NWACC President Announces Retirement
Paneitz Will Retire After 10 Years at the College

BENTONVILLE, Ark. (April 9, 2012) – The president of NorthWest Arkansas Community College (NWACC), Dr. Becky Paneitz, announced at tonight’s Board of Trustees meeting her plans to retire as president of the college in June 2013. Paneitz has presided as president since 2003.

For nearly 10 years, Dr. Paneitz has led the college during a time of tremendous growth, helping make it one of the largest and fastest growing community colleges in Arkansas and the country. Enrollment at the time she became president was 4,915, and enrollment today is at 8,528.

“Dr. Paneitz has been key to NWACC’s successes over the years,” said Alex Vasquez, Chairman of NWACC’s Board of Trustees. “She has inspired students on how to set and achieve their educational goals. She has led our administration, faculty and staff to continue providing quality education. And she has demonstrated what the impact of enthusiasm and vision can mean to a community college and the community it serves.”

Among her list of accomplishments, Dr. Paneitz established five learning centers to broaden post-secondary educational opportunities in nearby communities. The learning centers include: Jones Trust Center in Springdale, Washington County Center in Springdale, Regional Technology Center in Farmington, Center for Nonprofits in Rogers and College at the Crossing in Bella Vista.

To accommodate growth and new programs for students and faculty, Dr. Paneitz and her team engaged in an aggressive building initiative that included the Shewmaker Center for Global Business
Development, Center for Health Professions, the new Student Center, renovation and expansion of Burns Hall and the first parking garage in Benton County. During her tenure, Dr. Paneitz spearheaded new partnerships between NWACC and several area businesses and organizations, some of which include the University of Arkansas, S.I.F.E., La-Z-Boy, Tyson Foods, J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Walmart and Sam’s Club, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and the National Child Protection Training Center. Dr. Paneitz has also helped raise more than $69 million in private and federal grants and donations, a tribute to her commitment to expanding the overall revenue base of NWACC.

Past Board Chairman Howard Slinkard recalls serving on the search committee in 2003 when Dr. Paneitz was selected. “The Board was looking for someone who could work with area business leaders and private sector donors, provide inspiration to students, and uphold the reputation of the college. Dr. Paneitz fit that role, and has put her heart and soul into transitioning NWACC into a 21st century community college with walls,” said Slinkard.

After hearing of her plans to retire, Coleman Peterson said, “Having served as the Chairman of the NWACC Board of Trustees for three years, and seven years as a trustee, I was afforded the personal privilege of working directly with Dr. Becky Paneitz. She has worked tirelessly for the benefit of NWACC students, helping to focus on affordability, accessibility and a quality education for everyone. She has also built strong partnerships with community partners and stakeholders – realizing the true power and potential of the community college. In my view, she is one of the true dynamic leaders in NWA and we are all better for her having served with such distinction.”

Dr. Paneitz received her bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas at Monticello and her master's from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She began her career in higher education at Pueblo Community College in Colorado in 1985 as a part-time criminal justice instructor and then served as the department chair. Later, she served as the Dean of Technology and Trades before serving as the Dean of Arts, Business and Communication.

She then became Dean of Instruction at Hutchinson Community College in Kansas, where she was instrumental in the planning and development of their advanced technology center – a feat she also accomplished at Pueblo. Dr. Paneitz completed her doctorate in vocational education at Colorado
State University in 1997. In 1999, she moved to Charlotte, North Carolina and joined Central Piedmont Community College as Vice President for Instruction until her return to Arkansas in 2003 when she was named the second president of NorthWest Arkansas Community College.

**About NorthWest Arkansas Community College**

NorthWest Arkansas Community College is a comprehensive, public two-year college that serves and strengthens the community through learning for living. NWACC first opened its doors to 1,200 students in August 1990 and now has over 8,500 college credit students, making it one of the largest and fastest growing two-year colleges in Arkansas. NWACC’s service area is defined by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education as Benton and Washington counties in northwest Arkansas. For more information, visit [www.nwacc.edu](http://www.nwacc.edu)