The NW ACC Campus has come alive once again! With the return of faculty, staff and students, the parking spots became rare, and the hallways of every building on campus were packed. New students wandered and searched for their next classrooms aided by staff and student volunteers from the various on-campus organizations. For those who were on grounds during the hot summer months, the influx of activity seemed a bit overwhelming, but soon all settled in for another busy semester of scholastic activity.

The fall 2011 semester began with student activities and events at Bogle Plaza provided by the SAAB, which included a two-day “Fall Fling Vendor’s Fair,” where local businesses and vendors contributed merchandise and services to the students. A “Welcome Back Luau” was held for the local community to attend on Sept. 1, on the North Lawn Student Center. Entertainment, along with food and beverages, was provided by the SAAB Team.

Mary Beth Haas, Director of Student Life, said, “This (SAAB Team) is a hugely enthusiastic group of Student Ambassadors with innovative ideas for new student events every time we meet. I think this might be the best year ever for the students at NWACC!”

According to Brooke Holt, “The faculty and staff are geared up to welcome students to NWACC for the start of another exciting year! With new students beginning their educational journey, continuing students returning from summer break, and transfer students transitioning to NWACC, the atmosphere is full of energy. This is the time of year that reminds me of the important role NWACC plays in the lives of many students. Good luck to all of you and have a great year!”

With so many new and exciting events to look forward to, and many more new on campus organizations for students to become involved with, this semester is geared for a great time of learning and community involvement in the long standing tradition of NWACC.
Innovation Grants

Marketing Assessment for the Business Continuity Planning Workshop
Ethan Beckcom, Dan Charles & George Tanner
The Institute for Corporate and Public Safety, in collaboration with selected Global Business Development programs will use the President’s Innovation Grant to determine the focus, goals, and marketing direction for a new course called Business Continuity Planning Workshop: A building-block approach for Small and Medium Sized Organizations.

The NWACC Book Club
Sabrina Chesne
Last year a small book club was started for faculty, staff and students at NWACC. The President’s Innovation Grant will be used to expand the book club and to purchase books for the library for those who cannot buy the books plus it will expand the book club and refreshments will be served at the meetings. It will bring faculty, staff and students together.

NWACC Mobile App
Sean Lucero, John Strother & Michelle Wallace
The Office of Admissions and Information Technology will work together to build an App for mobile devices to be launched on the Apple, Blackberry and Android platforms. NWACC will be the first two-year college in Arkansas to provide a mobile App for its current and prospective students.

Online Professional Development for Early College Experience Instructors
Diana Johnson & Carl Collier
Funds will be used to pilot an online professional development program using Blackboard for the English instructors teaching in the ECE program. The curriculum for the program will be developed and include information on effective classroom strategies, learning outcomes in English, and engaging students in the classroom.

NWACC Fitness Center Usage Update
John F. Luedtke & R. Murry Jones
The Fitness Trac program can simplify the sign-in/out procedure for our fitness center. This will allow more efficient tracking of member usage. This program can also directly provide instructors with information about student participation for class credit.

Military 101: Serving those who have served
Barbara J. Rademacher, Susan Holmes & Brian Aquire
The goal is to work with fellow NWACC employees who have been active in veterans affairs to establish the following:
1. Orientation materials for newly hired NWACC employees designed to inform them about the needs of military and veteran students.
2. An intensive workshop designed to educate NWACC administrators, faculty, and staff about the many challenges faced by returning military and veteran students and constantly evolving best practices for working with and relating to America’s warriors.
3. A mechanism or office for maintaining the up-to-date status of the workshop curriculum.

Bella Vista and Community Awareness and Input Resource activity
Jean Anderson & Don Kerr
Plans are to develop a survey on the community awareness of CATC and various classes and services offered, which will expand awareness of CATC, the Bella Vista Center and the college in general.

NWACC Baseball Club Team wins 2011 Northwest Arkansas Men’s Baseball League championship!
The NWACC Eagles defeated the Van Buren Hogs 11- 5 on Aug. 14 in the NWAMBL championship game at Fayetteville High School’s Bulldog Stadium.

NWACC Award Winners:
MVP – Dakota Brissey (RHP) – Brissey was named the league MVP for the championship game and team MVP! Dakota posted a 6 –2 overall pitching record.
Team Captains – Ross Brokowski (RF) & Harrison Whightsil (1B/3B)
Gold Glove Winners – Michael Upton (SS) & Levi Schroeder (CF)
Outstanding Hitter – Tim Huebner (DH) .512 Batting Average
Mr. Attitude Awards – Andrew Todd (MIF) & Jarrod Williams (1B)

A special thanks to Coach Kyle Minor for the countless hours he gave to this year’s NWACC Baseball Club Team.
Fulfilling an Innovation Grant awarded in January, NWACC recently hosted its “Cooking with Kids” program for more than a dozen 12-year-old Fayetteville students. The program was a joint effort with the Fayetteville Boys & Girls Club. Led by Rebecca Liles from the college’s Culinary Arts program, the kids learned healthy eating tips along with basic cooking skills. The two-day program began with purchasing food from the Fayetteville Farmers’ Market and a lesson in organic and seasonal foods. Students then took some of the ingredients from the market back to the kitchen, where they made blueberry muffins and breakfast burritos.

For the second day of the program, the students traveled to NWACC’s culinary arts kitchen at the Center for Nonprofits in Rogers for more hands-on cooking experiences. Students made squash casserole and black bean burgers – a healthy and cost-effective substitute for hamburgers.

The Innovation Grant was awarded to Liles and Mark Scott, Executive Director of Public Relations.

The program was featured prominently in local newspaper reports and on KNWA television.
JTL’s Step By Step Provides Mentoring, Teaches Valuable Skills

Thirty NWACC students recently graduated from JTL’s Step By Step program. Lou Lo, Community Outreach Coordinator, gave recognition to the educators, mentors and volunteers, as well as presented a certificate of completion to each of the graduates. Step by Step is a community outreach program that encourages English-Language Learners at local schools to attend college. In response to the growing trend of ethnic minorities in northwest Arkansas, Step by Step targets first generation college prospects, students/families with limited financial resources, non-traditional students and underrepresented minorities. The program lasts five weeks during summer vacation. During the course, students are paired with a mentor that coaches and prepares the students for life after high school. While the classes are primarily focused on English and math, Step by Step also takes a pragmatic approach to education, teaching valuable, real-world skills such as team building, presentations, resume and cover letter writing, interviewing techniques and how to dress for success. Step by Step even offered a banking and finance workshop, taught by Bank of the Ozarks, where students gained practical insights about balancing a budget and how to open a checking account.

In addition to the skills development, there is also a career component to the program, where students visited Sam’s Club and Tyson Foods’ home office on a weekly basis. During the visits, students had the privilege of job shadowing professionals from said corporations. In doing so, they experienced a day in the life of a working professional – learning about everything from merchandising to marketing and branding.
Dennis Commended by Coast Guard Commander

NWACC’s police chief Gary Dennis recently was honored with a Letter of Commendation honoring his service to the U.S. Coast Guard through the Marine Safety Detachment (MSD) in Fort Smith. The commendation was for outstanding performance of duty and authorizes him to wear the Commandant’s Letter of Commendation Ribbon Bar on his uniform.

The letter, written by Commander M.S. Gardiner, highlights Gary’s volunteer service in 10 recall assignments, including operations Noble Eagle, Liberty Shield, and Iraqi Freedom, as well as response operations for Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The letter especially notes Gary’s leadership when a section of the Interstate 40 bridge collapsed near Webbers Falls, Oklahoma. “After being hit by a barge, a 580-foot section of the bridge collapsed, causing vehicles and their occupants to plunge into the Arkansas River,” Gardiner wrote. “Although 14 citizens perished, your skills, stamina, and dedication contributed to saving a life of one driver. You bravely served as a first responder to the incident, functioning as one of the only two Coxswains who later secured the area as the salvage operation commenced.”

The letter also honors Gary for serving as a key member of the MSD Reserve Forces, training and supervising personnel during more than 100 responses to marine casualties and more than 50 facility inspections. “Your vast experience and professional aptitude significantly strengthened the reserve forces, enabling them to contribute directly to the overall mission readiness of the unit,” Gardiner wrote. “Your performance, dedication, and devotion to duty are examples other members of the Coast Guard can use as an example.”

NWACC Women’s Golf Team Wins Local Charity Tournament

The NorthWest Arkansas Community College women’s golf team, which goes by the name “The NWACC Swingers”, took first place in the women’s group when they participated in this year’s Special Olympics Golf Tournament hosted by the Bentonville/Bella Vista Board of Realtors. Amazingly, the team who had never played together until the tournament, scored 2 over par. The team consists of Connie Bondurant, Diane Gower and Sharry Distefano from NWACC and Linda Purdom from Tyson Foods Inc. “The NWACC Swingers” were each awarded a plaque, a $50 cash prize, and a case of “Titlelist” golf balls.

This was the third year the college participated in this event. The team members look forward to representing NWACC for next year’s “Special Olympics Golf Tournament.”

Thank You for 20 Years

Dr. Paneitz, from left, joins 20-year employees at the 2011 fall forum: Barbara Maybury, Carey Chaney, & Jim Hall. (Kathryn Ramirez also received this recognition.)

Left to Right: Diane Gower, Sharon Distefano & Connie Bondurant.
Fire Science Program Earns Accreditation

The Fire Science Administration and Technology Program at NWACC earned accreditation from an international accrediting agency this spring. The International Fire Service Accreditation Congress voted unanimously in April at its annual meeting in St. John’s, Newfoundland, to extend accreditation to NWACC’s Associate of Applied Science program. The organization’s Degree Assembly accredits fire science or related academic programs at colleges and universities.

Accreditation indicates that course offerings, institutional support and qualified faculty are working together in completing their educational mission. NWACC is the only school in Arkansas to have a Degree Assembly accredited program. The Accreditation Congress’s Certificate Assembly accredits entities such as the Arkansas Fire Academy that certify the competency of and issue certificates to individuals who pass national qualifying exams.

Jeff Sprott, program director for the NWACC program, works closely with area fire departments, and his advisory board consists of the chiefs, assistant chiefs and training officers of the various departments. Through a combination of general education courses, administrative technology and hands-on courses, NWACC seeks to produce a student fully prepared to enter the workforce. To accomplish the Degree Assembly accreditation, NWACC had to become a member of the Accreditation Congress and members had to attend meetings in Oklahoma City and elsewhere to find out exactly what is required to be accomplished in a self-study.

Sprott began the self-study process in the spring of 2010. He wrote the self-study, and then submitted it in the fall of last year. After that step was accomplished, a time was established for the site team to arrive for an evaluation. It turned out the site team came during the inclement winter weather the region experienced earlier this year. IFSAC scheduled three members to come to do the evaluation, but one of the team from Colorado was unable to attend because of the extreme weather.

NWACC went through the process of evaluation as IFSAC representatives met with Mary Ross, Dean of Health Professions, and with the program’s advisory board. Local representatives showed the IFSAC Site Team the classroom for didactic instruction and the location where hands-on training in psychomotor skills is conducted.

“We were happy that everything went well,” Sprott said, “and during the April annual IFSAC meeting in St. John’s, Newfoundland we received a unanimous vote regarding our accreditation.”

NWACC’s is one of only 22 programs worldwide that are Degree Assembly accredited by IFSAC.

Sprott explained the difference between Degree Assembly accreditation and Certificate Assembly accreditation by discussing each program’s emphasis. The certificate program focuses on the ability to do something hands-on, and the Degree Assembly looks at both the hands-on component and the emphasis on the cognitive and general education. With the accreditation, graduates of the program will not only receive an AAS degree from NWACC but will also be able to apply for a separate Degree Assembly Certificate from IFSAC.

NWACC will need to repeat the evaluation procedure again in five years to remain Degree Assembly accredited.

Because NWACC is now Degree Assembly accredited and Sprott has also gone through site team training with IFSAC, he is now a member of a site team and will be traveling to Philadelphia’s Holy Family University to evaluate that institution’s fire science bachelor’s degree program.

“We are very proud of this accomplishment by NWACC,” Sprott said.

Longtime Employees Retire

Virginia Hill

“IT has been a wonderful opportunity to work for NWACC for the last seven and a half years of my 40 years as a librarian. The academic environment here has been such an amazing place to serve our students and help them get the most from their educational experience. I will miss the wonderful faculty and staff I have had the privilege of working with and getting to know. There are so many! I hope I’ll be missed as much as I’ll miss NWACC.”

Virginia Hill, Librarian

Steve Pelphrey

“I have enjoyed my nearly 12 years of employment at NWACC. During these years I have seen our student body number grow significantly and the services we offer the students increase dramatically. I hope that in the future NWACC will continue to focus on student needs and serve the community through community based programs. I have made many friends here at NWACC and will miss daily interaction with them. Best wishes to everyone.”

Steve Pelphrey, Librarian
Message from the President

Welcome back! The start of the fall semester is always one of my favorite times of the year – it represents a newness with the welcoming of our incoming first-year students and new faculty, but at the same time there is a familiarity, seeing those faculty and staff who have dedicated themselves to the mission of NWACC for many years. Both represent the special nature of working at NWACC – being a part of a welcoming community that embraces new faces and new challenges each semester.

Reflecting on what is “new” this year at NWACC, I’m struck by our continued technology upgrades and our willingness to embrace those technological advances here at the college. We have been serving our students through distance learning courses now for more than a decade, and Dr. Kate Burkes and her team are on top of the latest advances. All courses at NWACC now have Blackboard access, and numerous faculty members are thinking of ways to be as accessible as possible to our students, many of whom are challenged by their life circumstances and need as much access as possible to their teachers.

With access in mind, our new online tutoring program is designed specifically to fit the needs of our students. Tutors will be able to serve our students with the use of video conferencing software that includes desktop sharing, interactive chat, Whiteboard sessions, and a discussion board specific to the course level of each participant. It will be fun to watch as our students begin to embrace this new technology offered to them.

There are two service-related projects from the summer that especially stand out. First, I’d like to commend the faculty, staff and students who traveled to Joplin for a work day to help those who were tragically struck by the tornado there. It was heartwarming to hear of the impact that was made there, along with the relationships that were built. Second, I was pleased NWACC was able to donate several used computers to the Pea Ridge School District. Members of our IT department were able to maneuver through some governmental “red tape” to make the donation possible. The computers were used to create a new computer lab at the elementary school in Pea Ridge.

As we begin a new semester, I’m also especially proud of the leadership and structural changes that took place over the summer. Dr. Steve Gates became the college’s Senior Vice President for Learning and Provost, overseeing classroom-based initiatives and student services. Under the new structure, Dr. Gates oversees areas led by a Vice President for Learning, a Vice President for Learner Services, and a Vice President for Learning: Global Business, Health Professions, and External Programs. Dr. Marvin Galloway, a Dean at the college and a member of the faculty for the past 20 years, is serving as Interim Vice President for Learning until a replacement is hired. Todd Kitchen, who has served as the college’s Dean of Learner Administrative Services, was hired as Vice President for Learner Services, and Tim Cornelius was hired for the Vice President for Learning: Global Business, Health Professions, & External Programs position. Also, Wyley Elliott now oversees our college communications efforts along with his leadership of the NWACC Foundation, and Marty Parsons is our new Senior Vice President for Administrative Services/Chief Financial Officer.

Thank you, again, for your dedication to our students. I know we are all looking forward to an exciting and successful semester.

NWACC Introduces Technology Track at AATYC

New in 2011!

The Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges Annual Conference in Hot Springs will offer a technical track thanks to NWACC’s Paige Francis, AVP of Information Technology. Conceptualized primarily in response to the ‘coming soon!’ ARE-ON connection, the technical track promises to empower others by sharing knowledge, collaborating on ideas and encouraging open dialogue about current technology trends and initiatives. From Deploying Virtual Desktops: The Cloud Computing Lab (Pulaski Tech) to Preparing for ARE-ON (NWACC/Cisco Systems), this information-rich track promises to combine student, faculty and staff vision. Please join us in Hot Springs for the first-ever technical track!

Q: What exactly is online tutoring and how does it work?
Online tutoring was created to allow our students taking online courses to receive comparable tutoring services to what our local students receive. It works by allowing the student to speak and see the tutor using a video conferencing software called ooVoo. The students will work together with the tutor on their problems using an interactive whiteboard, desktop sharing, or file sharing. Also the students can drop off questions to a discussion board, created for their specific course, that will be answered by the tutor staff members.

Q: How do students sign up for online tutoring?
Students will sign up the same way they make an appointment with an advisor, using AdvisorTrac. More information can be found on our webpage at http://tiny.cc/otnwacc

Q: What made you realize that there was a need for this at NWACC?
The need specifically to me is shown by the number of students NWACC has who only take online courses, and the high number we have in the surrounding area. Students should have access to help, whether they are 30 minutes away or half-way around the world. Driving to campus for 15 minutes of tutoring is sometimes not an option.

Q: What was the hardest part in implementing this program?
Creating a system that worked for everyone. There is a constant pull between what the students need, what the tutors want, what the software can or cannot do, and sometimes just things we haven’t thought of. This is something we are still working on, and we need faculty, staff, and student feedback to really give them what they want.

Q: You have an online demo at 1 p.m. Sept. 7. What do you hope people get out of it?
I hope they get to see that getting tutored online is not difficult, and honestly is much, much, easier than driving on I-540.
Under the direction of Meredith Brunen, Executive Director of Development, the NWACC Foundation hosted a successful fundraising event with proceeds going to the NorthWest Arkansas Community College Scholarship Fund. On Aug. 20, guests at the Rogers Little Theater enjoyed an evening of fun and nostalgia as they traveled back to the Golden Days of Radio assisted by Sam Jones, writer, producer, and host of the Route 66 Playhouse.

Neile Jones of KNWA was the event chair, and catering was provided by Chef Michael Kuefner and the NWACC Culinary Arts Department who served an array of delicious hors d’oeuvres to the many guests in attendance. For over two hours the talented cast entertained delighted guests by reproducing live on stage the way radio shows were produced before the days of television. The production included humorous skits complete with sound effects, and professional singers and musicians performing many of the “old standards” from the 1930’s and 40’s. Best-selling author Michael Wallace and Spoken Word Artist and Poet Deborah J. Hunter also performed their original materials.

Sponsors for the fundraiser were Celebrate Arkansas Magazine, Cheezy’s, Coca-Cola, Embassy Suites, Hershey’s, KNWA, KURM and Willard & Pat Walker Charitable Foundation, Inc. A memorable time was experienced by all.