

BARB'S Wire

December 23, 2014

"I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish He didn't trust me so much."

~ **Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

I relate to what Mother Teresa said...This year has presented us with many challenges and also many opportunities. We have been busy with Higher Learning Commission committees, programmatic accreditation, assessment expansion, curriculum development, APM and catalog review/revisions, equipment selection and purchases, position interviews, college activities, and construction projects...all while achieving our primary goal - delivering quality instruction and student services. In retrospect, we have accomplished so very much in 2014. Thank you all for your dedication and service to SouthArk, our students, and our community!

Vice President for Learning: We are excited to announce that Dr. Mickey Best will be joining the SouthArk staff as our new Vice President for Learning. Dr. Best comes to us from Cedar Valley College (Dallas County Community College District) where he has served as the Executive Dean of Liberal Arts for the past 3 years. Previously, he served as Dean of Arts, Humanities and Career Technology at New Mexico Junior College (12 years) and communication/theatre faculty (10 years). He brings many years of experience with education, HLC and SACS accreditation, curriculum development, assessment, and professional development. He will join us on January 5th.

Many thanks to the numerous individuals who stepped up to assist during the interim – Deans, Directors, Dr. Bullock, Dr. Tully-Dartez, and Marguerite Rogers. Working together as a team, we continued to move forward with assessment, HLC research, catalog revisions, curriculum development, and the regular activities of the CAO office.

Vice President for Finance and Administration: Dr. Belinda Aaron will be transferring to UACC-Hope on January 6th to be closer to family in Texarkana. She has served SouthArk for 8 months. She came to us from Louisiana and learned the "lay of the land" in Arkansas higher education quickly. She jumped into budget preparation, a construction project, policy reviews, and HLC accreditation preparations. We wish her well in her new position at UACC-Hope. In the interim, we are pulling Lathan Hairston out of retirement to serve as the acting VPFA. We are fortunate he agreed to assist us during this time of transition.

Jenzabar Implementation update: Earlier this month our project manager from Jenzabar conducted a campus-wide project meeting in which he laid out the milestones, hazards, resource requirements, and timeline for our migration to the Jenzabar EX product. During this meeting it was repeatedly noted that process review and implementation of best practices was a necessary part of our migration and in many ways fundamental to the success of the project.

In the spring term we will be implementing a *campus life* content area in the mycampus portal where student groups can host their own content areas. This tab will also host a number of open bulletin boards where the SouthArk community can hold open discussions, make suggestions, post upcoming events of interest or list items for sale. Budget managers are reminded that they can quickly obtain budget information via the PXWebQuery module. With a few clicks they can review the status of a departmental budget, review outstanding purchase orders, or obtain a check number for a vendor payment. Anyone currently creating reports via SORT & PRINT in POISE are encouraged to explore the PXWebQuery module as many queries can be captured and subsequently run with just a few mouse clicks.

Health Benefits: *Did you know?* SouthArk just paid the new Affordable Care Act Transitional Reinsurance Fee of \$63.50 for each employee and covered dependent. Some Arkansas colleges have elected to pass this fee on to employees; however, SouthArk is providing this new benefit for the three year health care reform funding process.

Commencement: We celebrated with the 43rd graduating class of SouthArk on December 18, 2014. We had 193 students who earned 215 degrees, technical certificates, or certificates of proficiency. We had about 100 students walking at graduation. Dr. David Rankin, President of South Arkansas University-Magnolia, provided words of challenge and encouragement.

DOL TAACCCT Grant: As a result of the RAMP:UP grant, SouthArk has developed new courses to meet local industry needs. SouthArk has submitted Letters of Notification for an AAS Industrial Technology/Mechatronics and an advanced CP in Welding (pipe welding) to ADHE for Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval in January. In addition, new non-credit industry training courses have been developed for the local industries – Basic Operators Orientation Training (BOOT) Camp II and Tanker Rail Unloading/Loading Safety Training (TRUST) which could be eligible for college credit once enrolled at SouthArk.

Update on the New Early Alert Policy: "In an effort to ensure student retention and success, South Arkansas Community College employs an Early Alert System (EAS) to identify and support at-risk students as soon as possible in a given semester. The intent of Early Alert is to provide this assistance while there is still time to address behaviors or

issues that have the potential of preventing students from completing their courses and degree plans.”

After the first academic semester since the implementation of the updated Early Alert System, we show the following results: Overall, students who were reached by a Student Advising Coach through the Early Alert System received better grades than those that were not able to be reached, and about 75% of participants expressed that they were pleased with the new system. So Early Alert works when used. Conclusions:

-It's working...when we do it.

-We need more participation...both from faculty and from Student Advising Coaches

Faculty—48% of faculty used EAS

Student Advising Coaches— contacted 53% of EARs

Liberal Arts Activities: The Liberal Arts division had a busy semester. The faculty, staff, students and community members have worked throughout the semester to prepare and share wonderful works of art – from film, instrumental and chorale recitals to literary readings. We have a talented college and community.

- Lecture Series – Inge Auerbacher – November 6th
- “Hands that Shaped a Nation” Film debut and reception – November 11th
- Students-in-Recital – December 4th
- Between the Lines, Literary Journal Public Reading – December 7th
- Renaissance Holiday Chorale Concert – December 15th

Facilities/Plant Updates:

New Veteran's Lounge: Be on the watch for an open house early next semester for the new Veterans Lounge in Room 133 of the Computer Technology Building (TEC). In keeping with SouthArk's recent recognition as a Military Friendly School and as a service offered to students who are military veterans, the new lounge is designed to provide a place for study and relaxation for our veterans on campus.

Heritage Plaza construction was completed and the dedication was held on November 6th under a beautiful blue sky. We still have a few “punch list” items to finish, but students, employees, and community members are enjoying this beautiful new space. The brick paver campaign continues with 125 sold and 60 available for purchase.

East Campus: Timber logging on the northern 16 acres is completed. Some clearing of brush and tops is yet to be completed. This will be the location of the Advanced Manufacturing Training Center (AMTC) which will be located north of the Workforce Center. CADM and architect, Blake

Dunn, are working on the plans for the facility. General Improvement Funds will be used for a portion of the funding for the AMTC. The AMTC will contain 3 classrooms, 4 faculty offices, and a large open bay laboratory/training area. The Process Technology and Industrial Technology/Mechatronics programs will be housed in this facility. It will also be the location for customized training for our local industries.

The McWilliams (Callahan) house roofing and exterior repairs are nearing completion. The master plan for the house is complete. We plan to apply for another grant through Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC) this spring to work on phase 2 of this three phase project.

MOVES:

Tim Johnson is now in the ECC.

Cathy Harrell is in the TEC.

Jim Roomsburg and Nita McDonald are now in TEC.

SHOUT OUTS!

Congratulations to Graham Peterson who received his MBA from SAU-Magnolia this December.

Congratulations to Kathy Modica and Nikisha Faulkner – SouthArk December graduates!

Thanks again to everyone who volunteered and participated in the **SouthArk Campus Clean-up – Keep El Dorado Beautiful event!** Thanks to Dr. Aaron and the facilities and grounds team that helped plan the event.

Thanks to everyone involved in planning the **Employee Holiday Reception**. The holiday décor, delicious food, and time with co-workers and friends made for a festive event.

It has been another GREAT and EXCITING YEAR at SouthArk!

The best gifts are not wrapped up in boxes or bags and tucked under a tree. The best gifts are times with family and friends, sharing joys, sorrows, laughter, heartache, fun, and relaxing moments. These times and individuals are gifts that we hold dear in our hearts throughout the year. You are all such wonderful gifts that I cherish. I wish you all a restful, relaxing, peaceful, joyful, and blessed holiday season.

Barbara R. Jones

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- **January 5, 2015 – Monday** – College reopens
- **January 12-13, 2015 – Monday/Tuesday** – Convocation
- **January 14, 2015 – Wednesday** – Classes begin
- **January 19, 2015 – Monday** – MLK Holiday

