



Innovation

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PTC reports 10% enrollment jump

Pulaski Technical College had a 10 percent increase in enrollment for the fall 2006 semester.

The college had 8,455 students enrolled in college-credit classes on the 11th class day, compared to 7,685 students on the 11th day in fall 2005.

Pulaski Technical College, the state's largest two-year college, has had steady enrollment growth since 1991 when the state Legislature passed Act 1244 that converted the state's former vocational-technical schools into two-year colleges.

"Our growth has been a direct result of our outreach efforts," said Pulaski Technical College President Dr. Dan F. Bakke. "The important thing is that more and more people are realizing the value of higher education and are taking steps to get the skills and knowledge they need to advance in their careers."

Campus celebrates Constitution Day

Pulaski Technical College students, faculty and staff showed their patriotism Sept. 18 by celebrating Constitution Day.

The observance, which commemorates the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787, honors and celebrates the privileges and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship.

Students manned voter registration tables throughout the week and enjoyed visits from county officials. Uncle Sam also made an appearance.



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2006: A year of progress

As we reflect upon the many changes and accomplishments in 2006, the students, faculty, staff and friends of Pulaski Technical College have many accomplishments of which to be proud. The unprecedented growth of Arkansas' fifth-largest institution of higher education continues to present many challenges, and those challenges have been embraced and met in myriad ways. The following are among the many milestones in this busy year:

The Campus Center

Perhaps the most significant sign of progress in 2006 was observed on Sept. 28, as Pulaski Technical College celebrated the grand opening of the new Campus Center Building. The building was dedicated to the success of past, present and future students of Pulaski Tech.

Students led guests on tours of the center, pointing out many of the features, including the 300-person capacity Grand Hall, state-of-the-art conference and meeting facilities, the Cyber Lounge and open computer labs, the Campus Bookstore, the Food Court and private dining room, faculty and staff offices, and multi-purpose classrooms.

Construction of the 92,000- square-foot center began May 11, 2004. It was open for business in time for summer classes in 2006. The center houses the Student Services offices of Admissions and Records, Financial Aid, Counseling and Advising Services, Disability Support Services, Student Activities, and the Business Office/Cashier. Students can apply for admission, talk to an academic counselor, get financial aid information, buy books, join a student organization, get a meal in the Food Court and get free tutoring in the Learning Assistance Center—all under one roof.

Ottenheimer Library

Pulaski Technical College celebrated the opening of the newly renovated and expanded Ottenheimer Library on Sept. 1.

Renovation and expansion of the existing library more than doubled the library's space from 7,798 square feet to 19,254 square feet. The project began in May 2004 and was completed in summer 2006. The two-story library is named in honor of the Ottenheimer Brothers Foundation, which contributed \$500,000 - the largest single private cash gift the college has ever received.

"The addition of the Campus Center, along with the renovation and expansion of Ottenheimer Library, has greatly improved the collegiate experience for our students," Dr. Dan F. Bakke, college president, said. "Our hope is that this center will serve as a hub of student activity and provide an atmosphere conducive to learning for years to come."

The Ottenheimer Library features more than 34,000 book, multimedia and e-book titles, 36 research computers, six catalog search stations, 24 laptops students can borrow for use inside the library, more than 35 databases available on and off campus, seven individual study rooms and two group study rooms, three viewing/listening study rooms, six comfortable seating/study areas, 11 large, lighted study tables, and copy centers on both floors.

"This project has enabled us to improve both the quality and quantity of our library resources," Dr. Bakke added. "It is a tremendous resource for our faculty, staff and most importantly, our students."

Web site launch

In tandem with the ribbon-cutting for the library, Pulaski Technical College launched its redesigned Web site, www.pulaskitech.edu. The new Web design marks a dramatic improvement in the appearance, navigability, accessibility and usability of the college's site.

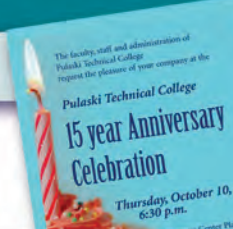
All the main and interior pages of the site—for example, the homepage, current news, information for current students and prospective students—have been redesigned and reorganized in the first phase of an ongoing project aimed at improving and updating the college's Web presence.

"Pulaski Tech recognizes that an easy-to-use and attractive Web site is essential if the college is to continue to provide quality services and to remain competitive," Carol Langston, vice president for college advancement, said.

Lennon Parker, Web communication specialist in the Public Relations and Marketing office, coordinated redevelopment of the site in conjunction with Aristotle, a Little Rock Web site and interactive multimedia design and consulting firm.

15th anniversary

Pulaski Tech celebrated its 15th anniversary on Oct. 10 with a community celebration on the Campus Center plaza. Brenda & Ellis, an R & B trio, provided soulful dance music. Guest speakers included Dr. Bakke and Quenton Burge, who has worked at the school since 1964, making him the college's oldest employee. Mr. Burge's significant contributions to the college were further commemorated by the publication of *Decades of Success: The History of Pulaski Technical College*, first distributed at the anniversary event.



PTC students join rally for college bonds

Pulaski Tech students were among college students from across the state who rallied at the state Capitol last fall in favor of the college bond issue.

Their efforts certainly paid off when Arkansas voters approved the bonds issue, which appeared as Referred Question 1, on the Nov. 7 general election ballot.

The rally was organized by student members of the Arkansas Student Association. The new group brings together representatives from student government associations at the state's two-year colleges and four-year universities.

Passage of Referred Question 1 paves the way for the state to issue up to \$250 million in college bonds. Of that amount, \$100 million is to be used to pay off existing bonds, and \$150 million will be earmarked for capital improvements and technology upgrades at Arkansas' 10 public universities and 22 two-year colleges.

Pulaski Technical College is slated to receive \$6.25 million for much-needed capital improvements, including construction of a new hangar/classroom complex at the Aviation Technology Center at the North Little Rock Airport and renovation of the Administration and Science buildings on the North Little Rock campus for more classroom and laboratory space.



PTC Choir sings its way into hearts of concert goers



If you haven't heard, Pulaski Tech has a brand new choir. And they sound terrific! Directed by Dr. Milton Lites, an adjunct music instructor, the choir is now in its second semester. In October, the choir made its television debut, performing on KATV's "Good Morning Arkansas" show.

They've also put in a handful of performances on campus - at the dedication of the Campus Center in September, for a North Little Rock chamber luncheon at the campus, at the Clinton Presidential Center's holiday celebration on Dec. 3, and most recently their Holiday Concert in the R.J. Wills Lecture Hall on Dec. 7. The hour-long concert of traditional holiday carols included songs in Spanish, English and Latin.

Not bad for a group that has been singing together only since August.

The choir, in fact, had a rocky start.

Choir was initially offered as an elective in fall 2005, but only one person signed up. A semester passed, and in spring 2006 nine people signed up and they became Pulaski Tech's first choir. In fall 2006, 17 people joined the choir, with two of the original members returning from spring.

The choir is a blend of musical novices, a few who have been singing since childhood and two seasoned music instructors.

"The hardest challenge is instilling confidence in the singers," Dr. Lites said. "They have all practiced long hours and put in a tremendous amount of time learning the music."

Danielle Jones of North Little Rock, an alto, has been singing since she was in seventh grade and is considering a major in musical theatre arts.

Very few of the singers, however, plan to pursue music majors.

Johna Ward of North Little Rock, who will graduate with an Associate of Arts, plans to earn a bachelor's degree in science as part of a pre-med course. "I just love the fine arts," she said. "I love to sing, and I wanted to learn to sing better with a group of people."

Aliya Dame of Shannon Hills also signed up for choir for the sheer pleasure of music. "I like to sing and I needed something fun to balance out the other stuff. It makes school enjoyable."

Two adjunct music instructors - Jim Munns and Ron Selby - round out the choir. Much like Dr. Lites musical roots, both men not only sing but also direct music groups. Munns is minister of music at Pulaski Heights Baptist Church in Little Rock, and Selby directs the handbell choir at Geyer Springs Baptist Church in Little Rock.

The Pulaski Technical College Choir performs a medley of traditional holiday carols during a holiday concert Dec. 7 in the R.J. Wills Lecture Hall.

The Pulaski Technical College Choir practices on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Administration Building. During each rehearsal, Dr. Lites offers a mix of encouragement and advice. When the singers all run out of breath at the end of a stanza, Dr. Lites urges them to take "catch breaths" at different times to avoid gulping air at the same time.

And Dr. Lites himself sets an example, holding a note until a student jokingly yells, "You're turning blue!"

The group starts and stops repeatedly during a rehearsal as they work to end notes at the same time, improve their pitch and stagger their breathing.

"Forte, forte, louder," he urges as the singers adjust their voices to the acoustics in the R.J. Wills Lecture Hall where they were rehearsing for their holiday concert.

That concert, which drew nearly 200 people, was also a tribute to the late Dr. Ryan Chadwick, who chaired Pulaski Tech's Fine Arts Department and helped lay the foundation for the college's music and choir programs.

She died of cancer in June 2005 before the choir had gotten off the ground.

"Dr. Chadwick wanted to see a music department started," Dr. Lites said. "So we dedicated this holiday concert to her because it was one of her dreams."

As for Dr. Lites hopes and dreams for the choir?

He'd definitely like to see the choir grow. He'd particularly like more male voices to balance the choir's sound. And, "One day I hope this choir performs overseas," he said. "I might not be the director at that time, but I think it will happen."

Sopranos - Cortney Butcher, Doris Champ, Aliya Dame, Shundra King and Kimberly Stafford; **Altos** - Cynthia Brown, Amy Hicks, Deborah Johnson, Danielle Jones, Deborah Marks and Johna Ward; **Tenors** - Adam Tompkins and Ron Selby; **Bass** - Jim Munns and Sam Ringgold.

PTC instructor pens original song

It might not be the official alumni song, but "Hail PTC" certainly has all the makings of a proper school song.

Written and composed by PTC Choir Director Milton Lites, the song speaks of learning, wisdom and values imparted to students.

"It's my gift to the college," he said.

Dr. Lites started working on the score and lyrics last semester and finished the work over the summer.

"It didn't take me that long. I'd been thinking about it. These ideas come to me. I think God gives me inspiration," he said. "The words and phrases come to me that I don't think otherwise would."

Although the song is the first school song he's composed, he has been writing and composing for more than four decades, mostly as part of his church work.

He's even penned songs for each of his four grandchildren, most recently for his 3-year-old granddaughter Sara, born on Christmas Day 2003.

After earning a bachelor's degree in music at Louisiana Tech University and a master's in music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Dr. Lites worked as a music minister at churches in Georgia and Alabama. Much of his work was composing call to worship pieces and arranging hymns. Then in 1970, he and his wife, Nannette, were chosen as music missionaries by the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. After several years of music missionary work that took them throughout Asia and Latin America, the couple returned home to west Little Rock in 2003.

All that experience training musicians overseas continues to serve him well.

"My greatest joy has been training others and seeing them perform well," Dr. Lites said.

And it's no coincidence that "Hail PTC" was written in the key of A Major. After all, "we're an 'A Major' school," Dr. Lites said.



News in Brief

Molex gives \$15,000 to Business and Industry Center

Molex Inc. has given \$15,000 to Pulaski Technical College's Business and Industry Center. Company officials have been working with the BIC to develop an entry-level industrial training program to prepare individuals for the workplace.

"We want to encourage Pulaski Technical College to continue to help us find and recruit competent people," said Tom Moore, human resources director of Molex's Connector Products and Integrated Products Divisions. "The other end of that is we'd like to recruit and hire Pulaski Technical College graduates in our business."

Molex, based in Lisle, Ill., makes connectors and adapters for the electronics industry. It employs more than 36,000 people worldwide, including 1,350 people at its two plants in Maumelle.

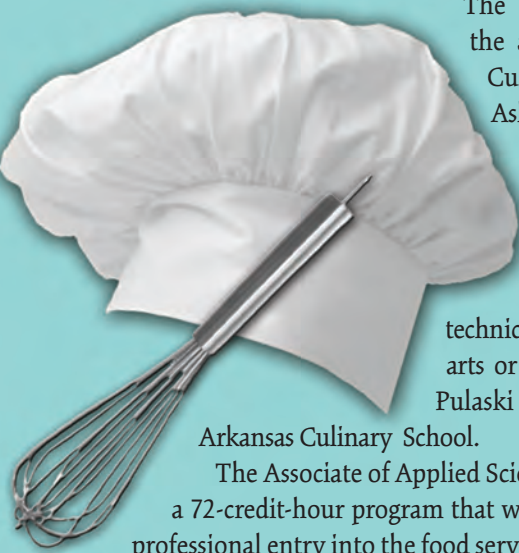
College cooks up new program

Pulaski Technical College will offer a culinary arts degree beginning in January.

The college has purchased the assets of the Arkansas Culinary School at 4901 Asher Ave. in Little Rock, where classes will be held. Aspiring chefs can earn an associate degree in culinary arts or complete a technical certificate in culinary arts or pastry arts at the new Pulaski Technical College

Arkansas Culinary School.

The Associate of Applied Science in Culinary Arts is a 72-credit-hour program that will prepare students for professional entry into the food service industry. Both technical certificates require 30 credit hours.



Pulaski Tech receives Title III grant

Pulaski Technical College has received a Title III Strengthening Institutions grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The college will receive nearly \$400,000 a year for five years to support instructional methods proven effective with at-risk students and to provide other structures to promote student success.

Library Web site debuts

Pulaski Technical College's new Ottenheimer Library Web site made its debut in mid-November.

New features include research topics and assistance, improved database access, an enhanced catalog search and information literacy training.

Find it at www.pulaskitech.edu/library/

Metropolitan Bank donates plane to PTC

Metropolitan National Bank gave a 1967 Learjet to Pulaski Technical College's Aviation Maintenance Technology program.

The plane, which has been decertified by the Federal Aviation Administration, will be used for training purposes by students enrolled in Pulaski Tech's Aviation Maintenance Technology degree and certification programs.

College dean follows in footsteps of family of educators

Rashunda Johnson planned to major in computer science and then land a job at a business or industry, but that just wasn't in the cards.

Being from a long line of educators, she was destined to follow suit.

Johnson, who has worked at Pulaski Tech since 1999, recently completed her first year as dean of education and academic success. In that job, she oversees 13 full-time faculty members and about 70 adjunct instructors.

"My goal for this division is to make sure students who would not otherwise be here are equipped with the skills they need to go into college-level classes," she said.

Johnson, a Pine Bluff native, graduated from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, like her parents and grandparents.

Her grandfather retired as UAPB's vice chancellor of academic affairs, and her grandmother was a home economics teacher at Altheimer High School. Johnson's mother is a reading instructor at UAPB.

"My grandmother would always say, 'You're going to end up in the classroom,' but I kept ignoring her. My goal was to major in computer science and get a job in business and industry."

But after completing her bachelor's degree in math at UAPB, she decided to give teaching a try. She moved to Dallas and taught math at a middle school for one year.



"I don't want to lose touch with the students and what they need."

Rashunda Johnson
Dean of Education
and Academic Success

"That was enough to send me back to college for my master's degree," Johnson said. She moved to Little Rock and began working on a master's degree in applied mathematics at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. To pay for her graduate education, she worked as a math tutor and a graduate assistant, and in 1999 she began teaching classes at Pulaski Tech as an adjunct instructor.

She taught developmental math, college algebra and business calculus from January 1999 to August 2001 when she joined the faculty full-time as a developmental math instructor. She chaired the department from spring 2004 until Oct. 31, 2005, when she was named dean of education and academic success.

She is now working toward a doctorate in education with an emphasis on two-year college administration at UALR.

Even with her many administrative duties, Johnson still tries to teach at least one class per semester.

"I don't want to lose touch with the students and what they need," she said. "Being in the classroom is the best way for me to find out."

Bank of America Learning Assistance Center boosts student success

For students struggling with their studies, the Bank of America Learning Assistance Center can be the difference between a passing and a failing grade.

The center provides a place where students can get free tutoring in various subjects, such as accounting, chemistry, English, general biology and microbiology, math, physics and physical science, anatomy and physiology, and Spanish.

Both one-on-one tutoring and group tutoring are available, and students can meet with a tutor online using Live Chat through the Pulaski Tech Web page.

The best part is that it's free!

The Learning Assistance Center is on the third floor of the Campus Center in Room 302 on the North Little Rock main campus. The computer lab in Room 303 gives students access to word processing, PLATO tutorials, the Internet and e-mail. At the college's Kanis Road site, the LAC is located in Rooms 120 and 130.

Beginning in January, a tutoring center will be open in IT 102 on the main campus for information technology students.

"If students take advantage of our services early in the semester and continue with us throughout the semester, we can help them improve their test scores, pass their courses, and complete their academic pursuits," said Learning Assistance Center Coordinator Rhonda Carroll. "Our ultimate goal is to help our students succeed and attain their academic goals."

Carroll advises students not to wait until they are so far behind that dropping the course may be the only answer.

"Come to the LAC as soon as you feel that you are not comprehending the course content and we will work with you to gain that comprehension," she said.

The lab, which was recently certified by the College Reading and Learning Association, serves about 4,000 students a year. It employs professional tutors as well as students who have been recommended by faculty.

During the fall 2006 semester, the LAC offered a series of free 45-minute workshops designed to help students with common problems in specific disciplines. The topics ranged from writing thesis statements and using proper punctuation to working with fractions and logarithms.

The program was so successful that more workshops are planned for spring 2007 at the main campus and at the Kanis site.

For more information, call Rhonda Carroll at 812-2270 or e-mail rcarroll@pulaskitech.edu



Pulaski Tech instructor makes world of difference

WorldFest attracted a record number of visitors in 2006, and 2007 promises to be even better.

The festival has grown in size and popularity, in part because of the efforts of Pulaski Tech instructor Mayo Johnson, who has chaired the event for the past four years.

The two-day festival held in mid-September in MacArthur Park, seeks to reduce prejudices by bringing together people of different cultures. This year's festival featured international music and performances, a World Animal zone, a cultural fair, global games, children's activities, a global village and information about community resources.

"We're trying to expose people to experiences that enhance cultural diversity," Johnson said. "Through that, we break down barriers and learn more about each other."



Johnson has a bachelor's degree in business administration in computer information science from the University of Central Arkansas and a master's degree in computer information management from Webster University. He worked at Acxiom Corp. before joining Pulaski Tech as a full-time instructor in 2002.

He's currently vice chair of Little Rock's Racial and Cultural Diversity Committee and is already hard at work planning WorldFest 2007.

Lecture Hall named in honor of R.J. Wills

The lecture hall on the second floor of the Campus Center has been renamed the R. J. Wills Lecture Hall in honor of the chairman of the Pulaski Technical College Foundation's Board of Directors.

Mr. Wills has been a member of the foundation board since July 2003 and has served as chairman for the past two years.

The renaming was announced Nov. 3 during the Salute to R.J. Wills Tribute Dinner in the Pulaski Technical College Campus Center Grand Hall.

The \$100-a-plate dinner event raised more than \$100,000 for the foundation's Campus Center and Library Expansion Building Campaign. That includes a \$40,000 gift from the Tenenbaum Company and a \$20,000 gift from Bank of America.

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PULASKI TECHNICAL COLLEGE
3000 WEST SCENIC DRIVE • NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR 72118

EDITOR

Tracy Courage
Communication/Special Events Manager

ART DIRECTION AND DESIGN

Amy Bonds
Graphic Designer

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Tim Jones
Director of Public Relations and Marketing

For article submission or comments, please contact
Tracy Courage at tcourage@pulaskitech.edu
or call 501-812-2324.

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3000 West Scenic Drive
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