

## SACS Reaffirms VHCC Accreditation

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) has reaffirmed accreditation for Virginia Highlands Community College, effective through 2018.

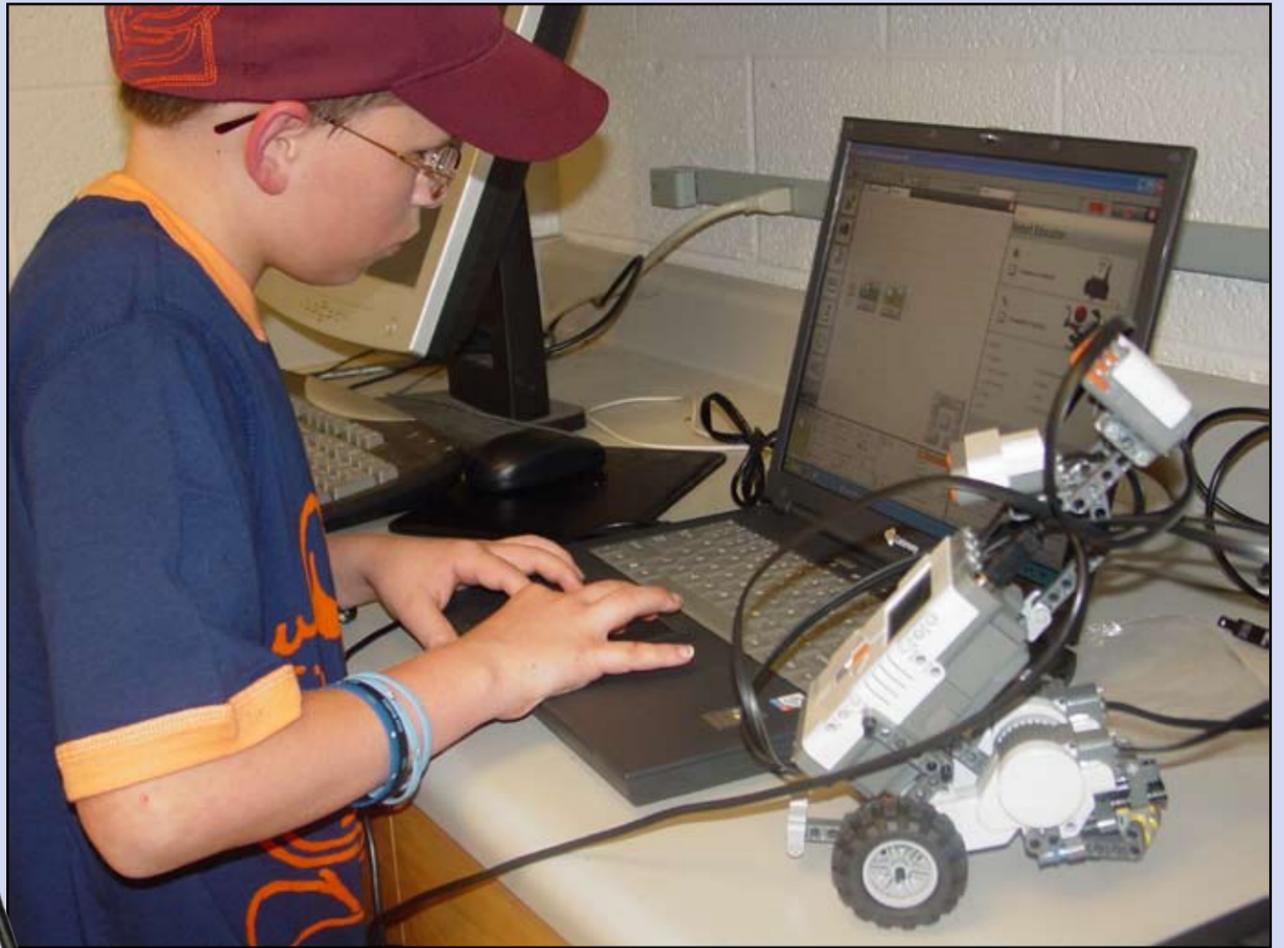
"We take the accreditation standards very seriously and are delighted with the results of our latest SACS review," said VHCC President F. David Wilkin. "Accreditation assures our constituents that VHCC meets established standards of academic excellence and is continually working to enhance its programs and services. I'm so proud of the VHCC faculty and staff members who work hard every day to deliver quality education throughout our service region."

VHCC has been accredited by SACS since 1972. SACS can grant reaffirmation for up to 10 years but, depending on its findings, may choose to review institutions more frequently. Reaffirmation for the full ten years indicates SACS places its highest confidence in VHCC.

The comprehensive SACS reaffirmation process includes a self-assessment, a SACS committee review of the self-assessment report, and an on-site review by a SACS visiting team. Each institution also is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for enhancing student learning. VHCC's enhancement plan is designed to enhance advising services, particularly for first-year students.

VHCC's on-site review was conducted last October and resulted in a favorable recommendation by the visiting team. The team's recommendations were forwarded to the SACS Commission on Colleges, which recently reaffirmed VHCC's accreditation.

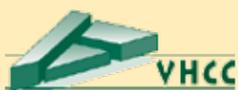
SACS is the recognized regional accrediting body for Virginia and 10 other southern states.



## Start me up!

More than 95 Middle School students from throughout the service region learned about careers in robotics, digital animation, gaming technology and healthcare during Educational Talent Search's annual Technology Camp at VHCC. In addition to educational laboratories on campus, students took a field trip to search for salamanders on Whitetop Mountain and visited the Gray Fossil Site to learn about the creatures that explored the earth 5 to 7 million years ago.

Technology Camp each year helps students explore careers in technology and sharpen teamwork skills by completing fun and innovative projects. The camp includes transportation and lunch at no cost to participating students.



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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or call  
276-739-2400

Para la ayuda en español, llama por favor  
(276) 739-2436



Sandy Davis and Jennifer Addison

VHCC employees Debbie Hale, Kevin Hamed, Beth Duffield, Sandy Davis, and Jennifer Addison recently graduated from the Inaugural 20/20 Rural Community College Leadership Academy. The Academy held monthly meetings between Sept. 2007 and June 2008 to explore rural community college issues and hosted guest speakers to address special topics. Speakers included Dr. Belle Whelan, President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Participants focused on such issues as workforce services, student affairs, budget and finance, fundraising, public relations, human resources, and capital projects at rural community colleges. Four Virginia and one West Virginia colleges participated.



Heather Barbow, the VHCC alum who first visited the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory in Spring 2006 as part of our Coast Ecology course, is spending her summer as an intern at the center. Heather recently graduated from Coastal Carolina University with a bachelor's degree in Marine Science and landed the internship with the help of VHCC Assistant Professor of Biology Kevin Hamed. Heather said her ultimate dream - one she has had since the age of eight - is to work as a trainer at Sea World. In the meantime, she's racking up tons of experience as one of only two interns who educate visitors to the Mississippi center. Heather credits the "hands-on experience" she received in Mr. Hamed's class for helping her finish her degree and land the internship. Another VHCC success story!



## A Large Deposit

Building on a long-standing relationship with Alpha Natural Resources, David Matlock recently received a \$10,000 check from Alpha for its VHCC scholarship program. The Alpha Natural Resources Scholarship each year provides \$1,000 scholarships for first-year students from high schools throughout the region. In the past year, Alpha has provided \$30,000 to the VHCC Educational Foundation and has pledged another \$5,000 toward the spring golf tournament.



Please plan to join the Classified Staff Association in collecting school supplies for this year's recipient, Stonewall Jackson Elementary School in Bristol. Your donations may be taken to OTC-1108B or LRC-623. Cash donation also are being accepted and will be used to purchase book bags for needy children. Aug. 15 is the deadline for donating items. A list of needed supplies is available at [www.bristolvaschools.org/stonewall/SchoolSupplies.htm](http://www.bristolvaschools.org/stonewall/SchoolSupplies.htm). For more information, contact [tgillespie@vhcc.edu](mailto:tgillespie@vhcc.edu).



## Don't Cry for Gary Aday

He designed this fabulous set! There's still time to attend a Barter Theatre production of *Don't Cry for Me Margaret Mitchell* and admire the artistry of VHCC Associate Professor of Speech & Drama Gary Aday. Billed as "hilarious, irreverent and mostly true," this comedy stars Michael Poisson, Rick McVey, and Ezra Colon as movie executives with only one week to write the script for *Gone With the Wind*, the book that took Margaret Mitchell ten years to write. Aday's beautifully designed set has helped make the play a hit all summer long. Get your tickets today!



FROM THE  
ARCHIVES

If only Barbara Johnson had held on to that dress - circa 1975 - it would be in style again. In fact, if you added a computer and updated her telephone, you would hardly know three decades have passed since this delightful photo was taken.

## Mark Your Calendar

The dog days of summer are yet to come, but planning already is under way for the annual Faculty/Staff Back-to-School meeting. This year's event will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Aug. 18 in the VHCC Snack Bar.

## HR Website Provides Information

Wondering how to request a new insurance card?  
Can't remember the procedures for reporting a work-related injury?  
Need to access information for retirement planning?

It's easy. Just go to the Human Resources web page and click on the FYI section. You'll find an array of information and links divided into categories such as Health Insurance, Payroll and Leave, Benefits, and new sections for Retirement Planning and PowerPoint presentations.

This information resource is available to you 24/7. Take a little time to become familiar with the site and utilize it as a primary resource that is quick and easy to use. Feedback is welcome. Please send any comments, suggestions or ideas to Debbie Hale at [dhale@vhcc.edu](mailto:dhale@vhcc.edu).