

# Connection

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## Business Programs Reaccredited by ACBSP

Our Business programs received full reaffirmation of accreditation following a meeting last November of the Accreditation Council of Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) Associate Degree Board of Commissioners.

Our Accounting, Business Technology, and Automated Office Technology programs recently received a 10-year reaccreditation, said Jackie Blakley, dean of the Business and Public Services Division.

Following the College's extensive self-study of these programs, a team of program evaluators visited Tri-County

in October of 2010 to validate the programs' compliance with ACBSP standards. In addition to talking to department heads and College administrators, the evaluators met with other faculty, staff, and students.

ACBSP accreditation certifies that the teaching and learning processes within the business school at Tri-County meet the rigorous educational standards established by ACBSP, said Jackie.

"Tri-County Technical College has shown its commitment to teaching excellence and to the process of quality improvement by participating in the accreditation process," said ACBSP Director of Accreditation Steve Parscale, who will present the Certificate of Reaffirmation of Accreditation at the ACBSP Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 27. "This accreditation is evidence that Tri-County is committed to providing the highest quality business education for its students."

"Along with being recognized as standing apart from the rest, reaccreditation helps an organization to evaluate itself and to stay competitive with other colleges," said Jackie. "Reaccreditation is very meaningful for the Business Department because it confirms that our standards are high for our department and our faculty."

"Evaluators said the College's strengths include the dedicated and qualified faculty and administrative leaders," said Jackie. "They also added that we are supportive of our Business unit and the College mission. They noted a connection between faculty, students, and administration."

The process is outcomes based and allows us continually to look at our programs and services and to improve ourselves when necessary. It also reaffirms we are doing things right."

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Our Accounting program is among the College's Business programs receiving full reaffirmation of program accreditation by ACBSP



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Commission Meeting ..... February 7  
Pendleton Campus  
Open House ..... February 25  
College Fair ..... March 2  
Bluegrass Under the Stars..... April 2  
Career Fair ..... April 16  
Spring Open ..... April 29

Check the College Activities Calendar in  
eTC for additional activities and events.

## Connection

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### Anderson Campus

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### Easley Campus

1774 Powdersville Rd., Easley, SC

### Oconee Campus

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100 Vocational Dr., Seneca, SC

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Tri-County Technical College does not discriminate  
in admission or employment on the basis of race,  
color, religion, sex, qualifying disability, veteran's  
status, or national origin.

## Connecting



**Ronnie L. Booth**  
President

Our Easley Campus opened with 440 students  
enrolled for Spring Semester, an accomplishment  
for which we can all be proud. I appreciate the

countless hours many of you spent to ensure a smooth start-up. The community is  
thrilled we are now officially a part of the Easley/Powdersville area.

In just over three short years, we have made tremendous progress in increasing  
access to public higher education and training in our service area. We now have four  
campuses, as well as a learning center in Honea Path and another in Sandy Springs that  
we hope to open in time for Fall Semester. Two of our community campuses, Easley and  
Oconee, include QuickJobs Training Centers.

It should come as no surprise that becoming a multi-campus institution completely  
changes the operations and culture of the College. No department is left untouched.  
Decisions must be made regarding what services, courses, and programs will be offered  
at our new locations. Staffing must be addressed. Budget resources must be allocated.  
Accreditation issues must be considered. Changes must be communicated.

We have been completely immersed in all of these tasks over the last three years  
and have gained solid, practical experience. We also have learned important lessons  
along the way. ***Now that we have a sense of this new paradigm, the time has come  
to think more strategically about how we plan and manage our resources to  
achieve our mission in a multi-campus environment.***

To help us work through these issues, the Executive Staff has chartered a project  
team to develop a multi-campus strategy that, according to its charter, will enable us to  
“ensure effective, proportional, and scalable delivery of programs and services across all  
locations and inform strategic College decisions on expansions and new acquisitions.”

Simply put, this group will develop a strategy that will inform big-picture decisions,  
as well as local operations. They will take complex scenarios and break them down into  
specific pieces in an effort to define levels of services – support and programming – that  
can be offered at each location. Doing so will provide the framework to make decisions  
on a day-by-day basis.

Members of the Multi-Campus Strategy Project Team include Tim Bowen, Anderson  
Campus director (facilitator); Amanda Blanton, dean of Enrollment Management; Sharon  
Colcolough, Personnel director; Eugene Grant, dean of the Industrial and Engineering  
Technology Division; Glenn Hellenga, Career Services director; Dr. Gwen Owens, dean  
of the Arts and Sciences Division; Dr. Brian Swords, operations manager for Corporate  
and Community Education and interim director of the Easley Campus; and Lee Tennent,  
Information Technology director. Their work is a critical strategic step in our development,  
and they need your support.

We have posted the multi-campus strategy charter in the Special Initiatives channel  
in eTC, and we have started using that channel to communicate progress made on the  
various tasks associated with the development of the strategy. We hope you will check  
this channel regularly to stay informed on this topic.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ron Booth".

Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D.  
President



# Spotlight on Career Services

When Kristen Henry graduates from Tri-County with a double major in Accounting and Business Management this spring, her resume already will include a year of work experience with AmeriCorps as a VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) Site Coordinator for Pickens County.

She never thought she would be able to combine her communication skills from her 1995 Criminal Justice degree from Tri-County with her accounting/management skills into a public service job with a not-for-profit agency. (VITA volunteers provide free income tax preparation assistance to low-income, elderly, disabled, and limited English-speaking people.)

"I've found the perfect job," the West Union resident says of her year-long stint with AmeriCorps, a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps members serve through more than 2,100 non-profits, public agencies, and faith-based organizations.

"I knew I wanted to help people in my job, but I didn't know how to combine that with the Accounting and Management degrees," she said. She says a mock interview with Job Placement Coordinator Alison Reynolds put her on the right path. "When she asked me what I wanted to do with my degrees, I gave a robotic answer. Sensing that I wanted more, she asked what I really wanted to do, and I said work for a non-profit agency in its accounting/management office. Mrs. Reynolds showed me how to make the connection between accounting, management, and my Criminal Justice degree. It was eye opening – one of those light-bulb moments that I had never thought of."

Alison told her about a job listing with AmeriCorps, and Kristen applied. The United Way of Greenville County and United Way of Pickens County joined forces with AmeriCorps through a three-year grant-funded program, which offers assistance with tax returns, information about what state and federal benefits are available to qualifying residents and a financial management curriculum.

She applied and was among the seven hired to work in agencies in Pickens County. (SHARE, Pickens County Seniors Unlimited, the Board of Disabilities, the Pickens County Public Library System, the YMCA, and Clemson Community Care are providing locations for these services.)

Kristen was assigned to the SHARE office in Easley as VITA Site Coordinator to do volunteer and client outreach. "The VITA tax preparation service will allow us to prepare income tax returns, free of charge, for those individuals who qualify (individuals and families who file a basic tax return, and who have a low-to-moderate income - defined as having a household income of less than \$50,000). "We want to get the word out about the free VITA tax preparation service," she said,

adding that there are an estimated 25,000 persons in Pickens County who qualify for VITA services.

She also is implementing a job training program at the SHARE office. Through AmeriCorps, she receives a small living stipend, and when she completes her year of service (July 31, 2010), she will receive an educational stipend. "This has been a great experience. I'm meeting new people and networking in the community. I get to go home and feel good about what I do all day," she added.

"Kristen has so much to offer an employer. She interviews very well and she is an excellent communicator. She is a perfect fit for this job," said Alison.

Heather Love, vice president of community impact for United Way of Pickens County, agrees. "Kristen's work experience, combined with her college degrees made her, at first glance, a great candidate for our program. She is dedicated, creative, and a self starter. It's unique to find someone who possesses all three of these valuable attributes," said Heather. "Because she is one of two AmeriCorps members who has a background and degree in Accounting, she is a huge asset to our team. We look to her to answer questions because she has that real-world experience. She offers a perspective that other AmeriCorps members may not be able to offer. We would love to have Kristen consider being a part of AmeriCorps next year."

"Many times students come into the Career Services Office unsure of their major. It takes one-on-one conversation to help connect those dots. This AmeriCorps opportunity is wonderful for Kristen," said Alison. "Sometimes you have to get experience to be marketable. It's wise to look at more than the salary when you are a student. I've been to recent community events that Kristen attended and so many people already know her. She has made so many connections already, and her job at AmeriCorps will make her resume even more valuable," said Alison.

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Kristen Henry

SPOTLIGHT is a regular feature of CONNECTION that highlights College instructional programs, activities, and support services. Surveys show that our own faculty and staff play a significant role in influencing potential students to apply to the College. We're all ambassadors – so stay informed and keep doing a great job spreading the word that Tri-County is a great place to learn and grow!





"I would like to take this opportunity to thank our **Maintenance and Information Technology Staffs** for the many

long hours and late nights they put in to guarantee the startup of our Easley Campus went smoothly. They went above and beyond to make sure everything was working correctly when the doors opened for classes. These two departments rarely receive the praise they deserve; instead, they are always the first to hear when things are not working correctly. On behalf of all of the Easley students and staff, we want to thank both of these departments for helping make the start-up of our new campus a great experience for everyone."

*Dr. Brian Swords, acting director for the Easley Campus*

"I would like to thank the **Maintenance Department, Campus Safety, Buddy Hughes and his employees, and S & S Construction** for all they did to help with the snow removal during the week of January 10, 2011. Their hard work allowed Tri-County Technical College to open up and offer classes as soon as possible considering the amount of snow that fell."

*Ken Kopera, director of Physical Plant*

"I'd like to express my appreciation to **Denise Day**, graphic designer in the PR/Marketing office, for designing the new logo for the Campus Store. Last fall we decided to rebrand from the Bookstore to the Campus Store to reflect the wide array of merchandise we carry. Denise came up with several excellent logo designs for us to choose from. The version we ultimately chose is perfect and it has some of our favorite elements from the old logo, which helps with transition. Thanks to Denise's quick work and excellent design skills, we were able to completely rebrand during the December break and open in January with our new look and name."

*Kevin Steele, director of Administrative Services*

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# Our College Family

## excellence through service

Dr. Phil Buckhiester alerted us that in December 2010, Tri-County Technical College became the first technical college in South Carolina to implement AcademyOne's Equivalency Synchronizer. This application allows for Tri-County's representatives to update equivalencies by adding, removing, or adjusting data in their student information system and then see the changes that were made automatically reflected on sctrac.org. Using the Equivalency Synchronizer in this manner reduces the need for Tri-County's personnel to enter the same data in two separate systems. What's more, implementing the application takes only a few weeks, with minimal work needed that must be completed by institutional representatives. Many thanks to **Scott Harvey** for leading the way for Tri-County on this implementation.

Congratulations to **Alydia Sims**, library tech - acquisitions coordinator, who graduated December 12, 2010, from the University of Phoenix online with a Master of Adult Education and Training degree. She plans to pursue a master certification for U.S. History beginning this month.

Also congratulations to **Cathy Ford**, MS, RN, FNP-BC, CNE, program coordinator for associate degree Nursing, and **Beth Schultz**, Practical Nursing instructor, who have been selected to serve as Program Evaluators for the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission.

## in transition

### ARTS AND SCIENCES

**Jill English** joined the English faculty at the Anderson Campus this semester. She is teaching Public Speaking classes on a full-time basis after two years as an adjunct. Jill has taught at various colleges over the years – she taught Public Speaking, Communications, and Journalism at Greenville Technical College from 2005 – 2010, Public Speaking classes at Asheville- Buncombe Tech from 2001 – 2005, and Journalism and Communications classes at Brevard College from 2000 – 2004. She holds a B.S. in Communications from Western Carolina University and a master's in Mass Communications from the University of South Carolina. She and her children, Jenna and Jacobi, live in Greenville.



*Scott Harvey*



*Alydia Sims*



*Cathy Ford*



*Beth Schultz*



*Jill English*

## Brag & Share

(continued from page 4)

### STUDENT AFFAIRS

**Karen Thompson** came on board late last year as our new Educational Talent Search Counselor in TRiO. She spent the last 10 years working at Clemson University, most recently as a Transfer Credit Evaluator. She also was Director of Information and Ticketing Services for the Information Desk at Littlejohn Coliseum and worked as an Admissions Counselor for several years.

Karen holds a B.A. in Psychology from Wingate University in Wingate, NC, and an M. Ed. in Guidance Counseling from Clemson University. She is currently working toward a master's in Sociology at Clemson.

She and her husband, Chad, have two sons, Reece, 6, and Kaylor, 5. They are members of First Baptist Church in Pendleton and live in Liberty.



Karen Thompson

The following faculty and staff recently departed the College. We wish them well in their new endeavors.

**Dr. Vinson Burdette**

**Stephanie Higingbottom**

**Larry Myers**

**Tasneem Raja**

## Three Faculty/Staff Members Honored as Tri-County's Educators of the Year

Three faculty/staff members have been honored as Tri-County Technical College's Educators of the Year and will be recognized at the South Carolina Technical Education Association (SCTEA) meeting in February.

Dr. Gwen Owens, dean of the Arts and Sciences Division, is the College's outstanding administrator; Chris Worthy, head of the Comprehensive Studies Department, is the outstanding instructor; and Linda Crowe, administrative assistant for the Comprehensive Studies and Social Science departments in the Arts and Sciences Division, is the outstanding staff nominee.

SCTEA is a professional association of technical education personnel and others interested in post-secondary technical education.



Dr. Gwen Owens



Chris Worthy



Linda Crowe

*Eddie Capps of the Men's Training Center of Haven of Rest Ministries, Inc., sent Dr. Booth these words of thanks:*

"I wanted to write a note of thanks for your generosity toward the men at Haven of Rest's Men's Training Center. As you know, these men are a work in progress, but with the help of Tri-County and your assistance through the mobile classroom environment on our campus in Belton, we are making a difference in these men's lives. I believe there has been a two-fold benefit to our men. Not only are they learning a skill that may open a door toward employment and possibly further training at your facility, but because of this addition to our program, men also are encouraged to actually stay in our program longer, which works for their overall good in the addressing of their life-dominating problems.

I would like to compliment your support staff, who, in my opinion, have proved themselves to be quality people. **Scott Brabham, Donald White, Eugene Grant, and Joe Shaw** (welding instructor) all have put their hearts into their jobs and we have been impressed with their diligence and professionalism.

Thanks again for your friendship and partnership with Haven of Rest. We wish you continued success in your great work."

If you wish to thank someone publicly, share personal news, brag about a recent accomplishment in your unit, or any other highlight, send it in for our "Brag & Share" column. E-mail your submission (65 words or less) with "Brag & Share" in the subject line to Lisa Garrett at lgarrett@tctc.edu.

# Golden OPPORTUNITIES to shape the future

## U.S. Engine Valve Contributes \$15,000 for Mechatronics

U.S. Engine Valve made a donation in support of equipment for the Mechatronics program. The two joint owners of U.S. Engine Valve donated \$7,500 from the Eaton Charitable Fund and \$7,500 from Nittan Valve Company towards the purchase of EM614/600-Air Advanced Electronics Sensors Systems with Ejection/Sorting Stations to support the Mechatronics Program.

Pictured here are, from left, **Rob Griffin**, plant manager; **Lamar Dendy**, a maintenance technician at the plant and a student in the College's Mechatronics curriculum; **Dr. Booth**; **Mary Ann Craft**, human resource manager at U.S. Engine Valve; **Keizo Harada**, technical manager for Nittan; **John Lummus**, vice president for economic and institutional advancement; and **Elisabeth Gadd**, director of Development.

U.S. Engine Valve is a member of the College's World Class Training Center and since 1989 has been a strong supporter of the College Foundation, having endowed a scholarship and provided funding for professional development and equipment.



## Business Programs

(continued from page 1)

Accreditation has many advantages for students and employers, she said. Students are able to transfer course credit more easily from an accredited business program. Also, accreditation is important for employers, who can expect that prospective employees have completed a program where students have been exposed to a comprehensive and relevant curriculum.

"Preparing the documentation for the site visit was a lot of work by a lot of people on campus, but it was worth it," said Beth Marsh, AOT instructor and champion (leader) of the project. "It helps us to see where our strengths are and where our opportunities are."

Jackie commended the faculty's work on the project and gave a special thank you to Beth, "who in addition to teaching, did an exceptional job pulling the information together for the report we submitted prior to the site visit. Beth did a tremendous job of keeping us on task, organizing materials, setting up interviews for the site visit and communicating with the group. She did a remarkable job."

## Guidance Counselors and Principals Meet at Easley Campus



Area guidance counselors and high school principals met December 14 at the Easley Campus to tour the facility and to meet staff. The participants were welcomed by Dr. Brian Swords, acting campus director, and were given area updates from Lakishia Dinkins (Office of Admissions and Recruitment /Easley Campus) and Kevin Woods (Financial Aid Counselor). After the meeting, those attending took a tour of the building.

Pictured from left to right are **Brent Snipes**, guidance counselor, Easley High; **Ken Hitchcock**, assistant principal, Easley High; **Cherie Latham**, guidance counselor, Liberty High; **Angie Burgess**, guidance counselor, Liberty High; **Robbie Binnicker**, principal, Wren High; and **Pat Washnock**, guidance counselor, Palmetto High.



## Tri-County, Anderson County Sheriff's Office Host ALERRT Training



*The 27 local law enforcement officers who completed the two-day ALERRT training held on our Pendleton Campus pose for a group photo at the end of the day.*

Tri-County and the Anderson County Sheriff's Office were the first in the Upstate to host a two-day (December 14 and 15) class on Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT). Security Officer Carmen Lehmann was among the 27 local law enforcement officers enrolled in the class that trains law enforcement personnel on the latest techniques in responding to active shooter situations. This training prepares the officers to respond to school shootings, office or factory shootings, church shootings, or any situation where immediate action is needed to stop the threat of a person with a firearm.

Five certified ALERRT instructors from Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties' law enforcement agencies taught the class to certify local officers in ALERRT techniques. They were Rick Clark, our director of Public Safety; Adam Gilstrap, of the Liberty Police Department; Jody Culbertson, of the Anderson City Police Department; Tommy Crumpton, of the Oconee County Sheriff's Department; and Richard Gooch, of the Clemson City Police Department. The ALERRT program is funded in South Carolina by a grant from The Department of Homeland Security and SLED. The ALERRT training and the needed equipment were administered through the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training (ALERRT) Program has already reached more than 17,000 front line law enforcement officers from nearly 600 agencies in 46 geographical regions of the United States.

## Superintendent Congratulates Gateway Grad



*Mrs. Betty Bagley and JerMonika Harrison*

JerMonika J. Harrison, of Anderson, received her high school diploma in December from T.L. Hanna High School through the College's Gateway to College Program. Presenting her the diploma at the recognition ceremony is Mrs. Betty Bagley, superintendent for Anderson School District Five.

JerMonika began the Gateway program in the fall of 2008 having completed only her ninth grade credits. In addition to earning her high school diploma, she earned 34 hours of college credit and achieved a GPA of 3.26. Monika plans to take a semester off and start her college studies again during the summer term. She will complete her associate degree here and then transfer to earn a bachelor's degree in Sociology/Social Work. She hopes to one day run a group home for displaced children.

The Gateway to College program serves high school dropouts age 17 – 20 who meet specific eligibility criteria and live in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. Using a dual credit model, students earn both high school and college credit and may simultaneously complete both the high school diploma (meeting all requirements of the South Carolina Department of Education) and a postsecondary credential.

## Students Get Connected

Students turned out in droves for "Get Connected," the first spring semester event where students enjoyed free pizza, drinks, and giveaways. The "Get Connected" event gives students an opportunity to meet other students, sign-up for clubs/organizations, and much more. Here, **Stephanie Hudson**, of Pendleton, a University Transfer Major, left, talks to **Cindy Trimmier-Lee**, advisor for the Minority Student Association and coordinator of Student Support Services.



## 440 Students Register at Easley



Our “first” Easley student to come through the door was **Melissa Snider**, of Williamston. She is a Medical Office Specialist major in the Business Technology department. Melissa is among the 440 students who registered for classes at our newest campus on Powdersville Road in Easley. As of the end of the drop-add period, overall College enrollment for Spring Semester is 6,447 students. Final figures will be available later in the semester.

## Spotlight (continued from page 3)

“I encourage students to pursue volunteer work and to get relevant work experience in their field of study. This one-year commitment is a way to build your resume and to make important community connections,” said Alison.

Kristen credits Alison and others at Tri-County with helping her to make good academic, career, and personal decisions.

She began college at Tri-County in 1995 as a teenage mother and was active with the College’s then-Homemakers and Single Parents (HASP) organization. “If it weren’t for Ollie Smith (HASP director), I would not have been able to succeed,” said Kristen, who today is married and the mother of four daughters. “It comes down to caring, and every department at Tri-County cares about you and your academic success.”

After she graduates, she and her family hope to move to her home state of Maine where she wants to work at the Financial Literacy Institute as a counselor and one day continue her education.

## LPN, ADN Programs Hold December Pinning Ceremonies for Graduates



**Thelandra Teneshia Patterson**, of Anderson, right, participates in the pinning ceremony held December 13 for Practical Nursing graduates. Pinning her is **Carol Henry**, an instructor in the Practical Nursing program.



**Russell Carl Taylor**, of Anderson, right, participates in the pinning ceremony for its December graduates of the associate degree nursing (ADN) program. Pinning him is ADN instructor **Blythe Winburn**. Taylor was among the 10 Tri-County students participating in the LPN to Professor initiative, a partnership between Tri-County, Clemson University, and local hospitals designed to encourage graduates to pursue advanced degrees. These 10 students achieved an outstanding cumulative GPA and completed the general education classes required by Clemson for a bachelor’s degree in Science/Nursing. Once he has his license, he will begin the 12- to 15-month program at Clemson to earn a bachelor’s degree.

## Executive Staff Updates

- **Student Development Update:** Dr. Vinson Burdette, (former) dean of Student Development, provided an update on services provided through the Student Development department, including assessment, athletics, student life, and others. He also highlighted the process used to establish measurable learning outcomes for student development.
- **Key Strategic Objectives:** The Executive Staff finalized key strategic objectives to be used in the Strategic Planning process.
- **Budget issues:** The College budgeted for a three-percent increase in Spring Semester enrollment, but enrollment did not reach that level. Reductions will need to be made to the operating budget.
- **Other:** Approval of Spring 2012 Academic Calendar; faculty/staff convocation dates; inclement weather.