Dr. Checkovich: A Campus Plan to Match Our Growth

One of the questions I am asked most often is when are we going to begin construction of a second building on the 46 acre headquarters location. I can’t tell you exactly when, but I can tell you we are planning for it now. Blue Ridge is required to have a master facilities plan approved by the Council for Community and Technical College Education before we are eligible for any construction funding. While we do have an approved plan already in place, parts of it were dated and as a result we have contracted with Bastian and Harris Architects to update and formalize a new plan.

The plan is the vision for developing the 46 acres and a portrayal of how and where future buildings will be located for best use of the land. The plan does not include exactly what will be located inside each of the buildings. In other words, it is the footprint for location of the structures and not a complete listing of what will go into each building. There has been some discussion about moving some specific programs from our Tech Center and that discussion has taken place in order to determine the approximate amount of square footage that will be required for building number two and building number three.

Funding for a new building will have to be approved at the state level. Currently, I am not aware of any discussion related to how quickly that funding may be acquired. Obviously, construction for the building cannot and will not proceed until a solid source of funding is located and approved. However, it is wise for us to have a plan and be ready for the event. Our enrollment has grown at such a pace that a second building is certainly justified.

Most of us do not have an opportunity to construct a master plan for new college facilities. Most often a master plan involves renovation and restoration of existing buildings. At Blue Ridge we have been lucky to build a college literally from the ground up. And the process has been fun, challenging, detailed, and amazing all at the same time. When I reflect on how far this institution has come over the years and where we might go in the future it is fulfilling and awesome. The plan for future development of the campus will be an informational topic at our next assembly meeting. I invite you to join us and dream about the future of the college.

Best Regards,
Dr. Peter Checkovich
HR Facilitates Faculty Teaching & Learning Program Development

As a strategic priority derived from the “Great College to Work For” (Comprehensive Workplace Study _round tables, HR is now leading a committee to develop a Faculty Teaching & Learning program. This program is intended to promote success in the classroom for both new and existing instructors. The program will focus on various content areas to be determined and developed by some of Blue Ridge’s finest instructors.

The Faculty Teaching & Learning program is anticipated to launch in August 2016. The program will be open to all faculty members, including adjunct faculty.

For more information, please contact Brandon Ledbetter, project lead, at bledbett@blueridgectc.edu.

Career Services To Pilot New Career Assessment Tool

By: Chris Cobian, Coordinator of Career Services

When you were in school, did you know what you wanted to be when you grew up? The Office of Career Services helps students find their best career path.

When I was in college, I was unsure of what I wanted to be when I grew up. In fact, one of my plans was to be a Pastor of a Church. Long story! I expect many of our students experience the same uncertainty.

This summer, the Office of Career Services is piloting a new and improved career assessment tool for our students called the World of Work Inventory or WOWi (wow – wee) for short.

The philosophy of WOWi states that:

- Just because students are good at something does not mean they will like it.
- Just because students like something does not mean they will be good at it.
- Just because students like something and are good at it, does not mean they have the temperament to persevere at that occupation.

WOWi provides a robust multidimensional career assessment that measures interests, skills and work styles. The results help guide students onto pathways of career success and happiness. Their website features an online assessment, links to up-to-date wage and salary data, industry information and career exploration assistance. With this assessment, we hope to achieve two major goals:

1. Help students develop a Career Plan where they identify a clear vocational goal that is a good fit and action steps to reach that goal.
2. Develop career profiles that identify the key interests, aptitudes and personality traits that relate to each degree program. Faculty and staff can compare these profiles with students’ to guide advisement.

I am excited about this new project and look forward to working with faculty and staff to determine how to best use the WOWi for their programs. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to email me at ccobian@blueridgectc.edu or call me at X2125.
Ralston Celebrates 30 Years of Literature & Writing

Jim Ralston receives his 30 Year Service Award Certificate from Dr. Checkovich

Did you know that the community college once had a branch in Petersburg, West Virginia? Jim Ralston does because that is where he started working for the college back in 1984. The South Branch Campus of Shepherd’s community college was located in an old courthouse. “I was the only person housed on the second floor. I had windows on three sides, one of them was overlooking the WWI statue in the front courtyard (the names on which were some of the last names of my current students).”

After the closing of the South Branch Campus and separation from Shepherd, Jim Ralston was relocated to Martinsburg to teach English and literature at BRCTC. “When I first came to Martinsburg in my early 60’s, it was a bit of an adjustment. But I have been very happy here. A whole new stage of my career unfolded.” Speaking of stage, Jim didn’t waste much time after arriving in the panhandle to feed the dramatic needs of the students and the community. He directed and managed the production of seven full length plays that were showcased at the Apollo Theater in Martinsburg. He counts these plays as one of his fondest memories. “We dove in over our heads, every time, but how else do you grow.”

Literature and writing have been the center of Jim’s career for more than the 30 years he’s spent teaching. His message to newcomers in the field, “You came into literature and writing because you love them. Don’t lose your glow. Don’t let that love become secondary to bureaucratic concerns.” His passion for American literature carries into the classroom when he talks about some of his favorite authors like Thoreau, Whitman, Emerson, and Raymond Carver. Can’t you just imagine Jim Ralston sitting in the café at HQ having a conversation with one of these literary giants?

Whether he is teaching in a courthouse, a high school, or a beautiful new building in Martinsburg, Jim invigorates the imagination and critical thinking of his students. He has also introduced a “real theater experience” for the students in the cast and the members of the audience of the plays he produced.

“Being older I grew into a more outspoken person, and most students responded to that favorably—being half starved, I think, for positive, assertive elders. I became a mature teacher here, and I’m glad I didn’t retire early.”
Lucht Celebrates 25 Years of “Go Get Lost”

just an idea. Throughout his tenure, he’s been in all the locations, Gardner Hall, the outlet mall, and now the beautiful new headquarters campus. If he remembers correctly, he has inhabited six different desks, all of which he loved. Out of all of them, he did pick a favorite, his office in Gardner Hall. The spacious and private space had a great view of Shepherd’s campus. He recalls his office mates had quite the list of visitors, always giving him an opportunity to meet a new face and swap stories with one interesting person after another. Along with his favorite office, he was quick to acknowledge his least favorite. And office more identifiable as a closet in the Student Center at Shepherd.

What words of wisdom would Bill share with a new employee in higher education?

Bill’s ultimate piece of advice to anyone in the higher education field is to be “intellectually curious.” He advises people to keep an open mind to new ideas and forgo a rigid attitude toward change and challenge the status quo. “If I just did my 9-5 job, if Dr. Checkovich would have left every day at 4:30 we wouldn’t even have a community college.” Bill embraces and revels in the idea that he was able to be a part of an idea so great that came to fruition by the hard work of people who love education and had the desire to provide the community with the opportunities a community college provides.

(cont. on next page)
Lucht Celebrates 25 Years of “Go Get Lost” (cont.)

What is Bill’s fondest memory of his years of service at the college?

Bill’s love of Blue Ridge is evident in almost every conversation he has. He has been part of Blue Ridge since its inception and feels privileged to still be a part of it as the College continues to advance and grow. One of his fondest memories is in the early stages of the College. He was sent on a trip by Dr. Checkovich, which was a normal occurrence, to explore different community colleges and bring back best practices and new ideas to grow and cultivate Blue Ridge in its introductory stages. He was sent to a conference in Phoenix, a trip that will become one of his favorite stories to tell.

He started the trip off right by getting on the wrong train. After a delayed arrival to the conference, he was left with one conference session to attend. He remembers the title specifically, “Just in Time.” This conference changed him and gave him great insight and information to bring home to what would become Blue Ridge. Knowing that he went to the most important session, he knew that things happen for a reason. Getting lost and exploring on his detour led and prepared him for the information that would change the history of the College. He reminisced that his challenge from Dr. Checkovich will always be, “Go get lost!”

Stewart Reflects on 25 Years of College Student Development

We’ve all seen the bumper sticker that says, “If You Can Read This--Thank a Teacher”. Plenty of Blue Ridge students have Cindy Stewart to thank for her 25 plus years of instruction of classes like Developmental Reading, College Study Skills, Critical Thinking, and First Year Experience.

Cindy Stewart receives her 25 Year Service Award Certificate from Dr. Checkovich

Cindy began her career in higher education in August 1989 at Shepherd College. She started as a lecturer, was a classified employee for a while, and now is a tenured Associate Professor at BRCTC. She taught at Shepherd College for many years before the community college separated from Shepherd and moved to Martinsburg. Throughout the years her “office” has been anything from a desk to a cubicle to a shared office to a private office. The office didn’t matter as much as the classroom. “I have always enjoyed seeing the progress in first year college students who previously had reading difficulties. It has always been a very satisfying job...which never really seemed like a job at all for me.”

Satisfaction with the job seems to be the glue that has kept Cindy planted in Martinsburg teaching college students. She, as many of her colleagues will agree, says, “Teaching in higher education is one of the most satisfying jobs there is.” Asked if she ever considered leaving the college or teaching she responded, “I really never considered leaving for any reason. I’ve pretty much loved my job the entire time.”
Nevertheless Cindy has decided to retire in the near future. She said, however, that she’ll miss it. “I have great memories of my students throughout the years.” Over the years, she enhanced her skills by attending conferences such as the National Associate of Developmental Education (NADE) held each year in different locations around the country. She got to meet people who were doing the same things at other colleges. In addition to the impact she made on students (and vice versa), Cindy also counts her promotion to Associate Professor as a memorable moment in her career. “Another memorable moment for me was moving into our brand new building in Martinsburg.”

Celebrating the years of service that Cindy Stewart has provided the college and the community is an easy task. The College’s employees can all appreciate the impact she has made on the lives of hundreds, maybe even thousands of students who needed her caretaking instruction to be successful in college. “I have and will always have very fond memories of all the close friends, teachers, and students that I have made over the years.”

5 Year Service Award Recipients

- Laura Busey
- Ty Eubanks
- Apryl McDonough
- Michele Morrison
- Brenda Neal
- Jess Colon (not pictured)

10 Year Service Award Recipients

- George Perry
- Teresa Noll
- Mike Byers (not pictured)
The Blue Ridge CTC Foundation hosted the first Blue Ridge Bluegrass and BBQ on Friday, May 15. The event was a great success raising over $7,600 to benefit the general scholarship fund. The evening was full of wonderful music by Laura Bussey and Ernie Bradley and the Blue Ridge CTC Bluegrass students, as well as great BBQ food by The Purple Iris and desserts by the Academy of Hospitality and Culinary Arts. Approximately 160 people attended the event, and ten local companies were sponsors. During the event, attendees could sample craft beer and wine provided by Reid’s Distributor and sparkling ciders donated by SVB Food and Beverage Co., as well as buy raffle tickets for a donated Big Green Egg or participate in the silent auction of local farm market baskets. Many Blue Ridge CTC faculty and staff were in attendance. It was encouraging to see the support of the College employees. The Foundations looks forward to growing this event for next year and continuing to raise money to provide student scholarships.

**Foundation Awards 2nd Annual Presidential Scholarship**

The Foundation offers each high school in the tri-county area an Excellence Scholarship to a graduating senior attending Blue Ridge CTC. The Foundation Director, Sherri Janelle, will be attending all the high school awards ceremony within the next two weeks to award each scholarship. The Foundation also presents one Presidential Scholarship to the most outstanding student application receiving $1500 for the 2015-2016 academic year. This year’s recipient of the Presidential Scholarship is Kirsten Ours from Musselman High School The Foundation will also award seven Excellence Scholarships of $750 and two BCT Scholarships of $500. The Excellence Scholarship recipients are Shania Hovermale (BSHS), Kearsten Sanders (HHS), Sarah Beland (Home-School), Michal McCutcheon (SMHS), Kaylin Puffenbarger (MHS), Mary Fore (MuHS), and Melissa Grant (WHS). The BCT recipients are Caitlynn Frye (WHS) and Samantha Timmons (HHS). For more information on Foundation Scholarships, please visit the webpage. http://www.blueridgectc.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/
Finance Welcomes New Accounting Manager

**Kristy Scarlata**

Accounting Manager

The Finance Office is pleased to welcome Kristy Scarlata to the team as Accounting Manager. The Campus Connection sat down with Kristy for a few questions.

**Kristy, welcome to Blue Ridge! Can you tell us a little about your job history and education?**

Well, I have twenty one years of accounting experience, which ranges from public, private and governmental accounting. I have a CPA and received my degree in accounting from WVU.

**What attracted to you to Blue Ridge?**

The reputation of the school throughout the community was impressive, including its celebrated work/life balance.

**Fill in the blank. Kristy, Blue Ridge faculty and staff would most likely come to you for assistance in…**

I would be able to assist with anything accounting related.

**Can you tell us a little about your family? Are you a resident of Martinsburg, if so how long?**

I currently reside in Inwood with my husband, but I am originally from Clarksburg, WV.

**And when you’re not here at work, what do you enjoy doing?**

I enjoy spending quality time with my husband, boating, fishing and relaxing!

Kristy, welcome to the Finance Office and the BRCTC team.

Finance Introduces New Purchasing Card Guidelines & Processes

Recently, the Purchasing Card Program underwent a Program Evaluation. The State Auditor’s Office – Purchasing Card Division, reviewed six months of the College’s P-Card transactions against its own policies and that of the State. The feedback from the evaluation was positive and included some suggestions to strengthen internal controls and improve administrative oversight over our purchasing card program. The following changes are being introduced as a result of that evaluation.

**Tagging of iPads**

Effective May 2015, all iPads purchased with agency funds will need to be asset tagged by the Finance Department. This requires that all current faculty/staff with an iPad to bring their iPad to Finance so that an asset tag can be placed on the device. When purchasing a new iPad the purchaser will need to have the iPad tagged by Finance and reference the “asset tag” number and whom the iPad was purchased for on their P-Card receipt. When the new purchase is a replacement of an older iPad, the “old” iPad will need to be turned into Finance and the new iPad will need to follow aforementioned process.

**Receiving Reports**

In the past, the requirements for receiving were driven by the account code. However, effective May 2015, all commodity based purchases will require that those items be received by a Certified Receiver. So this now includes items being coded to “Hospitality” – 79H148 and “Student Activities” – 79H168.

**Documenting Business Purpose**

For items purchased that have the high risk of conversion to personal use; to include grocery, home goods, and home improvement; the business justification should be noted on the cardholder’s receipt. Examples include but are not limited to:

- catering contract number
- copy of the weekly café menu or note: “food items purchased for menu week of…”
- course number/syllabi
- work order number or facilities request order number

Purchasing and P-Card training sessions were hosted this spring to review current policies and procedures and introduce and clarify new processes. The Finance Department appreciates the support of all staff and faculty in ensuring the proper use of agency and State funds.
Career Services Engages Employers and Supports Student Placement

By: Nick Czapla, Job Placement Specialist

Most students would receive a wild look from parents, professors, and fellow classmates if they had simply neglected to visit the financial aid office to see if they could decrease the cost of their degree. The ongoing jokes of ramen and odd college jobs always seem to get a laugh. Most students are hypersensitive about decreasing costs and are coached to do so by admissions counselors, parents, academic advisors, and older siblings.

However, there appears to be lacking of such consideration and mentorship when students are preparing to maximize their earning potential on the back end of their college experience. All smart business owners look to decrease costs and increase profits so as to maximize their returns on their investments (ROI). Through my lens, students are lacking the essential job searching skills (resume and cover letter writing, networking, interviewing skills, etc.), which is holding them back from maximizing the ROI on the market value of their prospective degrees.

The research on national graduate employment rates further validate these observations: Over half of college graduates are unemployed or underemployed. Furthermore, for the students that are employed, less than half are employed in their respective fields of study.

The Office of Career Services at Blue Ridge CTC is seeking to combat these deficiencies. Our recent Career Fair attracted 40 employers and over 350 participants. During our mock interview event, 14 employers interviewed with more than 80 students over a two day period. During those two days, approximately 10 students received job offers or other opportunities to follow-up with prospective employers. For example, approximately 1/4 of the mechatronics students who participated received job offers during the event and two are projected to begin working in a couple weeks after interviewing with Essroc’s representative. The College’s student job board has exploded with 20 postings the first month to close to 70 in April – all of which are directly related to the degrees that Blue Ridge students are obtaining. Our business and industry partners are appreciative of our newest program, the resume book, which is a list of soon-to-graduate students or graduated students’ resumes that are forwarded on to employers by Career Services when we are notified of opportunities in the job market. Our office is buzzing with success stories: one student was able to land a job in her field that paid her an extra $10,000 dollars more than what she was making, while another was able to land two interviews in one week based off positions posted on our student job board.

Numerous studies over the years have shown that individuals with college degrees significantly out-earn those with high school degrees by $1 million or more over the course of a lifetime. How quickly can students begin accessing the benefits of their education? I’m convinced that the earlier that students begin the process of engaging with Career Services, the more likely that they may begin seeing such returns on their investment.

Security Provides Easier Way to Register for e2Campus

Security announces a streamlined mechanism for registering for the e2Campus emergency alert system.

Faculty, staff, students and the public may register for e2Campus notifications now by texting the word “safety” to #79516. This will automatically opt an individual into system text message notifications.

All employees are encouraged to register for alerts and also pass along the word to students.
Student Employment Program Assists Departments and Students

The Student Employment program at Blue Ridge CTC provides qualified students with temporary, part-time employment opportunities at College as well as in community service organizations in the Eastern Panhandle. The program allows students to earn money to use toward educational and living expenses, gain valuable work experience and build relationships both in the community and at the College.

Here’s what a student employee supervisor and a student employee had to say about the program:

Blue Ridge CTC Student Employment Supervisor: “Blue Ridge CTC Student Employment/Work Study Students are utilized by the Faculty and Staff of the Division of Allied Sciences on a regular basis. They have been a very important part of what makes the everyday flow of the office and with Faculty needs. They also allow for Instructors to better prepare for class, assist with grading and preparing labs. It is great to know that when there is a heavy workload, a crunch period, or a spur of the moment project, we can count on the abilities and skills of our Work Study Students to assist. The Student Employment/Work Study program is a very efficient and effective way to provide help where and when it is needed.”

Blue Ridge CTC Student Employee: “Working at Blue Ridge CTC has helped me grow as a person and has provided me workplace experience that I can take with me into the workforce. The flexible schedule allowed me to work around my classes and being located on campus made it very convenient. I really enjoyed my time as a student employee and I would recommend the program to other students.”


Current student employment positions can be found on our web site by clicking on the “JOBS” link and then on the “Student Opportunities” link.

If you are interested in creating a position for a student employee or for more information regarding the Student Employment Program, please contact Tami Aabel at extension 2233.

Citi Commercial Cards Chip and PIN Solution for P-Card Holders

The College’s Citi Visa purchasing cards will be migrating to the Chip and Pin technology. It is being introduced as another tool to help combat potential fraud.

What Is It?

Chip and PIN cards contain an encrypted microprocessor that is embedded within the card. If the card is lost or stolen, the embedded microchip makes the card extremely difficult to counterfeit. All Citi Chip and PIN cards will continue to have a magnetic stripe, enabling cardholders to use their Citi Chip and PIN cards at merchants who have not yet adopted Chip and PIN technology. No personal information about the cardholder account (outside of account number, expiration date, PIN and Security Code) or cardholder is stored on the microchip.

Why Is Citi Moving to Chip and PIN?

Chip and PIN is the next generation of payment card technology and merchants in the United States are expected to begin rapidly adopting Chip and PIN technology during the course of 2015.

What Does This Mean For Cardholders?

- All current cardholders will receive a new card.
- Cardholders will have to activate their new cards and establish a four-digit PIN during the activation process.
- At retailers that are equipped to take CHIP and PIN cards, upon the first transaction, a P-card holder will insert the card, chip first, into the terminal and not remove it until the transaction is complete. A P-card holder will confirm the purchase amount and sign the terminal receipt. Upon subsequent transactions, a P-card holder will be prompted for the PIN.
- P-Cards will still contain the magnetic stripe so that the card can still be used at terminals that are not equipped with the Chip and PIN Technology.

Note: Purchases made over-the-phone and on the internet do not require a PIN.
Linda Kimes to Coordinate New HIM Program

As the Coordinator of the new Health Information Management Program, Linda Kimes is excited about the new program. Linda has lived in Berkeley County for most of her life and currently resides in Bunker Hill.

Linda has worked in healthcare for 28 years in a variety of positions such as, Medical Assistant, File Clerk, Supervisor of Medical Records, Director of Health Information Management, and Quality Improvement/Risk Management and as a Coder employed by the VA Medical Center in Martinsburg.

Working in diverse settings of healthcare including, physician offices, nursing homes and hospitals, both private sector and government, somewhere along the way she realized that indeed learning is a lifelong process.

Linda graduated from the Health Information Management program at Hagerstown Business College in 1996 and went on to Mountain State University and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership.

She is a Registered Health Information Technologist with AHIMA.

Linda is looking forward to working with students, helping them obtain the skills and confidence needed to enter the Health Information Management, and together realizing the growth of the program as well as the personal growth of individual students.

Linda is married to Butch and they have 3 sons, 6 grandchildren and 2 dogs.

Allied Health: In the News

Nursing
The SNA is having a fundraiser at Sweet Frog (at the Commons) on May 9th all day for National Nurses week. Please bring a flyer from Nursing or tell the cashier the purchase is for the BRCTC Student Nurses.

A blood drive is schedule for June 19, 2015 from 11-430pm in Room 1101.

PTA
The PTA pinning ceremony is Friday, June 26th @ 6:30pm at the WVU Byrd Auditorium of Berkeley Medical Center. Attendance of anyone who may be interested is welcomed. A variety of awards will be presented at this ceremony.

Welcome to Bruin New Hires

Allied Health
Linda Kimes—HIM Program Coordinator
Faculty
Enrollment Management
Sara Greenfield—Student Success Counselor
Shauna Seering—Financial Aid Counselor
Finance
Kelly Claros—Accounting Assistant
Kristy Scarlata—Accounting Manager
Program Coordinator Faculty

Human Resources
Tyler Lewis—Security Guard
IT
Richard Crea—IT Assistant
Workforce
Diane King—Housekeeper
Paul Emanuel—Chemical Ops Technician
Enrollment Management Welcomes New Team Members

Shauna Seering
Financial Aid Counselor

She previously worked in Financial Aid and Disability Support Services at Hagerstown Community College. Shauna has also worked in Financial Aid at American Public University System and as the Director of Student Services at Mountain State University’s Martinsburg Campus.

Shauna was a first-generation college student and saw while in college the tremendous opportunities that it afforded students. Knowing the financial struggles she went through as a student, she is excited at the opportunity to work with students to help them realize their potential and help ease the financial burden that higher education can have on students.

Sara Greenfield
Student Success Counselor

Sara Greenfield is a m from Martinsburg, WV. For her undergraduate studies, she attended Fairmont State University where she received her BA in Communications. She just graduated in Spring 2015 with her MA in College Student Development Administration from Shepherd University. Sara will be working as the Student Success Counselor at the Tech Center. In her spare time, she enjoys going for walks with her dog Boo, baking and watching movies.

EM Purchases Retention & Advisement Software

Enrollment Management is excited to announce the purchase of Hobsons Software, which is a Student Lifecycle Management System (SLM). Enrollment Management is now in the implementation phase of building the custom software. The first project is an online application for admission to the college. The application is now in the final review stages and is set to launch early June. This will allow students to apply to our college from anywhere.

Radius, the retention portal, will allow the institution to execute their Student Lifecycle Management (SLM) strategies and provide a valuable recruitment and enrollment experience to students. Targeted e-mail campaigns and online chat functionality are just a few of the ways we can use Radius to personalize and manage student relationships using multi-channel communication options.

Radius offers a seamless online application system that guides students through the application process. This personalized, one-stop student portal allows students to apply and track application status.

Additionally, Radius automatically tracks and analyzes all student touch points from point of inquiry to application to enrollment. The analytics functionality of Radius allows us to identify enrollment trends, forecast student populations, and develop strategic action plans for even greater institutional efficiencies.

The advisement software portion will help by creating personalized degree-based roadmaps to graduation, and empower students to manage their academic future. This easy-to-use technology also provides advisors with insight into student plans, allowing advisors to review, alter, and monitor student course load and path to graduation, as well as intelligence into student choices, allowing administrators to make strategic decisions based on accurate curriculum and class forecasting.
Barnes & Noble Bookstore Survey Results Revealed

Students and faculty were recently asked to complete an electronic survey, which focused on the Barnes and Noble College bookstore, distributed by the Textbook Affordability Committee. The student survey was delivered through Blackboard, with a total of 406 respondents. Faculty took part in a similar survey through Survey Monkey, with 23 participants. A variety of questions were asked, using a scale to obtain responses which ranged from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

Students and faculty also provided feedback through comments, which touched on overall satisfaction with website user-friendliness, book buy-back, policies and procedures, and customer service.

According to survey results, students expressed satisfaction with the layout of the bookstore website, with 220 students responding they “agree” that the site is easy to navigate, and 111 who responded with, “strongly agree.” Students were also pleased with staff customer service. Comments to this effect included, “Everyone was so nice and helpful!,” and “I feel that the B&N Bookstore not only take their jobs seriously, but they care about the satisfaction of the customer.”

Faculty who participated in the survey were in agreement with students when asked about customer service. Results showed a positive response, with 43.8% of faculty who “strongly agree,” and 39.13% “agree” they “feel confident directing students to the Barnes and Noble College bookstore for answers to book issues, ordering, and general information.”

Overall, the main point of dissatisfaction for students is the high cost of textbooks, as was consistently expressed within the comment portion of the survey. Faculty shared this opinion, with one statement including, “I consider the markup on textbooks and supplies is price gouging. A calculator that one can purchase at Office Max or Walmart for $10.00 is $20.00 in the bookstore.”

Students expressed a desire for more clarity and consistency regarding book buy-back, rental, and return procedures. Comments from students included: “I haven’t really seen any information about book buy-back this semester,” and “Students need more people to go over policies.”

To address students’ concerns, the feedback from the annual surveys provides a valuable resource for developing strong, efficient textbook and bookstore services to students. In response to additional reviews of the bookstore policies for students, the Bruin Bookstore Manager, Denise Friday, conducts regular and consistent reviews of textbook and bookstore policies and procedures in addition to reviewing the Barnes and Noble bookstore guidelines.

Friday emphasized that the website, blueridgeetc.bncollege.com, is an instrumental tool in providing book buy-back dates and times to students. Additional methods are utilized as well, including announcing the buy-back schedules with social media posts on Facebook at face-book.com/blueridgectcbookstore.

In order to better communicate information needed by students, the Textbook Affordability Committee will introduce a student representative as a vital member of the committee to address student concerns and to collect pertinent information to forward to students, including book buy-back schedules. The established committee consists of members representing several administrative and academic departments on campus, including student services, finance, and faculty. The group meets each spring and fall semester.

The annual surveys will be presented again this spring for completion by both faculty and students for additional feedback and guidance.
E-Learning Team Goes Green on Earth Day

On April 22nd, the E-Learning团队 worked in conjunction with Student Affairs, offering a variety of Earth Day-themed activities, developed by Amanda Carrell, E-Learning Support Specialist. During the school-wide Campus Clean Up event, E-Learning participated in the following ways:

- A bin was available to encourage students to recycle.
- Together with Student Services, E-Learning donated funds for the purchase of an oak tree for the campus. Students and staff planted this tree together.
- Information was available on a display board, which focused on the recycling of personal electronics and the environmental benefits of E-Learning. Students were encouraged to participate in a “Make a Pledge to the Environment” activity.

Carrell stated, “Activities for Earth Day turned out fantastically. Students were enthusiastically engaged in the higher purpose for the day’s activities. Blue Ridge has written into its mission to improve the quality of life of the community, and what better way to do so than working alongside students to provide a cleaner campus?”

Looking ahead toward the fall semester, E-Learning will be offering the following activities at a display table on the first floor for “Welcome Back Week”, August 17th-21st:

- Enter to win a laptop!
- E-Learning-themed games and prizes
- 1st floor help desk representative for questions about Blackboard
- Resources for success in the online learning atmosphere

Amanda Carrell, E-Learning Support Specialist, working alongside students and staff to plant a tree on campus.

Campus Clean-Up team, comprised of both BRCTC staff and students
Spring Transfer Expo & Articulation Updates

The Spring Transfer Expo, organized by Jackie Griggs, Academic Program Specialist, was held on March 17th and 18th on Headquarters campus. Seven universities and colleges were in attendance, including Shepherd University, West Virginia University, Stevenson University, American Sentinel University, Shenandoah University, American Public University, and Excelsior College. “The majority of the student Transfer Expo participants were Information Technology and Nursing majors, according to the university/college representatives,” said Griggs.

University representatives felt that most students knew exactly when they were transferring and what degree program they wanted. Students were very proactive and engaged. “Quality conversations were held with students, with real interests and aspiration,” stated one participant. Future Transfer Expo events will be planned “each Spring and Fall semesters with dates and times to attract students in the daytime as well as during evening class hours,” according to Griggs.

New transfer-articulation agreement plans are underway. Most recently, two agreements with WVU; the AS in Education to the BA in Elementary Education and the AS to BS in Nursing, and a second nursing agreement with Shenandoah University, ASN to BSN. “Additional agreements with Shenandoah University and Stevenson University are expected, in Business Administration and Criminal Justice, and we have had interest from Salem International University and West Virginia State University for the development of articulations,” Griggs explained.

Griggs expressed a positive outlook for the future and the relationships that Blue Ridge CTC will develop with four-year institutions. “I anticipate a substantial growth in this area for Blue Ridge CTC. Many schools are contacting us for the development of articulations. It is nice to see four-year institutions requesting agreements with Blue Ridge CTC, indicating that they are taking note of the success here and of the potential of our students.” To find a full list of current articulations, search “Current Students” and “Transfer Articulation” on the Blue Ridge CTC website.

Technology Summit to be Held on Campus

A Technology Summit event, hosted by Blue Ridge CTC and the Blue Ridge Chapter of ISSA (Information Systems Security Association), will take place on Friday, June 5th from 1:00pm – 4:30pm on Headquarters campus, room 1101. Speakers on the program to present include:

- Dave Brown, BRCTC adjunct faculty and President of the Blue Ridge Chapter of ISSA, will provide a brief overview of membership to the organization.
- Rod Summers, Section Chief of IT Technical Unit at the CJIS Division, FBI in Clarksburg, WV, will address the group regarding internship opportunities locally and in the Clarksburg area.
- Rhonda Farrell, Associate with Booz Allen and Hamilton, will discuss Women in Technology. Mr. Leigh Reise, CEO, ITAAPS (Information Technology Auditing and Professional Services), will address current trends in the industry. ITAAPS is a veteran-owned small business recognized by the US Department of Veterans Affairs, the Center of Veterans Enterprise.

This is a free event with no registration required. Light refreshments will be provided. Contact Michele Morrison, Cyber Security Program Coordinator, at 304.260.4380 ext. 3329 or mmorriso@blueridgectc.edu with any questions.
Quality Matters to an Artful Life

Jennifer Orr
Adjunct

Those of us who advise transfer students often hear this: “I can take an art class? Great! I love to draw!” or “Music? Perfect! I’m in a band, so that’s an easy A.” Initially, our students don’t always understand that our ART 103 and MUSC 111 courses are not hands-on application classes but are instead more historical survey classes. The Introduction to Visual Art classes that Jennifer teaches, though, have become much more hands-on this past year – at least in the sense that students are applying their hands to their keyboards in her online sections of the general education art class.

When Jennifer moved halfway across the state last year, she wanted to continue adjuncting for Blue Ridge. Unfortunately, though, no one had ever created an online version of ART 103. Jennifer’s experience in the online course delivery world…

[Have you ever heard that white is the combination of all colors of the spectrum and black is the absence of all of those colors?]…would have been black in the art world. Not only had she never taught an online course, she had never taken one, either!

Within a few months, after taking some trainings, Jennifer built her course. As she sought to develop the online class, she applied the Quality Matters Rubric to her own course, which helped ensure that she was using appropriate activities and means of assessment. After additional revisions and the opening of a new semester’s course, a team of Quality Matters Peer Reviewers (Amanda Carrell, Brett Gallagher, and Billie Unger) evaluated her course using that same rubric, providing Jennifer with feedback to strengthen her course even further.

The result of that Peer Review was Jennifer’s achieving a singular honor: Authoring the first Blue Ridge CTC online course to be peer-reviewed and recognized by Quality Matters. The application of the Quality Matters Rubric to an instructor’s courses is one of the measures the College uses to determine whether a faculty member is qualified to teach online.

While that Quality Matters rubric helped Jennifer strengthen her course, it did not help her make sure that her course had the same sort of “flow” that a face-to-face class has. Her greatest challenge, she says, was making sure that a student who took her online class could comfortably discuss shared experiences in a conversation with a student who took Karen Barrett’s once-a-week in-person class or with a student from Gary Bergel’s twice-a-week face-to-face section.

In building a course that would make that sort of conversation possible, she ended up facilitating conversations in her own class. The discussion portion of her online class, she says, is “deeper – much better than it ever was.” She didn’t expect that outcome, but after reflection, she has decided that it occurred because “people can’t just sit” like they might in a face-to-face class. The students “all have to think about the questions and create their own responses.” As a result, the discussion is “much richer because all are participating.”

That participation is a key element in Jennifer’s class. During the course, students are required to visit several art exhibits and choose a work of art in each about which to write a critique. Their critiques must demonstrate an understanding and application of their coursework, but they can also include accounts of their experiences while visiting the exhibits. These visits to museums and installations help students to understand, as Jennifer says, that “art is everywhere.”

Her teaching philosophy is similarly inclusive, with art acting as a bond among us all: “A lot of people don’t think art has a place for them. I think it’s important for people to know that art is for everyone. Art is very personal, relative. There is no right or wrong way to interact with it.” In taking her class, Jennifer hopes her students “become aware that art is all around” them and come away knowing that anyone “can live an artful life.”
All Employees Required to Create a myApps Account

Do you access your pay stubs (eNODS) or W-2s via the state auditor’s office website? If so, you are on pace for managing your time, leave and eNODS when the state moves to new employee self-service and time and leave system in 2016.

If you do not have a myApps account, you are encouraged to create a myApps account at wvsao.gov. All employees will be required to have a myApps account when the state launches Phase D of the ERP, also known as wvOASIS. The state has provide HR with a list of employees who are not registered. The HR Team is making rounds informing employees and assisting with registration as needed.

Please stop by HR for a hard copy of the step-by-step instructions for creating a myApps online account. You may also view an electronic copy at “Policies and Procedures” on the HR portion of the College’s website.

School of Workforce and Eng. Tech. Earns Grant Funds

Over the past year, The School of Workforce and Engineering Technologies has been working hard to generate additional funding for certificate development and new equipment purchases. This year alone, the School has generated approximately $1.2 million dollars in Technical Program Development grants and a WV Advance Grant for Instrumentation Process Control.

Technical Program Development and WV Advance grants provide the funding necessary to develop academic programs that meet the documented needs of employers by targeting high-demand occupations. Faculty continue to collaborate with local employers to design new programs based on workforce needs.

The involvement and collaboration of employers is essential to preparing our students to fill job shortages in technical careers across the state and nation. Certificates in Robotics, Renewable Energy Systems, Instrumentation Process Control, and Agribusiness are currently under development to meet these growing needs.