**The Power of Partnerships**

Blue Ridge Community College has been involved with Wingate University since before its initial move to Hendersonville. Last month, in a joint press conference at the Historic Courthouse, we announced the next step in this partnership which will take education and training opportunities to a whole new level. Likewise, Pardee Hospital has been a friend to the College for decades — providing clinical sites for students and employment opportunities for countless Blue Ridge graduates.

It is anticipated that, in 2016, Blue Ridge Community College will relocate its Associate Degree Nursing, Surgical Technology degree and diploma, Nurse Aide I and II certification, and Phlebotomy certification programs to a new building in close proximity to Pardee Hospital. In turn, Wingate will relocate all of its Hendersonville-based Pharmacy, Physician Assistant, and Master in Business Administration education programs there as well. This building will be financed and managed by Henderson County and will house a state-of-the-art educational space for exclusive use by Blue Ridge, Wingate, and Pardee Hospital.

As indicated in a press conference last month, this announcement assures Henderson County that it will have the best possible allied health training resources to meet the healthcare needs of its citizens and employers.

The benefits of this historic agreement include:

- the opportunity to build a state of the art learning facility for our community
- a seamless transfer for those students who seek advanced degrees
- shared resources with Wingate and others — which means a savings for taxpayers, and
- a means to produce a quality world class workforce for employers — both local and regional

Additionally, it brings an increased awareness of these career pathways to new workers and engages incumbent workers to train for higher skilled jobs. At the same time, the chance to move our allied health programs to this joint facility will allow Blue Ridge to fulfill its mission of developing an advanced manufacturing center on our Henderson County Campus.
YOUR SUCCESS IS **OUR MISSION**

Student members of Phi Beta Lambda attended the 60th Annual State Leadership Conference. At this year’s conference, each student brought home a state award and the College placed within the top 8 in the state. Out of a total of 10 individual events and 2 team events, BRCC brought home 12 awards. Three students will advance to represent North Carolina Phi Beta Lambda in this year’s National Leadership Conference being held in Nashville, TN this summer in June.

Phi Beta Lambda students (pictured) were Jessica Boeh, Jennifer Rollins, Crystal ”Destiny” Davis, Jaime Tankersley, Dewey Budro, Robert “Mac” Barlow, and Marie Fuentes.

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Following a four-year concentration on student success, the NC Community College System (NCCCS) has turned its attention to two core areas--workforce and economic development--as the central focus for its next strategic planning effort.

On May 1, Blue Ridge Community College hosted a regional meeting with A-B Tech and Isothermal Community College to hear about best practices and discuss challenges in these two areas. The meeting was led by NCCCS President Scott Ralls and included elected officials, local employers, and workforce partners from across the region.

The Sixth Annual Blue Ridge Bookfest was held April 25-26. The featured authors represented a wide array of genres and include award winners, best-selling authors, renowned scholars, children’s writers, and writers of fiction and non-fiction. Of special note, Ken Grossman, Sierra Nevada CEO and author of recently released Beyond the Pale, was the featured author at a reception on Friday. Following the reception, Mr. Grossman talked about his book and his entrepreneurial journey.

On March 21, Thomas A. Furness III, was a special guest speaker during a Simulation and Game Development class. Professor Furness is the founding father of the HIT Lab and is often referred to as the ‘Grandfather of Virtual Reality’ due to his outstanding contribution to the advancement of this field.
Blue Ridge Community College’s Back to Work Program was one of two of the 49 programs in the state selected to be highlighted at the NC Joint Legislative Committee in Innovation Meeting in Raleigh March 27. President Parkhill gave a presentation to the committee on the successes of the program.

The Henderson County Early College students hosted a Student Showcase on March 24. This event allowed students to showcase their work by creating unique displays that highlighted some of their talents and accomplishments.

The Spring College Transfer Fair was held Tuesday, March 25. Approximately 20 colleges and universities were represented.

Thirty mechatronics students from Balfour Education Center visited the Henderson County Campus on April 9 to view the advanced manufacturing lab. The students had lunch on campus and then traveled to Continental Automotive for an afternoon field trip. A followup field trip for automotive students was held on May 9.

The Transylvania County Campus hosted its annual College Day (formerly "Senior Day") on April 4. Approximately 100 juniors and seniors from the area high schools attended this annual event to hear about BRCC programs and promising careers. Many faculty members presented and, for the first time for this event, several student ambassadors made a presentation on the transition from high school to college. Transylvania County Sheriff David Mahoney was on hand to discuss careers in law enforcement and demonstrate the canine unit.

YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR MISSION

Joao Washington Bezerra, a Blue Ridge Community College student, is among 58 outstanding students recently honored by North Carolina’s Community Colleges. This recognition was part of Governor Pat McCrory’s proclamation of April as North Carolina Community College Excellence in Education Month.

Joao’s Story

I am originally from Brazil. All my life, I was taught to be involved and help people. In Brazil, I served as a volunteer at a school in a poor community. This experience gave me the confidence to be able to contribute to the education of students who were less fortunate than I. I knew that I wanted a career where I could help people, and I wanted to pursue my education to do this. I knew that the language barrier would be a challenge, but I also knew that it would be worth the hard work. I have learned many valuable tools at Blue Ridge to help me throughout my life. I attended ESL classes, worked to obtain my GED, and then began college courses, all while working my job. Understanding English is still difficult at times, but I do not settle for anything less than my best. I have become a member of the National Technical Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa, and the National Society of Leadership and Success, of which I am now President. After attending Blue Ridge, I plan to become a physical therapist. I will always be grateful for my Blue Ridge Community College experience.

Joao is currently enrolled in the Associate in Science program and received the Ruth H. Crane Scholarship and the Gene Kopf Scholarship through Blue Ridge Community College Educational Foundation.
Financial Update

Contributions total $736,658 for the first three quarters of the fiscal year with total support and revenue at $1.7M. Investment returns since July 1 are 12.11% and 13.32% for the trailing five years. At March 31, 2014, assets of the Foundation were $10.6M.

Major Gifts

Raven and Judith McKenzie-Wilson gifted $20,000 to the Ray and Judith McKenzie-Wilson Scholarship Endowment Fund with the Educational Foundation.

Continental Automotive Systems made an in-kind contribution valued at $34,800.

2013-2014 Audit

At their April meeting, the Board of Directors ratified the actions of the Audit Committee to engage Carter, P.C. for the 2013-2014 audit. Preliminary information will be sent to the auditors as requested with fieldwork scheduled for the week of July 14.

Board of Directors

With regrets, the Board of Directors accepted the resignation of Anthony (Tony) Morrow with an effective date of May 1, 2014.

YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR MISSION

Last month twelve BRCC automotive students competed at the 49th SkillsUSA State Conference in Greensboro, NC. More than 2,000 students from high schools and colleges from all across North Carolina competed. Throughout the competition Blue Ridge received many compliments from instructors, advisors, and judges on how sharp and professional the Blue Ridge students were over all. For many of our students this was the first Auto motive Service Technology competition and they are already looking forward to next year.

Blue Ridge Automotive student Kirby Raines (pictured) earned a second place in Automotive Service Technology.

Raines is concurrently enrolled at Blue Ridge Community College and Rosman High School through the College’s Career and College Promise Program for high school students.
Conner McAbee was the 2014 Blue Ridge Community College Rotary Scholarship Award Winner. This prestigious recognizes a graduate who best exemplifies “Service Above Self.”

Conner not only graduated from Henderson County Early College High with honors last week but he also graduated from Blue Ridge Community College with his two-year transfer degree.

He accomplished this goal one year earlier than anticipated all while working part-time and staying very involved in his school and community. He has been a student leader and is a model of what an exceptional student should be.

Conner has spent more than 400 hours volunteering through local and international missions and is very active in numerous clubs and extracurricular activities at Early College. He will be continuing his education pursuing a degree in engineering at North Carolina State University.

Blue Ridge Community College’s School Age Education associate degree program has been awarded accreditation through 2021 by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The College’s Early Childhood Education associate degree program received reaccreditation.

The accreditation signifies that the College demonstrates it adheres to national professional standards for early childhood teacher education and attests to the program’s high quality standards in helping students prepare to become professional early childhood educators. The accreditation process included a comprehensive self-study and on-site evaluation by a NAEYC peer review team.

The School-Age Education program at Blue Ridge Community College prepares individuals to work with school-age children in diverse learning environments. The curriculum is specifically designed for students planning to work in public or private school-age care environments. The Early Childhood Education graduates are prepared to plan and implement developmentally appropriate programs in early childhood settings. Both programs have transfer agreements with East Tennessee State University and Mars Hill University.

The Inclusive Education Committee hosted the Second Annual Heritage Week on March 31-April 3. This series of events promoted an awareness of diversity and a greater understanding of global issues.

Blue Ridge Community College Engineering Faculty Soud Al-Mishwit (pictured), along with other faculty and students, presented about his native country during one of the Heritage Week events.
Congratulations Class of 2014!