



Innovation

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Pulaski Technical College leads the way in workforce education

When Gov. Mike Beebe visited Pulaski Technical College in January to promote the new Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate, more than 250 business and industry leaders, city officials and educators attended the event. The CRC, which certifies that a person has core employability skills, is a tool that the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and the Department of Workforce Services are encouraging employers to utilize to identify, train and retain better employees.

Pulaski Tech's relationship with Arkansas' newest manufacturing success story, LM Glasfiber, shows how education, industry and government can work together successfully as more than 100 LM Glasfiber employees received Career Readiness Certificates on Jan. 14.

Pulaski Tech's role has been to assure that applicants have both the basic literacy and technical skills required for employment at LM Glasfiber. Pulaski Tech has administered WorkKeys assessments -the testing system used to assess math, reading comprehension and information literacy- to 735 applicants. The 312 applicants who successfully passed the assessments qualified for pre-employment training. This 20-hour training was designed and taught by PTC Business and Industry faculty in partnership with LM Glasfiber, which guarantees interviews to all who successfully complete pre-employment training.

"LM Glasfiber's next set of leaders will come from these employees. The process of working with the Department of Workforce Education, Economic Development Commission and Pulaski Tech was seamless, and we look forward to working with these groups in the future," said Adam Ruple, LM Glasfiber's Director of Human Resources.

The company expects to employ 400 workers by this summer and as many as 1,000 workers within five years.

Mary Ann Shope, PTC vice president for economic development, is proud of the college's contribution. "PTC is helping LM Glasfiber meet very ambitious production goals."

PTC hosts World AIDS quilt

Panels tell silent stories created by families, friends

Whether quilted, painted, embroidered or embellished, the panels in the World AIDS Memorial Quilt told the bittersweet stories of the many young men and women, mothers and fathers, athletes and even children who have died of AIDS.

Five panels of the quilt were displayed Nov. 29 - Dec. 5 in the Campus Center Grand Hall as part of events to commemorate World AIDS Day on Dec. 1 and to raise awareness of HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

"It was a very humbling experience," Pulaski Technical College student Dave Jones said of the quilt display. "It was almost impossible not to be affected in some way by it. It just makes you stop and think about life itself."

This was the first year Pulaski Tech has hosted the quilt.

More than 250 people visited the panels, which are part of a 54-ton handmade tapestry created as a memorial to the thousands of people who have died of AIDS.

The quilt began with a single three-by-six-foot panel created in San Francisco in 1987. Today, it comprises more than 47,000 panels, each one commemorating the life of someone who has died of AIDS.

Many Pulaski Tech students also took advantage of the free HIV testing made available on campus through the Arkansas AIDS Foundation. Students also had a

chance to visit with HIV prevention consultant Debra Patton who gave a no-nonsense talk to students about lifestyle choices and consequences.

The quilt and Patton's presentation were sponsored by the college's Cultural Diversity Committee.



Above: Panels of the World AIDS Memorial Quilt hung on display in the Campus Center Grand Hall.

Student welders spruce up city signage

North Little Rock Parks and Recreation got an early Christmas present this year from Pulaski Technical College's Welding Technology students: a new entrance sign for the annual Holiday in Burns Park light display.

The sign, which was designed and created four years ago by instructor Steve Williams and students in the Welding Technology program, was vandalized last year.

The students rewelded the sign to shore up its supports, and then sanded and painted the sign, which features a snowman, Christmas trees and lettering.

The sign was returned to Parks and Recreation in time for the Dec. 1 opening of the month-long lights exhibit.

"It needed a lot of work," said Elizabeth Elizandro, communication and special events coordinator for the North Little Rock Visitors Bureau. "The Pulaski Technical College welding class did a fabulous job. It was amazing."

The sign, situated just off Military Drive, was visible to passing motorists and to the thousands of people who visited the park's lights display.

This year's exhibit featured more than 40 displays set up along Fun Land Drive.

Proceeds from the \$5-per-car admission help fund park projects and future light displays.



Left: Tminski Rodgers, a welding technology student, sands the Burns Park sign before paint is applied.

Right: The newly refinished sign sits outside the welding department before it is taken to Burns Park.



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PTC student lands publishing contract

Discipline, determination pay off for poet

Zipporah Brockman waited seven years for a “yes.”

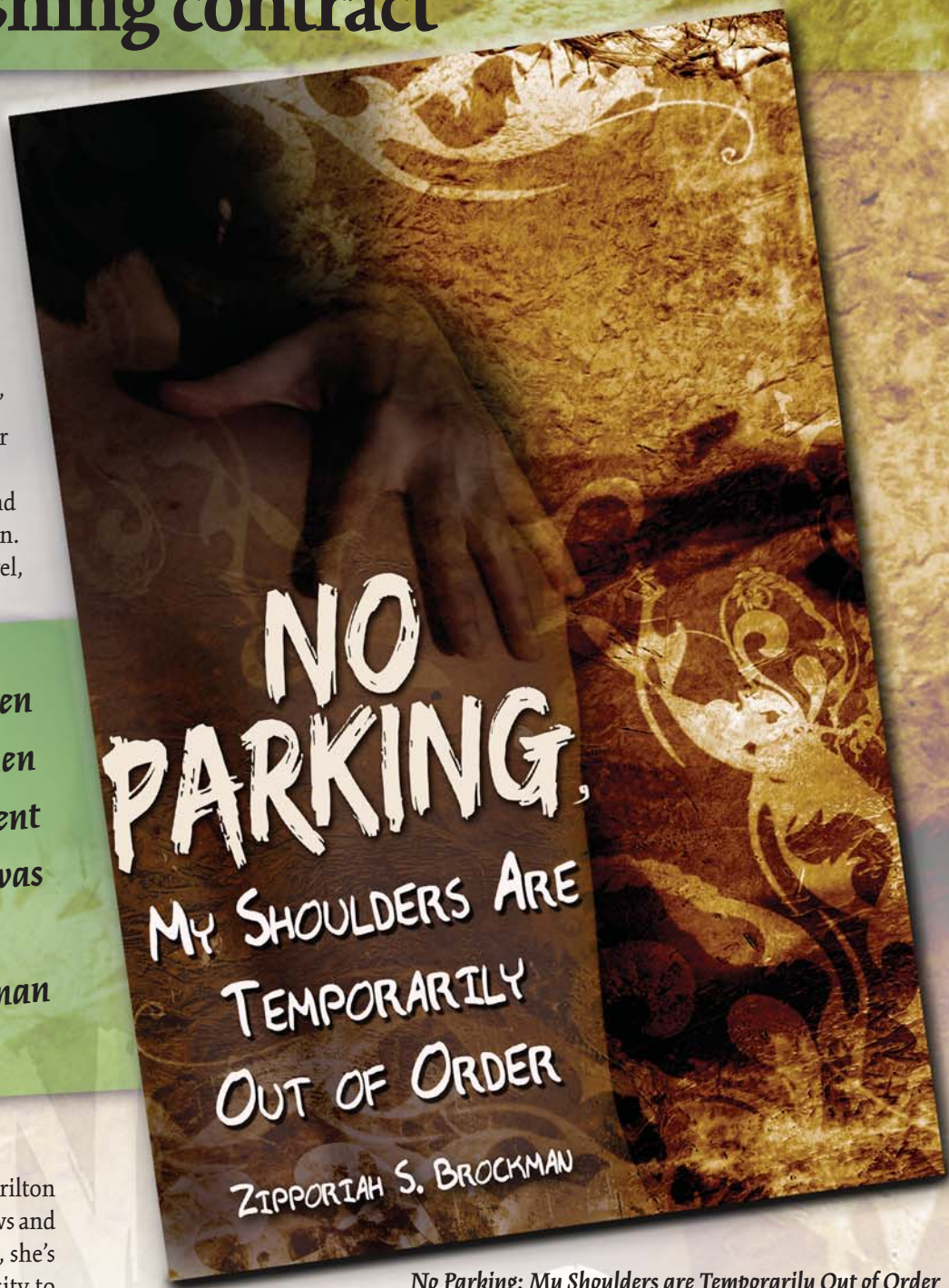
In her search for a publisher for her poetry, the 26-year-old Pulaski Tech student got more rejection letters than she can recall. Then, a letter from Publish America turned her luck around.

“I had been looking for a publisher for seven years and kept getting turned down,” Zipporah recalled. “Then Publish America picked up my work. They sent me a letter and told me the release date. It was really exciting.”

No Parking: My Shoulders are Temporarily Out of Order is a collection of 85 poems and is sold online and at area bookstores such as Barnes & Noble and Books-a-Million. Publish America also signed her to a seven-year, five-book contract. Her first novel, *In My Skin*, is due out in March.

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Zipporah has been writing poetry since she was 12. After graduating from Morrilton High School in 2000, she moved to Chicago to pursue writing, doing open mic shows and poetry symposiums. She’s back in Little Rock now, and for the past year and a half, she’s taken classes at PTC’s Little Rock site. She plans to transfer to a four-year university to pursue a degree in psychology.

“It’s always been a dream of mine to go to college,” she said.

Zipporah wrote most of the poems in *No Parking* during the past four years while experiencing some major life changes, including the birth of her son, Addison. Through those major life events, she put pen to paper, capturing the raw emotion of her experiences and offering readers an intimate perspective.

The first poem she wrote for the book was a poem titled “Incarceration” that she wrote for a friend.

“I wrote it to lift him up, to show him that even though he’s locked up, that’s not how he has to live on the inside,” she said. “He doesn’t have to feel like a caged animal.”

Her favorite poem is “Tops of Trees,” which speaks of the serenity and peace that can be found in nature.

“Sometimes you just want to climb up where you don’t have to talk to anybody, to a place of serenity and just be inspired by the things around you...the birds, the sunshine, the air...just getting away from the chaos.”

Though she’s written more than 300 poems, she’s had no formal training.

She is an avid poetry reader, though, citing “Phenomenal Woman” by Maya Angelou and “Nikki-Rosa” by Nikki Giovanni as some of her favorite poems and poets.

She plans to take creative writing classes this year and eventually take poetry classes to learn about in-depth writing techniques.

Meanwhile, writing remains a daily discipline. She manages to carve out about three hours daily for her craft.

“When you love what you do, you just make the time to do it,” she said.

Veterans Upward Bound program opens doors to military veterans

Pulaski Technical College has a new program available to help low-income, first-generation military veterans prepare for college.

Last fall, the college received a \$1 million, five-year federal grant that will help 120 military veterans achieve their higher education goals through the Veterans Upward Bound program, which is funded through the U.S. Department of Education.

“The purpose of the Veterans Upward Bound is to serve as a resource while helping veterans attain their educational goals,” said Jackie Johnson of Little Rock, who was hired in November as program director.

To be eligible, participants must have at least 180 days of active service with better than a dishonorable discharge. They must be low-income or potential first-generation college students and show academic potential and need.

The program aims to help veterans develop the skills and the motivation they need to succeed in college.

Other program benefits include academic assessments and counseling, tutoring, referrals and fee waivers for college entrance exams. Participants also have access to free classes in math, laboratory sciences, composition, literature and foreign languages.

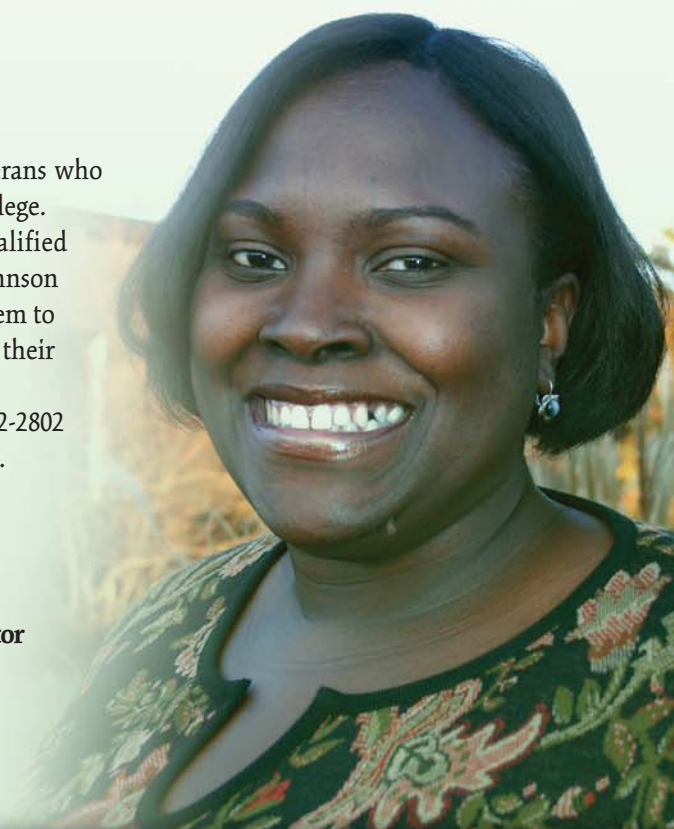
The program does not provide financial aid for college, but program advisors can help participants with the financial aid application process.

The program isn’t limited to veterans who plan to attend Pulaski Technical College.

“It is our job to help all qualified veterans to achieve their goals,” Johnson said. “We will do that by helping them to choose the program that best fits their individual needs.”

For more information, call (501) 812-2802 or e-mail jjjohnson@pulaskitech.edu.

Jackie Johnson, program director for Veterans Upward Bound



News in Brief

Delta Dental endows PTC dental assisting scholarship

Delta Dental donated \$15,000 to the college to endow scholarships for students in the Dental Assisting Technical Certificate program.

Students will apply for the first scholarship in March 2009 to be awarded for the fall 2009 semester.

Pulaski Tech's dental assisting program is one of only two dental assisting programs in Arkansas accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation within the American Dental Association. The nine-month program prepares students to care for dental patients and to perform a variety of office and laboratory duties.



PTC president named to state workforce board

Dr. Dan F. Bakke, president of Pulaski Technical College, has been named to the Executive Committee of the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

Dr. Bakke was reappointed to the board in June by Gov. Mike Beebe and will serve through June 1, 2011.

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board works to provide services that link employers with jobseekers.

PTC names new director to lead Career Pathways



Patricia "Jo" Keegan of Hensley is the new director for the Career Pathways program at Pulaski Technical College.

More than 650 Pulaski Technical College students are served by the program, which provides support services and financial assistance to parents who want to improve their education and employability.

Left: Patricia "Jo" Keegan

T & I expands course offerings

Pulaski Tech's Technical and Industrial Division has added new courses for spring 2008: Motorcycle and ATV Repair and Tractor-Trailer Operation.

Courses in Motorcycle and All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) repair will be offered as an option for the Small Engine Repair Technical Certificate. The courses, to be taught afternoons and evenings, include Drive Trains, Dealer Preparation and Assembly, and Rideability and Performance.

The Tractor-Trailer Operation course is part of an 18-hour certificate of proficiency and will prepare students for the Class A Commercial Drivers License (CDL). This course is taught from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at the main campus.

"The transportation industry in Arkansas is growing," said Mike Sneed, dean of Pulaski Tech's Technical and Industrial Division. "These courses will train students for positions with many companies in central Arkansas."

For more information, contact Mike Sneed at (501) 812-2241, or e-mail him at msneed@pulaskitech.edu

Tuition set to increase 4 percent

Pulaski Technical College's Board of Trustees approved a modest tuition increase that will take effect this fall.

In-state tuition will increase \$3 per credit hour, from \$74 to \$77. Tuition for out-of-state students will increase \$5 per credit hour, from \$123 to \$128. Tuition for international students will increase \$10 per credit hour, from \$246 to \$256.

The college's equipment/facility use fee will increase \$1 per credit hour, from \$9 to \$10. Other enrollment fees will remain the same.

"Four percent is a very modest increase - one that will allow us to continue to meet our costs while keeping education accessible and affordable for our students," said Dr. Dan F. Bakke, college president.

'Twas a night for Twain Texas storyteller pays homage to literary great

If imitation is the finest form of flattery, then Richard Salassi may be the greatest Mark Twain fan alive.

The experienced stage actor, who lives in Texas, has been touring for 11 years, performing his one-man act "A Visit with Mark Twain" about 40 times a year in classrooms across the country.

Recently, he visited Pulaski Technical College - performing once for faculty, staff and students and a second time for the community at large.

More than 300 people attended the performances, which were supported by a performing arts grant from the Mid-America Arts Alliance.

"We are grateful to the Mid-America Arts Alliance for making the presentation possible and pleased that we had such an exceptional turnout for the event," said Melissa Myers, grants and major gifts officer for the college.

Some faculty members also brought their classes to the performance.

"Art events of this nature on campus are vital," said Joey Cole, dean of the Fine Arts and Humanities Division. "They give students and the community an opportunity that they may not otherwise have and bring students, faculty, staff and the community together."

During his two-day stay, Salassi also led a professional development workshop for about a dozen instructors about teaching Mark Twain in the classroom, and he attended a Mark Twain-themed birthday party for about 25 children from Centers for Youth and Families complete with birthday cake and ice cream.

The birthday party coincided with the Nov. 30 (1835) birthday of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known as Mark Twain.

"The kids had a great time visiting campus, and it was just a fun way to introduce them to literature in a non-classroom setting," said Summer Brown, director of Student Life and Leadership.

Salassi's presentation was supported by the Mid-America Arts Alliance with underwriting by the National Endowment for the Arts; the Arkansas Department of Heritage Arkansas Arts Council, an agency of the Arkansas Department of Heritage;

and foundations, corporations and individuals throughout Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas.

The event was co-sponsored by Pulaski Technical College's Ottenheimer Library, Fine Arts and Humanities Division and Student Life and Leadership.

Mark Twain impersonator Richard Salassi performs for an audience in the R.J. Wills Lecture Hall.



PTC Fine Arts faculty net poetry fellowships

Pulaski Technical College English instructors Sandy Longhorn and Angie Macri have received individual artist fellowships from the Arkansas Arts Council for their poetry.

They were among the nine people throughout the state to each receive a \$4,000 grant.

"This is a huge honor for both Sandy and Angie and for the Division of Fine Arts and Humanities and for Pulaski Technical College," said Joey Cole, dean of Pulaski Technical College's Fine Arts and Humanities Division.

Each year, the Arkansas Arts Council awards \$4,000 fellowships to recognize artists who have demonstrated a career commitment to their disciplines and who have created a substantial body of work. Nine artists were recognized in this year's categories of painting, poetry and music composition and then recognized during the Governor's Arts Awards luncheon Oct. 22, 2007, in Rogers.

"We were delighted with the quality of the winning manuscripts," said Greg Brownderville, from the University of Mississippi in Oxford, who served as one of the judges. "As poets who know how lonely a profession writing can be, we relished the opportunity to reward talented, diligent practitioners of the art we love. The fellowships should help

enable three good poets to complete worthy creative projects."

Longhorn, coordinator of composition II, won the 2005 Anhinga Prize for Poetry for her book *Blood Almanac*. Her poems have been published in *Black Warrior Review*, *River Styx*, *Crab Orchard Review* and *Midwest Quarterly*.

Macri, chair of the English Department, has been featured in the *Spoon River Poetry Review*. Her manuscript *Enough for This Star* was recently named a finalist in the Crab Orchard Series in Poetry First Book Award competition, and she has had work published or that is forthcoming in journals including *The Chattahoochee Review*, *West Branch*, *Connecticut Review*, *Crab Orchard Review* and *New Delta Review*.



Sandy Longhorn



Angie Macri

PTC Foundation names Business and Fine Arts scholarship recipients

Catina Flowers and Susanna Garcia, both of Little Rock, have been selected as the first recipients of Pulaski Technical College's Business and Fine Arts Scholarships for the spring 2008 semester.

Flowers, 35, is pursuing an Associate of Applied Science in business and hopes to have a career in teaching and social work.

"My ultimate goal is to one day be a child psychologist and have a flourishing practice here in Arkansas," she said.

Susanna Garcia, 23, is pursuing an Associate of Arts and plans to pursue a master's degree in English and eventually teach.

"I have had such a positive experience here that I am looking forward to teaching in such a school where I truly feel there is a sense of community and where everyone seems to really enjoy being a part of education," she said.

The Business and Fine Arts Scholarship will be awarded each year to students enrolled in a business or fine arts track at Pulaski Tech. The full-tuition scholarship is renewable for two years provided that recipients maintain a minimum 3.0 grade-point average.

Scholarship recipients are selected based on community service, leadership potential and academics through a written application and interview process.

"Both of these women were strong candidates in their respective fields and whose records of community service really set them apart," said Joyce Taylor, executive director of the Pulaski Technical College Foundation.

The scholarships were provided by proceeds from the foundation's Business of Art event on April 3, which featured a meet-the-artist reception with nationally acclaimed artist Kevin Cole.



Catina Flowers (above) and Susanna Garcia (left) received Pulaski Technical College's Business and Fine Arts Scholarships for spring 2008.



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