



## Run, Mike, Run!

A hard-fought game of wiffle ball between faculty/staff & students was just one of the highlights of Campus Craze Dayz. See page 2 for more!

## Who's enrolled in 2010?

The majority of students enrolled at VHCC this Fall are under 25, attending classes on a full-time basis, and receiving a share of the \$6 million in financial aid now available.

Admissions Director Karen Cheers described the average student during the Pre-Service Breakfast attended by faculty and staff, noting that enrollment for this fall is up about 4 percent over last year's record levels.

Here are the highlights:

- **SUCCESS AT ANY AGE:** 59 percent of all students enrolled on campus are under the age of 25.
- **ON THE RIGHT PATH:** 59 percent are enrolled in diploma, certificate and degree programs in Career & Technical Areas. Transfer Programs, those programs that lead to an Associate of Arts & Sciences Degree and are designed to be the first half of a bachelor's degree, account for 36 percent of enrollment. The remaining 5 percent of students are non-curricular.
- **MEETING STUDENT NEEDS:** Full-time students account for 58 percent of the total enrollment.
- **ANY TIME OF DAY:** The vast majority, 92 percent, are taking classes during the day.
- **SHOW ME THE MONEY:** Financial aid is distributed to an overwhelming 75 percent of all degree seeking students enrolled on campus this fall. The funding comes in the form of federal grants, state aid, and private scholarships provided through the VHCC Educational Foundation.
- **A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT:** The majority of VHCC students, 80 percent, live in Virginia. However, Cheers pointed out that VHCC offers in-state tuition to students in the neighboring counties of Sullivan and Johnson County, Tenn., which has resulted in an increase in the number of students who now cross the state line to enroll.



## VHCC is 'Pathway and Hope' for Students

On his 46th day as VHCC president, Dr. Ron Proffitt challenged faculty and staff to embrace changes that are immanent with "excitement rather than apprehension" so that VHCC will "always be a college known for changing lives."

"I have a hope that our students will be challenged to learn," Dr. Proffitt said. "A hope that each of us will work to make this college envy of all; a hope that we will seek the positive in a world of negative and scorn; a hope that as colleagues and friends we can agree to disagree in a collegial fashion; a hope that you and I can find the best in every person, every student and every colleague that we meet or work with this next year. My highest hope is that we at Virginia Highlands Community College will work to change lives."

Dr. Proffitt's comments came during the annual State of the College Address delivered before faculty and staff on Aug. 16. He expressed appreciation for the warm welcome he has received and the sound decisions of the past that have positioned the College to fulfill its mission. Together, he said, we can continue to make a difference for every student enrolled on our campus.

He will begin, Dr. Proffitt said, by filling full-time faculty vacancies and searching for new revenue streams to provide the resources needed for our most urgent needs. He noted that Heartwood soon will bring new visitors and new opportunities to our campus, and student leaders will soon begin work on a long list of projects to engage their classmates.

While we are hard at work on campus, Chancellor Glenn DuBois will be busy across Virginia searching for ways to "Reengineer Virginia's Community Colleges." A state-wide task force already has made several recommendations for greater success and employees will also be asked for input before change is implemented.

"One concept we must all accept is that change is coming," Dr. Proffitt said. "If we all have input into that change and accept the fact that it is necessary, then I believe we will be able to approach this with excitement rather than apprehension."

Dr. Proffitt ended with a word of encouragement, noting that everyone on campus has an opportunity to make a positive impact on VHCC students.

"You and I -- this college -- are the pathway and hope for those who will enroll here this fall," he said. "Yes, there will be many unprepared for college work. Will we send them home without any hope? Yes, there will be many who need extra help. Will we send them away because we are too busy? Yes, there will be many who are scared to death of all of us. Will we offer them a smile? What will this College, all of us, do to meet the hopes and dreams of those who seek us out?"

Whether it takes a "gentle push" or a "swift kick," Dr. Proffitt said we must look for ways to make a difference.

"It's what we are all about," he said.

## SGA President Works to 'Bridge the Gap'

Phillip Blevins Jr. prefers that people call him "Bucky," - a nickname he's had since childhood and one that he hopes won't hurt his plans to become a dentist. In his new role as President of the VHCC Student Government Association, he's meeting lots of students and his advice is always the same.

"Get involved," he said. "If you don't, you'll get burned out."

Getting involved in campus life has made him enjoy being a college student, Bucky said, and forced him to develop time management skills to balance his busy life. In addition to his elected position on campus and his full-time class duties, he works for the Smyth County Ambulance Service, as a shift supervisor for the Smyth County Community Hospital's Food Service, and operates a limousine service. He also volunteers as an EMT with the Marion Lifesaving Crew and as a firefighter for the Adwolve Volunteer Fire Department.

He's seeking Associate of Arts & Sciences degrees in Science, Business, General Studies and Education, and hopes to earn a bachelor's degree in science before heading off to dental school. Meanwhile, he's excited about serving the students of VHCC in his capacity as SGA president and the opportunity he has to bridge the gap between the student body and the administration.

"My job is to fight for their wants and needs," he explained. "Just about everything that SGA does comes as a result of something someone has scribbled on a piece of paper and dropped in the suggestion box."

The campus game room was established by the SGA several years ago at the suggestion of a few students who wanted a place to relax between classes. Since then, student leaders have also looked at providing healthier options in the Wolves' Den and establishing a gazebo for smokers, he said. If someone suggests it, he's willing to look into it.

And this semester he wants to make it easier than ever before for students to voice their concerns. In addition to the suggestion box, which is located in the hallway across from the Career Development Center, Bucky plans to spend at least two hours each week gathering input from students.

"I'm going to tour all over campus between September and December," he explained. "I'll set up a table somewhere and invite them to talk with me. ... We want to pursue issues that are in the best interest of everyone."

Students interested in getting involved in SGA are encouraged to pick up an application for Secretary or a Senate seat prior to Sept. 3. Elections will be held Sept. 8 and 9. And, Bucky adds, those with concerns or suggestions can contact him at [plb2014@email.vccs.edu](mailto:plb2014@email.vccs.edu) or (276) 780-5541.



VHCC News is produced each month by Anne Dunham of the Office of Institutional Advancement. If you would like to suggest information for the newsletter, please send your ideas to [adunham@vhcc.edu](mailto:adunham@vhcc.edu) or contact her by phone at 276-739-2456. VHCC is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

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# TRiO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded VHCC's Student Support Services Program, commonly referred to as Project EXCEL, a \$1.8 million grant to continue the program through Aug. 31, 2015.

The program is one of the federal TRIO programs and is designed to serve low-income, first-generation students and those with disabilities. The VHCC program each year serves just over 200 students by providing academic resources including tutoring, transfer advising, 4-year college campus visits, mid-term grade reports, grant aid, cultural enrichment trips, and personal counseling. The ultimate goal is to provide the support and services participants need to earn a college degree.

On the VHCC campus, Project EXCEL is led by Coordinator Jackie Craft and staff members Mike Fillnow, Janet Estep, Tommy Bryant, and Debbie Puckett. Their offices are located in the Instruction and Student Center and in the Tutoring Center, which is operated by Project EXCEL.

## Adjunct Emergency Workforce Outlined

All eligible state employees are encouraged to support the Commonwealth's continuing efforts to stand at the forefront of a response to any disaster or emergency by participating in Virginia's Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW).

The AEW provides opportunities for employees to be assigned to emergency response teams during periods of declared emergencies. The initial effort in a declared emergency will focus on the area of greatest need – the emergency sheltering of our fellow citizens.

In the event of the mass evacuation of a large region of Virginia, state government will assume primary responsibility for sheltering and there will be a critical need for shelter staff. For additional information and to access the registration process, please go online to <http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/AdjunctEmergencyWorkforce.html>

To honor the victims and brave first responders of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, VHCC is proud to take part in the federally recognized National Day of Service. The event - sponsored by the VHCC Student Government Association - allows the VHCC campus community to create a wonderful legacy that honors the victims and those who rose to service in response to the attacks on America. Please register to participate in the projects online at [www.vhcc.edu/dayofservice](http://www.vhcc.edu/dayofservice). Service projects will be conducted from 1-5 p.m. In addition to the service projects listed below, the entire community is invited to participate in a town-wide blood drive, organized in conjunction with the American Red Cross, at Abingdon United Methodist Church.

## NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

FRIDAY, SEPT. 10, 2010

The event will conclude the following evening, Saturday, Sept. 11, with a Candlelight Vigil of Remembrance at 7 p.m. on the VHCC Commons. The entire community is invited to attend.



### Wonder Kids Therapeutic Equestrian Center

Perform maintenance work. Location: 1956g Rustic Lane, Abingdon.

Leader: Jim Krall

### Chain Free Bristol

Assist in freeing a chained canine in Bristol by building the first Chain Free Fence in Bristol! Location: TBA, Bristol.

Leader: Nikelle Hagg

### Feeding America Southwest Virginia

Sort donated food. Location: 21452 Gravel Link Road.

Leader: Debbie Barrett

### Animal & People Food Drive

Collect food from community homes. Location: throughout Abingdon.

Leader: Phil Ferguson

### Faith in Action

Stock and clean food pantry. Location: 798 Hillman Highway, Abingdon. Leader: Anne Dunham

### Keep Bristol Beautiful

Clean up Sugar Hollow Park. Location: TBA.

Leader: Rachel Law

### Adwolfe Fire Department

Set up their annual festival. Location: 104 Thomas Bridge Road, Marion. Leader: Alma Rowland.

### American Red Cross

Register donors for blood drive. Location: United Methodist Church, Abingdon. Leader: Dr. Proffitt.

### It's a GOD thing TOO

Organize donated goods. Location: TBA, Damascus.

Leader: Charles Boling

### U.S. Troops Care Packages

Assemble care packages for troops stationed overseas. Location: VHCC Campus. Leader: Kim Marton.

### Project Linus

Make blankets for those in need. Location: VHCC Campus.

Leader: Mike McBride



CAMPUS CRAZE DAYZ

VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS

VHCC WOLVES

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JOIN THE PACK

Students arrived on campus Aug. 23 to discover a week filled with activities designed to familiarize them with the campus, introduce them to new friends, and enjoy the VHCC experience during 2010 Campus Craze Dayz. **Pictured below: 1) Jackie Craft, coordinator of Project EXCEL, takes a turn in the dunking booth during the Back to School Bash that included a hamburger/hotdog luncheon and music by Impeach Dixon; 2) The Pool Party, sponsored by the VHCC Educational Foundation, gave students and their family members an opportunity to gather for one more big summer splash and take part in a variety of cool games; 3) Students compete in the limbo contest that was part of the SGA Luau that also featured a pig roast and music by Ras Alan. Throughout the week, students also had an opportunity to test their VHCC knowledge during a campus scavenger hunt that featured new clues each day on the website, Twitter and Facebook accounts. Student Dexter Minton took home the grand prize - an Apple iPad valued at \$500.**

