Payne Named Director of Center for Teaching Excellence
At New River Community and Technical College

[Beckley, WV] Ralph C. Payne has been appointed director of the newly created Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) at New River Community and Technical College. The center is a faculty resource focused on instructional development and support. Payne assumed his duties on April 2, 2009.

Located at the Public Higher Education Center in Beaver, WV, the CTE will serve faculty from all New River campuses with workshops and support for design and development of distance education courses.

With Payne’s arrival, the CTE’s faculty studio will soon be fully operational for instructors working on course development projects. Using newly installed equipment and software, the faculty will be able to incorporate advanced media elements into distance education courses.
Additionally, services offered through SCT Banner and WebCT will be enhanced so that time- and place-bound students have complete access to information and services necessary for academic success at New River.

The development of the Center for Teaching Excellence is supported by a five-year, $2 million federal Title III grant that was awarded to the college last October. Carolyn Sizemore, dean of New River's Beckley Campus, is the Title III project director.

“Ralph Payne has the personality and background to help our instructors lose their fear of technology and bring life to our distance education courses,” Sizemore commented.

Payne was born and raised in McDowell County, WV, and attended Big Creek High School. Shortly after graduation in 1970, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. After being honorably discharged from the military, he enrolled in Niagara County Community College in Sanborn, NY and received an associate’s degree in Communications and Media Arts in 1984. He worked in the media field and in retail management until 1999, when he joined the Office of Media Relations at Niagara University in New York.

During his nine years at Niagara, Payne earned a bachelor’s degree in Communications and a master’s in Education. He was promoted to multimedia production coordinator and immersed himself in assisting faculty, staff and students in using technology in the classroom. During this time Payne also became an adjunct professor at Niagara University and at Niagara County Community College, where he taught classes in multimedia production and television production.

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