

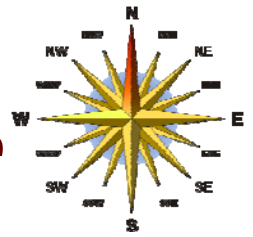


President's Newsletter



Joanne Jaeger Tomblin, President

# Staying on Course



It seems almost impossible that we are already into the second semester of this academic year. The economic downturn throughout the country is certainly making everyone nervous, and educational institutions across the nation are feeling the pinch. As I have said on many occasions, we are very fortunate to be living in West Virginia where our Legislature and Governor have taken steps over the past fifteen years to keep us financially sound. Although we are "Staying the Course" at the present time, this doesn't mean we will totally escape what is happening throughout the country. All of us together need to be very cognizant of the economic crisis and continue to conserve our resources and be prudent with our spending. As an institution we have done extremely well this past

year, and I thank each of you for going the extra mile.

According to a recent article in the *Community College Journal*, community colleges across the country are really experiencing pain, since community colleges in general draw about 60 percent of their funding from the state. It is estimated that this would amount to about 332 million dollars in cuts at a time when unfortunately there is more demand for worker training. Many community colleges are considering layoffs, and in our neighboring state of Kentucky, the Board of Regents for the Community and Technical College System will vote in March to eliminate tenure for all new faculty hires as well as health care benefits for people hired after June 30, 2009. Others are reducing

travel and implementing hiring freezes. Hopefully we will not have to experience what most of our neighbors are experiencing, but we have to not only be conservative, but creative as we move forward. If the recession continues into the 2010 and 2011-year, it will become considerably more difficult for West Virginia to balance its budget. We, as an institution, just need to be prepared and I know we will.

As an institution, we are going to have to place emphasis on the recruitment of both traditional and non-traditional students, and continue to seek outside resources to enhance our budget.

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## Dates to Remember

**February 17**—Board of Governors Business Meeting, 6:00 p.m., Room 428, Center for Allied Health and Technology

**March 10** — Assessment Day

**March 16-21** — Spring Break

## Appalachian Leadership Academy

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The second annual induction ceremony for the Appalachian Leadership Academy Fellows was held at the Brass Tree Restaurant in Williamson on December 17, 2008. Six new students were inducted through the support of Cotiga Development Company and the Southern West Virginia

Community College Foundation, Inc. The students will receive a full scholarship to attend Southern and a book stipend for up to \$500. Mingo County native, Retired General Robert "Doc" Foglesong, USAF, was the guest speaker.



*Pictured l-r back row, 2008 ALA Fellows Kevin Whitt, Rita White, and Shannon Carballo, President Tomblin, Cotiga Development Resource Manager, Eddie Curry, his wife Charlotte, and ALA Director Pauline Sturgill. Front row l-r, 2009 ALA Fellows Joyce Varney, Kimberly Irick, Shelley Rose, Michelle Ford, Whitney Dempsey, and Anita Copley.*

## West Virginia Coal Association Meets on Southern's Campus

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The West Virginia Coal Association met on Southern's Logan Campus in December where members had an opportunity to visit the Academy for Mine Training and Energy Technologies. Mr. Carl Baisden, Director of Southern's Academy, presented the group with a presentation outlining the training currently available through the Academy.

Representatives from 30 states and three foreign countries have visited Southern's mining academy to see for themselves



how future coal mine employees are

trained. Over 5,000 students in the mining, gas and oil industries have received hands-on, simulator training since the Academy opened its doors in the fall of 2006. Mr. Bill Raney, President of the WV Coal Association, said he was pleased to bring the coal association members to Logan since it is centrally located among the coal and energy related businesses in southern West Virginia. The group was extremely impressed with what the College has to offer and appreciated the opportunity to meet in

## Center for Allied Health and Technology Grand Opening



The Grand Opening of the Center for Allied Health and Technology took place on November 12, 2008. Senator Earl Ray Tomblin was the featured speaker during the formal ceremony attended by approximately 250 dignitaries, guests, and students. The event culminated in a ribbon cutting ceremony and tours of the facility by Southern's Student Government Association members and Allied Health students.

## Board of Governors December 2008 Meeting Review

The Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College Board of Governors held its regular scheduled business meeting on December 9, 2008. A presentation by the Classified Staff Council was given by Council Chair, Debbie Dingess, and the West Virginia Community and Technical College System Chancellor, Jim Skidmore, provided Board members with an overview of state priorities for 2009-2010.



The Board's Committee on Tuition and Fees presented its recom-

mendations for a strategy for tuition and fee increases beginning the 2009-2010 academic year. The Board will act on this recommendation during its regularly scheduled meeting on February 17. However, the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education will not act on tuition and fee increases until May 8, 2009 after the Legislative Session has ended.

## 2009 President's Award Recipients



Mr. Eugene Maynard, Roger Watson, Delbert Queen, and Scott Pritchard, are the recipients of the prestigious **President's Award**. Established in 2000 by President Joanne Jaeger Tomblin, the **President's Award** is annually presented to an employee who demonstrates a commitment to the College and is dedicated to making the community a better place. The award is presented during the first All Governance Day session of the Spring Semester.

## Employees Enjoy Annual Holiday Luncheon



## Congratulations to Eva Hallis and Russell Saunders

Southern's Radiologic Technology students recently competed in the Student Bowl Competition held at the 56th Annual Conference of the West Virginia Society of Radiologic Technologists held in Morgantown, where they placed first and third in competition. This is certainly a great honor for our students, but especially for the Radiologic Technology Program Coordinator, Eva Hallis, and Instructor, Russell Saunders, who spent many hours preparing our students for the event.



Congratulations to first place team members Savannah Duncan, Krista Jarrell and Rebekah Maxwell. Sharing third place honors were team members Paul Fraley, Sammeley Noe and Andrea Sloan. Alternates were Daniel Varney and Brandon Thacker. Southern's teams were under the direction of Eva Hallis, MS, RT, (R) and Russell Saunders, BA, RT, (R) (CT).

## Office of Development Plans Harmony Week Activities

Plans for *Harmony Week 2009* at Southern are well underway. I hope that many of you will be able to participate in one or more of the activities. Activities are posted on our institutional calendar, and Vice President for Development, Ron Lemon, provided the information to all employees via e-mail. This year's culmination luncheon will take place on February 26th with Reverend Billy Kyles as the guest speaker. Reverend Kyles will speak in the Savas-Kostas Theater on the Logan Campus beginning at 11:00 a.m., followed by lunch in Room 111. The event is free; however, you must have a ticket for entree. You may reserve your ticket by contacting Ron Lemon at extension 7425.

- February 15, Candlelight Vigil/ Harmony Week Kick-off, Logan Street Baptist Church, Williamson, 3:00 p.m.
- February 16, Williamson Public Library, 5:00 p.m., Black History Month
- February 18, Harriet Tubman portrayed by Ilene Evans at Mullens Elementary and Middle Schools
- February 19, Wyoming/McDowell Campus, Speaker: Clemenceau Allen, Chief Emeritus, Appalachian American Indians of West Virginia, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
- February 19, Dixie Hummingbirds, Rose G. Smith Theater, 7:30 p.m.
- February 23, Memphis T. Garrison portrayed by Ilene Evans at Burch High School, Williamson Middle and Riverside Elementary Schools.
- February 23, WVOW Live Remote, Logan Campus, 10:00 – 1:00 p.m.
- February 23, KIXX 96 Live Remote, Williamson Campus, 11:30 – 1:30 p.m.
- February 23, Candlelight Vigil at First Presbyterian Church, Logan, 6:00 p.m.
- February 24, Memphis T. Garrison portrayed by Ilene Evans at Chapmanville Middle, Logan Middle and Man Central.
- February 25, Memphis T. Garrison portrayed by Ilene Evans at Ramage and Sherman Elementary Schools
- February 26, Reverend Billy Kyles, Memphis T. Garrison portrayed by Ilene Evans, Music by Krista Brown, 11:00 – 12:00 noon, Savas-Kostas Theater; Multi-cultural Banquet, Logan Campus, Room 111, 12:00 noon.

## Tenure at Risk in Kentucky's Community Colleges

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The following article was taken from the December 5, 2008 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The Board of Regents of the Kentucky Community and Technical College system will vote in March on a proposal to eliminate tenure for all new faculty hires beginning in 2009.

The board, which met today to discuss the proposal, is also considering a plan to wipe out health-care benefits in retirement for people hired after June 30, 2009.

The regents spent about 45 minutes at today's meeting discussing details of the two proposals, after receiving a report from staff members of the system about how such a plan might be carried out.

The board has considered eliminating tenure before, in part because the cost of non-tenure-track instructors is lower than that of tenure-track ones.

The system's budget has been cut by \$31.5-million since 2001, and it is facing a possible \$8.8-million cut in its \$764-million budget next year.

Terri Giltner, a spokeswoman for the system, said the main reason the board was interested in eliminating tenure now, however, is flexibility. "We have a state that is very dependent on the auto industry, and we do most of the training for that," she told *The Chronicle*. "Given all that is happening with that industry, we may have to change really, really quickly and offer different kinds of programs that require different faculty. With tenure you get locked into faculty."

Of the 14 regents, eight are appointed by the governor and six are elected by faculty and staff members and students. Ms. Giltner said faculty members who serve on the board spoke in favor of maintaining tenure at

today's meeting. Several professors have told *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville, that they oppose the plan to eliminate tenure because it would make it harder for the system to hire top-notch professors and because it would jeopardize academic freedom.

Under the tenure proposal, professors hired after next June 30 would receive multiyear contracts instead of tenure-track job offers. Like many community-college systems, Kentucky's already employs a large number of full- and part-time professors who work off the tenure track. Only 25 percent of its 4,226 faculty members have tenured or tenure-track positions.

The plan to eliminate health-care benefits in retirement to those hired after June 30 would save the system \$57.2-million over 10 years, according to the system's analysis of the proposal. —*Robin Wilson*

## Relative Advantages of Associate Degrees and Certificates

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The following article was taken from the January 22, 2009 issue of *Inside Higher Ed*

WASHINGTON — Many of the findings produced by a new in-depth study of the educational and employment outcomes of low-income students fell into the category, as the researcher Louis S. Jacobson described them, of "the truths your mother told you" — in other words, they mostly confirmed widely held suppositions about the links between education and work force success. Being from a low-income background hurts students' chances of educational progress. Those who struggle in high school tend to fare less well in college and beyond. The further one advances educationally, the better one fares economically. Taking courses in fields that pay well tends to produce higher wages.

But the study, which was conducted by the research organization CNA and the Hudson Institute and financed by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, also promulgated some findings that challenged the status quo, especially in suggesting that low-income students who struggle in high school get more of an earnings boost by earning a certificate than they do achieving an associate degree at a two-year college.

Although some leading higher education researchers invited to respond to the study warned against a sweeping embrace of that conclusion, citing limitations in the data, they also cited the report — which was based on data produced by the State of Florida's unusual system for linking its citizens' education and employment

records — as evidence of the need for many more states to create such data systems, an idea that is building steam but still oppose in some quarters for privacy reasons.

"Increasingly in this economy, some form of postsecondary education and training, degreed or not, is the prerequisite for middle class earnings now," said Anthony P. Carnevale, research professor and director of Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce. The only way to truly understand what sorts of education produces the best economic outcomes, he said, is "to understand the connection between what happens in the schools, particularly postsecondary, and what goes on in the labor

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## Advantages of Associate Degrees and Certificates (continued)

market. Integrating educational and economic data to track outcomes, Carnevale said, “seems like a small and geeky thing, but it isn’t.”

The study, “Pathways to Boosting the Earnings of Low-Income Students by Increasing Their Educational Attainment,” was the subject of a half-day forum Wednesday at the Hudson Institute’s office here. The researchers presented their findings and then — to their credit — let some highly respected researchers from a range of perspectives take their turns critiquing it.

By tapping into the rich reams of student data produced by Florida’s longitudinal records system — which examine 225,000 students who were in public high schools in 1996 and follow them through 2007 — the authors are able to show how students from a range of economic backgrounds flow through that state’s public colleges and into its work force, to see “what actually happened to them,” said Diana Furchgott-Roth, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute and co-author of the study. (The data are limited to those students who attended public high schools and stayed within Florida for college.)

Much of what they found reaffirms concerns that arise whenever policy makers look at the success of students from low-income backgrounds in higher education. Among their findings:

- Access to college depends heavily on students’ financial backgrounds. Only 55 percent of students who qualified for free and reduced lunch (a federal proxy for low family income) attended college, compared to 62 percent of other students. Twenty-five percent of free and reduced lunch students attended college within two years (compared to 39 percent of other

students) and 17 percent completed a year’s worth of college, compared to 30 percent. Non-free and reduced lunch students were also more than twice as likely as their less-wealthy peers to earn a college credential within six years.

- High school grades also appear to have a significant influence on college outcomes. Of students who earned an A average in high school and attended college within two years of graduation, 52 percent earned a B.A. or graduate degree, 17 percent a certificate or associate degree, and 31 percent no credential at all. A full 82 percent of C students who entered college within two years earned no credential. In addition, students with a C average were significantly likelier to attend community colleges than were those with A averages in high school.
- Those who achieved a higher credential earned more money. Students who earned a certificate had median earnings that were 27 percent higher than those with no college credential; those with a bachelor’s degree earned about 35 percent more than those with no credential; and those with graduate degrees made about 62 percent more. Interestingly, though, students with just an A.A. degree did only 8 percent better than those with no credential at all — quite a bit less well than those with certificates.
- Student earnings varied greatly by discipline, most acutely for those with certificates and associate degrees. The median income for students in health-related fields was higher than

the 75th percentile for all other fields, including the so-called STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and math) and professional fields such as communications and management. (Among bachelor’s degree earners, the fields were much more closely grouped, except for the humanities, which lagged.)

The finding that students who earned certificates earned more than those with an associate degree, and another suggesting that students who earned a C in high school were only slightly less likely than A students to earn a credential in health-related and other higher-paying fields, were arguably the most surprising of the study. “Together these two results suggest that it is feasible for students who attend two-year colleges and do not go on to complete four-year programs to increase their earnings substantially by completing the courses needed to obtain a certificate,” the study’s authors wrote.

Jacobson, of CNA (which is known for this kind of work because of its extensive experience crunching huge data systems for the military), said the study was not designed to argue that students should be directed toward more-practical certificate programs rather than the more academic liberal arts disciplines at community colleges.

“All we’re trying to do is find what C students can do most productively at the point they leave high school,” he said. “The investments we’re currently making in the two-year-college system are extremely important, and the message that comes across very clearly is that too many students are leaving high school without having a terrific high school experience, then are going to community colleges and

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If you have specific questions regarding issues or events at the College, please e-mail or call my office by the 15th of each month.

## Employee News

- Congratulations to Ron Lemon on the birth of his first grandson, Ryan Michael Lemon, born November 10, 2008.
- Congratulations to Dianna Ball on the birth of her great grandson, Chandler Michael Arnold, born November 11, 2008.
- Congratulations to Jo Lee Fryer on the birth of her son, William Chase Settle, born December 25, 2008.
- Congratulations to Rita Roberson, on the birth of her grandson, Jamin Cayl Moore, born January 5, 2009.
- Congratulations to David Lord on his appointment to the Wyoming County Planning Commission and for obtaining a donation from Jet Broadband for wireless internet access at the Wyoming/McDowell Campus.

## Advantages of Associate Degrees and Certificates (continued)

repeating some mistakes they've already made."

The experts who analyzed the Hudson study seemed most intrigued by the finding on certificates. Chester B. Finn, Jr., president of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, said that to people like him "who tend to focus only on degrees," the findings about the earnings value of community college certificates suggested "evidence that better information regarding postsecondary possibilities might boost the prospects of low-income students."

But that finding also raised significant questions and cautions. Thomas Bailey, the George and Abby O'Neill Professor of Economics and Education and director of the Community College Research Center at Columbia University Teachers College, said it was unfair to compare recipients of certificates — which in many cases are a student's ultimate educational goal — with those who've achieved associate degrees, particularly in fields such as the humanities.

Most students who end up with only an associate degree in English or comparable fields do so "either because they stumbled into it, didn't know what they would do, were misinformed, or didn't complete their goals," Bailey said. "There is very little return to a student who has an English associate degree, and that's it." The pool of people who get associate degrees in non-technical fields and *don't* go on to transfer to a four-year college, Bailey noted, is very small.

In many ways, the assembled experts said, the study's specific findings were less important than the promise that such data-driven studies hold for policy makers — if they can get their hands on good longitudinal data like those from Florida. But that will be impossible unless more states — often over the objections of college officials — begin stitching together data from the elementary and secondary schools, postsecondary education systems, and work force agencies, said Georgetown's Carnevale.

Many private college officials, backed by leading Republican lawmakers, have blocked efforts to create a federal student records system, citing privacy concerns. But the Education Department has begun funding state efforts to build their own, and the stimulus package that Congress is now considering would contain as much as \$250 million in additional funds for such efforts.

— Doug Lederma

*The original story and user comments can be viewed online at <http://insidehighered.com/news/2009/01/22/pathway>*