howard and his wife appeared in a diving film, “Five Fathoms to a Ship’s Grave.” He recently donated a coral collection to South Arkansas Community College, which he retrieved while diving in the Caribbean Sea.

A major contributor to the efforts of the SouthArk Foundation, Heritage Plaza on SouthArk’s West Campus will be named in honor of Mr. Howard and his late wife.

Jerry is the chief financial officer at First Financial Bank in El Dorado, a position that she has held since 1999.

Prior to that she was the internal auditor at National Bank of Commerce in 1988-92, vice president and controller in ’92-’95, senior vice president and controller in ’95-’98 and senior vice president and chief financial officer in ’98-’99.

She was nominated for Arkansas Business’ 2012 Chief Financial Officer of the Year in the Large Bank category.

A Huttig native, Jerry is a 1988 graduate of Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia with a bachelor’s degree in accounting, a 1985 graduate of SAU-El Dorado with an associate’s degree in liberal arts and a 1974 graduate of Strong High School.

She also is a certified public accountant, having been licensed in 1990, and a 1990 graduate of the Bank Administration Institute in Madison, Wis.

Jerry is the chair of the El Dorado Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and previously was on the boards of the Union County Community Foundation Board and El Dorado Habitat for Humanity. She also is a former commissioner of El Dorado Water Utilities.

She is the treasurer and Finance Committee chair of the SouthArk Foundation Board.

Taylor is the corporate environmental, health and safety director of training at Martin Resource Management Group. In his career in training, spanning more than 25 years, he previously was the environmental health and safety services training manager at Great Lakes Solutions South Arkansas Operations, an operations trainer at Lion Oil and the lead trainer for the Century Telephone-Alltel acquisition.

A native of Spearsville, La., Taylor was a satellite communications specialist in the U.S. Air Force during the first Gulf War in 1990. He is a 1989 graduate of Spearsville High School and a 2013 summa cum laude graduate of SouthArk with an associate’s degree in process technology.

He is the chair of the process technology advisory committee at SouthArk.

The event will feature a live auction with auctioneer Bruce Maloch, and local band Sonic Groove will perform for the dance. Dr. John and Julie Spencer will provide smooth jazz during dinner.

“The foundation supports a broad number of teaching and learning initiatives. This event will give the community a chance to learn more about the foundation, the good work it has done, and its plans for the future,” foundation event chair Robin Carroll said.

Tickets are $125 for the black-tie-optional affair, and may be purchased through the foundation office. Proceeds benefit the foundation, which supports college goals and projects, and provides scholarships.
Graduates of last year’s classes in occupational therapy assistance and radiologic technology both performed exceptionally on certification examinations, so it was learned recently.

All 11 graduates from the 2013 class of occupational therapy assistant program passed the credentialing exam to become certified. The 100-percent pass rate exceeds the national average, which is about 80 percent.

All 11 graduates also are employed as certified occupational therapy assistants.

Ten of the 11 graduates of the August 2013 radiologic technology class have taken the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists exam and all passed. For the last two years, SouthArk’s rad tech program has produced a 100 percent pass rate.

“These results illustrate that we remain committed to preparing the best and the brightest health-care professionals for our communities,” Health and Natural Sciences dean Art Brown said. “We are very proud of all that this class has accomplished.”

SPEAKER

Continued from page 1

Henderson State University with honors in 1993. He was captain of the golf team his senior season and was named an NAIA All-America Scholar Athlete and GTE Academic All-American. In 2011 Carroll was inducted into the Henderson State Sports Hall of Honor.

He was named as one of the 10 Outstanding Young Arkansans by the Arkansas Junior Chamber of Commerce in 1997, one of the Arkansas Business “40 Under 40” business leaders in 2001, received the Henderson State University “Young Alumni Achievement Award” in 2007 and was admitted into the Henderson Academy of Scholars in 2008.

Carroll also is the secretary of the SouthArk Foundation Board of Directors.

Birthday celebration

Foundation donors Bill Howard, left, and Charlie Thomas, center, at a February birthday celebration held in their honor speak with Dr. Carolyn Langston.
Several members of the Sigma Epsilon Chapter of Phi Beta Lambda at South Arkansas Community College have completed different levels of the Career and Membership Achievement Program.

CMAP is a comprehensive individual membership recognition program for members of the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda. The projects, goals and programs emphasize career development and preparation for the world of work. There are three levels of achievement that require individuals to participate in integrated workplace activities tied to business, education, leadership, public relations and service. Individuals may complete more than one level per year and must report and log their progress. Each level builds upon the next.

The Director Level focuses on introductory community service and career research activities, and involvement at the local level. SouthArk students who completed this level are Amanda Graves, Angela Grifton, Holly Key, Kathy Modica and Jill Spencer.

The Executive Level focuses on developing job interview skills, state and national FBLA-PBL involvement, public relations activities and leadership. Anne Moses completed the Executive Level of CMAP. Students who completed the Director and Executive Levels are Nikita Culpepper, Gerald Hall, Hazel Hardy, Jennifer Miletello, Capri Scharbor and Doris Springer. All students who complete the Executive Level were be recognized at the Arkansas Leadership Conference in April.

The Presidential Level focuses on job interview preparation, community and campus service and total association leadership. Ruby Billings and Tammie Carrier both completed the Executive and Presidential Levels of CMAP this year. In the last two years, just 24 people have completed this level. Both students will receive awards at the PBL National Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tenn., in June.

The SouthWest Arkansas Community College Consortium will hold its inaugural Regional Advanced Manufacturing Partnership meeting on April 24 at the University of Arkansas Community College-Hope. The meeting represents the kick-off of the consortium’s $8.4 million Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant initiatives, which are led by SouthArk and heavily centered on employer engagement to foster higher skill and education levels for new and incumbent workers.

The consortium’s seven schools cover a service area of 28 counties, and industry supporters across the advanced manufacturing sector will be in attendance, along with state and regional officials from workforce, economic development and higher education areas.

Each consortium college is developing new programs, in concert with manufacturers, in which students will be able to earn credentials from nationally-recognized advanced manufacturing groups such as the National Center for Construction Education and Research, the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council and the Advanced Welding Society. These valuable credentials can be a first step to a good-paying local job, and the first rung on the ladder of success for students who have the desire to improve their skills in crafts such as welding, industrial technology, and logistics.

SouthArk recently received $60,000 in state General Improvement Funds from local representatives for use at the South Arkansas Arboretum (bridge repair), in the automotive service program (lift) and the performance and media arts program (stage lighting).