

State of the College: 'Excellent!'

President David Wilkin declared VHCC to be in "excellent" shape and poised for another year of success as he presented his annual State of the College Address to faculty, staff, and special guests on Aug. 18.

Pointing to the recent 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Dr. Wilkin said the entire campus community has much to be proud of. Reaffirmation for a full 10 years indicates VHCC has earned the highest level of confidence from SACS, he said.

Other highlights include:

- Total enrollment of 3,532 full- and part-time students last year.
- The recent appointment of Peer Ambassadors to welcome students to campus. The program was a direct result of the Quality Enhancement Plan that is a component of the SACS review.
- Progress regarding Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway. The design for the \$17 million facility, which will be built on the VHCC campus, has been approved by the State Board for Community Colleges and the state's Art and Architectural Review Board. An oversight entity, which will include the VCCS Chancellor and the VHCC President, also has been approved.
- New Associate Degree programs in Electricity, CNC Machining, and Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating are now admitting students.
- More than \$4.5 million in financial aid was awarded last year.
- The Center for Business & Industry served 2,866 students, provided customized training for 25 companies, and awarded 50 Career Readiness Certificates last year.
- The espalier tree planted to symbolize VHCC's participation in the Foundations of Excellence project began bearing fruit.



Campus Craze Dayz, a week full of activities to welcome students to campus, included a Wednesday Back-to-School Bash featuring a Money Machine (left) and a live WZVA radio remote that allowed campus leaders to highlight their programs.

(Below) Other activities include a Thursday night Luau, sponsored by the SGA, which included beach music, a pig roast, and limbo contest. On Tuesday, students were invited to learn more about campus programs and activities at Campus Cruise. This opportunity gave faculty and staff, including Brianne Green of Educational Talent Search (pictured below) a chance to meet and greet our students.



Commissioned Flag Presented to College

To show his gratitude for the support he received while on active duty in Iraq, Sgt. Eric Hoffman on Aug. 18 presented the College with a flag that was commissioned by the 1st Battalion of the 214th Aviation Regiment of the U.S. military.

While on active duty with his unit of the Tennessee Army National Guard, Sgt. Hoffman completed two online courses 6,000 miles from campus. He returned in June and immediately enrolled in summer classes.

In order to be commissioned, a U.S. flag must be part of a military mission. The flag presented to VHCC was present on a MEDEVAC helicopter that flew missions in Baghdad, Balad, Ramadi, Fallujah, Al Taqaddum, and Al Asad. It currently is hanging in the Administration Building, but will rotate throughout campus.



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 or contact her by phone at 276-739-2456. VHCC is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

Virginia Highlands
Community College
www.vhcc.edu

or call
276-739-2400

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

2008 Presidential Scholars Arrive

The best and brightest from the region's high schools have arrived on campus through the VHCC Presidential Scholarship program sponsored by contributions from employees. The 2008 scholars are Daniel Thaxton, Jana Harrison, Rachel Qualkenbush, Randi Menton, David Thaxton, Michael Doss, Kimberly Boardwine, Brian Johnson, and Beth Rush.



FERPA Guidelines Outlined

College students are guaranteed certain rights to privacy under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and educational institutions are responsible for protecting this information, Mike Turner, coordinator for student affairs for the Virginia Community College System, told faculty and staff during a recent in-service session.

Turner urged those who have access to sensitive student data, such as grades and GPAs, to familiarize themselves with the law. When questions arise, they should be directed to the Registrar, he said, and those who get pushy or belligerent should be directed to campus police.

To assist in upholding the law, Turner prepared a list of guidelines:

- Do not use the entire, or partial, Social Security number or Student ID number of a student in a public posting of any type; e.g., grades or attendance.
- Graded tests and assignments should not be accessible to students by sorting through the papers of all students.
- When writing a letter of recommendation for a student, you must have written consent from the student if you plan to include anything other than directory information.
- The progress of any student should not be discussed with anyone other than the student (including parents) without the consent of the student.
- If someone, other than a College employee, is looking for one of your students, refer them to Campus Police.
- Only VCCS email is considered secure for FERPA covered information
- If a federal agent requests information from you regarding a current or former student, please contact the Registrar's Office or Campus Police.

He also cautioned those who have access to private information to observe safe practices, such as logging off their computers, securing student records, and shredding - not trashing- documents containing sensitive data.

Mark Your Calendars

The Washington County/Virginia High School College Night Program will be held from 7-9 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 9, in the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Grand Hall. The event is designed for VHCC students to explore transfer opportunities and for high school juniors and seniors to learn about their college choices.

Voter Registration Event Slated

Election 2008 is heating up and VHCC is doing its part by encouraging the campus community to register to vote.

The event, sponsored by the VHCC Student Government Association, College Democrats and Young Republicans, will be held Tuesday, Sept. 23, from noon until 3 p.m. in the campus common's area.

In addition to voter registration opportunities, the event will feature a mock election and live music by Ryan Ward & Thee Birds ov

Paradise. Officials from the local campaigns of Democratic candidate Barack Obama and Republican candidate John

McCain are also scheduled to attend.

If you don't know who you plan to support in the upcoming election, this is an opportunity to gather information

about the candidates.

For more information about the event, contact the Student Success Center or the Career Planning Center.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Finding the required textbooks in January 1970 required a visit to the makeshift VHCC bookstore housed at the Washington County Technical School. Not only were Amazon and eBay non-existent, but there were likely few used books available since the College was still in its infancy. Has anybody seen this guy lately?

Online wellness resource now available

State employees and their families now have access to a new online wellness resource through Revolution Health. The site offers a range of resources, from information on conditions and treatments to tips on how to develop and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. It includes online tools such as a BMI calculator, health assessments and a symptom checker. Participants will also be able to set up and maintain a secure, personal online health record that will help keep track of medical history, allergies, prescriptions and doctors' visits. Visit the Revolution Health web site at <https://www.revolutionhealth.com/commonhealthva/index> to get started. The link is also available on the Human Resources web page under the FYI - Benefits section.