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Southwest Now Magazine

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We asked. You responded. We listened. Over the course of the past year, Southwest Tennessee Community College, in consultation with the Huron Consulting Group, surveyed our internal and external stakeholders to determine ways to improve our performance and responsiveness to the community. The responses were insightful and focused on three primary opportunities for the College: increase the promotion of our successes; become more responsive to our workforce and K-12 communities; and improve our service to students.

The survey responses indicated that people are, for the most part, unaware of our academic programming and community partnerships, which is a shame considering that, for nearly 16 years, Southwest has served well the people of Shelby and Fayette counties. Our footprint is wide and spans from downtown Memphis to Collierville to Millington. Through our stellar nursing program, we produce professionals vital to our local medical community.

We offer more than 55 career programs and over 43 transfer programs. Southwest is known across the state for our Industrial Readiness Training (IRT) program, which prepares citizens for jobs in local manufacturing and industry and teaches skillsets identified by local industry leaders as critical to long-term employee success. Recently, we received a $904,588 federal grant from the U.S. Commerce Department’s Economic Development Administration to assist in the construction of a $3.5 million IRT building on our Macon Cove Campus. This new center will help meet the increasing needs of business and industry while providing opportunities for unemployed and underemployed people to enhance the quality of life for themselves and their families.

Southwest is excited about the influx of high school students as a result of the new Tennessee Promise (TNPromise) initiative. This last-dollar scholarship program has significantly increased the number of college-bound students in Shelby and Fayette counties, and undergirds Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55 goal to increase the number of Tennesseans with college credentials by 2025. Fueled by the TNPromise Scholarship, Southwest enrolled more than 2,400 freshman students in the fall of 2015, a 10.6 percent increase over the fall of 2014.

The Tennessee Promise initiative is, without a doubt, a game changer. Students and parents who may have never considered a community college are now taking a second look. Therefore, expanding our outreach and partnerships with K-12 institutions is critical.

In preparation for new students, it is imperative that Southwest restructure its business practices to become more “student/consumer-centric.” Our processes and procedures must be effective and efficient, and our customer service needs to be second to none. Students have more educational options today than ever before. Therefore, we must work hard to prove that they have, in fact, made the best choice.

We asked. You responded. We listened, and now we are on the move, promoting our successes, developing and expanding our workforce and K-12 partnerships, and improving our service to students.

Memphis is a great city in which to live, work, and play, and Southwest is committed to partnering with the community to make it even better.

Dr. Tracy D. Hall
President
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Southwest students, faculty, and staff along with public officials lined the sidewalk and entryway of our college’s Macon Cove Campus Academic Building on August 25, 2015 with thank-you signs to greet Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam as he made his first visit to Southwest during his statewide Tennessee Promise (TN Promise) inaugural kickoff tour. The governor briefly addressed an academic success class and interacted with students about their career goals and community service, pointing out that TN Promise scholars had performed 180,000 hours of community service.

The Tennessee Promise student financial assistance plan is designed to provide two years of community college or technical school tuition free for any student graduating from a Tennessee high school starting in May 2015, effective fall 2015, who also meets other eligibility requirements.

The governor delivered a main address to business leaders, elected officials, and the college community in the Bornblum Library on the Macon Cove Campus. Capsulizing the significance of Tennessee Promise, Haslam remarked, “This is not about access to college. It’s about success. So the goal, I’ve said to students that I have gotten the chance to talk with, is not just starting school the first day. We were relatively confident you could pull that off. The main goal is to have them walk across the stage two years from now.”

Governor Haslam, in support of his “Drive to 55” initiative designed to increase the number of Tennessee residents with two-year degrees and above to 55 percent by 2025, unveiled the Tennessee Promise plan during his State of the State Address on February 3, 2014. It was passed by the Tennessee General Assembly and signed into law on May 13, 2014. This initiative is a key catalyst for the governor’s plan to significantly enhance future economic development efforts in the state.
The TN Promise Scholarship Looks Promising for 2016 High School Seniors

Southwest Tennessee Community College helped area 2016 high school seniors sign up for the TN Promise Scholarship and fill out their college applications as part of the statewide Scholarship Saturday on September 26, 2015. This was the second year that Southwest served graduating seniors and their family members during Scholarship Saturday.

Students were lined up at the door when the volunteers arrived. “When I got here at 9:30 a.m., there were four people already waiting in line ready to come in and sign up. We did them at 9:30 a.m. rather than 10 a.m. We didn’t want anybody to wait,” said Director of Student Ombudsman William Ross, who volunteered to help out.

Students came from all over the area including Kingsbury, Germantown, White Station and Middle College high schools; Creative Life Preparatory School; from charter schools; and there were homeschoolers. “They’re coming from everywhere,” said Ross. “Most of them did come in and fill out the TN Promise Scholarship and an application for Southwest. We are able to waive the $10 application fee, if they register today.”

Among the students signing up for the TN Promise Scholarship was Josiah Weave, a homeschooler who owns a lawn business. He plans to attend Southwest and get an associate degree in business, but hasn’t quite decided what kind of business. “Right now I own a lawn business. I want to extend that. I’ve thought about real estate and several other options. I’m not really sure yet,” Weaver said.

Noma Anderson, a member of Leadership Memphis, is an executive who works with East High School. “Our goal is to help students finish high school and prepare for two-year and four-year colleges, technical colleges or military service. My project with the students is to make sure that they know about TN Promise – make sure they have their FAFSAs done, that they do their community service, and to give them information. So, I’m here to get as much information as I can,” she explained.

The event was designed to encourage students to enroll in TNPromise, the state’s historic program that provides two years of community college or technical school tuition-free for any student graduating from a Tennessee high school. It includes a mentoring component, as well as a last-dollar scholarship to cover tuition and fees not covered by the Pell grant, the HOPE scholarship or TSAA funds. Students may use the scholarship at any of the state’s 13 community colleges, 27 colleges of applied technology or other eligible institution offering an associate’s degree program. The Class of 2016 will be the second eligible to take advantage of the program, which is part of Governor Bill Haslam’s Drive to 55 initiative to increase the number of Tennesseans with some form of post-secondary credential.
Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam’s Tennessee Promise initiative, which will let students attend a community college or state college of applied technology tuition free, kicked off this week.

If successful, it will be a major weapon in the governor’s Drive to 55 campaign, which has a goal of having 55 percent of Tennesseans equipped with a college degree or technology certificate by the year 2025.

Success promises to bring a host of benefits to the state in terms of economic development projects that attract high-paying jobs. And that means a better quality of life for Tennesseans.

Tennessee Promise provides last-dollar scholarships, which kick in when students have exhausted other federal and state grants, that allow students to attend a community college or technology college tuition free in exchange for community service.

It promises to provide an opportunity for any high school graduate to attend college to earn an associate degree or career certificate, or even go on to earn a four-year college degree.

Haslam visited Southwest Tennessee Community College Tuesday to help kick off the program here.

In many ways, Memphis is ground zero for what Haslam wants to accomplish with Tennessee Promise. Only 23.7 percent of the city’s population 25 years old or older has a college degree. That compares to 33.3 percent statewide for Tennesseans between the ages of 25 and 64.

Studies have shown that if the city could increase the number of college graduates here by 1 percent, it would mean a $1 billion economic impact boost. In a city with a 28 percent poverty rate, that is a significant number.

Under Tennessee Promise, Southwest Tennessee Community College has a big role to play.

During a visit Wednesday with The Commercial Appeal’s editorial board, new Southwest President Dr. Tracy D. Hall acknowledged that fact, while emphasizing that the success of Tennessee Promise will be measured by how many of the students entering college under the program this fall go on to receive a degree or certificate. That, she said, will take a coordinated effort by Southwest staff to ensure the support is in place to make sure students actually register and stay in school.

She also made another important point: The state’s public school districts must graduate students who are ready to succeed in a postsecondary institution. Shelby County Schools Superintendent Dorsey Hopson, who was present at Southwest’s Macon Road campus during Haslam’s visit, said that is SCS’s core goal.

He said the district has a strategy and support system in place to make sure students, especially first-generation college students, enroll in Tennessee Promise.

Tennessee Promise has drawn national attention. For instance, Republican presidential candidate Jeb Bush mentioned the initiative this week when a reporter asked him about job creation and having a trained workforce.

Those are two major topics in Memphis, and are frequently mentioned by the candidates for mayor in the October 8, 2015 city election.

Southwest has been a major partner in the numerous workforce development efforts taking place here, and it is our hope that Dr. Hall and her administrators will be a visible and accessible presence in showcasing the College’s role.

Tennessee Promise can be a game-changer in the important effort to better educate the state’s drive to increase the education level of its citizens. Southwest is a key roadway in that effort.
Interested in becoming a Pharmacy Technician, a career on the rise with excellent job opportunities?

Southwest Tennessee Community College has a two-semester program beginning each fall and spring.

A pharmacy technician works under the supervision of a pharmacist to assist with filling and dispensing medications, maintaining patient records, medication labeling and other job-related duties. The U.S. Department of Labor projects a 20 percent increase in jobs for pharmacy technicians from 2012 to 2022.

This program has an application deadline of July 1 for fall enrollment and for spring classes November 1.

For more information, visit our website at www.southwest.tn.edu/allied_health/ or call 901-333-5400.
Noted philanthropist Bert Bornblum passed from this life on February 21, 2016 but leaves behind a rich legacy of community service.

Justice and duty. It’s what drives a young immigrant to join the Army Air Corps even when he’s not an American citizen. It’s what drives that same individual to be the first store owner on Beale Street to hire African-American sales clerks and cashiers. And it’s why Bert Bornblum established an endowed scholarship at Southwest Tennessee Community College, because it was the right thing to do. But to really understand Bert Bornblum, you have to travel back to pre-war Poland.

As a young man, Bert had two loves in his life—girls and books—and the two were intertwined. “A group of us would get together and go to the library to discuss books. If you wanted to get a girl, you went to the library.” Bert wanted to get the girl but maybe even more, Bert wanted to get the books. Spend just five minutes with Bert and he talks about authors like best friends: Dostoevsky, Sinclair Lewis, Tolsoty, Upton Sinclair, Mark Twain. But to Bert, these authors offered even more than philosophy and literature. They offered an education that was denied him by a system that increasingly discriminated against Jews.

In 1938, at 18 with only a few dollars and a dictionary that was basically ineffective, Bert and his brother left Poland and arrived in Memphis. With little English at their command, they found it difficult at the beginning, but soon immersed themselves in the culture and began working in a men’s clothing store. In January 1942, Bert enlisted in the Signal Corps, transferred to the Regular Army Air Corps shortly thereafter and served honorably overseas for the next two and half years. If you ask him why he joined, he simply says, “It was my duty.” While in the Army, Bert became a U.S. citizen and was offered a position as a warrant officer. He considered a career in the military, but those authors were still whispering in his ear. Bert returned to Memphis for a short time and then, like many veterans took off out west.

Bert left Memphis for California with high hopes of getting into UCLA. He had dreams of being a lawyer, but the school had a waiting list of six months, so Bert patiently went to work in a shoe store and worked his way up to manager while waiting for his slot to open. Then a fateful cable arrived from his brother David, still in Memphis. David offered Bert a half partnership in a store in Memphis if only Bert would return. Bert declined; he wanted to pursue his education. David persisted and finally Bert agreed.

“It was only supposed to be a year or two and then I would return,” says Bert. That’s not how it happened. Some 40-plus years later, Bert Bornblum’s legacy is clear. There wasn’t just one store. There were six; four in Memphis and two in Nashville. There was a beautiful loving wife whom Bert lost over several years ago. There are grandchildren from children, and those authors whispering in his ear they never stopped talking. The man who never got a chance to formally complete his education estimates he has approximately 21 years of philosophy credits and a few courses in history.

Justice and duty. Bert Bornblum’s sense of those two words are embedded in this community. Scholarships, lecture series and even a school, and of course an endowed scholarship at Southwest that Bert says he supports because it provides a way for people to go to school who cannot afford to or who are not prepared for the university. Bert also remembers, “It was hard for me to get into a high school, so I don’t want anyone to have a hard time getting an education.” Righting a wrong, doing it because it’s his duty, or just because it’s the right thing to do, Bert Bornblum understood the need in our society for justice and duty. Those who have been touched by his sense of that understanding are better for it.

Mr. Bornblum has also provided significant support to Southwest in nursing scholarship endowments. He served as a member of the Southwest Foundation Board for 15 years, the past 10 years of which serving in an emeritus capacity.

Bert Bornblum is shown next to the plaque that bears his name and image displayed in our Macon Cove Campus library.
Southwest’s 2015 Fall Career Fairs Bring Job Opportunities for Students and Alumni

Southwest’s Career Services Office invites employers to the College twice a year during the fall and spring semesters to recruit and provide employment information for students and alumni. More than 30 companies and businesses came to the October 21 and 22, 2015 Career Fairs held on the Union Avenue and Macon Cove campuses respectively.

Director of Career Services Brenda Williams indicated several new companies came to recruit this year. “Yes, we do have several new employers. I think it is due to us reaching out to the Memphis Chamber. As soon as we reached out to them, we saw an increase in registration; so much, in fact, that we had to close registration. We had to turn a couple of employers away. This is the first time we’ve ever had to do that because of the space limitations, so we will probably be looking to having the next one in the Nabors Auditorium,” said Williams.

The Tennessee Department of Corrections was a first-time participant. Employee Relations Director Connie Johnson indicated they were specifically recruiting college students. “We just had a College Program Initiative that we rolled out back in August, so we are reaching out to a lot of different colleges in the areas where we have a facility and hope that they’ll become interested, especially those who are criminal justice, psychology, and social work majors. The Department of Justice has over 200 job classifications,” Johnson stated.

Robert Elkins of MLGW, a returning vendor, said they had eight jobs listed on the board and discussed the qualifications. “They [the jobs] have varying qualifications. Many of them require a degree of some sort; others require specific skills that we’re looking for,” said Elkins. He indicated the starting pay for an entry-level utility worker is $13 an hour. The starting salary for a professional position could get as high as $30 to $35 an hour.
“Spark the Dream” Presentation Kindles Passion in a Southwest Business Student

“Wilson’s whole presentation was astonishing. I was impressed with his father’s, Kemmons Wilson Sr., background story. It’s amazing to imagine how one simple idea of his created a huge hotel chain.” – Carmen Sanchez

Kemmons Wilson Jr., son of the Holiday Inn founder, launched the “Spark the Dream” series in 2013 with the inspiring story of how his father started the Holiday Inn hotel chain. He returned on October 22 to reboot the “Spark the Dream” series for 2015. “The purpose of the series,” explained Executive Director of the Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) at Southwest Rory Thomas, “is to actually spark the idea or dream of entrepreneurship in students. Many students only think about getting a job when done with school, but this series allows them to think about another option, which is becoming a business owner.”

Memphis resident Kemmons Wilson Sr. opened the first Holiday Inn in 1941 on Summer Avenue. Today, it is one of the world’s largest hotel chains. Kemmons Wilson Jr. has followed in his father’s footsteps and is one of the most successful businessmen in the country.

“I’m going to give them the story of my father’s life. It really is a kind of rags to riches story in a sense but, it was about a man who had an idea and executed the idea, which changed the face of the American hotel industry,” said Wilson.

Dr. Joan McGrory accompanied her business class to the “Spark the Dream” presentation. McGrory’s student Carmen Sanchez was astounded by Wilson’s presentation. “Wilson’s whole presentation was astonishing. I was impressed with his father’s, Kemmons Wilson Sr., background story. It’s amazing to imagine how one simple idea of his created a huge hotel chain. Wilson mentioned how his father was a dropout, but still managed to succeed in life. Kemmons Wilson Sr. was born to be an entrepreneur because he always saw an opportunity and just went for it. I am impressed at how Kemmons Wilson’s humility led him to become very successful and to [network] with other entrepreneurs. Wilson saw the need and opportunity and took the risk, which will always be impressive,” said Sanchez.

The entrepreneurship spirit runs strong in the Wilson bloodline. A third-generation Wilson is heavily involved in the Overton Square Crosstown Project. “The latest project we’ve been working on is the Crosstown Concourse. My son is a co-developer of that. Our company has lent him to do that for the city. As you all know, that is one million square feet of space that is an urban vertical village in Midtown, so it’s quite a project,” said Wilson.
Southwest is Meeting Key Local Industry Needs

In response to critical local industry needs, Southwest Tennessee Community College has unveiled a new, cutting-edge program in Industrial Process Control Technology. Approved to start during the Spring 2016 semester, this program will offer a technical certificate and two degree tracks for Process Control and Maintenance Technicians. Process Control Technicians monitor, analyze, and control the production of products in a wide range of industries. These industries include chemical, steel, food and beverage, pharmaceutical, power generation, refining, and wastewater treatment. The Maintenance Technicians focus on equipment installation, repair, and troubleshooting all process systems. Based on the same program at Nashville State Community College, this new program will be housed in the Technologies Department on Southwest’s Macon Cove Campus.

“This is a great opportunity for anyone who wants to raise his or her job readiness and skill level to meet the current and future needs of major local employers,” said Dr. Tracy D. Hall, President of Southwest Tennessee Community College. Training to become a process control operator is an alternative for high school graduates, unemployed individuals and workers who want to increase their earning power. “My goal is for Southwest to be a proactive and critical partner in training workers capable of successfully competing on a regional basis,” remarked Dr. Hall.

As Pauline Vernon, Vice President of Workforce Systems Alignment for the Greater Memphis Alliance for a Competitive Workforce (GMACW) said, “This will definitely help to fill an important sector need in the region. This is perfect timing to correspond with the process control technology sector council that GMACW is helping to support. One of the goals of the new council is to assist local employers in filling their process control employment and training needs. Southwest will definitely be part of this initiative with its newly approved program!”

For additional details, contact Dr. Antonio Jenkins, grant coordinator-Southwest Solutions Workforce Development, at 901-333-4556 or by e-mail at: ajenkins7@southwest.tn.edu.
The U.S. Secretary of Education Announces Pell Grants for Dual Enrollment High School Students While Visiting Southwest

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan made a historical stop in Memphis on October 30, 2015, where he announced during a visit to Southwest that the federal government will make Pell Grants available for dual enrollment high school students.

“I am thrilled to be here at Southwest. And I think this is actually going to be the first time the nation has moved in this direction. So really it is a time of innovation. What we are announcing is an opportunity for universities partnering with high schools to come to us, starting as early as next week through January, to give us plans for concurrent enrollment/dual enrollment – where high school students will take college classes while they’re still in high school. And [they] for the first time, we think, in our nation’s history, will actually have access to Pell Grants,” announced Duncan.

This announcement is a huge play maker that will make it possible for thousands of high school students to rack up college credits before graduating high school. Colleges and universities can now reportedly pair up with high schools and apply for those grants. Applications continue through January. The government will respond by May, and selected students will have their grants by July in time for fall 2016.

While at Southwest, Duncan slipped in on a Heads Up America event and took a selfie with local high school students before participating in a round table discussion with local education leaders. Heads Up America is a national campaign to promote free community college education for all Americans.

Duncan left the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Education at the end of 2015.
“Conversation Peace:” A Student’s Perspective

“The fault is on all of us; not the teachers or the parents, but all of us. We are a community, and it’s time we act like one.” – Ashley Norwood

Southwest Associate Director of the Honors Academy MaLinda Wade convened another “Conversation Peace” panel discussion, *Is Education Failing Our Children; Who is to Blame?*, on October 13, 2015 at the Union Avenue Campus. Moderator Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Joanitha Barnes summarized the prevailing comments, stating, “The overall consensus from the audience was that ‘education begins in the home,’ and that parents are first responsible for the education of children. Also, that it is not completely the fault or responsibility of teachers to educate, raise, and discipline our children.”

Southwest Criminal Justice Student Ashley Norwood was in attendance and gave her perspective in the following excerpts:

I believe that the focus should be on the children, instead of trying to find someone to blame. Our priorities in the U.S. are just upside-down. Eight hours of school has been proven not to be the answer. When I was in school, I used to long to just go outside and have class. That never happened and I was miserable. I was an honors student and by the time I got to college, I was burnt out and needed a break. That’s why I’m back now at 30.

Some may even argue that parents have to work. The average family, with both parents, has two full-time working parents. Many parents become overwhelmed with all that is expected of them now; parent/teacher meetings, extracurricular school activities, extremely difficult homework, providing a healthy meal, and making sure that their children are getting enough exercise and sleep.

There was also talk about the teachers that are being overwhelmed with the ratio of teachers to students. When I was going to elementary school, teachers had assistants or parents that came and helped out. Now, many schools won’t let a parent past the office and they have taken assistants out of the classrooms. I’m sure that parents aren’t allowed past the office for safety reasons. I love my city, but many times we get our priorities mixed up. Parents need to be involved, period.

In conclusion, we need more meetings like the one we had at Southwest Tennessee Community College. They should be recorded and broadcast, and students should be involved. It is their lives. Research other countries and see what is working and what isn’t. The fault is on all of us; not the teachers or the parents, but all of us. We are a community, and it’s time we act like one.

Recapping, Barnes stated, “The best part of this event was that so many people offered great comments and solutions to the question at hand. We plan to continue the momentum by having more regular sessions of Conversation Peace and possibly organizing a call-to-action to bring the solutions to fruition. I truly appreciate all who came and those who provided feedback for a solution.”
Southwest’s Project M.O.S.T. Program Gets $3 Million in a Second Round of Funding from the U.S. Department of Education

The U.S. Department of Education Predominantly Black Institutions (P.B.I.) Competitive Grant Program has awarded Southwest Tennessee Community College’s Project M.O.S.T (Men of Southwest Tennessee) Program $3 million for the FY 2015-FY 2020 second-round funding cycle. The purpose of the PBI Grant is to strengthen PBIs to carry out programs in the areas of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM); health education; globalization; teacher preparation; or improving educational outcomes of African-American males.

“Project M.O.S.T is successful because it skillfully blends several best-practice retention initiatives into one program. The grant will allow us to continue to increase the African-American male retention rate, which in turn can lead to better educational and economic opportunities for the participants and their families,” said Southwest President Dr. Tracy D. Hall.

During the first round of funding, Project M.O.S.T aided in enhancing participants’ fall-to-fall retention numbers from fall 2012 to fall 2015, revealing a retention rate of 76.9 percent, exceeding the projected goal of 70 percent.

Grant Director Kariem-Abdul Salaam attributes the success of the program to a “no quit” mindset, stating, “Project M.O.S.T. has been successful because of a group of brave young African-American male students who refused to succumb to the negative stereotypes and predictions of failure around them. They have learned and embraced a psychological trait called GRIT and are exemplifying a “no quit” mindset with graduation and success as their goal.”

Under the terms of the new grant award, Project M.O.S.T. will implement the Transition to Success (TTS™) holistic model, developed by Dr. Marcella Wilson, CEO/president of Matrix Human Services, which disrupts the cycle of poverty across all demographics to attain health, economic self-sufficiency, and personal success. It will also target and support African-American males who indicate interests in pursuing careers in the fields of education and allied healthcare.

For more information about Project M.O.S.T., contact Kariem-Abdul Salaam at ksalaam@southwest.tn.edu.

Project M.O.S.T. 2015 Graduates
The City of Memphis is a breeding ground for an active shooter and has all the indicators for the potential occurrence of an Active Shooter Event (ASE), according to Memphis Police Department (MPD) Active Shooter Program/Firearms Instructor Robert Carlson. He says “it’s just a matter of time.” Of the public places targeted by an active shooter, schools, including colleges and universities, are prime venues. To be proactive and empower Southwest, the Police Services/Public Safety Department convened in the fall 2015 an Active Shooter/Armed Intruder Training presentation facilitated by Officer Carlson.

Carlson indicated the FBI’s definition of an active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. He listed the profile of an active shooter as follows:

- Shooter is not there to commit any other crime; the goal is mass murder
- Shooter is often seeking revenge for perceived acts of injustice
- Shooter’s mindset is to dehumanize its victims
- Shooter will usually continue to kill until stopped; either by the shooter’s own hands (self-termination) or by officers of the law

ASE statistics revealed, Carlson pointed out, that 351 ASEs occurred from 1966 through 2013 (NYPD); 98 percent consisted of a single suspect; the average ASE lasted eight minutes, while 37 percent less than five minutes; the median number of individuals killed was two; and the median number wounded was two.

ASE statistics additionally revealed that 37 percent of the shootings took place in businesses; 34 percent in schools; 17 percent in public venues; and 12 percent in other unnamed places.

Additional data regarding ASE locations showed that:

- 94 percent took place in public schools.
  - This includes universities and colleges that may be privately-owned.
- Six percent in private schools
  - 75 percent in religious schools
- Suspect’s relationship
  - 75 percent were past/current students.
  - 18 percent had no affiliation.
  - Six percent were staff/faculty.

Carlson gave a comprehensive, sobering, and compelling presentation which included the following topics: Case Studies, Statistics, Preparing for a Hostile Event, Warnings, Disaster Response, How to React, Police Response, and Emergency Action Plan.

If you believe someone is planning an Active Shooter Event, contact the local law enforcement or FBI.
The Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) at Southwest Tennessee Community College has been recognized for its work in helping small businesses build an online presence.

Executive Director of the TSBDC at Southwest Rory Thomas was one of approximately 70 small business consultants selected nationally to take part in an “Insider’s Tour of Silicon Valley” in Mountain View, California, to celebrate the 35th anniversary of America’s Small Business Development Center network (ASBDC).

The tour included stops at Google, Intuit and Facebook headquarters to meet with leaders and discuss programs to assist small businesses. Prior to leaving for the trip to California during the fall, Thomas was contacted by Google staff to make a presentation during the visit and share how TSBDC at Southwest has successfully implemented Google’s “Get Your Business Online” and “Let’s Put Our Cities on the Map” programs in the Memphis area. Thomas shared with the attendees representing more than 40 states that small businesses which are not online are immediately at a competitive disadvantage. According to Thomas, “one of the most important things we can do for our small business clients is to help them build an online presence so customers can find their locations and learn more about their products and services with just a few clicks.”

The TSBDC at Southwest and Google share a strong partnership. Thomas hopes from the visit and talks with Google representatives that the partnership will get even stronger so that more small businesses in Memphis can be favorably impacted.

Rory Thomas at Google’s headquarters in California
Southwest Launches OrgSync Pilot

Having gone up for a promotion in January 2014, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Hannah Province had to put a dossier together. She found there were products that document and generate reports for advising and other aspects of her work, but nothing to run a report on her volunteer service hours. That prompted Province to look for a product that would capture and log service hours. She discovered OrgSync, software that enables colleges and universities to communicate with students and staff, track student involvement, manage campus organizations and programs, collect data, and generate reports, among many other features.

“OrgSync creates an online community for campuses that helps departments, programs, and all member-based organizations streamline processes and drive engagement. The platform reflects our institution’s unique structure and helps us connect and engage with the populations we serve, improves information sharing, minimizes paper usage, tracks co-curricular involvement, and allows us to generate reports on all data collected for annual reports and accreditation,” stated Province.

She delineated the following features of the program that will benefit Southwest’s faculty, staff and students.

Centralize Communication and Online Resources - Students, faculty, and staff can centralize resources and easily send out messages to a variety of audiences. By simplifying these processes, we are ensuring users stay organized and spend more time working on meaningful activities that contribute to our institution’s overall mission and goals.

Streamline Student and Administrative Processes - This product enables us to move administrative processes online so individuals can submit documents at anytime from anywhere, automatically triggering the appropriate workflows.

It eliminates paper forms requiring data entry and manages workflow in order to run a more efficient department or college area.

Manage People and Groups - OrgSync is designed specifically for departments, divisions, organizations, and other governing bodies to manage and oversee all reporting groups and users. Whether it is a student-facing department or part of central administration, this product will help us streamline processes, operate more efficiently, and engage with students, faculty and staff in one location.

Organize Calendars, Programs, and Events - Keeping track of groups hosting events and those attending can become digital and automatic. This product enables departmental oversight of event planning to manage risk and allow groups to plan, market, execute, and assess programming. Event management will become easier by centralizing calendars, simplifying event promotion, and making sure the appropriate functional areas are kept informed.

Analyze Assessments and Evaluations - Conducting annual assessments or tracking program participation data can be easily collected and analyzed at multiple levels. This product also has a central repository for all involvement and assessment data to enable successful execution of your campus assessment strategy.

Quantify Involvement and Success - Research consistently points to a direct correlation between campus involvement and student success, but documenting this trend can be difficult. This product allows campuses to streamline data collection and store it in a centralized repository.

The product has a feature called Card Swipe which has the capacity to track event attendance via swipe of the magnetic strips on students’ IDs. Students can swipe in and out from an event, streamlining the process of tracking hours and saving valuable time.

“What’s nice about this is that students will have a co-curricular transcript that is a verified record of their involvement to document experiences gained outside the classroom. This transcript can be used to showcase what they have done outside the classroom whether it be for job interviews, applying to a university or applying for scholarships – ‘These are the things that I’ve done outside of the classroom; and this is the time that I put in to those activities,’” Province remarked.

An OrgSync pilot has recently been launched. Some of the areas participating are student clubs, student activities, career services, all nine college departments and DEIT.
Southwest’s Workforce Development Department has partnered with the U.S. Department of Labor through the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grants Program (TAACCCT) and local employers to provide training in Advanced Manufacturing, Transportation, Logistics and Process Control to provide a pipeline of skilled workers to the Mid-South area. Students like Nicholas Nutzell, who is currently enrolled in the Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology (AIIT) program, are receiving quality training that leads to a solution to the skills gap that exists in today’s workforce and are “Southwest Skilled.”

Nutzell transferred from the University of Memphis to Southwest. “I was going to be an electrical engineer at first. I decided I’d rather work with my hands instead of working behind a computer all day,” he explained. He has been involved in electronics since he was seven years old. His father, an electrical instrumentation and maintenance tech, introduced him to soldering at a young age, which stirred his interest in the field.

Nutzell earned a Technical Certificate in Basic Electronic Technology in May 2011 and graduated Summa Cum Laude in December 2012 with an AAS Degree in Electronic Technology. He will complete the AIIT program at Southwest in the Spring or Fall of 2016.

Through the TAACCCT, Three Mississippi River Transportation, Distribution and Logistics grant participants were given the opportunity to apply for an internship with KTG (Kruger Tissue). The 18-month, $18 dollars-an-hour co-op stipulated enrollment in the AAS degree AIIT program and maintenance of a 2.5 GPA. At the culmination of the internship, a possible full-time employment opportunity with KTG awaits, contingent upon development and progress.

Nutzell was one of several students who applied and was offered the opportunity after undergoing pre-employment development services with Southwest Workforce Development staff members Jeremy Calico, employment specialist and Taylor Tagg, MRTDL grant counselor.

“This program definitely helps me feel more comfortable talking with [co-workers], allowing them to use more technical terminology instead of having to break things down to a more basic understanding,” Nutzell said.

Southwest Assistant Professor of Technologies Charles Hale explained, “The equipment that we have in here [labs] is actually what they use in the industry. So what they see in here, when they get their jobs, they’ll actually see it out there in the field.”

Working with industry standard technology boosts students’ confidence, gives them a competitive edge, and they enter the job market with a can-do attitude. “We start them from the very basics saying, ‘This is a wire,’ and we build them up from there,” said Hale.

If you are interested in becoming “Southwest Skilled,” or learning more information about the AIIT program and job opportunities in these industry-demand fields, call Southwest’s Workforce Development Department at 901.333.4207.
Southwest Students Make Strides in the RX TN Program

Southwest is participating in the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) project, “A Prescription for Healthcare Training in Tennessee” (RX TN). Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, RX Tennessee is designed to improve opportunities for Trade Act Adjustment (TAA)-eligible workers and others in healthcare-related training while at the same time meet the needs of the state-wide healthcare employers and industry. TAA workers are dislocated employees who lost their jobs as a result of the work going off-shore. A total of 133 students enrolled, and of that number 73 students completed the LPN-RN Mobility Track at Southwest and 60 the Phlebotomy Track at the Tennessee Applied College of Technology in Memphis.

The project contains a strong Student Support Prescription component designed to serve all TAA-eligible workers and others to prepare for and make good decisions in selecting healthcare training as well as being successful once they start training to complete and obtain employment. Resources include completion coaches, prior learning assessment, career aptitude, career exploration, academic planning, diagnostic skills assessment/college readiness testing and components to address deficiencies, learning support remediation and supplemental instruction, digital literacy and more.

“The RX TN staff has assisted me tremendously. The moral support, tutoring and supplies have been a godsend. I really appreciate having someone to talk with who genuinely cares about my future,” reported Angela Mixon, Southwest LPN-RN Mobility student.

Southwest received $774,764 of the $12.6M grant awarded to TBR Community Colleges and Applied Technology Colleges via the development efforts of Roane State Community College.

The occupational training areas addressed are AAS Degrees in Surgery Technology, Allied Health, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Health Informatics, LPN to RN Mobility and short-term/non-credit certification in Phlebotomy, ECG Technology, Patient Care and Emergency Medical Dispatch. Southwest Rx-Tennessee Degree Supported programs include:

- Nursing, LPN Mobility Track, Associate of Applied Science [AAS.]
- University Parallel, Natural Sciences Emphasis, Associate of Science Degree [AS.]

Tennessee College of Applied Technology of Memphis RX –Tennessee Non-Credit programs include:

- Phlebotomy
- ECG
- IV Therapy

Southwest’s RX TN staff includes Tonya Johnson, program coordinator; LaMecia Goode, completion coach; and Tara Scott-Smith, data analyst.
The Southwest Workforce Development/Corporate Training and Continuing Education (CTCE) Department’s Industrial Readiness Training Program held its Fall Graduate Career /Job Fair on October 13, 2015 IRT is a four-and-a-half week program designed to prepare individuals for jobs in the local manufacturing industry. The training program teaches and measures foundational technical, academic, and interpersonal knowledge and skills that have been identified by local industry leaders.

IRT Program Manager Kim Barnett said the fall event was expanded to provide IRT graduates with more career opportunities, with the inclusion of vendors such as the Sheraton Downtown Hotel, the Federal Correctional Institution of Forrest City, AR, and the Shelby Health Department, to name a few. “I wanted to make this not only a job fair, but a career/job fair. And that’s what we accomplished by bringing in more and different business partners for the fair,” Barnett stated.

Hope Credit Union was there to assist students needing help with opening checking accounts. “Many of our graduates need help financially and can’t afford to open a regular checking account [with commercial banks], but they can come to Hope,” Barnett said. “Also, Lifeblood is here. And D&S Community Services, as well as Maximus (a contractor for the state of Tennessee’s Child Support and Workforce Services programs), are here for counseling,” Barnett added.

A key component of the IRT program is soft-skills training, which is in high demand. David Walker of the Cascade Tissue Group came to the job fair to recruit entry-level production workers. Walker pointed out the value of soft skills. “Individuals who will work hard, come to work, and come to work on time are what we are really looking for. Hard work ethics are what we like, people that are trainable; that we can train up and turn into some of our top-level performers,” Walker stated. Pay scales for the entry-level jobs spanned a wide rage. “I’ve got some who offer an entry-level salary as low as $10 and some with as much as $22 (an hour). It’s a large range” said Barnett.

The IRT course is a centerpiece of the Made in Memphis Initiative, whose goal is for local manufacturers, educational institutions, and the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) to work together to create a pipeline of skilled workers to meet the hiring needs of manufacturing employers; as well as to prepare local job seekers with the skills they need to get good jobs in industry and manufacturing.

IRT program enrollment is ongoing, and there are several ways to pay tuition for individuals wanting to enroll. “If you were to come in and pay for the program yourself, it is $1,200. But you can get sponsorship through the Workforce Investment Network (WIN), or you can come to the College and we will look to prescreen you to see if we can pay for the tuition through one of our TAACCCT grants,” said Barnett. For more information, call 901-333-4207.

IRT graduates came dressed for success as employers were taking applications on the spot.

The IRT Program Held Its Fall Graduate Career/Job Fair
Today’s highly technical workplace demands that potential employees have skills that enable them to quickly enter the workforce and become successful! Begin by enrolling in a cutting-edge Southwest technologies program.

- Oracle, Cisco and ASE certification preparation - Real-world curriculum and program designs
- Partnerships with major industry leaders - Active business and industry advisory boards
- Advanced Green Technology training applications
- Associate Degrees and Technical Certificates -
  - Automotive Service, Electronic, Information and Office technologies
  - Architectural, Computer, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering technologies

(901) 333-4150   •   www.southwest.tn.edu   Your Best Choice!

For more information about our graduation rates, placement rates, program costs and other important information, please visit our website at http://www.southwest.tn.edu/gainfulEmployment
The Technologies Department Continues its Effort to Excel as a Leading Program

The program Effort to Excel is designed to offer students the opportunity to complete technical courses on mainly the Macon Cove Campus, while also offering many classes as a split/hybrid course working 50 percent in class/50 percent online or fully online. This makes it possible for Southwest students to earn an associate’s degree or a technical certificate, or certification without ever setting foot on campus, keeping in mind only about two programs in Technologies are 100 percent online. A lot of our programs are hands-on, and we expect all of our graduates to have a full grasp of the real-world experience during each course. Like most community colleges in Tennessee, we have experienced instructors who are willing to extend themselves to provide each student with the latest technical knowledge and updated industry training. Each program within the Technologies Department has an Industry Partnership to create a pipeline of skilled workers to meet the hiring needs of today’s employers and conversely offer our students good, high-paying jobs.

Programs in the Technologies department are designed to train students in a variety of high-demand technical careers in the mid-south region. Our programs offer real world, hands-on learning environments. Technology core classes are offered on the Macon Cove campus. Classes are offered in all three formats: traditional classroom and laboratory instruction; online format; and hybrid, which provides a mix of online and classroom instruction. We have experienced instructors who are willing to extend themselves to provide each student with the latest technical knowledge and updated industry training. Each program within the Technologies Department has an Industry Partnership to create a pipeline of skilled workers to meet the hiring needs of today’s employers who offer our students good, high paying jobs. Earning potential for the associate degree programs can range between $36,100 - $89,700 (per year) (Source: O*NET September 2015).

In the spring 2015, four graduates of the A.A.S degree in Information Technology program were offered full paid scholarships by Tennessee State University to pursue their Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science. It is our goal to expand our articulation agreements for all A.A.S. programs with all universities.
In spring 2015, we were able to transfer four Information Technology A.A.S. graduates of Southwest to Tennessee State University to continue towards their Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science on a full scholarship. It is our goal to continue our transfer program for all A.A.S. programs with all local Tennessee universities. Please note that the earning potential for the associate degree programs can range between $36,100 - $89,700 (per year) (Source: O*NET September 2015).

Technologies Programs

- Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology
- Architectural Engineering Technology
- Automotive Service Technology
- Computer Engineering Technology
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Information Technology
- Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Office Administration

Returning to school is a very smart investment that requires a big commitment. In the short term, seeking a degree or certification may involve some sacrifice of time and money, but studies have shown us that the long-term payoff is worth the commitment.

Our Technical Certificates are designed to provide for students with the skills and knowledge to enter the workforce in a short amount of time with more flexibility. The certificates are designed to prepare graduates for many different careers related to office administration, entrepreneurship and manufacturing with an emphasis on technology, critical thinking, and problem solving. The certificates do not require general education or remedial courses to begin the programs. All certificates are embedded in one or more of the A.A.S. degree programs so, if the student chooses to continue towards a related associate degree, he/she will have already completed several of the required courses. We’re excited to note that the earning potential for the certificate programs can range between $24,000 - $73,000 (per year) (Source: O*NET September 2015).

Certificates

- Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology Technical Certificate
- Architectural/Construction Fundamentals Technical Certificate
- Basic Electronics Technician Technical Certificate
- Computer Software Specialist Technical Certificate
- Electrical/Electronic Fundamentals Technical Certificate
- Industrial Computer Fundamentals Technical Certificate
- Mechanical/Manufacturing CAD Technical Certificate
International Studies Trip to Japan: A Lead Teacher’s Account

By Assistant Professor Valetta Brinson

During the May 2015 nine-day International Studies trip to Japan, I was the lead teacher for the Music Appreciation class and was assisted by Instructor Willie Burley, who taught the Business Communications class. We had planned to travel during spring break, but when I took students to Japan last year, the jet lag was unbearable getting off the plane on a Sunday and going right back to school on the following Monday. At that time, we traveled to two cities, Tokyo and Tono, to give students an opportunity to see the busy city life compared to the rural quiet life.

I try to change up the itinerary a bit each time that I go, based on the suggestions and reports given to me by my students. I traveled to Tono, Japan on another occasion last year with nine students and the teacher of Photography, Assistant Professor Annette Fournet. Both trips were successful.

We had the opportunity to see many sites: shrines and temples, kabuki theater shows, classical pianist recitals, traditional and ryokan styled-Japanese inns. The students had the opportunity to visit traditional Japanese homes, learn to play koto harps, attend tea ceremonies and see old castles and museums, try sushi, handle foreign money, sing karaoke, speak Japanese, and so much more. Many students hadn’t flown before, so it was a major accomplishment for their first flight to be an international one. They loved riding the Bullet Train or Shinkansen and going to the various districts such as Ueno, Shinjuku, Ginza, Minato, Asakusa, Akasaka, Ikebukuro and many others. It is considered to be a great feat if one manages to travel to between four to six districts on one visit.

I love the rich tradition and culture of the Japanese people. There is simplicity, elegance and graciousness in many of the day-to-day dealings that make you feel quite at home. The people are very nice and will help you. They especially love it when they get the opportunity to speak English with Americans.

Teachers have to write proposals and hope the best one wins when trying to recruit for our particular country. All students are encouraged to go to http://www.southwest.tn.edu/Intstudies to inquire about the requirements to do so. I will recruit for the Japan trip, but there are so many other countries to choose from such as Denmark, Greece, Ghana, Antigua, France and so many more through Tennessee Consortium for International Studies (TnCIS).

I love teaching abroad and experiencing this opportunity with students. They come back better persons for having experienced the many great opportunities studying abroad offers. I am happy that Southwest offers this awesome experience for them. The process is so simple that it would really behoove students to jump on it right away.
The Honors Academy: Letting Students Get the Most Out of Their College Experience

By Douglas Branch

With its mission to encourage Southwest students who want to get as much out of their education at Southwest as possible, both intellectually and socially, the Honors Academy has been providing opportunities for student growth for as long as Southwest has existed. Students who have been active in the Academy have gone on to achieve high levels of success at excellent four-year colleges and universities and in the career force.

The Honors Academy’s focus is two-fold. It is both a club and an academic program. Both the club aspect, which aims to nurture students’ social engagement with like-minded peers, and the academic aspect, which enhances members’ intellectual development, provide students with growth opportunities that are rare at two-year colleges. Southwest is one of the few community colleges in the state to offer an Honors program such as we provide.

As a club, the Academy organizes fun activities designed to engage the imagination of students and encourage cultural edification. Recently, for example, students were invited to attend a performance of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, featuring Gustav Holst’s The Planets. This evening was made even more special for students because one of the Honors faculty, Michelle Pellay-Walker, happens to be a violist in the orchestra. Recent “Evenings at the Theatre” have included Hattiloo Theatre productions, such as August Wilson’s Radio Golf, and Katori Hall’s Hoodoo Love. Brown Bag Lunch programs, open to all students, are often accompanied by “Walk and Talk” events at local museums, such as one conducted by art professor Annette Fournet guiding students through the Dixon Gallery’s “Rodin: The Human Experience” exhibition. Honors Academy Associate Director MaLinda Wade organizes yearly “Conversation Peace” activities. The Academy sponsors a celebration of National Poetry Month every year, involving a reading by and
a reception for an acclaimed poet. Recent guest poets have included Derrick Harriell and Caki Wilkinson. An annual art auction, “smART on Cooper,” is a highlight every spring. Students and others associated with Southwest display their artwork at Burke’s Books in Midtown. Proceeds from the auction are used to fund many of the Academy’s activities.

As an academic program, the Academy offers Honors classes each semester. These classes, offered across the curriculum, are distinguished by class sizes of 15 or fewer students, and every attempt is made to create a seminar-like format. Honors classes at Southwest are distinguished too by activities involving learning outside the classroom and presentation opportunities. ENGL 1020, English Composition II, for instance, taught this year by Jerome Wilson and Daniel Gillespie, focuses on writing about the American South and Southern experiences. Toward the end of the semester, students take an overnight trip to Oxford, Mississippi, where they visit Rowan Oak, the home of Nobel-prize winning author William Faulkner, enjoy an exhibition of Faulkner memorabilia organized by the curator of Special Collections at the University of Mississippi, and dine at Honors Academy Director Doug Branch’s home, where there is a reading by an American Southern author. Honors Academy students may also earn Honors credits by working on Honors Contracts, which allow students to work on projects of special interest to them and their professors. Further, the Academy has recently expanded by offering International Studies experiences in Ireland, Antigua, and, for the first time this year, Paris.

One cornerstone of the academic program is HONR 1110, Honors Inquiry. This class, required for students who wish to graduate with an Honors Diploma, has “Memphis: City as Text” as its theme. Although usually taught by Honors Director Doug Branch, new Honors Faculty member Julie Lester will teach the class for Spring 2016. Students study Memphis, reading literature set in Memphis, watching films set in Memphis, reading a sociological text exploring Memphis in detail, and learning as much about the city as possible. About half of the classes take place in the classroom, but the other half are conducted at sites across the city, such as Elmwood Cemetery, Sun and Stax Studios, the Old Forest at Overton Park, and other places of interest. Students work on a major Memphis-related project, individually designed by the student in conjunction with the professor, on topics of special interest to the student. Last year, for instance, Honors student Walter Stallings gave a presentation on his semester project entitled “Stories from the Corner: A Celebration of Neighborhood Market Culture in Memphis.” Stallings visited a number of neighborhood markets in the city, interviewing proprietors and customers about the importance and function of these markets in their lives. His project, which involved a book he created, involved essays he had written about and photos he had taken of these markets. Stallings’ project, like all projects for “Honors Inquiry” was designed to give the student and those who listened to his presentation insight into parts of their city which may have previously escaped notice.

The Honors Academy at Southwest has been giving the College’s most motivated and intellectually-curious students, those who “want more out of college than mere grades,” the opportunity to fulfill their potential since its founding over 20 years ago by Southwest Professor Emeritus Clarence Christian. We look forward to continuing and expanding that fine tradition for many years to come. For more information about the Honors Academy, visit our website at www.southwest.tn.edu/honors/.

Professors Jerome Wilson, second row, far left, and Douglas Branch, second row, second from left, join Honors English Composition II students at Rowan Oak, the home of Nobel Prize-winning author William Faulkner, in Oxford, Mississippi.
Lady Saluqis Basketball Team Assists with Komen Race for the Cure®

The Southwest women’s basketball team recently pre-packed bags to be used for last fall’s Susan G. Komen Memphis-Mid-South Race for the Cure® 5-K Walk/Run on October 31, 2015 at AutoZone Park. The Race has a special significance for the team as one of the Lady Saluqis’ assistant coaches has Stage 3 breast cancer and another assistant coach had Stage 1. Thousands of participants registered for the event. The Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® Series, which began in 1983, is the world’s largest and most successful education and fundraising event ever created for breast cancer. It has grown from one Race with 800 people in Dallas to a global series of more than 150 Races with over one million people participating on four continents.

Southwest Ran Encore Performances of the Play, “Our Freedom and Yours”

The one-man play, Our Freedom and Yours, written by Southwest Associate Professor of Communications, Graphics and Fine Arts Levi Frazier Jr. and directed by Associate Professor of Communications, Graphics and Fine Arts Evelyn Little, had encore performances run October 2-4 and 8-11, 2015 at the Southwest Theatre on the Union Avenue Campus. It debuted during the 2015 Memphis in May Celebration. The play is based on the life of Ira Frederick Aldridge (July 24, 1807 – August 7, 1867), an American and later British stage actor who made his career largely on the London stage and in Europe, especially in Shakespearean roles. Our Freedom and Yours takes place in Lodz, Poland, the night before Aldridge’s last performance was to take place.

Delvyn Brown, the actor portraying Aldridge, continued to fascinate the audience with his powerful performance. “Delvyn Brown is one of Memphis’ most dynamic actors and he brings a lot of energy and daring to Southwest Tennessee Professor Levi Frazier’s historical drama, For Our Freedom and Yours,” blogged Chris Davis of The Memphis Flyer newspaper.

Delvyn Brown
Nationally-Acclaimed Vietnamese-American Writer Presented a Public Reading

Hailed by The New York Times (NYT) as a promising new voice of the immigrant experience in America, Vu Tran, author of the recently released novel, Dragonfish, presented a public reading at Southwest on November 5, 2015. “Dragonfish is a strong first novel for its risk taking, for its collapsing of genre, for its elegant language and its mediation of a history that is integral to post-1960s American identity yet often ignored,” wrote NYT critic Chris Abani.

Dragonfish presents the story of Suzy, a Vietnamese immigrant who is tormented by haunting memories of her past and of the entanglement of two men who love her, as she, at last, searches for her abandoned daughter.

Vu Tran was born in Saigon, Vietnam, and was raised in Oklahoma. He is the winner of a Whiting Award, and his short stories have appeared in many publications, including the O. Henry Prize Stories and the Best American Mystery Stories. Tran also holds a Ph.D. from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and is currently an assistant professor of practice in English and Creative Writing at the University of Chicago.

MTSU, Southwest Tennessee Community College Announce Pacts Encouraging Student Success, Easing Transfer Options

Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and Southwest Tennessee Community College in Memphis announced agreements November 9, 2015 to make it easier for community college students to transfer and successfully earn an advanced degree at the university.

MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee and Southwest President Dr. Tracy D. Hall authorized agreements creating dual admissions and reverse transfer options between Southwest — with two main campuses, four centers and one site — and MTSU, located in Murfreesboro.
Southwest Student Satisfaction

As part of the application for graduation process, Southwest students are asked to complete the Career Services graduate survey regarding their current employment status and future education plans. Based on the information provided, Career Services can suggest helpful career and employment resources. Interested in also capturing satisfaction feedback from students just before they leave Southwest, the following question was added to the graduate survey in late 2013,

“How satisfied are you with the education that you received at Southwest?”

Students were given the following response choices: 5 – Extremely Satisfied, 4 – Very Satisfied, 3 – Satisfied, 2 – Not Satisfied, and 1 – Extremely Not Satisfied.

Between late 2013 and early 2015, surveys were collected from a total of 845 soon-to-be Southwest graduates.

The good news? Average student satisfaction levels ranged from 4.09 to 4.19 depending on program type, with an average ranking over all programs of 4.14 or “Very Satisfied.”
Congratulations to a Special Alumnus

Foundation Board Member and Southwest Alumnus Darrell K. Thomas has taken a top award. As the CEO of Thomas Consultants, Inc., Darrell K. Thomas recently received the Robert R. Church Quality Assurance Business of the Year.

Nominated by BlueCross BlueShield, an independent panel made up of members of the Memphis Minority Business Council judged Thomas on several factors including customer satisfaction, on-time delivery, quality of products and services and service after the sale.

Thomas, who celebrated 30 years in business in December, is justifiably proud of the award. “This award stands for my belief of providing quality services and products. Keeping our customers happy is the most important thing we do. It’s how we operate, and it’s what we do best. I simply can’t imagine doing business any other way.”

Thomas serves on the Southwest Tennessee Community College Foundation Board and was the College’s 2013 Alumnus of the Year.

Want to know more about the Alumni Association?

Go to www.Southwest.tn.edu/alumni. Dues are only $12 annually and help pay for scholarships for needy students. For more information call Rose Landey at 901-333-4577

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Alumni on the Move

Wendolyn Payne graduated in 2006 with a degree in Business and E-Commerce with a concentration in Management. Payne began her educational journey in 1995 but like many of our students had to drop out because of financial challenges, and the road to her degree became a lesson in patience, faith and understanding. However, in 2002 Payne returned to school in earnest to complete her degree. She has since worked at a number of top companies including FedEx and Luxottica. She is now stepping into the entrepreneurial ring and launching a human resources consulting business.

We asked Wendolyn ten questions about her experience at Southwest.

1. Why did you choose Southwest? — Actually, it was State Tech when I first attended back in 1995. State Tech accepted me when I had been turned down by the few colleges I had applied to. Unlike some of my other classmates, during my high school years, I wasn’t as focused on my studies as I should have been and when it came time to prepare for college my selection was limited. But that’s not in any way to say that State Tech was a last resort because it wasn’t. The other reason for me choosing this school was due to me being in a single parent home with limited funds and applying for several other schools that I might have qualified for wasn’t possible because I didn’t have the application fee.

So, I was accepted at another school out of town along with State Tech and had to have what I called a reality check. My mother wasn’t able to truly afford for me to go out of town; at least here in Memphis, I would have a bus line, family support and also time for me to mature more before going to a four-year institution.

2. What was your major and when did you graduate? — I’m so embarrassed to say, but I don’t remember what it was in 1995; due to financial challenges, I had to withdraw almost two years in but was able to return in 2002. At that time I majored in Business and E-Commerce with a concentration in Management.

3. Where has your education taken you so far? — The education I received from Southwest has taken me into corporations where I was able to sit at the table with executives, vice presidents and even presidents of companies in a support capacity. It has also provided opportunities to share my experiences with youths undecided on where they want to go to school and parents who are not 100 percent confident their child is ready for the responsibility of attending a four-year institution. In a professional capacity in the Human Resource field I’m able to recommend a Southwest graduate to a potential hiring manager because I am a product of the quality education that the graduate/applicant has received.

4. What are you currently doing and what do you hope to be doing five years from now? — As of this year, I’ve started pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities in the form of Human Resource consulting. At this time I’m working with a more established company that has connected me to other companies in need of various consultative services. It’s been a journey, and there are other people that I’ve networked with in my previous profession as Human Resource Generalist who have also provided opportunities for me to consult for them. That means a lot, because it says that people value what I have to offer.

In the next five years, I’m confident that I will be fully engrossed in an entrepreneurial effort and possibly even have a partner. My passion is Human Resources, but it is the form of presenting it in a more simplified manner to the blue collar workforce and even our youth.

5. What do you think is the best thing you received from your time at Southwest? — Exposure to what education can do for you and the importance of building relationships. That would have to be the two more priceless things I received.

6. If you could share anything with today’s students what would it be? — Today, you have two types of students. There is the freshman that is straight from high school. They are not completely certain of what they want to do, what their next move should be, how will their education be paid for and possibly some fear of do they really belong there.

What I would say to that student is you have already done the most fearless action ever to be done and that is you started school. Now that you are there, cast fear to the side, tap into every ounce of knowledge that is
presented, dare to ask questions, dare to align yourself with like minded people, – and most importantly – determine in your mind that there is no room for the thought of giving up or dropping out.

The other student is the adult that has hit a barricade in the road as it relates to where they want to go in their career, in the ability to financially provide for their family, in the scope of what they sense on the inside that there is something more they can do but unsure if furthering their education is the right way to achieve it.

What I would say to that student is that our minds are the most amazing tool that has ever been created and it is only limited by the limitations we have placed on ourselves. Your inner spirit is what is causing you to desire more, do more, and achieve more because it is our innate nature to thrive, achieve and succeed. Everyone might not be on board with your decision to return, others may try to instill fear that you have waited too long. My challenge to that student is to shut the door, the portal to any and all thoughts of not pursuing a higher education, a new skill and even a new outlook on life. Trust the spirit within that is making you uncomfortable with where you are and know that when you step out there, Southwest will support you in those goals.

7. What’s your favorite thing about our community? — There is closeness about the community of Southwest. Many have gone on to receive other post-secondary degrees, but once you begin to connect with them, you would be surprised at just how many got their start right at Southwest.

8. What’s the one thing you would change about our community? — At this point I don’t think I could offer any recommendations in changing the community. It is my desire to become more involved within it.

9. Who was your favorite instructor at Southwest, and do you have a message for him/her? — His name was the late Mr. Tuggle at the Union campus. He taught me African-American Literature. In this class, he exposed me to an in-depth look into my history, my heritage. There were so many things he taught me that didn’t come from the text book; that challenged me to not stop at what I learned in high school but to dig deeper and recognize my obligation

10. What are you proud of? — I’m proud of the time that I was raised, the fact that I was raised by a village and not just one person (my mother, my church, my mentors and my school); that I’m in a profession that I love and that it was God-ordained or orchestrated with every step that I took to be where I am right now, that through the good, the bad and even the ugly what shines through is the glow of perseverance, determination and most of all grace.
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Sponsorships Available
Ron Wells Elected Vice President of the Tennessee Alliance for Continuing and Higher Education

Southwest’s Director of Special Projects and Extended Programs, and Director of the Millington Center, Ron Wells was elected Vice President of the Tennessee Alliance for Continuing and Higher Education (TACHE) at its 47th Annual Conference recently in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Wells was also a speaker, partnering with Dr. Anita Ricker of Walters State to present “The Skills Gap and Putting Assessments to Good Use.”

TACHE is an association of post-secondary education professionals representing public and private colleges and universities, technical training institutions and other related entities. Members include representatives from faculty, workforce development, administrative departments, distance learning and extended programs, credit and non-credit.

TACHE promotes the advancement of continuing education and lifelong learning by providing a forum for professional networking and professional development, sharing of best practices and successful programs, and promoting professional collaborative relationships. Many highly successful programs were initially presented at a TACHE Conference as a best practice, and spread across the state. The Industrial Readiness Training (IRT), developed at Southwest, was one of those programs.
Southwest announced that it has been designated a 2016 Military Friendly® School by Victory Media, the leader in successfully connecting the military and civilian worlds, and publisher of G.I. Jobs®, STEM JobsSM and Military Spouse Magazine. Now in its seventh year, the original, premier Military Friendly® Schools designation provides service members and their families with transparent, data-driven ratings about post-military education and career opportunities.

Institutions competed for the elite Military Friendly® School title by completing a survey of over 100 questions covering ten categories, including military support on campus, graduation and employment outcomes, and military spouse policies. Survey responses were scored against benchmarks across these key indicators of success. In addition, data was independently tested by EY (Ernst & Young) based upon the weightings and methodology established by Victory Media with guidance from an independent advisory board of higher education and recruiting professionals. A full list of board members can be found at MilitaryFriendly.com/advisory-board.

“Post-secondary institutions earning the 2016 Military Friendly® School award have exceptionally strong programs for transitioning service members and spouses,” said Daniel Nichols, chief product officer of Victory Media and Navy Reserve veteran. “Our Military Friendly® Schools are truly aligning their military programs and services with employers to help students translate military experience, skills and training into successful careers after graduation.” Southwest will be showcased along with other 2016 Military Friendly® Schools in the annual Guide to Military Friendly® Schools, special education issues of G.I. Jobs® and Military Spouse Magazine, and on MilitaryFriendly.com.

Southwest is Awarded Reconnect Grant for Adult Learners

Southwest is a recipient of the THEC Ready to Reconnect $50,000 grant program designed to increase retention and graduation among adult learners. Southwest’s approach, entitled Adult Learner Link (ALL), will use a three-pronged approach of meeting the adult learner’s emotional and physical needs coupled with meeting their social needs which will help fast-track them on to their ultimate goal of an undergraduate degree. By providing counselors, an innovative and comprehensive model of transitioning from poverty to self-efficacy, intrusive coaching and an on-line community suited solely to their needs, the Southwest adult community will be poised for increased success.
Southwest Receives SACS Re-Accreditation

Southwest received re-accreditation confirmation in 2015 from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees. SACS is the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. The “English as a Second Language” (ESL) program is included in the scope of that accreditation. The mission of Southwest is to provide the citizens of Shelby and Fayette counties and the surrounding Mid-South region with a high quality and affordable post-secondary education that prepares them for associate degrees, future educational opportunities, and successful employment. The college promotes student success in a supportive teaching and learning environment designed to raise educational levels, promote work readiness skills, enhance career advancement, prepare for university transfer, and enrich personal lives.

Southwest Former Chair Steve Katz Recognized

Dr. Steve Katz, former department chair of English, Foreign Languages, and Music for Southwest, was inducted into the Music Educator Walk of Fame, in recognition of his many years of service to the Mid-South music community. In honor of his induction, a wine and cheese reception was held on October 13, 2015 at Amro Music in Memphis. The reception followed the unveiling of a brick bearing Dr. Katz’s name in the Walk of Fame, and the presentation of a trophy. He was also honored with commendations and brief performances by current and former students.

Dr. Katz has taught private piano since 1973. At Southwest, he taught Music Appreciation, private and class piano, and Music Theory I, II, III, IV, and he has been recognized for excellence in teaching both nationally and campus-wide. In addition to serving as department chair, he served as Associate Dean of Adjunct Faculty. He has represented the United States in international piano competition.
Ten Prestigious Marketing Awards for Southwest Tennessee Community College

The Communications and Marketing Department at Southwest Tennessee Community College continues its excellence in marketing efforts for the College. The College is pleased to announce winning five MarCom Awards and five National Council for Marketing and Public Relations (NCMPR) Medallion Awards in the 2015 competitions.

MarCom is an international and national awards competition that recognizes outstanding creative achievement by marketing and communication professionals. The College received two Platinum Awards: 2014-15 Student Planner and Career Services Flyer Fall 2014. Three Gold awards were received for Video Advertising (Job Prospects Television Commercial), College Video Program (Southwest Now TV Fall 2014) and Education Magazine (Southwest Now – Spring/Summer 2014).

The NCMPR District 2 Medallion Awards recognize outstanding achievement in communications at community and technical colleges. It is the only regional competition of its kind that honors excellence exclusively among marketing and PR professionals at two-year colleges. A Gold award was received for the College’s Digital Class Catalog. A Silver award was garnered for Print Advertising. Three Bronze awards were presented for Video Advertising (Job Prospects Television Commercial), College Video Program (Southwest Now TV Fall 2014) and Successful Recruitment Marketing Program (2014 Tennessee Promise).

Former Associate Professor Ken Carpenter Is a Co-Recipient of a 2015 BENNY Award

The Black Business Association (BBA) of Memphis honored recently retired Southwest Associate Professor of Natural Sciences Ken Carpenter and his wife, Dr. Terrell (Terri) Carpenter, owners of the Carpenter Primary Healthcare (CPH), PLLC Clinic with the 2015 BENNY (Black Entrepreneurs Network Need You) Award for Outstanding New Business of the Year on May 1, 2015 at the Holiday Inn-University of Memphis. The BENNY Awards recognize superior achievement in business by minority and women-owned businesses and by supportive corporations. CPH is a family practice located in the Methodist South Hospital Medical Office Complex on 1251 Wesley Drive that opened in February of last year. Carpenter was extremely gratified and pledged to effectively support the Whitehaven community. Sponsored by FedEx, the keynote speaker for the 2015 BENNY Awards was Susan L. Taylor, founder and CEO of National CARES Mentoring Movement and Editor Emeritus of Essence Magazine.

Displaying the “Outstanding New Business of the Year Award” are (L to R) Terri and Ken Carpenter.
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