

VHCC Pledges Employee Support to Guard, Reserve

Virginia Highlands Community College has joined Virginia Gov. Tim Kaine, the Virginia Community College System, and thousands of other agencies across the state and nation in pledging employer support for members of the National Guard and Reserve.

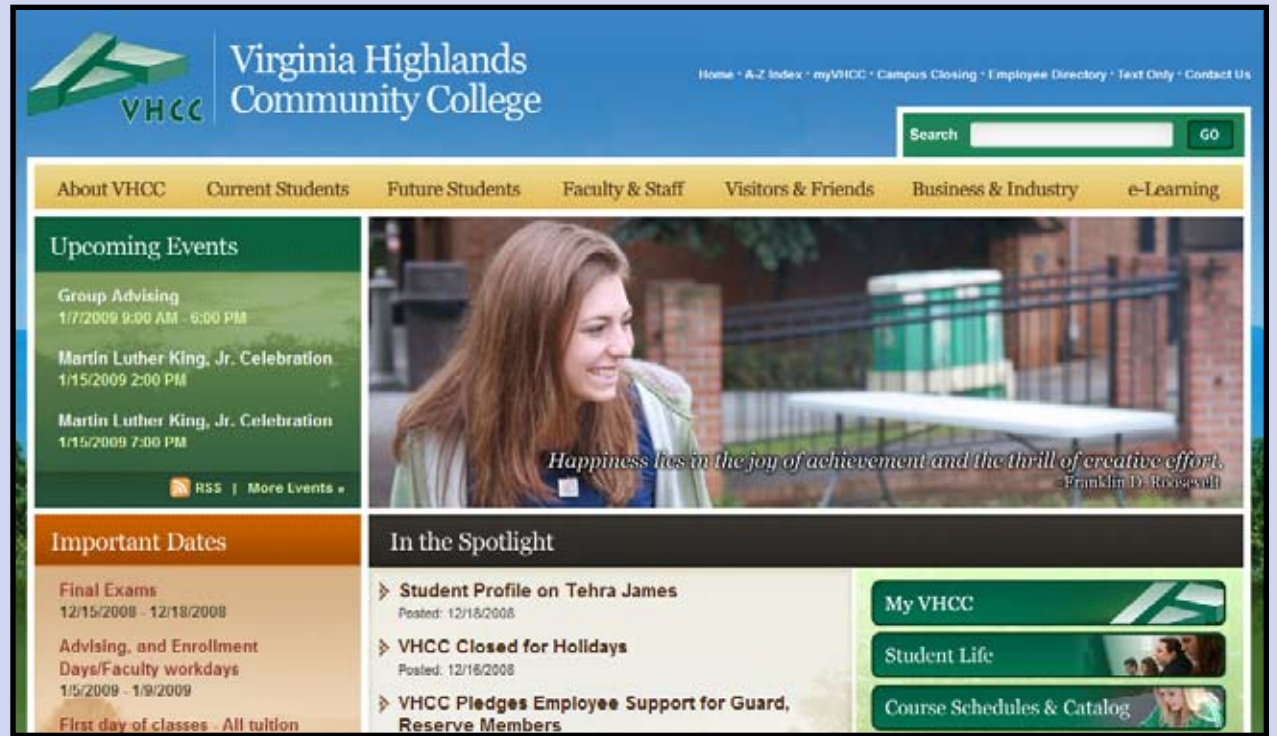
"With the enthusiastic and unanimous support of the College Board, VHCC is publicly recognizing the important contributions that Guard and Reserve members make to our nation's military force," said VHCC President David Wilkin. "We have pledged to adhere to all laws regarding their employment rights and to adopt human resources policies on our campus that protect these rights."

Because members of the Guard and Reserve currently make up nearly half of the nation's military force, a national effort is under way to raise awareness about the rights guaranteed to these part-time military members through the federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Volunteer members of a Department of Defense organization known as Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is asking both public and private employers throughout the nation to sign and display a resolution pledging their support.

"We fully recognize, honor and enforce the ...USERRA," the pledge states. "Our managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve. We will continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crisis, and in war."

Pete Montague and Jim Boulton, members of the Southwest Virginia Committee representing ESGR, recently joined Dr. Wilkin as he signed the pledge that will be posted on the VHCC campus.

Additional information about ESGR and those who have signed the pledge is available at www.esgr.org.



New VHCC Website Launched

Students who logged on to the VHCC website to check grades on Dec. 19 got their first look at the new VHCC website, a project that has been in the works for more than a year.

VHCC Webmaster Nikelle King worked closely with Vision Internet, the design firm based in Los Angeles, to capture a new look for the site and to create a new navigation system that better organizes important information. The new site was proposed as part of the Quality Enhancement Plan, a component of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools, as a means to improve communication with students.

Information is organized under key categories that requires each user to follow links created for current students,

future students, faculty & staff, visitors & friends, or business & industry. General information about the College is located under the About Us link and e-Learning has been added to assist the growing number of students now enrolled in distance education courses. Campus news and upcoming events are also housed on the home page.

One thing that has not changed is the My VHCC link, which is still available on the home page and at each level of the site. This link allows students to check grades, enroll in classes, print their class schedule, and view other important student information.

You can view the new website by logging onto www.vhcc.edu.



Happy Holidays!

A member of the VHCC Percussion Ensemble concentrates on a difficult number during the Bristol Christmas Parade on Dec. 6.



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

First Becky May Memorial Scholarship Awarded

Asked about his career goals, Rex Bullins is quick to reply.

"I would like to be a friend to a sick child," he said. "I always have a smile, and I think kids sense that."

Rex recently moved one step closer to his goal when he was awarded the Becky May Scholarship, a \$500 award that will allow him to complete his nursing degree at VHCC. The scholarship was established through the VHCC Educational Foundation, with contributions from the campus community, after the 3-year-old daughter of VHCC Dean Robert May and his wife, Connie, lost her lifelong battle with cancer last year.

Bullins grew up in the Hickory Tree community of Bristol and, although his family watched little television, remembers seeing the St. Jude Telethon each August. He was touched by the kindness of the healthcare workers, he said, and the courage of the young patients.

But Rex didn't decide to pursue a career in nursing, until later in life when he realized his current factory job wasn't right for him. He began taking courses at VHCC in 2005 and, when his company ultimately moved to Mexico, applied for admission to the Virginia Appalachian Tricollege Nursing Program.

Rex expects to graduate in May and already has been accepted for an internship at Bristol Regional Medical Center. That experience and an RN license will open the door for him to become a pediatric nurse, he said.

"I want to see children grow up and be happy in their life," He said. "I cannot think of a better way to live my life than by caring for children who are sick and giving them a smile and a friend."

The Becky May Scholarship was established for a second-year student with an interest in pursuing pediatric nursing. For more information or to make a contribution, please contact the VHCC Educational Foundation at (276) 739-2473.



(Left to right) VHCC Dean of Science & Engineering Technologies Robert May and his wife, Connie, are pictured here with Rex Bullins (seated). Bullins is the recipient of the Becky May Memorial Scholarship, which was established in memory of the Mays' daughter.

New Moms Get Special Benefits

State employees who participate in COVA Care are eligible for special benefits available for Future Moms. Future Moms is a free prenatal program that is designed to help women have healthy pregnancies and healthy babies. Enrolling in Future Moms provides toll-free access to a registered nurse 24 hours a day; a free prenatal book; and postpartum support and guidance. Currently, if you enroll in Future Moms in your first trimester and complete all program requirements, COVA Care will waive the \$300 maternity hospital stay copayment. It's easy to enroll – just call 800-828-5891.

SIFE Team Forming on Campus

Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) is a new student organization at VHCC. Active on more than 1,400 college and university campuses in over 40 countries, SIFE teams are creating economic opportunity for millions of people around the world.

The concept is simple—working as teams, SIFE students design educational outreach projects that help individuals in their communities develop a better understanding of the principles of free enterprise and how to use this information to empower themselves and achieve their dreams.

TEAMS: SIFE is an organization for students, generated by the leadership of students. The student teams have complete control over the type, size, and audience of SIFE outreach

projects.

EXPERIENCE: Students gain first-hand knowledge of the business

world by working in real-world situations with local and global businesses, families, schools, and individuals.

EDUCATION: Taking knowledge gained in the classroom, students teach principles of business, economics, and other success skills to those in need of support. Our only request is that those we teach continue to pass on the knowledge.

COMPETITION: Each SPRING, teams travel to regional and, if successful, national competitions where they present an audio/visual account of that year's projects. Presentations are judged by business executives from around the country and monetary awards are handed out to the top teams. These competitions are great opportunities to network with business professionals and generate future employment interests.

Learn more at www.sife.org.



Far Out!

One look at this stylish shirt and it's easy to see how Dr. Ed Hardison rose quickly through the ranks at VHCC before his retirement a few years ago. Similar garments are now available on eBay - wig sold separately.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Campus Closed for Holidays

Virginia Highlands Community College will be closed Dec. 24, 2008, through Jan. 4, 2009, in observance of the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

The campus will reopen at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 5, and Spring Semester classes will begin Monday, Jan. 12.