New River Sets Up Shop at Snowshoe Career Center

[MARLINTON, WV] The Snowshoe Career Center in downtown Marlinton is fast becoming a “one stop shop” for a vast array of services for the citizens of Pocahontas County. New River Community and Technical College is one of a number of partner organizations that are staffing the center to make their resources more accessible to people in the county.

Wanda Johnson, a program specialist at New River’s Greenbrier Valley Campus in Lewisburg, is now working at the Career Center on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. Johnson will be able to assist prospective students with admissions and financial aid information, as well as class registration for all New River programs. She will be the first stop for students interested in enrolling in the practical nursing program that is offered in Pocahontas County. She also will work with employers to identify training needs and will coordinate New River classes at the center. Offerings will include workforce training, community education and noncredit and for-credit courses for the hospitality industry. Johnson can be reached at (304) 799-2509.

Suzanne Soucier, who coordinates New River’s College Prep 4 Success program, will be at the Center on the second and fourth Friday of each month. Prep 4 Success is designed for people with a high school diploma or GED certificate who have no college credits. It includes a college orientation course and a computer class, plus refresher courses in math, English and reading skills. Students receive transferrable college credits if they successfully complete the program. The program will be offered at the Career Center March 30-July 15.

In addition to her New River responsibilities, Soucier also offers Workforce Investment Act assistance through Region I Workforce West Virginia. Among other services, Workforce
offers Work Keys assessment, case management and access to federal and state tuition assistance for training programs.

According to William Loope, Director of Institutional Advancement and Workforce Education, New River’s increased presence in the county came about as a result of the commitment of Snowshoe Mountain and the Pocahontas County Commission to help fund a shared facility that will be staffed by a number of organizations providing services for Pocahontas County citizens.

“We started this effort in 2002 and had two failed attempts, “Loope explained. “We would have continued to fail if Snowshoe had not come forward to help us.”

He credits Bill Rock, Coby Brown and Tracy Samples of Snowshoe for providing the leadership necessary to help the center evolve into the multi-faceted facility it is today. He also praises the county commission for its vision in supporting the project.

The county commission pledged $30,000 for a “living classroom” concept several years ago, and they committed an additional $13,000 earlier this year to help underwrite the expenses for New River to expand its presence at the center.

In addition to New River and Workforce West Virginia, a number of other agencies will have a presence at the center. They include the Pocahontas County Prevention Coalition, which provides education and strategies for the prevention of alcohol and substance abuse; the WV Division of Rehabilitative Services, which assists disable workers in returning to the workforce; RESA I and IV, offering Adult Basic Education and GED classes; the Human Resources Development Foundation, which provides services to disadvantaged youth; WV Workplace Education, providing training in a variety of subjects; and the Community Corrections program, which works with offenders to help repair their lives and return them to the workforce;

Snowshoe Mountain established the Career Center as a centralized site for employee recruitment and training efforts. It is also home to the Snowshoe Foundation, which provides grants and helps identify resources for organizations working within the three-county area where employees of the resort live (Pocahontas Randolph and Webster Counties). More information about the foundation and its mission can be found at www.snowshoefoundation.com.

New River Community and Technical Colleges serves a nine-county area of southern West Virginia from campuses in Raleigh County (Beckley and Beaver), Mercer County (Bluefield and Princeton), Nicholas County (Summersville) and the Greenbrier Valley (Lewisburg). Additional information can be found at www.newriver.edu

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Photo Caption: New River Community and Technical College representatives are pictured with partners who are helping them provide outreach in Pocahontas County. Pictured are (front row, L-R) Kay Bosquet, career center coordinator for Region I Workforce West Virginia; Coby Brown, executive director of the Snowshoe Foundation; Rita Griffith, county commission member; and Wanda Johnson, program specialist for New River; (back row, L-R) Roger Griffith, dean of New River's Greenbrier Valley Campus in Lewisburg; Bill Rock, president and chief operating officer of Snowshoe Mountain; Martin Saffer, president of the county commission; David Fleming, county commission member; and Dr. Ted D. Spring, president of New River Community and Technical College.