

# CONNECTION

A Publication  
from the  
Office of  
the President

March 2009

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## Honi Deaton & Dream Headline Free Bluegrass Concert April 4

Back by popular demand, Honi Deaton & Dream will bring its “high energy from the heart” as headliners of our Fourth Annual Bluegrass under the Stars concert.

The community is invited to attend Bluegrass under the Stars, a free concert and fireworks event for the family set for Saturday, April 4, from 5 - 9:30 p.m. in the College’s Amphitheater. In



Honi Deaton & Dream

addition to Honi Deaton & Dream, the show will include performances by Tugalo Holler and New Dixie Storm. Legacy Drive will kick off the show. The concert will end with a fireworks extravaganza.

BBQ, Chick-fil-A, and other refreshments will be for sale during the event. Admission is free, and the concert will be held rain or shine (rain location is the College’s Student Center) and admission is free. This event is made possible by the generosity of our community sponsors.

## AT&T Foundation Awards \$100,000 To Gateway to College Program

(See full story on back page)

**Jane Sosebee**, AT&T director of external affairs, third from left, and **Dr. Booth**, second from left, pose with members of our Legislative Delegation for the presentation of a \$100,000 check to support our Gateway to College program. Pictured with them are, from left, **Rep. Brian White**; **Sen. Thomas Alexander**; **Rep. Dan Cooper**; **Jim Evers**, AT&T regional director; **Rep. Phil Owens**; and **Rep. Mike Gambrell**.



# CONNECTING

In light of diminishing State support, the College's ability to tap into external funding sources can make the difference between "just getting by" and truly excelling when it comes to the programs and services we provide to Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties.

*As I write this message, an ad-hoc group is carefully examining how we might access funds made available through the federal stimulus package.* We know some of the stimulus funds will flow through the S.C. Technical College System to the technical colleges, but we have no concrete information yet on how those funds can be used. Until we know more, we are brainstorming possible uses of the funds, such as infrastructure and facilities improvements tied to health education, industrial and engineering technology, and other areas.

Stimulus funds also will be made available through the WorkLink Board for dislocated worker training. We plan to apply for and use those funds for QuickJobs training through our Corporate and Community Education Division. Our ability to provide a trained workforce will play a critical role in the economic recovery of our State.

It would take pages to write about every grant and special funding allocation we currently receive, but I would like to highlight a few of the more recent initiatives below:

An allocation from the Anderson County Transportation Committee and other county sources will provide a total of \$362,000 to fund an asphalt pad at the Anderson Campus for truck driver and motorcyclist training. This partnership also allows Anderson County to use the pad for its training needs. In addition, U.S. Representative Gresham Barrett secured \$300,000 in federal appropriations to widen Michelin Boulevard to provide a turn lane onto our Anderson Campus.

Looking ahead to the development of our Easley Campus, the Pickens County Transportation Committee allocated \$250,000 to make improvements to an area that will eventually be the entrance to the campus.

Our technical training programs also benefit from external funding. Thanks to a grant from AdvanceSC/Duke Energy, we are aligning our General Engineering Technology curriculum more closely with the "Project Lead the Way" programs offered at area career centers. We already have seen an increase in enrollment and created new opportunities for high school students to take advantage of technical advanced placement credit when entering our programs.

AdvanceSC/Duke Energy funding also supported the Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) conference held last summer at our Anderson Campus. More than one hundred public school teachers gathered to learn new techniques for teaching STEM standards and to obtain information about STEM career opportunities.

The College's strong partnerships with Oconee and Pickens counties positioned them to receive Community Block Development grants to build two QuickJobs Centers that will be constructed later this year. One will be located at our Oconee Campus at the Hamilton Career Center and the other at our new Easley Campus. Both counties and the College will use these facilities.

The Appalachian Regional Commission funded a \$100,401 grant to support technology and infrastructure improvements for the Pendleton Campus, which enabled us to improve our broadband Internet services and install wireless services on parts of the campus.

Our Gateway to College (GTC) program received strong support from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) through a \$621,000 grant to assist with programmatic costs. And, thanks to a \$100,000 grant from AT&T awarded earlier this month, we will be able to purchase new computer hardware and software for GTC classrooms.

(continued on page 12)



Ronnie L. Booth  
President

Connecting...  
colleagues ideas goals  
services accomplishments  
programs events  
successes opportunities

## 2009

### College Events

- Bluegrass under the Stars..... April 4
- Spring Open..... April 24
- Awards Ceremony..... April 28
- Spring Faculty and Staff Convocation.....May 6
- Spring Commencement.....May 12
- Groundbreaking Ceremony for Easley Campus (rescheduled).....May 29

Check the College Activities Calendar in eTC for updated postings on upcoming events.

## CONNECTION

is published ten times each year by the Office of the President and the Public Relations and Marketing Department.

### Mailing Address

P. O. Box 587, Pendleton, SC 29670

### Pendleton Campus

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### Anderson Campus

511 Michelin Blvd., Anderson, SC

### Oconee Campus

Hamilton Career Center  
100 Vocational Dr., Seneca, SC

Phone Number: (864) 646-1500  
Toll-free (864 area code): 1-866-269-5677  
TDD/Voice: 1-800-735-2905  
Website: [www.tctc.edu](http://www.tctc.edu)

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. The College is a member of South Carolina's nationally acclaimed system of sixteen technical colleges.







## SPOTLIGHT ON the Assessment Center

The paper and pencils that have long been used to record just about every operation in the Assessment Center, including collecting essential demographics and taking placement tests, have been replaced by electronic database entries.

“The purpose of these changes is to achieve the goal of providing the best service to our students, faculty, and the community in an effort to reduce the amount of paper used at the Assessment Center,” said Assessment Center Coordinator Wanda Screws. “I hope these changes and the data collected support the vision of our College by being a role model with high standards while implementing the innovative use of technology.”

Wanda and Administrative Specialist Elizabeth Y. Gambrell have spent the last year working with College administration and members of the Placement Committee to streamline services by implementing an electronic check-in for students taking academic placement tests and by launching a COMPASS testing pilot program with nine of the 13 local high schools participating.

Here’s an example of how things have changed: In the past, if an instructor called the Assessment Center to obtain information regarding a student’s test, someone went to a file cabinet and manually searched for the information that was recorded on a paper document. Now, with the click of a few keystrokes, the staff can tell every time the student came in the Center, what test he or she took, and what time he or she checked in and out.

“This allows the Assessment Center staff to easily provide accurate data to an instructor or administrator. It’s the difference between night and day,” said Wanda.

The Assessment Center, located in Miller Hall, administers the placement tests (COMPASS and ASSET), as well as academic make-up tests and academic tests for online classes arranged by instructors. Other tests include placement tests at the high-school level, foreign language placement tests, third-party proctoring, and TABE testing for the WIA office.

The Assessment Center is open Monday–Thursday (8 a.m. until 7 p.m.) and on Fridays from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. when the College is in session.

The electronic check-in is at a convenient location adjacent to both testing labs (one for academic testing and one for placement tests). “As a savings to the College, this check-in database was created using Microsoft Access 2007. Because check-in now occurs outside the labs, the testing environment is quieter and more comfortable for students. The electronic check-in also enables the staff to accurately collect data regarding when and how each student uses the Assessment Center,” explained Wanda.

During the check-in process, information such as major and the faculty members for whom the academic test is being proctored is collected. “This process has been simplified by importing all majors and faculty names directly into the database. Through the assistance of the IT department, a network drive was established to house the check-in database. This allows the check-in procedure for COMPASS testing at the Anderson campus to be identical to the



Assessment Center Coordinator **Wanda Screws**, standing, and **Elizabeth Y. Gambrell**, administrative specialist

check-in process at the Pendleton campus,” said Wanda.

“The day’s events are recorded. Being a paperless office makes it easier because there is no hand counting or tallying. It improves our accuracy and is a tremendous tool for us to track data and provide instructors and administrators with valuable information,” she added.

“We’re a busy office,” said Wanda, adding that since the last week of July 2008, they have administered/proctored approximately 8,000 tests. This includes on-campus tests, as well as the College Readiness Initiative (CRI) testing at the local high schools.

Last year the College received a \$62,500 grant from the EEDA to work more closely with school districts on students’ career pathways to ensure a seamless transition from secondary to postsecondary education.

With this funding, Tri-County established a new project, the College Readiness Initiative, which addresses the EEDA mandates.

The Assessment Center launched a COMPASS testing pilot program with nine of the 13 local area high schools participating. In a partnership with the local school district offices’ IT departments, COMPASS has been installed on approximately 650 computers. As part of CRI, the Assessment Center staff administers either COMPASS or ASSET testing to juniors at local high schools.

“I would like to point out that these changes would not have been possible without the support and leadership of Vinson Burdette (dean of Student Development) and Dan Holland (vice president for Student Affairs),” said Wanda. “The greatest contribution to the success of these improvements goes to the dedicated staff at the Assessment Center. I am very grateful to have the opportunity to work with these individuals since they have made my employment experience at Tri-County outstanding.”

**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!

# our college family

## excellence through service

Congratulations to our graphic artists **Denise Day** and **Jessica Raymond**, who each won Paragon awards at the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) conference in Kansas City earlier this month. Denise received the Silver Paragon (2nd place) in the category "Fund Raising/Annual Campaign," and Jessica received the Bronze Paragon (3rd place) in the category "Print Advertisement/Series." Congrats to both.



Denise Day



Jessica Raymond

## in transition

### ARTS AND SCIENCES DIVISION



Jeremy McCracken

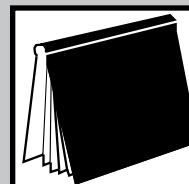
**Jeremy McCracken** joined us this semester as a faculty member in the Social Sciences Department. Jeremy was an adjunct faculty member from 2006 – 2007 year and taught at

Piedmont Technical College for the last year. He holds a B.S. in Biology from Charleston Southern University and two master's degrees—in Plant Pathology and Physiology and Applied Economics and Statistics -- both from Clemson University.

He and his wife, Kimberly, live in Clemson.

The following have departed the College over the past several months. We wish them well in their new endeavors.

**Laura Hall**  
**Krystal Rowland**



Congratulations to **John Woodson**, program coordinator for our Radio and

Television Broadcasting program, on his marriage to Julia Romo, of Anderson. John and Julia were married on Sunday, March 15, at Grace Episcopal Church in Anderson. Congratulations to the happy couple!

## Health Fair Draws Crowd

The Personnel Department sponsored a Health Fair following the annual blood screening for employees. At right, **Angel Luper**, an Accounting instructor, left, checks her body fat with the assistance of **Rhonda Alewine**, of AnMed Health. Pictured below, **Roberta Sitton**, administrative specialist for the Business Affairs Division, seated, left, gets her blood pressure checked by **Cindy Henderson**, business health coordinator for AnMed Health/Healthy Business.



Other Health Fair services offered included vision testing by the Lions Club; spine alignment tests and massage therapy demonstrations by Lakeside Chiropractic, Hrbacek Chiropractic, and Hanner Physical Rehabilitation and Wellness Center. Other vendors included Appalachian Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging, Medicus Vision Center, SC Department of Natural Resources, Curves of Clemson, Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Awareness, American Cancer Society, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, CVS Diabetes Manager, GNC, Hospice House, and Blue Ridge Orthopaedic.



# 28 Generously Donate To Voluntary Programs That Address College Budget Shortfalls

Since the beginning of spring semester, faculty and staff have generously donated more than \$30,000\* to three voluntary programs which address college budget shortfalls through donations of salary (donations to the Foundation to cover operational costs), teaching overload, and/or furloughs (leave without pay).

Since the posting of these options and opportunities on the Budget Cut Impacts Channel on eTC, seven have given to the salary donation program, five to the voluntary furlough program, and the instructors in the Industrial and Engineering Technology Division took on teaching an extra class (at no cost). Twenty-eight persons in all have donated through one of the voluntary options.

"After talking with my division, we decided that it wouldn't be a hardship for one semester to help with the budget crisis by teaching six classes," said Eugene Grant, dean of the I&ET Division. Based on an adjunct's average salary, this translated into a cost savings of \$1,800 per instructor per class (totaling 12).

"They really stepped up to the plate, and I appreciate that. Tough times call for extreme measures, and we decided to take one for the team," added Eugene.

Eugene said the faculty's willingness to help out didn't surprise him. "The faculty's caring attitude makes us who we are. This is just one example of caring people at this College who want the College to be successful."

Director of Development Haley Sitton says donating to the voluntary furlough program was a win-win situation for both her

and the College. "I was able to help the College financially and at the same time it allowed me the flexibility to take personal time to visit my newborn grandchildren who live out of town." She urges others to look at voluntary programs and consider participation. "It only required one simple step – filling out an online form and submitting it to my supervisor for approval. For those who are able, I recommend it as one way to help the College during this budget shortfall."

Lou Ann Martin, mathematics instructor, says she elected to contribute by donation of salary because there are limited days that faculty can take off during the semester. "It balances the sacrifice a staff member would make with a voluntary furlough. It's a way to do my part to show my support of the College and to show my appreciation to the administration who is working hard to preserve our jobs." She wasn't surprised that 28 persons had donated. "That's what is terrific about Tri-County. People here come together to do what we have to do."

"This money, coupled with the budget cuts being offset by significant enrollment increases for fall and spring semesters, temporary position cuts, freezing positions, and reducing operating expenses, have helped us to avoid mandatory furloughs for faculty and staff," said Dr. Booth. "It really makes a difference, and I commend and thank these individuals for their selfless generosity."

The money from these voluntary programs goes back into the operational budget.

\* figures current as of March 16

## College and Career Fair Draws Both Students and Community

The phones at the Information Center were ringing off the hook on the day of Student Support Services' (SSS) 16th Annual College and Career Fair. "Caroline Williams (of the Information Center) told me that we had 357 telephone calls and 249 walk-in's that day, and many of those were inquiries about the event," said Cindy Trimmier-Lee, coordinator of SSS.

"It was an outstanding event, drawing nearly 300 attendees. Both students and community members seized the opportunity to talk one-on-one with recruiters and managers and to develop a network of career contacts," she said.

"Individuals came with their resumes and were serious about their job search. I had a lady arrive at 8:15 that morning, and the event didn't begin until 9 a.m.," added Cindy.

The annual event is an opportunity for employers to put a name with a face," said Cindy. Persons also were talking to colleges about transfer options. Both needs were being met. It was a networking opportunity for everyone. How amazing was that?"

"We extend a big thank you to Tazneem Raja and Tasheka Johnson, both of Student Support Services, for their outstanding support and commitment to pulling the event off. We also thank the TRiO family and the College, along with the Career Center for their support in helping with resume writing skills. And it certainly couldn't have happened without Maintenance and Campus Safety," she added.



**Mark Franks**, of Anderson, right, an Industrial Electronics Technology major, talks with **Jim Petty**, regional manager for Bartlett Nuclear, Inc., about opportunities during the 16th Annual College and Career Fair. Bartlett Nuclear, Inc., is the nation's largest nuclear staffing solutions company. Student Support Services, a TRiO program at the College, sponsored the event.

Other groups recognized for their donations are:

Bi-Lo of Clemson, Pendleton, and Seneca; Bloom, Ingles and to Chick-fil-A and Hardee's for their continued support and outstanding service.



## Vet Tech Students Foster Greyhounds For a Semester

When the six greyhounds arrived from the racetrack in Tallahassee in January, Dr. Peggy Champion had to do a double take. The retiring race dogs were extremely thin, had skin ailments, and she later discovered all but one had a tick borne disease. Dr. Champion quickly knew this would go far beyond a fostering relationship – there would also be serious teaching moments for students beginning immediately.

The department partnered with Greyhound Crossroads, a greyhound adoption service in South Carolina and the surrounding areas in North Carolina and Georgia, to foster six greyhounds who were being retired. After a half semester at the College and a rigorous screening process of the prospective families by Crossroads, the animals were adopted to approved families on a first-come, first-served basis. A non-refundable, pre-adoption fee of \$100 was required to hold one of greyhounds, and the other \$100 of the \$200 adoption fee was due on the day the animal was released. Half of the adoption fee will be donated back to the Veterinary Technology program to help buy special equipment and provide extra medical care to dogs that require it.

“This experience served as an opportunity for students to be able to take what they learn here about greyhounds’ unique medical needs with them to the veterinary practices they will eventually work in,” said Peggy, who says they learned extensively about nutrition and caring for animals with rare tick diseases.

After the spaying and neutering, each animal was assigned a student to provide daily care. Students were responsible for socializing their dog or cat with other animals and people. Students also provided basic obedience training for their dogs and worked with them to

(continued on page 7)

## Crowds Turn Out for Pet Adoption Day

“There’s no better way to ensure that the veterinary technicians we graduate are caring and compassionate professionals than what I observe through our pet adoptions,” said Dr. Peggy Champion, who leads the Veterinary Technology program.

“Caring for animals begins at the technician level, and hands-on care is what they do best,” said Peggy when speaking of the work her students did in making sure that the 43 animals they had cared for during the semester were adopted. (The three that weren’t adopted are being fostered and will come back to the department if not adopted.) “I’m so proud of the care and devotion of our students. They are a good group. I’m lucky.”



A friend told **Cyndy Blanton**, a teacher at Liberty Middle School, left, about the adoption day by putting a flyer on her door at school. She and her father, Dr. Lloyd Blanton, visited the department a week before the adoption day and that’s when she fell in love with two cats, Kermit, the orange tabby, and Stitch, the grey tabby. “This is a great place and what a great price,” she said. She and her father were so impressed they made a \$100 donation to the program. Pictured with her is **Jessica Rainey**, a Veterinary Technology student.



**Dr. Lynn Lewis**, dean of the Health Education Division, chose Kringle, a Saint Bernard mix, to add to her family.

# Foundation News

## Tri-County Spring Open Set for April 24

The Alumni Association and the Athletics Department are co-sponsoring the Tri-County Spring Open, a golf tournament set for April 24.

The captain's choice, shotgun start will be at 1 p.m. at Brookstone Meadows Golf Club in Anderson with registration and lunch beginning at 11:30 a.m. The tournament can accommodate 120 golfers. A \$75 registration fee includes a bucket of practice balls, green fees, carts, beverages and lunch. Awards will be given to the winners at a reception following the tournament.

Funds raised from the Tri-County Spring Open benefit both the Alumni Association and the Athletics Department. "The Alumni Association will utilize funds from the tournament to provide scholarships for students, offer book/supply awards, and provide faculty/staff professional development opportunities. Proceeds also will be used for Athletics Department scholarships and equipment, will cover team-related expenses, and will help support the addition of a women's soccer program at the College," said Haley Sitton, director of Development at the College and the event's coordinator.



Alumni board members urge persons and companies to consider these sponsorships: platinum (\$2,500), gold (\$1,500), silver (\$1,000), and bronze (\$500), in addition to holes at \$125 each and/or carts at \$50 each.

Proceeds from past tournaments have enabled the Alumni Association to endow two scholarships through the College's Foundation, to make professional development opportunities available to faculty and staff, and to name a room at both the Pendleton and Anderson Campuses.

To register online, visit [www.tctc.edu/golf/golf.html](http://www.tctc.edu/golf/golf.html) or contact Haley Sitton by e-mail at [msitton@tctc.edu](mailto:msitton@tctc.edu) or by telephone at Ext.1812.

## Greyhounds *(continued from page 6)*

correct any behavior problems. Cats also are socialized and have a lot of playtime with other cats.

"Learning from a textbook is one thing, but it's quite another to experience, watch, and understand what we need to do to protect animals. This was a wonderful experience for the students," said Peggy.

But it can be a sad one, also. On adoption day a little girl drew a photo of the greyhound she adopted and gave it to student Stephanie Merkle, a student who had worked with the dog. "She hugged Stephanie and told her she drew the picture as a reminder of the experience. It's such a sweet story. It's hard for the students to let go of the animals they have cared for during the semester. That, in itself, is a testament to the care and love our students have for these animals," said Peggy.

**Meredith Mitchell**, of Lexington, SC, and her children, **Riley** 6, and **Walker**, 4, took home Blue, a greyhound, as part of a first-time partnership with Greyhound Crossroads.



# Connecting

(continued from page 2)

In 2005, the Duke Endowment enabled the College to establish the LPN-to-Professor program. This year, the Endowment funded a \$642,000 grant to support the transition of students from high school-level health occupations programs to LPN training. The program also provides opportunities to continue on to an associate degree Nursing program and beyond.

Much of the work we do in high schools, such as testing all juniors using the COMPASS and ASSET placement tests, is made possible by grant funds through the S.C. Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA). Once tested, students can focus on areas shown to need improvement as they prepare for college. Nearly thirty percent of recent high school graduates from our service area who enroll in college choose Tri-County, and we expect that number to grow in the coming years.

We have and will continue to pursue grants and other alternative sources of funds at every opportunity, particularly those most directly related to our core mission, which is to serve as a catalyst for the economic and lifelong development of the citizens of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties.



Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D.  
President

# AT&T (continued from page 1)

The AT&T Foundation, the philanthropic arm of AT&T Inc., awarded the College a generous \$100,000 grant to support the Gateway to College program—an initiative that is designed to serve at-risk students and recent high school dropouts in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. The purpose of Gateway to College is to serve the needs of students who have recently dropped out of high school or who have the academic capability but are struggling in a traditional high school environment.

The Gateway program gives youth between the ages of 17-20 who have dropped out of high school the opportunity to earn a high school diploma while simultaneously earning college credits.

“In today’s economy, it is more critical than ever before that American students are skilled, knowledgeable, and ready to hit the ground running when they graduate,” said Pamela P. Lackey, state president of AT&T-SC. “Our challenge is to balance the realities of today’s economic environment with the needs of tomorrow’s workforce. Investing in education is always a smart investment.”

“AT&T is the kind of community citizen that sets an example for others,” said Dr. Booth. “Further, AT&T understands the important role of technology in education. Because of this gift, the students in our Gateway to College program will have access to the latest technology and communication resources for enhancing their learning. The Gateway to College program has a tremendous impact on the lives of students who have been unsuccessful in public education, often for reasons beyond their control, and this significant grant goes a long way towards assisting these students in obtaining the goal of a high school diploma while also allowing them to earn college credits at the same time,” said Dr. Booth.

“This grant, then, is really a long-term investment in the lives of students in our community and ultimately, the community as a whole. We are grateful for their generosity and support,” said Dr. Booth.

Specifically, grant funds will be used to purchase computers, printers, software, interactive white board systems, and other classroom modifications, providing Gateway to College students with the technological tools they need to be successful at Tri-County and in the workplace.

“I’m thrilled about what this wonderful donation from AT&T will enable us to do for our students,” said Diana M. Walter, director of Tri-County’s Gateway to College program.

“One of our priorities will be to provide technology-based learning support for students in a variety of core academic areas, particularly in mathematics, English, sciences, and economics—areas where our students have real needs. As a result, I expect we’ll see higher success rates in these core courses, which will ultimately lead to higher graduation rates,” she said.

“It is exciting that AT&T is committed to helping these young people get the education they need to compete in this economy,” said Representative Dan Cooper, chairman of the South Carolina House Ways and Means Committee.

“Tri-County has always been innovative -- not just fitting the mold, but creating opportunities for young people so they may have a better quality of life,” said State Senator Thomas Alexander. “I commend corporate partners like AT&T for their commitment to the communities they serve.”

“We are fortunate to have companies like AT&T committed to philanthropy in SC, and it shows here today,” added Rep. Phil Owens.

## Executive Staff Meetings Update

- **State Funding:** Continued discussions on the impacts of State budget cuts and anticipated funding for FY10.
- **Federal Stimulus Package:** Discussed potential uses, such as dislocated worker and industry training for funds that will be available through WorkLink. Also discussed other potential uses, such as infrastructure and facilities improvements.
- **Legal residency:** Approved new procedures to verify legal residency of students as required by S.C. law.
- **Budgeting Process:** Reviewed the process for developing departmental/division budgets for FY10.
- **Other Topics:** Official policies and procedures; inclement weather procedures; EPMS; benchmarks; AV support.