

Connection

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John Woodson Receives Presidential Medallion for Instructional Excellence

John Woodson, program coordinator for Media Arts Production (MAP), was honored May 10 with the highest award presented to faculty. He received the Presidential Medallion for Instructional Excellence at the College's spring commencement.

The medallion is presented each year to the instructor who has contributed the most during the academic year to the profession of teaching, to the development of the College, and to the students.

A well-known media

personality in the Upstate, John has been leading the Media Arts Production (formerly Radio and Television Broadcasting, or RTV) program since 2002.

"John is an enthusiastic faculty member and student advocate. Through his actions, he exhibits a grounded commitment to the success of students and colleagues alike," said Tom Lawrence, department head for the College's Business and Public Services Division. "He takes an active role in ensuring that all individuals reach their educational and professional goals. He proactively seeks new responsibilities, actively engages the College community and external stakeholders, and delivers process improvement on a College-wide scale," Tom wrote in his nomination letter.

"John's service to the MAP program and the division is exemplified by his novel approach to curricular design and ability to forecast market needs," added Tom.

John and MAP instructors worked with the program's advisory committee in 2014 to redesign the program's curriculum as it moved in the direction of multimedia and content creation. The RTV program was renamed Media Technology Arts and later in 2015 became MAP to more accurately capture the array of skills and technical competencies developed in the program. "John's work with the advisory committee has been identified as a best practice and the committee was named the College's Advisory Committee of the Year in 2015," said Tom. The College's MAP program remains one of the few two-year broadcasting/media production programs in the nation.

"John recognizes that there needs to be continuous improvement for Media Arts Production to remain state of the art," said Jackie Blakley dean of the Business and Public Services Division.

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John Woodson, program coordinator for Media Arts Production (MAP), second from left, was honored May 10 with the highest award presented to the faculty. He received the Presidential Medallion for Instructional Excellence at the College's spring commencement. He is pictured with his wife, **Julia**, and children **Caroline**, **William**, and **Anna**.

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Tri-County Technical College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the associate degree. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Tri-County Technical College.

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

Site Prep Gets Underway for New Student Success Center



Dr. Ronnie L. Booth
President

*T*his summer we will begin demolition and site preparation for the first new building on the Pendleton Campus in two decades—a new Student Success Center. Our hope is to complete the messy demolition work on Clarke and McKissick halls and the amphitheater before fall semester begins.

This project has been in the making for more than a decade. Many of you have been actively involved in the planning process from the very beginning, which was suspended for a period during the “Great Recession.” For the past three years, we have been diligently moving forward with the pre-engineering and design processes and determining how we will organize our one-stop enrollment center, learning commons, computer labs, group study areas, meeting spaces, campus store, café, and more.

Planned like most other commuter campuses built during the late 50s and early 60s, the Pendleton Campus was constructed with little attention given to any space other than classrooms and labs. The design focused on getting students on and off campus as quickly as possible. Learning and engagement spaces outside the classroom were not a priority.

Now, we expect our students to develop 21st-Century workforce skills like teamwork, collaboration, communication, and social skills. We need to provide spaces where they can hone these skills outside the classroom. Our small student cafeteria, a few outdoor benches, and less than a half-dozen study rooms in the back of the Library are far from adequate.

Double-digit enrollment increases, deferred maintenance costs to the tune of \$8 million, and energy savings also speak to the need for a new facility.

Beyond the practical arguments for a new Student Success Center are the students themselves and their individual needs. As we discovered during our year-long, College-wide discussion about the elements of a transformative student experience, a true sense of belonging is strongly tied to student success. Research supports this finding, including a study conducted at the University of Texas and Stanford that concluded the underperformance of academically-capable students from low-income backgrounds stemmed from students’ belief they did not have the ability to be successful AND that they did not feel a sense of belonging. Many of our students come from lower socio-economic backgrounds. We serve them best and increase their probability for success when we help them to achieve a sense of belonging, which includes providing the space and services they need. We cannot adequately do this in our current facilities.

I hope all of you are as excited as I am to finally be at the point where we are ready to break ground on this new facility. We have begun the important work of creating not just much-needed space, but of transforming our institution from “a place where I go to classes” to a “place where I belong.”

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

Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D., President



Spotlight on S.C. Apprenticeship Initiative

Department of Labor Grant Expands Apprenticeships

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) awarded the S.C. Technical College System a \$5 million grant to expand apprenticeships in the State, with Tri-County receiving \$163,000 to train 62 individuals in the areas of manufacturing, information, and professional services.

Apprenticeships are easy to set up and there's not a lot of red tape, said Carla Whitlock, senior apprenticeship consultant with Apprenticeship Carolina. Other benefits include a highly skilled workforce, State tax credits, standardized skills, reduced turnover, and increased productivity, she said.

"You'll get credentialed, well trained, and highly-educated employees," said Whitlock in a presentation to industry representatives.

The S.C. Technical College System's grant—S.C. Apprenticeship Initiative—is designed to increase the number of manufacturing apprenticeships and lay the foundation for future scaling of new programs in professional and information services. The S.C. Apprenticeship Initiative has two goals: to increase registered apprentices in the State by 1,000 by 2017 in the targeted high-growth, high-tech industries of manufacturing, professional, and information services and to increase access to post-secondary training and credentials for target industries and underrepresented groups in sponsored apprenticeships, namely veterans, minorities, and women.

Companies across the State will be able to apply for grants to offset training costs associated with apprenticeship programs. Applications will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis, and Tri-County will serve as a provider of job-related education programs.

Companies also may receive a \$1,000 State tax credit per registered apprentice per year for up to four years, resulting in a financial advantage for company.



Varia Galbreath, a technician in the Vent Department at Johnson Controls, seated, is one of six employees sponsored by her company to take Mechatronics classes funded by an ARC grant. Varia, who has been at Johnson Controls for 15 years working as a Vent Operator, recently was promoted to a Technician. Here, she talks with **April Eller**, human resources manager for the company.

"You'll get credentialed, well trained, and highly-educated employees."

~Carla Whitlock

"Tri-County and Apprenticeship Carolina work hard to make sure that the net cost of training is as low as possible for companies," said Whitlock.

Program components include supervised, on-the-job training, job-related education, which can be through Tri-County or what companies provide internally,

and a scalable wage progression. "Our staff puts together the paperwork, but it's important for the company to register the apprentice because it gives your associate a nationally-recognized credential through the DOL," she said.

Companies can receive up to \$12,500 in grant funding. The funds may be used for up to \$2,500 of training per apprentice.

Richard Parker, training and development director in our Corporate and Community Education Division, reminded the crowd they also can apply tax credits and the Enterprise Zone Retraining (E-Zone) program to offset costs.

"We can help recoup all you spend and you wind up with good technicians," said Richard. Besides the \$1,000 tax credit per apprentice, the State offers incentives through the E-Zone Retraining program. Employers may receive up to \$1,000 in additional credits for training provided to full-time employees who have been with the company for at least two years.

Have an Attitude of Gratitude, Ambassador David Wilkins Tells Class of 2016



David Wilkins

If you want to be successful, you have to have an attitude of gratitude, David H. Wilkins, former U.S. Ambassador to Canada (2005-2009) and longtime Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives (1994-2005), told the College's Class of 2016.

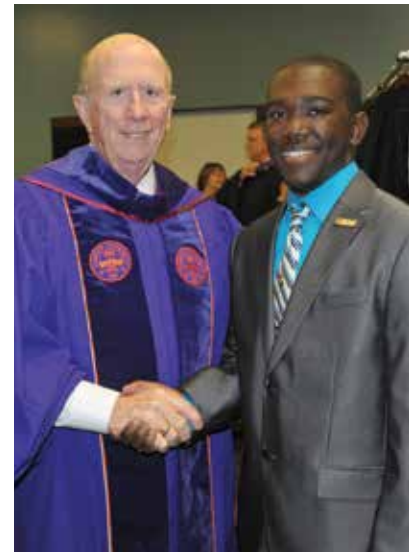
Five hundred and eighty-six received degrees, diplomas, and certificates at the spring commencement held May 10 at the Anderson Civic Center.

"More than hard work, more than book sense and common sense, your tenacity, your degree, even your humility, your gratitude is the most important tool in your tool box—because it is a multiplier," said Ambassador Wilkins, who is widely credited with vastly improving the strength of the U.S.-Canada relationship during his service in Ottawa.

"Gratitude grows grace," added Ambassador Wilkins, who is a partner at Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough, LLP, and chairs the Public Policy and International Law practice group.

"Grateful people are truly agents of change because they don't take for granted what they've been given—they share their gifts with others. It doesn't mean they don't work hard. It certainly doesn't mean they settle for less," he told the graduates.

"But grateful people start way ahead of everyone else because they always begin with enough. May you use your time to light your world, taking nothing for granted, and everything with gratitude," he said.



David H. Wilkins, former U.S. Ambassador to Canada (2005-2009) and longtime Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives (1994-2005), left, addressed the Class of 2016 at the College's spring commencement. Ambassador Wilkins is pictured with Student Government Association President **Caleb Allen**, of Anderson, and a Mechatronics major.

Graduation At A Glance

- **Ceremony Date and Location:** Tuesday, May 10, 6 p.m., Civic Center, Anderson
- **Number of Graduates:** 586
- **Keynote Speaker:** David Wilkins, former U.S. Ambassador to Canada (2005-2009) and longtime Speaker of the South Carolina House of Representatives
- **Special Honors:** Two awards were given:
Presidential Medallion for Instructional Excellence
Distinguished Alumni Award

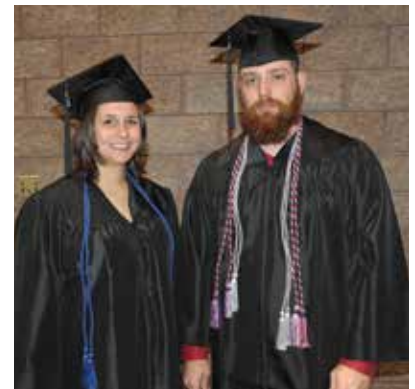
Couple Secures Jobs at Voith Prior to Graduation

Husband and wife Nathan and Stephannie Albrecht both graduated with Mechatronics degrees and one month before graduation, secured jobs as Maintenance Technicians for Voith, a contractor for BMW's Greer plant. The couple from Williamston entered Voith's three-year technical training program that is available for Mechatronics, Industrial Engineering Technology, and General Engineering Technology graduates.

The minute Danny Stovall, technical trainer for Voith Industrial Services, saw their names come across his desk, he immediately set up an interview and testing, hoping to make them a part of his team. The former Program Coordinator for Tri-County's Mechatronics program, Stovall recognized and remembered their tenacity and work ethic in the classroom and knew they would be an asset to the Spartanburg Voith team.

Both Stephannie and Nathan passed the written, mechanical, and electromechanical aptitude tests. One month before Tri-County's spring graduation, the Albrechts have secured jobs as Maintenance Technicians (Level II) for Voith, a contractor for BMW's Greer plant.

"They are the best candidates for our training program," said Stovall. "We wanted them to work for us because they are dependable and hard working. They know the material. They ask questions, and they want to learn more. We need 40 more just like them."



Stephannie and Nathan Albrecht

ECD Grad Ashley Clayton Makes Learning Fun



Ashley Clayton

Early Childhood Development (ECD) graduate Ashley Clayton says she knew she had chosen the right career path while serving as a Student Teacher's Assistant at Homeland Park Primary School this past year.

"I really connected with the students and their teacher, Mrs. Jamie Davis, who is a role model for me. I want to have fun teaching and to make a positive impact every day. I want the

kids to learn and have fun at the same time. It takes creativity and planning, as well as getting to know the students as individuals," said Ashley, who graduated with honors at the College's May 10 spring commencement.

Her year of work is creatively captured in a portfolio, an ECD program requirement for graduation. It also serves as a resource guide for the students as they enter the workforce as new teachers. Individual students must evaluate reflectively on their learning throughout the year and must show and discuss three artifacts of their learning before a panel of educators from Tri-County.

The Early Childhood Development program is designed to incorporate High Impact Practices into each semester, as candidates begin lab experiences involving hands on learning in



Ashley Clayton presented her portfolio to an exit interview team that included Dr. Booth.

real-life situations during the very first semester, said Meredith McClure, program coordinator for ECD.

Ashley presented her portfolio during an exit interview that included Dr. Booth. "I recognized him from the President's List reception, but I wasn't nervous. I was glad he was there. I wanted him to hear how good the program is and what Tri-County means to me," said the Anderson resident.

"Your passion is there and I also see compassion. That came out loud and clear," Dr. Booth told her following her presentation.



Veterinary Technology graduates decorated their mortarboards for the ceremony.

Samuel Hill Accepted into U.S. Naval Academy

Samuel Hill, an associate in Science major, a member of the Chorus, and vice president of the Student Government Association, spent 2015 working towards his goal of being accepted into the United States Naval Academy. Only seven percent, or 1,426, of the 19,145 applicants are admitted. In February, he was offered a full qualified appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy. The admission process is lengthy and requires the nomination of a U.S. Congressman or one of the state's two U.S. Senators. Samuel received both—a #1 nomination from Congressman Jeff Duncan and a nomination from Senator Scott, as well. He will depart for Annapolis, Maryland, June 30.



Samuel Hill, an associate in Science major, a member of the Chorus, and vice president of the Student Government Association, right, sang The National Anthem at commencement. Pictured with him, from left, are Ambassador David Wilkins, Dr. Booth, and Commission Chairman Butch Harris.



Denver and Daniel Averette, second and third from left, were among the graduates of the Engineering and Industrial Technology Division. Daniel, a BMW Scholar, received Industrial Electronics Technology and Mechatronics degrees and will begin work August 1 at BMW's Greer plant. He will complete his Manufacturing Management and Leadership degree this summer. Denver, a career pathways student and senior at D.W. Daniel High School, received Mechatronics Technology—Technical Operators I and II certificates. They are pictured with their parents, **Anita and Dr. Dan Averette**, dean of our Engineering and Industrial Technology Division.

Dr. Kyle Powell Addresses Vet Tech Students at Pinning

"Two words you should tattoo somewhere: don't settle," Dr. Kyle Powell, director of Anderson County PAWS, told the 23 Veterinary Technology graduates during their annual pinning ceremony.

"Don't settle for good enough, and be a student for life. Daydream of new ways to use your talents. Network. Don't settle for being a kennel worker. Don't settle for being quiet. Speak up if you suspect abuse. Don't settle for all work and no play. Hug your patients. Our animals are better off because you of you," said Dr. Powell.

"A big thank you to the caliber of graduates you produce," Dr. Powell told our Veterinary Technology faculty.

"You are a vet's best friend and a pet's best friend," said Ashley Brady, department head, before presenting the



Katherine Ruth Parris, of Travelers Rest, left, participated in the pinning ceremony held May 10 for Veterinary Technology graduates. Katherine also was presented the Leadership Award from the South Carolina Association of Veterinary Technicians. Pictured with her is **Stephanie Brown**, academic program director.



Dr. Kyle Powell, director of Anderson County PAWs, third from left, addressed the Veterinary Technology graduates at the annual pinning ceremony. Dr. Powell is pictured with faculty, from left, **Ashley Bradley**, department head; **Stephanie Brown**, academic program director; and **Dr. Elizabeth Bryan**, staff veterinarian.

students with their pins. "Remember where your roots are—here at Tri-County."

Fourth Annual Graduates' Breakfast

Soon-to-be graduates and their families gathered at the fourth annual Graduates' Breakfast hosted by the Alumni Association. Staff encouraged them to keep in touch as alumni and stay involved with the College. The Foundation presented grads with a selfie stick as their graduation gift and later they took photos at the selfie station. From left are **Tristin Miller**, **Connie Johnson**, **Stacie Morgan**, and **Brookelyn Partridge**.



Sixty-four Receive Technical Career Pathways Certificates

Sixty-four high school students received Tri-County certificates through the Technical Career Pathways programs. In just two years Tri-County's Technical Career Pathways (TCP) program has grown from seven students in one district to 166 students from all seven school districts.



Brandon Patterson

Each program is unique to each district and includes pathways for Automotive Technology, Mechatronics, Industrial Electronics, HVAC, and Welding.

Among those receiving a Tri-County credential before graduating from high school are:

Brandon Patterson

Tri-County's Welding students garnered six awards—including three first-place recognitions—at the 34th Annual South Carolina Technical College State-wide Welding Competition hosted by Greenville Technical College April 22.

One of the first place winners was Welding Pathway student Brandon Patterson, of Easley, a student at the Anderson District 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center. As a dual enrollment student, he competed in the State-wide Welding Competition and took home a first-place prize. Brandon received a Welding certificate at Tri-County's spring graduation and will enter the College's Welding program this fall.

Mechatronics Students at Anderson 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center

Tri-County Mechatronics instructor Mark Franks teaches 45 sophomores, juniors and seniors from Belton-Honea Path, Palmetto, Powdersville, and Wren high schools in the Mechatronics curriculum at the Anderson 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center.

Students who once were considering a four-year degree are now planning to enroll at Tri-County this fall. "They are realizing that mechatronics is



Michael Dayne Chandler, of Easley, a Mechatronics student at Anderson 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center, received a Technical Operators I certificate at the first annual recognition reception honoring Technical Career Pathways Class of 2016 graduates. Presenting the certificate is **Dr. Booth**.

Students received certificates in Automotive Engine Electrical Systems, SMAW Structural Welding, Technical Operators I and Technical Operators II. Chandler has been accepted into the BMW Scholars Program for the fall and will continue his studies in our Mechatronics program.



Brett Johnson and Christopher Rector, Mechatronics Pathway students from the Anderson District 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center, are pictured with other students and instructor **Mark Franks**, center.

booming in the Upstate and companies are looking for individuals with electrical and mechanical skills—what they learn in these dual enrollment classes," said Franks.

Brett Johnson, a senior at Belton-Honea Path High School, said, "I thought I wanted to be an engineer, and I took this class and now I want to continue with Mechatronics at Tri-County. I'm getting college credit for a subject I'm really interested in."

"I didn't expect this opportunity to come along," says Christopher Rector, a senior at Palmetto and athlete who played baseball, track, and football—until this year when he took his first Mechatronics class at the Anderson 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center.

"It has been eye opening. I learned skills—electrical and mechanical—I didn't know I had. It turned out to be fun and cool," said Rector, who put sports aside and began to consider a career in advanced manufacturing.

Cierra Sorrells

Cierra Sorrells, of Easley, home schooled for 12 years, completed 37 credit hours over the past three years and received a University Studies certificate. She completed all of her general education courses and other prerequisites at the Easley Campus and will begin her associate degree Nursing clinicals at the Pendleton Campus in the fall.

Cierra will take a Biology class this summer and continue to volunteer at the Greenville Hospital System through the Area Health Education Center.



Cierra Sorrells poses with her mother, left, and grandmother.



Amber Garton (Pendleton High School) left, and **Taylor Mullikin** (Easley High School), received their high school diplomas through the C2C program.

a commitment to learning and a resistance to setbacks. You're reaching a milestone today, and you're becoming part of our family," said Cindy Mobley, director of C2C.

C2C Students Reach Milestone, Celebrate With Family, Faculty, Friends

Tri-County faculty and staff, along with school district officials applauded Connect to College (C2C) graduates' persistence, determination, and ambition, as they celebrated at an annual reception prior to graduation.

"You've traveled your own path to reach your educational goals. You have

The Connect to College program has evolved to meet the diverse needs of area students by offering academically capable youth between the ages of 17 and 20 the opportunity to simultaneously earn their high school diploma and college credit, up to and including a postsecondary credential. The first of its kind in South Carolina, C2C is a program for students who, for a variety of reasons, have faced difficult challenges in traditional high school environments.

"We never get anywhere in life by ourselves," said Dr. Booth. "We all need help to get to the finish line. Here at Tri-County, it's all about helping to change the community one student at a time. We are here to support you in making good decisions. We believe what we do changes our community because it changes lives. It's an extremely proud day for me," he said.

"Wherever you go, whatever you do, I hope this day stands out as being a very important day," he concluded.

Students Showcase GET Projects

General Engineering Technology (GET) students showcased their projects for faculty, staff, and guests before the end of the semester. Students work in teams on projects that combine their electrical, mechanical, design, and troubleshooting skills honed during their two years of study.



Kennon Merriett, a GET major, second from left, demonstrates the hexapod for **Sara Booth** and **Gregg Corley**.



Terrence Urban, of Iva, and **Joseph Stephens**, of Anderson, designed a magic mirror.



Andrew Kyle and **Richmond Angeles** designed a go-kart with a security system. The go-kart has a card reader with an individual number—you can scan the card into the system and you can start the car.

Jan Gibbs Receives Adjunct Faculty Presidential Award

Jan Gibbs, an adjunct instructor/lecturer in the College's Medical Assisting program, received the College's 2016 Adjunct Faculty Presidential Award May 4.

This award is given annually at the spring faculty/staff convocation to the adjunct faculty member who is recognized for excellence in teaching, who has consistently high student evaluations, and who supports the philosophy and goals of the College.

Jan, a Seneca resident, is a 2001 graduate of Tri-County's Medical Assisting program and a 1999 alumna of its Surgical Technology program. She is a Certified Medical Assistant and a Surgical Technologist and holds a certificate in Electrocardiology.

She has served as an adjunct instructor at Tri-County for the past 15 years.

"Jan exemplifies excellence in teaching, has earned the respect of students and other faculty members and supports the goals of the College," Donna Palmer, Allied Health department head and Dental Assisting faculty member, wrote in her nomination letter. "Her loyalty and service have been impeccable, and she is deserving of this honor because of her timeless and tireless service for the good of her students and this institution."

While the College was searching to fill the Program Coordinator position, Jan assumed the role on an interim basis. She managed students, assumed additional teaching assignments, and helped with scheduling, which included a new evening cohort of students. She also attended the National Medical Assisting conference in Atlanta.

"Jan has a wealth of knowledge that she shares with students through various modes of delivery," said Donna, adding that Jan also teaches Medical Terminology with Anatomy and Physiology and Medical Law and Ethics within the Allied Health Department. "Jan always has been eager to help and willing to accept additional requests within her teaching assignments and responsibilities. She is a lifelong learner and continues her own education by maintaining her CEUs for her recertification



Laura McClain, Medical Assisting department head, left, and **Jan Gibbs**

process and professional development at the College." Gibbs also completed the online certification through the University of Wisconsin—Madison, Fundamentals of Online Teaching.

"Jan is passionate about helping her students to be engaged and ensuring their success. She accomplishes tasks with great initiative, detailed organization, and maintains a very positive attitude," said Donna.

Jan serves as Chair of the College's Medical Assisting Advisory Committee and is a member of the Anderson Chapter of the American Association of Medical Assistants.

She began her career as a Surgical Technologist at Head and Neck Surgery of South Carolina and later worked as Billing Manager for Anderson Family Care, as well as Billing Director for Lab Tech Diagnostics in Anderson.

She and her husband, Randy, live in Seneca.



Welding Students Garner Six Awards at Annual Competition

Our Welding students garnered six awards—including three first-place recognitions—at the 34th Annual South Carolina Technical College State-wide Welding Competition hosted by Greenville Technical College April 22. Pictured from left to right are **Dakota Phillips**, of Walhalla, third place, Category 4; **Brandon Patterson**, dual enrollment student from Easley, first place, Category 2; **Charles Orr**, of Simpsonville, second place, Category 1; **Bryson "Ty" Nettles**, of Easley, first place, Category 5; **Andrew Abstance**, of Aiken, first place, Category 3; and **David "Clarke" Richey**, of Belton, second place, Category 6.

Randy Blackston Receives 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award

Randy Blackston of Anderson received Tri-County Technical College's 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award at the College's spring commencement May 10 at the Anderson Civic Center.

The award, which highlights his dedication to his alma mater, was presented to him by Dr. Booth.

The recipient of this award must have been awarded a degree, diploma, or certificate from Tri-County; must have graduated at least one year ago; and must have made significant contributions to the College, the Alumni Association or the community.

In 1988 Randy was on the University Transfer track with the goal of studying Business Management at Clemson University when he met Tri-County Technical College's Industrial Technology instructors, toured the department, and realized that he was challenged by and excited about mechanical equipment, gear ratios, motion time and study, production control, and quality analysis.

"I enjoyed the connection I had with faculty and the interest they had in me. When you engage like that with students, you expedite the learning process at a level much greater than can occur in the classroom lectures," he said.

Randy never scored less than an A after transitioning to the Engineering and Industrial Technology Division and graduated as an honor student with a 4.0 GPA.

He also did the nearly impossible. After receiving his degree in Industrial Technology in 1990, he enrolled at Clemson where he continued his education in textile manufacturing with an area of concentration in Industrial Engineering by day and by night earned a second degree in Quality Assurance at Tri-County. He was enrolled in 28 credit hours one semester all while maintaining a 30-hour work week. He worked full-time, second-shift jobs through 80 percent of the five years he went to college.

"Tri-County's Industrial Technology Department was excellent. It provided the basic math and engineering background to go straight to work or to continue my education, which is the avenue I chose," he said. "When I entered Clemson, I felt I was a semester ahead. The Industrial Technology classes gave me a good head start. It was an easy transition."

After receiving his bachelor's degree, he began working at Glen Raven as a Management Trainee and Project Engineer.

"I had a goal," said Randy, who, today is Vice President of Operations at Glen Raven (Sunbrella®) in Anderson and responsible for global manufacturing of the Sunbrella® Branded



Randy Blackston, of Anderson, right, is the recipient of Tri-County Technical College's 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award. The award, which highlights his dedication to his alma mater, was presented to him by **Dr. Booth**, left.

Products. Around the globe, Glen Raven's Sunbrella® brand is recognized as the industry leader in performance fabrics for awning, marine, and decorative furniture.

It's that strong work ethic that has put him on the fast track for the Anderson company—in 24 years rising from his first assignment to being directly responsible for the operations of four manufacturing plants with 1,200 associates. He also is responsible for global best practices and manages global capital projects.

He says his biggest achievement has been serving as Project Manager in 1992 for the one-million-square-foot facility on Liberty Highway. From May 1992–June 1994, he was immersed in the new project, calculating every item needed for

the facility based on growth calculations. "Tri-County's hands-on approach gave me the foundation I needed to tackle complicated problems. Through the math and work measurement, I had the building blocks to do calculations and be a part of group discussions," he said.

"I was at the right place at the right time," he said. "I just seized the opportunity. I was there and willing to accept the challenge as Project Manager for the new facility." He did the research and made the contacts. The 4 a.m. site supervisions and late evenings paid off. He was promoted to Process Engineering Manager during construction. In 1997 he was promoted to Manufacturing Manager for the warp preparation and weaving plants.

In 2003 he was transferred to the Glen Raven facility in Burnsville, NC, to become Director of Operations for the company's Technical Fabrics Plant.

In 2007 he returned to Glen Raven's Custom Fabrics business to focus on Sunbrella® manufacturing as Vice President of Operations. He is charged with directing the sustainability program for Glen Raven globally. Another proud moment is leading the corporate-wide sustainability initiative which resulted in achieving Landfill-Free Status in all operations in North America, France, and China. In 2012 Glen Raven received Duke Energy's Power Partners Award for its efforts in energy efficiency, sustainability, and business growth.

"Glen Raven has given me wonderful opportunities," said Randy. "Years ago, I joined an amazing company, and I'm thankful I could use my education to work for the greatest company in the world," he said.

He also found success as an instructor for Tri-County, serving as an adjunct for the division from

(continued on page 11)

Foundation News

Foundation Reaches 2015-16 Goal

How Giving to the Foundation Makes a Difference



Grayson Kelly

By Grayson Kelly, Executive Director of the Tri-County Technical College Foundation

Each year the Foundation is tasked with raising private funds to support needs of the College not provided for by State funding. Given that only 15% of the College's operating budget comes from the State, your contributions and those of other stakeholders in our community are more important than ever.

As of May 13, the Foundation has raised \$874,925.17 for this fiscal year. Recent major gifts made it possible for us to reach our \$830,000 goal before the end of June.

Just a few highlights of the gifts we have received this year:

- Our top donor for the year, Robert Bosch Corporation, has given a total of \$157,500 to support professional development, scholarships, robotics events, and a STEM teacher workshop.
- Donors have given approximately \$264,000 to support endowed and annual scholarships.
- The AARP Foundation has provided more than \$89,000 to fund a CCE program that is offering services and resources to long-term unemployed individuals 50 years or older to help connect them to employment and a sustainable living wage.
- We have raised \$60,000 for the new Student Success Center that will soon be under construction.
- More than \$46,700 was raised through the Fall Classic Golf Tournament.

One of our active campaigns, called Extreme Makeover Animal House Addition, is raising money for the new Veterinary Technology kennel and renovations to Halbert Hall. The new kennel is complete, making available 39 new dog kennels and 20 new cat condo units which are ready for summer residents.

To date we have raised more than \$30,000 to support this program. Giving options include purchasing a brick paver to honor or memorialize your pet or loved one or you may want to consider naming a dog or cat unit.

Gifts of any amount are appreciated and can be designated to support treatment expenses, scholarships, and other needs of the program. If you are interested in purchasing a brick, naming a unit, or supporting the campaign in general, contact Tammy Fiske at Ext. 1812.

You've heard me say it before and I'll say it again: Employee support makes a statement! The fact that you give to the

Foundation speaks volumes to outside stakeholders, making them more likely to respond positively to our funding requests.

So far this fiscal year, employee contributions total \$36,658. We project that this number will increase to over \$40,000 by the end of June, which will be a 25% increase over FY15. We are extremely grateful to you for your gifts and for helping us to achieve our fundraising goals.

Let me share with you a few ways that your gifts to the foundation are being put to work:

- Approximately 400 students have received scholarships totaling \$411,736.
- Faculty and staff have participated in professional development activities using funds made available through teaching chairs, mini-grants, and leadership training allocations that totaled \$231,900.
- An additional \$178,000 was generated from endowments to support technology and other priority needs of the College.
- During this Fiscal Year, the Foundation will provide more than \$1 million of support to the College, its employees, and students.

Your gift makes a difference in the lives of our students and faculty every single day.

Thank you for being passionate people who transform lives and build strong communities, one student at a time!

Alumni Award

(continued from page 10)

1995–2003. He also developed the first web-based quality classes for the College's Quality Assurance program.

"Teaching was a great source of relaxation. I taught real-world exercises by taking actual data and presenting it to the class. Students really appreciated this. Teaching made me a better manager. I would do it tomorrow if time allowed," he said.

Randy also is active in his community, serving on the Board of Directors for Imagine Anderson, the American Heart Association, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Board, Ambassadors Board for AnMed Health, the Board of Visitors at Anderson University, and the Industrial Engineering Advisory Board at Clemson University.

He and his family live in Anderson.

Our College Family

excellence through service

Croslena Johnson, manager of student development and wellness programs, is the recipient of the very first Student Advocate Award at the College. She was chosen by the Student Government Association in recognition and appreciation of her outstanding vision, commitment to excellence, and dedication to student success at Tri-County.



Croslena Johnson, third from left, is pictured with SGA officers, from left, **Samuel Hill**, vice president; **Jimmy Knott**, treasurer; **Rebecca Griebno**, secretary; and **Caleb Allen**, president.

The Campus Safety Magazine (www.campussafetymagazine.com) recognized Officer **B.J. Ellis** as one of its 'Campus Safety Heroes' in its April edition.

Among B.J.'s accomplishments are a crime prevention assessment of the campus that resulted in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design concepts being applied. She also works at building strong relationships with the community and focuses on community service projects.

"Not only does she lead the department in exemplary service to the College, she takes it a step further at every opportunity, striving to better the safety and security of the College and the



B.J. Ellis

greater community," said Jonathan Finch, director of Campus Safety, who nominated her.

Read about B.J. at http://www.campussafetymagazine.com/article/spotlight_on_campus_safety_hero_bj_ellis.

Congratulations to **Jackie Blakley**, dean of Public Services, who received a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership from Clemson University.

Last month we featured John Woodson as President-elect of the South Carolina Technical Education Association (SCTEA). Two other members of our college family will serve in leadership roles with the organization. **Cara Hamilton**, vice president for business affairs, will be the State Treasurer, and **Laneika Musalini**, director of grants, will serve as State Secretary.

Congratulations once again to **Lisa Garrett**, public relations associate, who recently was honored with a 2016 Hermes Gold Award in the Writing category for our most recent Annual Report. The Gold Award is presented to those entries judged to exceed the high standards of the industry norm. Approximately 22 percent of entries received the Gold Award.

The international Hermes Creative Awards competition is for creative professionals involved in the concept, writing, and design of traditional and emerging media. The awards are administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communications Professionals (AMCP), an international association consisting of several thousand communications professionals. This year there were approximately 6,200 entries from the United States and 16 other countries.



Jackie Blakley



Cara Hamilton



Laneika Musalini

Getting To Know You

Lou Moritz

Administrative Services Manager



Lou Moritz

- 1. What do you like best about your job?** The best part of my job is having the ability to troubleshoot and problem solve the many different aspects of administrative services and the departments we collaborate with. I especially enjoy when the resolution works best for both the College and the student, staff member, faculty member, or vendor. What I strive for—win-win situations!
- 2. What is your favorite time of day?** Lunch, not because I get to eat, perhaps, but because of all the hustle and bustle in the Café. It's great to see all the activity.
- 3. What makes you laugh?** An easier question to ask would be, "what doesn't make me laugh?" I try to find humor in all the appropriate places and spread the wealth. Life taken too seriously has already been medically proven to cause stress, which is no laughing matter.
- 4. What is your biggest accomplishment?** My three sons. Looking back at how incredibly hard it is to successfully raise children, seeing the results of three terrific men now, I can't think of anything bigger to accomplish. I just hope to be able to assist our students in any way I can to get them to that point where their parents/guardians can feel that same sense of accomplishment.
- 5. What is a skill you'd love to master?** I would love to master the ability to catch my limit of fish from Lake Hartwell every outing. Until then, I'll kick back on the boat or dock and toss a line or two and work on improving!

Dr. Thwanda Davidson

Director of TRiO Programs



Dr. Thwanda Davidson

- 1. What do you like best about your job?** Sharing academic resources and college information with our Educational Talent Search and Upward Bound program participants and their families. It is truly rewarding to see students grow academically and personally once they are equipped with the right tools.
- 2. What is your favorite time of day?** 7 a.m. It is a very peaceful time of the day for me.
- 3. What makes you laugh?** Listening to my husband recap stories from his childhood and/or early adult years. He paints

such vivid pictures combined with amazing details. After 30 years of marriage, I continue to find his humor therapeutic.

- 4. What is your biggest accomplishment?** Supporting our daughter to graduate with her undergraduate degree in Athletic Training from Winthrop University and earning her Master's degree in Higher Education with a concentration in Athletic Compliance from Auburn University. In addition, seeing our son graduate from Clemson University with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology and earning graduate credits.
- 5. What is a skill you'd love to master?** Speaking French or any foreign language.

Jenni Creamer

Dean of College Transitions



Jenni Creamer

- 1. What do you like best about your job?** The best part of my job is helping students achieve their goals. Whether I have the privilege of working directly with the student or hearing from others how students have overcome obstacles and achieved their goals—it's always motivating and encouraging.
- 2. What is your favorite time of day?** It's definitely not early morning.
- 3. What makes you laugh?** Lots of things. Here at work, that almost always means our College Transition Team meetings—I don't think we've ever had a meeting that didn't involve at least one "laugh until you cry" moment. It also means anytime Dan Cooper and Rebecca Eidson are in the same room. ☺ Our work is serious business, but it doesn't mean we can't laugh (a lot) while we do it. I believe it was Lord Byron who said, "Always laugh when you can. It's cheap medicine."
- 4. What is your biggest accomplishment?** As a first-generation college student, I suppose my biggest accomplishment would be my education. While my family was incredibly supportive of my goals, they never had any expectations that I attend college and definitely didn't expect that I go on for a graduate degree. But I don't measure my life by those types of milestones. I really prefer to think about what I accomplish each day—did I do what needed to be done? Did I make someone's day better? Did I remember to be grateful for all that I've been given?
- 5. What is a skill you'd love to master?** Playing the piano. I've always envied people with musical talent. I took piano lessons briefly several years ago but haven't looked for another instructor after moving. Any piano teachers out there with incredible patience for adult students with no natural musical ability?

John Woodson

(continued from page 1)

"He is truly an advocate for the College and a great representative to the community. He is well known in the media and is always looking for ways to provide opportunities to students," said Jackie.

"The caliber of John's instruction is evidenced by the quality of jobs that his students receive upon graduation," she said. For many years, graduates predominantly worked behind the camera and microphone. They still are getting jobs in traditional media and are working at TV stations as cameramen and women, and as producers and announcers at radio stations, but they also are working in hospitals, non-profits, churches, and businesses as videographers, graphic designers, and freelance photographers.

John's curriculum work is an outgrowth of his desire to make the MAP program functional, relevant, and cutting edge, said Tom. He developed a project charter that resulted in complete renovation of two computer labs including design and structural changes, with new hardware, software, and functional learning spaces included. As a result a Tri-County student-led radio station, 95.1 The Hill, is now on the air.

Woodson is active in College committee work and during 2013–2016 he served as Chair of the Curriculum Committee, as well as other standing committees. For the past several years, he served as the College's representative for the South Carolina Technical Education Association and was recently elected President of the organization.

He is equally dedicated to his community. He is a graduate of Leadership Anderson and was elected to the Board of its Alumni Association. He is the S.C. Broadcasters Association representative to the S.C. Congressional Delegation in Washington, DC. Last year he provided technical and professional experience to Greenville Technical College's Holocaust Remembrance Week. He also facilitated the transfer of archival papers for Walter Brown, a leading S.C. broadcaster, to the University of South Carolina.

Prior to joining Tri-County in 2002, John served as radio personality and General Manager at WRIX in Anderson. He worked in every aspect of radio broadcasting, include DJ, Production Manager, Program Director, General Manager, and the Co-Host of the Talk 103 morning show. He also taught Broadcasting classes at Tri-County on a part-time basis from 1993–97. Additionally, he is a weekend announcer for Classic Rock 101.1.

A 1985 graduate of Tri-County's RTV program, John also holds an associate in Arts degree from Tri-County (1994) and a bachelor's in Journalism from Anderson College (1997). This year, he earned a master's in Communication from Walden University.

He and his wife, Julia, live in Anderson and have six children and seven grandchildren.



Staff Advisory Board Hosts Faculty/Staff Cookout

Many thanks to the Staff Advisory Board for hosting a fun Faculty/Staff Cookout that included hamburgers, hot dogs, and a DJ with karaoke music. We also extend our appreciation to the Tri-County Technical College Foundation for funding the event.



ABOVE: The Staff Advisory Board hosted the annual Faculty/Staff cookout. From left are **Jamie Black**, co-chair; **Debbie Powell**, chair; **Jessica Cullen**; **Scott Jaeschke**, secretary; **Beth Byars**; **Jessica Scott**; and **Susan Womack**.

BELOW: LifeTime Entertainment provided DJ services, and **Lou Moritz** serenaded the crowd during the event.



Faculty and Staff Recognized for Years of Service

Service Awards Presentations

10 Years State Service



Gregg Corley



Dr. Suzanne
Ellenberger



Julie Ellington

10 Years TCTC Service



KC Bryson

*Not pictured:
David Little*

10 Years TCTC and State Service



Gayle Arries



Scott
Brabham



Dave Bucy



Eric Griffith



Terry Heg



Paul Phelps



Amy Roberts



Cathy Strasser



Teresa
Summers

15 Years TCTC Service



Melissa
Baxter



Ken Kopera



Richard
Parker



Phil Smith



Frances
Wilson

*Not pictured:
Elaine Alexander
Margaret Burdette
Suzanne Konieczny*

20 Years TCTC and State Service



Rachel
Campbell

20 Years TCTC Service



Rebecca
Eidson

25 Years TCTC Service



Doug Allen



Barry Phillips



Sandra
Roddey



Sandra
Strickland



Patricia West



Caroline
Williams



Susan
Womack

*Not pictured:
Larry Barnes*

30 Years TCTC and State Service

*Not pictured:
Dr. Mohammad Ghobadi*

35 Years TCTC Service

*Not pictured:
Carolyn Gambrell*



Workshop Salutes Administrative Professionals

Many of our administrative assistants attended the 14th Annual Administrative Professionals Day Workshop held April 27. **Elizabeth Roupnich**, workshop facilitator and owner of Visually Appealing, LLC, is a certified image consultant and the only certified Fashion Feng Shui® Facilitator in South Carolina.

Students in adjunct Industrial Electronics Technology instructor John Leonardo's Troubleshooting class at the Easley Campus worked diligently all semester on creating their projects. Students are pictured here with their Vending Machine project. It worked perfectly.



Executive Staff Summary

- **SACSCOC OFF-SITE REPORT:** The off-site committee review of the College's SACSCOC Compliance Report has been completed. The report was very favorable, citing only five requirements and standards as non-compliant. All five citations will require the College to supply a small amount of additional information but will not require any changes to processes or practices. All employees should be proud of this result because it is a testament to the work that everyone has accomplished to make the College a top-quality educational institution.
- **FIBER RELOCATION PROJECT:** This project involves moving the current Pendleton Campus fiber network trunk from the center of campus to a fiber ring topology running along the edge of campus. This change will better align with the campus master plans and industry best practices, as well as ensure continued network connectivity during the construction of the new Student Success Center and continuing through the next twenty-five years.
- **TECHNICAL CAREER PATHWAYS/I-BEST:** A new initiative is underway to develop a technical career pathway that improves the transition of students from Adult Education to Tri-County Technical College. The program includes six levels through which students can advance beginning with Adult Education and continuing through an associate degree in a technical program. The program is designed to include job-ready credentialed exit points at each of the six levels.
- **OTHER:** Policy and procedure reviews and updates; summer enrollment; leadership training; progress on the development of the College's Quality Enhancement Plan; and changes to non-exempt/exempt status based on salary.