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From the Hawk's Nest is distributed on the first and third Friday of each month. We need your input! Please send your ideas for stories on upcoming events, reports on attendance at conferences, awards and honors received, photos or information on outstanding employees or students to Barbara Elliott, bellott@newriver.edu. **The deadline for the next issue is 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 19.**

The Accreditation visit went well . . . Where do we go from here?

The accreditation reaffirmation visit by the team from the Higher Learning Commission went very smoothly thanks to great participation from faculty, staff, Board of Governors, Advisory Board members and community participants. The HLC team (pictured at right with Dr. Washington) included (l-r) Dr. Cynthia Krueger, Miss Sarah Griffith, Dr. William Tammon, and Dr. Joe Kanosky. Thanks to the Hospitality Committee for all of their efforts to make our guests feel welcome.



Team Chair, Dr. Tammon, will send the team's report to Dr. Washington for comment on Findings of Fact, which means that if there is any incorrect information, he can correct it, but not change the intent of the document. He will then finalize the document and present it to the Higher Learning Commission. The Commission will forward an electronic version to New River CTC along with an institutional response form, so we will have an opportunity to respond to the final report.

The final report, all submitted materials (including the Self-Study and our response) will move to the Institution Actions Council (IAC) for review and decision. The IAC will meet either in February or March. Their decision will be communicated to us and Dr. Washington will share it with the College community.



Dr. Washington will be on all campuses over the next several weeks to host Town Hall meetings to discuss the Reaffirmation, as well as other topics you wish to share. The first meeting was held at the Greenbrier Valley Campus (photo at left) on Nov. 5, and the conversation ranged from plans for the bookstore to questions about the rumored "third phase" of the Realignment. Dr. Washington's response to the latter question was that while some additional adjustments may be made going forward, there is no planned formal "third phase."

Busy Time for Financial Aid Staff

The Financial Aid staff has been busy in the past few weeks, and not just with processing FAFSAs! The staff recently participated in the Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA) conference. This association includes members from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, West Virginia and Wisconsin. The theme was "Climbing to Great Heights." With 59 different sessions to choose from, everyone definitely walked away engaged and enlightened!

West Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (WVASFAA) hosted this conference at the Marriott in Charleston, WV. New River CTC's financial aid office was very involved in making this event a lasting memory for those attending. Herman "Boats" Keene headed up the excursion, white water rafting and zip line committee. Patricia Hamon, Stephanie Morris and Donna Feijo were the signage committee, ensuring that participants found their way to the correct sessions and events. It was a great time to network and learn from others.



Pictured above (in front of a very appropriately named room) are (l-r) Donna Feijo, Stephanie Morris, Boats Keene, Trish Harmon and Suzanne Fry.

Boats Keene, Belinda Cox and Donna Feijo attended Federal Financial Aid training in Clarksburg Oct. 21-23. This training was based on the 2014-2015 NASFAA (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators)



Trish Harmon, director of financial aid, (photo at left) and her staff also hosted a day-long workshop on Nov. 5 at the Advanced Technology Center to mentor high school counselors on how to assist students with filling out their FAFSAs. The workshop was also attended by representatives from Appalachian Outreach and Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Susie Atkins Now in Administrative Services

Susie Atkins, administrative assistant joined the Office of Administrative Services in a full-time capacity effective Oct. 16. She has served the College for many years in various positions, most recently as the administrative assistant to the Vice President for Finance and Administration. Susie will continue to serve as the bookstore liaison and will assist in the areas of administrative services, human resources, facilities and safety.



Got Apps?

All employees should have signed up for a MyApps account at www.wso.gov by now. The deadline was Nov. 1. This step is crucial to receiving a paycheck through the new wvOASIS system in 2015. [Here](#) is a link to the directions which are posted on New River's Intranet. If you need help setting up your user account, please contact the Human Resources Office: 304.929.6709 or Payroll Office: (304) 929-6733 for assistance.

Dr. Edward Omolo Authors "Cultural Memoir"

Dr. Edward Omolo, instructor of biology at the Nicholas County Campus, has recently published *A Kenyan Pilgrim's Progress-My Memoirs of My Luo Family*, a chronicle of changing cultural paradigms framed within a memoir of his family's history since the 1800s.

Dr. Omolo says that his life in the United States was one of the factors that motivated him to write these cultural memoirs. "I got a chance to live in the western world, and I saw how every group that had immigrated to the U.S. loved their culture, be it the Hispanics, Chinese, (East) Indians, or Italians, etc." The book is an encyclopedia of Luo cultural traditions regarding birth, naming of children, growth, and passage of rights (initiation), marriage, starting a home, death, burials, and levirate relationships (wife inheritance).



"Every culture has merits and demerits," he notes. "It makes no sense to abandon one's culture on account of its demerits. That's throwing out the baby with the bath water. Based on my experiences within my own family, I have tried to illuminate both good and bad features in both cultures through the interaction of two very different cultures, a veritable clash of traditional (Dala) and modern civilizations (Diaspora)."

Within the span of merely a century, from his grandfather and grandmother to his father and mother and to him and his children, Dr. Omolo has experienced a transformation that the western "first" world has taken well over two millennia to achieve. He jokingly notes, "I suppose you could conclude that the westerners just are slow learners. But that would be ungracious and unjust, as notwithstanding the stress and anguish of the transformation experience, I am so grateful for that encounter of African and European (principally British) cultures, starting in the early 1900's with my grandfather's generation until today. We both have learned from one another and are much the better for it."

Mercer County Campus Hosts Business After Hours for Two Chamber Groups



The Mercer County Campus opened its doors to business leaders from across Mercer County as it hosted a joint Business After Hours for the Bluefield and Princeton/Mercer County Chambers of Commerce on Oct. 30. The turnout was fantastic, and everyone was impressed with how the College has re-purposed the former bank building.

Pictured are (l-r) Sharon Evans, Rita Holcomb and Katrina Allen from the Mercer County Campus. They were among the many faculty and staff from across the College who attended the event.



Scaring Up Some Halloween Fun

Halloween was celebrated on many days in many ways across our campuses. At the Advanced Technology Center, the SGA sponsored a Halloween Party on Oct. 22. Students were "treated" to pizza, Halloween goodies and some spooky tunes. Pictured (l-r) are SGA officers and advisors Lisa Matherly, Greg Saunders, Max Stephens, Adam Jones and Megan Mohn.

The Nicholas County Campus hosted a "Haunted School" event for kids in the community, the Raleigh County Campus SGA handed out goodies during Beckley's "Trunk or Treat" event, SGA members from the Mercer County Campus handed out treats during the "Monster Mash" event in downtown Princeton, and the Greenbrier Valley Campus SGA helped out at the Greenbrier Valley Visitors Center during the Downtown Merchant's candy give-away. Thanks to all for adding to the Halloween fun for children across our region!

KUDOS!

Gloria Kincaid of the Workforce Education staff did a terrific job of helping to organize the FIRST Lego League scrimmage held in the gymnasium at the Lee Street Complex on Nov. 1. She received assistance from the Greenbrier Valley Campus maintenance team in setting up for the event. Steve Butler and Dr. Lucie Refsland served as judges. Shane Bennett and Sandra Wilmer assisted with logistics, and Roger Griffith welcomed the visiting teams from across the state. Carol Evans and her nursing students provided concessions. Pictured (l-r) are Shane Bennett and Steve Butler.



Real men do wear pink! Even the guys got into the spirit of things during Breast Cancer Awareness week at the Nicholas County Campus. Showing their support for the cause are (l-r) Adam Argabright, Dr. John Mullens and Dr. John Mark Walkup.

Vanessa Bailey's Medical Assisting students went all out during Medical Assistants Appreciation Week. Among other activities, they met with Lewisburg Mayor John Manchester, who signed a proclamation of the week on behalf of the City of Lewisburg.



Kudos to the Student Services staff and all of their co-conspirators for the fun (and colorful) "Got Classes" campaign currently underway to encourage current students to enroll early for spring semester.



Check out our Facebook page for more information on College events. Just click on the logo above or connect from the home page of the website.

Keep us Posted!

Share the good news about what's going on at New River CTC. Send your articles, photos or Kudos to Barbara Elliott, bellioti@newriver.edu. Many thanks to Dr. Edward Omolo, Vanessa Bailey, Ingrid Hudnall, Amanda Baker, Adam Argabright, Karen Tully, Gene Whitlow, Gloria Kincaid, Donna Feijo, and Megan Mohn for their assistance with this issue.

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Mission

New River Community and Technical College provides accessible, affordable, quality education and workforce programs to meet the needs of the region it serves.