Proposed Legislation Holds Great Promise for Community Colleges

By Dr. Ted D. Spring, President

On Tuesday, July 14, President Obama proposed legislation that would authorize the investment of $12 billion to expand the capacity of the nation’s community college system. This initiative is a resounding confirmation of the effectiveness of community colleges nationwide to positively impact the economy. Proposed funding through this legislation would make a tremendous difference in our ability to address the unmet needs in our service area.

Two years ago the college developed a 10-year Facilities Master Plan to expand instructional space to meet current and projected enrollment growth, accommodate new technical and allied health programs and upgrade our technology.

In response to a request from the Governor’s Office and in response to potential stimulus funds, New River submitted a list of capital improvement projects to the West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education that could be “shovel ready” within three months. These projects had already been outlined in the approved Facilities Master Plan. The proposed new federal legislation includes $2.5 billion to leverage $10 billion in funding for renovation and construction on community college campuses.

The Master Plan includes construction of a new main campus in Beckley; renovation of the student activities building on the Greenbrier Valley Campus for the Fine Arts program; an addition to the existing building on the Nicholas County Campus in Summersville; construction of a Technology Center on the Nicholas County Campus; construction of a new building for the Mercer County Campus; and construction of a Technology Center on the Greenbrier Valley Campus.

Currently the college leases space in Beckley and in Mercer County. As a result, we spend a disproportionate amount of our budget leasing space. Additionally, none of our current facilities are suited to offer the technical programs needed in order to prepare students for high paying jobs in industry, business and manufacturing.

The funds from President Obama’s proposed legislation will be expended as loan guarantees or seed money for capital campaigns, with priority given to “green jobs”, nursing and building trades. New River is in an excellent position to qualify for funding.

New River has a rapidly growing practical nursing program, and will soon launch new Workforce Education programs in green building technology, weatherization technology and environmental sciences.

Although the proposed legislation must now be passed by Congress, I am optimistic that the legislation can be a tremendous boost for New River and community colleges around the country that are struggling to serve a growing student population with fewer and fewer dollars.
Sixth Annual Pinning Ceremony Held for Nursing Graduates

The Sixth Annual Pinning Ceremony for the practical nursing students on the Nicholas County Campus was held Saturday, July 25, at the Nazarene Tabernacle in Summersville.

Dean Fred Culler of the Nicholas County Campus opened the program with a welcome and introduction of the platform guests. Dr. Harry Faulk, executive vice president and chief academic officer, presented greetings on behalf of the administration. Joyce Egnor, director of the nursing program, introduced the guest speaker, Michael Bennett, M.S., who was selected by the students to deliver the commencement address.

Members of the graduating class were Mildred Bailes of Summersville; Amber Boggs of Fenwick; Steven Dent of Fayetteville; Karen Dillon of Tioga; Temper Hancock of Mt. Nebo; Jenny Irvin of Danese; Jessica Kiss of Summersville; Holly Mullens of Nettie; Luchanne Rockhold of Craigsville; Cassie Selbe of Mt. Lookout; and Kristina Tenney of Carl.

At a reception following the ceremony, Egnor announced that Luchanne Rockhold earned the highest grade point average in the class, and Millie Bailes was honored as Clinical Student of the Year. The ceremony was covered by television station WOAY.

Four students successfully completed the first commercial truck driving training course, which was offered on the Nicholas County Campus in July. Robert Taylor, John Callison, Russell Myer and Randall Miller successfully completed this rigorous program of study. Pictured (L-R) are Beverly McCutcheon, program assistant; John Callison; William Harlow, driving instructor; Randall Miller; Mary Igo, program specialist; and Lloyd Collins, classroom instructor.

Millie Bailes (left) and, and Luchanne Rockhold were recognized as outstanding nursing students at the Pinning Ceremony last Saturday.

The pinning ceremony was a family affair for Amber Boggs. Her mother, Gloria Russell (left) and sister, Cassie Rose (right) are also graduates. Pictured with them is Joyce Egnor, director of the nursing program.
There is a tremendous amount of activity at the Mercer County Technical Education Center in preparation for the fall semester. Bluefield/Mercer County Campus Dean, Bo Hylton is relocating his office to the Princeton facility. Mechatronics, Medical Assisting, POST and general education classes will be offered at MCTEC this fall. An advertising campaign has been launched to draw attention to the new location, with radio, newspaper and television ads promoting the site.

A new sign on the Mercer County Technical Education Center announces the arrival of New River in Princeton.

A cameraman from WVNS-TV films a commercial starring Bluefield/Mercer County Dean Bo Hylton (right) and Bill Sherwood, director of Mercer Tech, as they welcome a new student.

**Margaret Vines**, RN, MSN has joined the Mercer County faculty as an instructor of Medical Assisting on the Mercer County Campus. She received her certificate in Practical Nursing from the Summers County School of Practical Nursing, and her associate’s degree in Nursing from Bluefield State College. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Nursing and was named Outstanding Nursing Student at Queen’s College/Haywood School of Nursing in Charlotte, NC. She earned her master’s degree from the University of Phoenix School of Nursing, where she was an honor graduate.

**Shawn Garretson** has joined the Mercer County faculty as an instructor of Manufacturing and Industrial Systems. Garretson is an industrial and systems engineer with more than 20 years of experience in manufacturing. Before coming to New River, he was plant manager at Ohio Steel Industries, a structural steel fabricator in Columbus, OH. He has previous experience as an operations manager, corporate industrial engineer and project manager in a variety of industries. He earned his degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering from Ohio University.
“Pearl S. Buck” Speaks in Hollowell Auditorium

By Mike Williams

Pearl Sydenstricker Buck, the world famous Nobel and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, visited the Greenbrier Valley Campus on Monday, July 26, through the talents of West Virginia History Alive re-enactor Karen Vuranch.

Noting her father was from Greenbrier County and her mother from Pocahontas County, Vuranch (as Pearl Buck) told of her return to West Virginia as a nine-year-old, when she attended Hillsboro Academy.

Pearl S. Buck visited the Greenbrier Valley as part of her final tour of West Virginia on Nov. 18, 1970. At that time she addressed the student bodies of Greenbrier Military School, Greenbrier East High School, Greenbrier College for Women (the buildings of which now house the Greenbrier Valley Campus) and a public luncheon at Old Stone Presbyterian Church.

Just prior to the public presentation in Hollowell Auditorium in Greenbrier Hall, Vuranch visited the New River Library, where there is a collection of 41 volumes of Buck’s works.

Vuranch announced her next “West Virginia History Alive” performance at the Greenbrier Valley Campus will be October 10 at 3 p.m., when she will portray Julia Child, the famous French chef and television personality.

Fifty-five people attended the program, and it was covered by WVNS Channel 59 News. The program was presented by New River’s Department of Workforce Education in partnership with the West Virginia Humanities Council.

Dr. Richard Rafes, president of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine, Dr. Ted Spring and Dr. Gregory Aloia, president of Concord University, were on hand for the Greater Greenbrier Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours in Lewisburg on July 21. The event was co-hosted by the Greenbrier Valley Campus, Carnegie Hall and the North House Museum. Earlier that day, Dr. Spring and Dr. Aloia signed an agreement that will make it possible for Concord students to complete three degree programs (Fine Arts, Social Work and Recreation and Tourism Management) at the Greenbrier campus.
Dates to Remember

August 1  Virtual Bookstore goes live at www.newriver.bkstr.com
August 3  Town Hall Meeting, Nicholas County Campus
          10 a.m.-noon, The Commons
August 6  Town Hall Meeting, Beckley Campus/Raleigh County Campus
          10 a.m.-noon, A-5
August 6  Board of Governors Meeting, Beckley Campus
          6:45 pm, A-1
August 7  Town Hall Meeting, Greenbrier Valley Campus
          10 a.m.-noon, Auditorium
August 7  Opening Reception, Passages: New Works by Nathan England
          5-7 p.m., Carnegie Hall Museum, 105 Church Street, Lewisburg
August 10 Town Hall Meeting, Mercer County Campus/Bluefield Campus
          10 a.m.-noon, Mercer County Tech, Room 210
August 12 Faculty Institute, Country Inn and Suites, Beckley
August 13-14 Registration on all campuses
August 17 Fall Semester Classes begin

GOT NEWS??? Please send news items and announcements from your campus to belliot@newriver.edu.

Note that this newsletter is now called Transitions, reflecting its changing focus.