Northwest Arkansas Community College Foundation is hosting its 10th annual Scholarship Gala, Thursday evening, April 4, at the John Q. Hammons Center in Rogers. In addition to celebrating the important role higher education plays in creating better lives for community residents, attendees also will be celebrating a decade of service by NW ACC President Dr. Becky Paneitz, who will retire from the College on June 30.

The general reception will begin at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. The evening will feature a variety of entertainment from Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, Washington Regional Medical Center's Mark Bever, as well as the Thursday Night Band. NW ACC students will once again serve as celebrity waiters. Event proceeds will benefit scholarships for NW ACC students for the coming academic year.

“Scholarship awards presented from previous gala proceeds have impacted our students’ lives significantly,” said Dr. Meredith Brunen, Executive Director of the NWACC Foundation. “Because of the generosity of our community, staff and faculty, students have been able to continue attending college at NWACC and earn degrees when they would have had to discontinue their studies without scholarship support.”

Faculty and staff may obtain gala tickets to this year’s event at half-price ($50 per ticket) by contacting the Foundation Office or going online to www.nwaccfoundation.org. Each year the NWACC Foundation honors individuals and organizations with a prestigious Quality of Life Award. The awards recognize those who have helped build and sustain the exceptional quality of life we all enjoy in Northwest Arkansas. This year, the Foundation Board of Directors is honoring David Thrasher, Northwest Arkansas Council, and Susan Chambers for their vision and leadership in our community.

David Thrasher is being honored with a Quality of Life Award for his dedication of time, talents, and financial contributions to NorthWest Arkansas Community College. A true servant leader, David has been an active member of the NWACC Foundation Board of Directors, serving as Board Chair for eight years. Under his leadership, the Foundation successfully completed a $16 million capital campaign, as well as provided innovative funding solutions for other College projects that have received national recognition. David and his wife, Linda, are founding members of the Foundation’s newly formed Post Oak Society, which recognizes those who have left a legacy gift to benefit future generations of NWACC students.

A fifth generation Rogers resident, David
has spent more than 30 years helping to create a more prosperous future for his fellow community members. In addition to owning and operating his own business, Thrasher & Chambers, David also devotes his time and resources to numerous local nonprofit organizations. His fingerprint can be seen throughout the community as he has positively impacted countless organizations with his selfless volunteerism.

Northwest Arkansas Council has been selected to receive a Quality of Life Award for its commitment to making Northwest Arkansas a better place to live and work. The private, nonprofit organization serves as a catalyst and collaborator for finding solutions to the opportunities and challenges facing this thriving region by developing and implementing strategy for improving Northwest Arkansas in four focus areas: regional economic development, community vitality, educational excellence, and infrastructure. Through continued focus in these key areas, Northwest Arkansas will remain great for business, great for life and globally competitive.

Actively supported and empowered by high-level executive leaders at homegrown, world-class corporations such as Walmart, Sam's Club, Tyson Foods and J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Northwest Arkansas Council is in a unique position to connect companies or families with key stakeholders and influencers. The active leadership behind the success story of this region continues to be a key differentiator.

Susan Chambers is being recognized with a Quality of Life Award for her outstanding commitment to workforce development and education, as well as her personal connection with Northwest Arkansas Community College. Serving as Executive Vice President of the People Division at Walmart, Susan is responsible for managing, attracting, and retaining the nation's largest private workforce and reports directly to Walmart President and CEO Mike Duke. She has been named as one of the "50 Most Powerful Women" by Fortune Magazine.

Susan and her husband, Chip, truly believe in the mission of Northwest Arkansas Community College and are members of the President's Circle, a giving society that helps to provide student hardship assistance, as well as addresses other student-related priorities.

Health Professions students began attending classes on Jan. 14 in the new Center for Health Professions, which features state-of-the-art simulation labs and the latest in green building technologies.

NWACC conducted a dedication ceremony on Jan. 18. The new Center for Health Professions houses nursing, respiratory therapy, physical therapist assistant, paramedic, emergency medical technician, fire science, certified nursing assistant and patient care assistant programs.

Mary Ross, Dean of Health Professions at NWACC, said simulation training using high-tech mannequins and collaboration among students throughout the health disciplines will be key components of students' education in the new center.

“This collaboration among students in those disciplines will represent practical training that reflects the true working environment,” she said. In one scenario she mentioned, first responders will fine-tune skills of extricating “crash victims” from a mangled car and then paramedics/EMTs will practice loading the patient into the ambulance and administering care in the confined space that an ambulance presents. From there, respiratory therapy or nursing students also will have the opportunity to administer aid.

The Nursing Simulation Lab, made possible by a gift from Washington Regional Medical Center, features high-fidelity mannequins that can be programmed to engage NWACC nursing students in more than 100 scenarios, allowing students to be exposed to many of the real-world situations they may encounter in their work.

“We are thrilled at the many opportunities this new center will provide our current students and generations of students to come,” said Dr. Becky Paneitz, President of NWACC. “Ultimately, the new center will enhance our ability to educate and prepare those seeking a career in the health professions.”

Ross said the new center is expected to allow the College to add some needed programs and to open up additional slots in some key areas. For example, NWACC’s physical therapist assistant instructors have been seeking to expand the number of students who can enroll in the program, which currently serves 14 students. The College also is in the process of seeking required approvals to add a program in the growing field of Health Information Management.

Construction on the new center began in 2011. Crafton Tull provided the architect services, and Nabholz Construction Services was the contractor.

The cost for the total building project, including architectural fees, construction, furnishings and technology, is approximately $14.2 million.

The structure is the College’s first green building initiative through the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design program. NWACC is seeking LEED silver certification for the center.

Jim Lay, NWACC’s Executive Director of Facilities and Construction Management, said sustainable practices were followed throughout the building’s design and construction and will be used in its operations and maintenance. Green initiatives included such attention to detail as sourcing raw materials within 400 miles of the college and recycling almost 80 percent of the materials leaving the job site. All of the efforts have been documented and reported to the U.S. Green Building Council.

State Sen. Cecile Bledsoe was a special guest speaker for the event. Student Lisa Law also addressed the gathering.
Board Hosts Tree Dedication Ceremony

NorthWest Arkansas Community College’s 2012 Board of Trustees held a tree dedication ceremony Dec. 17 honoring Dr. Becky Paneitz. Paneitz has been President of NWACC since August 2003. She plans to retire from the post effective June 30, 2013.

Alex Vasquez, who served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees in 2011 and 2012, said the 2012 board wanted to recognize Dr. Paneitz’s service in a lasting way.

“Nelson Henderson, who left Ireland during the Great Hunger, once said, ’The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit,’ ” Vasquez said. “We would like for this living gift to honor Dr. Paneitz’s dedicated service to the untold number of students whose lives have been enhanced by NWACC.”

John Hendricks, owner of The Grey Barn, donated the tree, a Pin Oak, and the area design and labor in support of the College. Hendricks is a former student at NWACC and said he wanted to give back to the College because of its importance in his life and its important role in the community.

The Board of Trustees will provide an inscribed plaque honoring Dr. Paneitz with the message, “Providing shade for those seeking a brighter future.” The tree is planted in the circle drive area between the Student Center and Burns Hall.

Presentation to Focus on Painter of National Parks

NWACC Faculty Member to Present Lecture on Work of Gunnar Widforss

Through the Roaring Twenties and the first half of the Great Depression, the Swedish-born landscape painter Gunnar Widforss (1879-1934) focused his discerning eye and passionate energy on the national parks of the American West.

Curator and author Alan Petersen has been uncovering Widforss’ story and is working on a book on Widforss’ life and art as well as compiling a catalogue raisonne of works created by Widforss. Petersen, an adjunct faculty member in art at NorthWest Arkansas Community College, will present a slide lecture and tell the story of Widforss’ life and art work at 7:30 p.m. March 28 in Peterson Auditorium of the Shewmaker Center for Global Business Development.

Because of Widforss’ untimely death at only age 55, and because the rise of modernism in the early-20th century consigned many highly skilled realistic painters to obscurity, Widforss’ legacy is largely unknown today. The amiable Swede led a bohemian life in search of beautiful landscapes to paint.

Widforss dressed formally as he worked and always attracted wonder-struck onlookers when he painted in Yosemite Valley, on the rim of Grand Canyon and the other locations he favored in the national parks. Park Service friends such as Ansel Hall and Stephen Mather as well as tourists marveled at the accuracy of his painting and the way in which he was able to capture the dramatic landscapes. Today, Widforss’ work is known only to a small number of dedicated collectors, the descendants of his family and friends, and those who discover his paintings when they visit the national parks he depicted.
College officials and child protection advocates participated in a “ground-breaking” March 15 as renovation begins to transform a former oncology building into the Melba Shewmaker Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center.

Crafton Tull is providing architectural services for the project, and Nabholz Construction Services is the contractor. The renovation project is expected to take six to eight months for completion.

Eight individuals – representing the College, the NWACC Foundation, the National Child Protection Training Center and donors – took turns smashing a wall set up in front of the building on Friday to signal the project's beginning.

Dr. Becky Paneitz, president of NWACC, said College leaders had deliberated for some time on what to call the special event marking the start of the renovation.

"It’s not truly a groundbreaking because we aren't literally turning dirt to make this project take shape," she said, "but we are breaking new ground in the battle against child abuse."

The College has been the home of the Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center since 2009. Although the Southern Region site has been operating without dedicated lab facilities, it has still trained thousands of child protection students and professionals from a 16-state region. The Center teaches all mandated reporters, teachers, social workers, counselors, law enforcement officers, first responders, health professionals, attorneys, and members of the judicial and childcare systems to recognize, report, and respond to child abuse and maltreatment.

When the renovation is completed, the hands-on training center will feature a two-story mock home, practice courtroom, child forensic interview rooms, practice medical exam rooms, interactive video capabilities and flexible use spaces to train child abuse professionals with the latest techniques to identify and eliminate child abuse situations.

A $3 million capital campaign has been under way since 2011 to raise money for the renovation and transformation. That campaign has raised more than $2.5 million toward that goal, enabling the project to begin. The drive is ongoing to raise the additional funds needed for furnishings, equipment and information technology.

Speakers included Paneitz; Andrew Lentz, a child forensic interviewer from the Children's Advocacy Center of Benton County; Stephanie Smith, regional director for the Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center; and Dan Shewmaker, representing the NWACC Board of Trustees.

Additional information about the Center and the “Know Abuse. No Abuse.” fundraising campaign is available by calling Amy Benincosa, development coordinator for NCPTC, at 479-619-4321, or abenincosa@nwacc.edu.
Service Recognition

- Adriana Baeza
- Aimee Barker
- Dr. Kate Burkes
- Dr. Meredith Brunen
- Tim Cornelius
- Linda Drew
- Tuesday Eastlack
- Sammi Eddie
- April Elsea
- Paige Francis
- Juanita Franklin
- Amy Robertson-Gann
- Dr. Steve Gates
- Horst Kuefner
- Paul Lowrey
- Melodie Marcks
- Valisha McClain
- Norma Mercado
- Jessica Miller
- Gail Neely
- Elaine Olson
- Marilyn Pickrel
- Christy Reynolds
- David Sappe
- Tami Scrivner
- Steve Tosh
- Ellen Turner
- Marc Turner
- Karen Tinker-Walker
- Patrice Whitley
- Melanie Wilks
- Heather Worley

5 Years

- Ben Aldama
- Miles Fish
- Barbara Gordon
- Kathleen Legg
- Gloria Mallow

10 Years

- Genevieve Olson
- Gregory Swango
- Sebastian Torres
- Darcy Williams
- Jill Witt
NWACC Student’s Work Wins Honor

Carmen Carcamo, an NWACC graphic design student, has been featured in a book titled “Best of College & High School Photography 2013.” She submitted her photo, along with works from more than 16,700 other students from around the world, and her entry was judged as one of the best. She received an honorable mention for her self-portrait shot.

The judges were Steve LaVoie, Art Center College of Design; Linda Lowell, Santa Barbara City College; and Rob Winner, Brooks Institute of Photography.
Foundation Hosts Scholarship Luncheon

Event Celebrates Generosity, Allows Students to Meet Supporters

Students, faculty, staff, and supporters of the NWACC Foundation gathered for the annual scholarship luncheon to celebrate the generosity of scholarship donors.

The event, held on Feb. 27 in Walmart Auditorium, allowed scholarship recipients the opportunity to personally thank those individuals who contributed funds to the NWACC Foundation for student scholarships.

Overall, the Foundation awarded 100 private scholarships this year worth more than $100,000 because of the overwhelming support from donors throughout northwest Arkansas.

Speakers at the event included Dr. Paneitz; Dennis Smiley, Foundation Board Chairman; Dr. Bryan Aguiar, faculty member and scholarship donor; and Raul Najera-Bahena, scholarship recipient. Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson, NWACC’s incoming president, was also in attendance to show her support.