Major Gifts Announced for Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center at NWACC

New Donations, Grant Top $1.5 Million

BENTONVILLE, Ark. (October 22, 2012) – The NorthWest Arkansas Community College Foundation announced today the awarding of a $1.3 million gift from Melba Shewmaker toward the renovation and furnishing of the Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center.

Other financial support announced today includes:

- A $100,000 grant from the Walton Family Foundation.
- An additional gift of $25,000 from Mel and Vicki Redman that joins a $25,000 donation announced Feb. 24. The Redmans’ contributions, totaling $50,000, will support a study lounge within the center.
- A $30,000 gift from the Bogle family, on behalf of Bob and Marilyn Bogle.
- A $25,000 gift from John and Emily Douglas that will support one of the center’s forensic interview rooms.
- A $25,000 gift from Johnelle Hunt.
- A check for $401.61 presented by members of the First Lutheran School of Fort Smith’s Student Council. The sum was collected in a student-led fundraising initiative.

The donations will go toward the $3 million capital campaign needed to transform a former oncology building now owned by the NWACC Foundation into a state-of-the-art training facility that features a two-story mock home, mock courtrooms, child forensic interview rooms, a practice medical room and interactive video capabilities.
The financial support revealed today brings the total raised to approximately 75 percent of the philanthropic donations needed to complete the project. Approximately $800,000 is still needed to complete the renovation funding. The majority of that sum is for expenses associated with the center’s technology needs. Information technology needs are estimated to cost $500,000.

“We launched our capital campaign almost one year ago – October 19, 2011, and we are elated at the generous gifts and financial support we have received,” said Dr. Becky Paneitz, NWACC president. “We are particularly pleased to be able to announce the gift from Mrs. Shewmaker today. In recognition of this gift, we plan to recommend at the November Board of Trustees meeting that the center be named the Melba Shewmaker Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center. The center will be a lasting legacy that makes a real difference in the lives of children for generations to come.”

The Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center at NWACC began operations in 2010 and has delivered training to thousands of law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, social workers and others. Having the new state-of-the-art facility in place will enable the center to train current and future child protection professionals and equip them with the latest techniques in identifying and eliminating child abuse situations. The goal of the National Child Protection Training Center is to eradicate child abuse in the United States in three generations.

Victor Vieth, director of the NCPTC, was on hand for Monday’s announcement. Stephanie Smith, a former prosecuting attorney, serves as director of the Southern Region NCPTC. Dr. Steve Gates, the college’s senior vice president for learning and provost, serves on the National Child Protection Training Center Board of Directors.

NorthWest Arkansas Community College is a smart choice for students wanting to pursue quality higher education. As an accredited institution through The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, NWACC is a public two-year institution that serves and strengthens its surrounding communities in Benton and Washington counties by helping our students maximize their potential and exceed expectations. With state-of-the-art facilities, NWACC provides excellent academic instruction and workforce training needed to succeed, offering personalized attention from highly respected faculty, staff, and administrators. For more information, visit www.nwacc.edu.