

# Halifacts

Winter 2007

*A quarterly publication of current events at Halifax Community College*

## *HCC Welcomes Dr. Ervin Griffin as Fourth President*



With big plans on the horizon, Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. started his tenure as the fourth president of Halifax Community College (HCC) on Dec. 1. Selected by the HCC Board of Trustees and confirmed by the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges on October 20, Griffin not only brings impeccable credentials, but he also brings a wealth of knowledge and community college experience.

“I am extremely blessed to have the opportunity to serve as the next President of Halifax Community College. I believe all of us involved with HCC - trustees, faculty, staff, administration, and community partners - want the same thing. We are all dedicated to improving the lives of our students and our community,” said Griffin.

Griffin has hit the ground running. He is already involved in many aspects of the campus including updating the campus master plan, enhancing enrollment management, creating new student success and early college programs, and developing greater partnerships with business and industry. He also plans to spend the next several months becoming acquainted with students, faculty, staff, and community supporters. “I want to reintroduce Halifax Community College to the community and find out what the College can do to make this wonderful community even better,” said Griffin.

Griffin is a veteran community college educator with more than 30 years of experience and training in higher education management and community college education. Prior to assuming the Presidency at West Virginia State College & Community and Technical College (WVSC-CTC), he served as the Provost & Chief Operating Officer at WVSC-CTC; Vice-President for Student Affairs, WVSC-CTC; Professor & Director of Student Development Services & Vocational Equity Programs, Patrick Henry Community College in Martinsville, Virginia; and, Counselor/Director of Student Financial Assistance and Student Activities, Southwest Virginia Community College in Richlands, Virginia.

Griffin holds a B.S. degree in teacher education from Bluefield State College, an M.S. Degree in College Student Personnel Services from Western Illinois University, a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Higher Education Administration and a Doctorate of Education in Community College Education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Postdoctoral studies include College Management at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and the Millennium Leadership Institute sponsored by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C. He is a Leadership West Virginia Class of 1994 Graduate.

Dr. Stanley Edwards, chairman of the HCC Board of Trustees said, “Dr. Griffin has exhibited his leadership in and concern for education throughout his professional career. His concern for economic development and the quality of life for citizens have been foremost in his work in the community college setting in West Virginia. We are delighted to have him come to this area.”

Griffin has served as a member of Temple of Faith Ministries in Cross Lanes, West Virginia. He has one son, Ervin V. Griffin, Jr., a Bluefield resident and a 1998 graduate of Concord University in Athens, West Virginia.

## JobLink: Helping Students Since 1987



*JobLink Career Center staff (front row) Linda Smith, (second row from left) Gladys Askew, Fredia Webb, Bentley Mohorn, (third row from left) Bill Evans and George Holley, (top) John Foriest.*

Halifax Community College (HCC) houses a JobLink Career Center Satellite on campus, which has successfully operated since 1987. The mission of the center as a service of the state Department of Commerce is “to improve North Carolina’s workforce and strengthen our state’s economy by developing a system of JobLink Career Centers that offers labor market information, provides access to career training and job placement services, and serves as the connection between employers and qualified workers.”

Designated as an information site, the HCC center is part of an interagency team that includes North Carolina’s Employee Security Commission (ESC) and other community-based agencies. Staffers serve adult JobLink enrollees in Halifax and Northampton counties and assure that all customers have access to core employment related information and self-service tools. Turning Point Workforce Development Board in Rocky Mount governs the JobLink center.

According to JobLink Satellite Manager John Foriest, the center provides case management for students through extensive counseling, job training, job placement, and if needed, transportation, child care, books and tuition assistance. After enrolling in the program, a person will remain enrolled until he or she gains employment. Case managers continue follow-up work with enrollees for 12 months after being placed in a job.

Currently, JobLink at HCC is serving roughly 300 enrollees including follow-up cases. Staff even help recruit new students to attend the college, but there is a limit on the number of students from each curriculum who can be accepted into JobLink. Most of the center’s enrollees are students at HCC or other regional institutions. As long as an enrollee resides in the two-county service area, he or she can benefit from the HCC site. Enrollees qualify for the program based on income and other factors. In the 20 years that the center has operated, more than 4,500 people have been helped in this area. There are 104 JobLink centers located throughout the state.

“Of all of the things that I enjoy most, being Manager of the JobLink Center at HCC, is the ‘one-on-one’ student contact with program enrollees. I, especially, enjoy counseling students and assisting them with setting both short-term and long term, realistic goals based on in-depth assessment results. Many of our students have not given enough thought to future employment or the necessary preparation.” A graduate of North Carolina State University, Foriest supervises all of the Case Managers, deals with administrative issues and is a Case Manager himself. A member of the North Carolina Employment & Training Association’s Board of Directors for about 12 years, Foriest represents the eastern part of the state. The association provides training for state membership

and plays an integral role in the annual Governor’s Conference on Workforce Preparedness.

Foriest came to HCC after being hired to run the program when it began in 1987. With a family tradition of empowering others and a career of public service, he believes that the JobLink program is vital to this area. “A large percentage of the population here qualifies for public services. Many would not be able to obtain an education or any type of training without a program such as JobLink. Of utmost importance, the majority of our students wouldn’t be able to obtain the type of employment that they do without the assistance of our Case Managers, who perform an outstanding job with job referrals and job placement. Of note, at least one of our Case Managers spend time at the host JobLink Center, the Employment Security Commission, daily.”

One of the greatest needs of program enrollees, as observed by Foriest, includes transportation and childcare. He interacts with many who need counseling and direction and he noted that in some college programs, Pell Grant is not available to assist those in need.

JobLink is funded through the state’s Department of Commerce, which sends monies to the Turning Point Workforce Development Board. The development board then disperses money to contractors in the area to provide these services. The state receives funding through the federal government’s Department of Labor to operate the program. Funding is short this year on a national, state and regional level. However, Foriest believes the financial situation will soon improve. In fact, since he came to HCC in 1987, through grants, he has been responsible for securing at least \$10 million in grant funds to assist HCC students and students at other community colleges including Roanoke Chowan, Nash and Edgecombe.

The JobLink Career Center Satellite is housed in the 300 Building (Student Services). For more information about services, contact HCC’s JobLink Career Center at (252) 536-7281.

## Employee Contributes 30 Years



Jean McGee, Learning Resource Center Technical Assistant, has worked at the college for 30 years.

Born in Emporia, Va., she has lived in Roanoke Rapids most of her life. She is a 1973 graduate of Roanoke Rapids High School and a 1975 graduate of

HCC, then known as Halifax County Technical Institute. McGee graduated from the institute with an Associate in Applied Science/Executive Secretary Degree. While attending school, she worked at Rich's Supermarket. She also performed work-study and was assigned to Margie Musgrove in the Business Department.

*"When you help someone look up information, it's a learning process for you also."  
Jean McGee*

After college graduation, McGee accepted a temporary position at the college as cashier, while an employee was out on maternity leave. She was later offered a position as the Library Technical Assistant in the Learning

Resource Center and has worked there since that time. While at HCC, she has also served on the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools accreditation committee, as well as the planning and professional advisory/communications committees. She currently serves on the Learning Resource Center Advisory Committee.

"I really enjoy what I do," said McGee. "I enjoy working with the staff, faculty and students." She added that the best part of her job is working with people and helping them locate information. "When you help someone look up information, it's a learning process for you also." She plans to continue her work at HCC for the foreseeable future. In 1994-95, McGee earned the Outstanding Support Staff Award through peer selection.

## Horticulture Students Design for Community

Students in the Horticulture Technology program are designing for the community. The program is only in its fourth semester, but its students have already designed for several private residences and are in the process of creating multiple landscape plans for the new rescue squad building in Gaston.

Horticulture Technology is a two-year associate in applied science degree program that prepares graduates for careers in greenhouses, nurseries, landscape companies, and as business owners. Graduates are skilled in landscape design and installation, starting a horticulture business, designing and managing a nursery or greenhouse, and plant propagation techniques. Courses in the curriculum include plant materials and propagation, turf management, and landscape design.

"It's important for the students to understand the difference between residential and commercial design," said Carolyn Evans, head of the Horticulture Department. When the older rescue squad building in Gaston burned down and a new one was built, it was the



Students left to right, seated: George Brantley of Scotland Neck, instructor Carolyn Evans, Trendell Taylor of Enfield, Jerry Dickerson of Gaston, and Chris Edgerton of Warrenton. Standing: Carolyn Evans, Instructor

students provided landscaping design for the new structure.

In the design process, students first interview clients to assess their landscape preferences. A site analysis is done, and measurements are taken and translated to paper. Concept plans that represent general ideas are created, and used to develop a master plan that students present to clients.

"I like plans, designs, colors, and to be outdoors," said HCC horticulture student Chris Edgerton of Warrenton about the program. Fellow students Jerry Dickerson of Gaston and Trendell Taylor of Enfield enjoy learning about plant material. "Having a beautiful

environment can really help people," said Taylor.

Retired from research and development with Champion Paper, student George Brantley of Scotland Neck already had a knowledge of trees. A graduate of Nash Community College in May 2005, Brantley enjoys learning more about "growing vegetables and trees and other things in the landscape."

*"It's important for the students to understand the difference between residential and commercial design"  
Carolyn Evans*

The program also benefits from support from local business. This year, the Greenhouse Production class in the horticulture program successfully produced its first poinsettia crop. Proceeds will be used to establish a scholarship for horticulture students.

For information about the Horticulture Technology program, call (252) 536-4209 e-mail [evansc@halifaxcc.edu](mailto:evansc@halifaxcc.edu).

# HCC Turning 40!

Halifax Community College (HCC) will celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary Sept. 7, 2007, using the theme, "40 Years of Bringing Learning to Life." Special banners featuring the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo will be displayed and a variety of campus events are being planned. During the festivities, HCC students, staff and alumni will reflect on the progress that has been made at the college and the lives that have been impacted. In its 40-year history, HCC has helped thousands of students accomplish personal and professional goals.

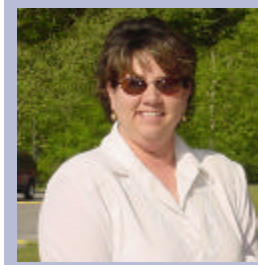
One alumnus, Willie Freer '84, recently visited campus and talked with instructors and students about his



Bryant (former HCC English Instructor) and I was hooked on English and writing forever," said Wilson, who is 1993 Associate of Arts graduate.

Wilson, originally from an area near Emporia, Va., is currently the Director of Creative Writing at Southwest Minnesota State University, where she has been for the past five years. Last year, she gained early tenure and was promoted to the level of Associate Professor of English. "In addition, the quality of instruction that I received at HCC was equally as good as the instruction I later received at The University of Southern Mississippi. By the time I left HCC, I was fully prepared for the transition to a university setting. I

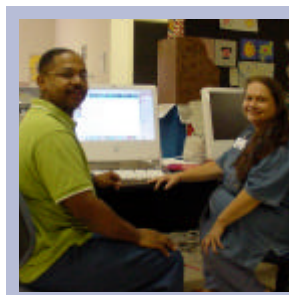
graduates of a partnership between HCC, Elizabeth City State University (ECSU) and the College of the



Debra Walls

Albemarle-Manteo in an initiative called "Homegrown Teachers." The initiative aims to increase the number of teachers in the state's classrooms. Spring 2006 graduates included HCC's Bernard Zdancewicz from Weldon.

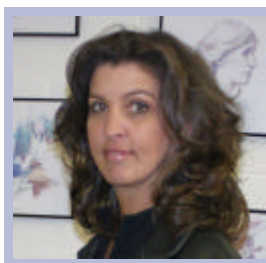
Zdancewicz, who was an area sales manager for a large department store for 22 years, now teaches sixth grade math and science at Enfield Middle School. "Ninety-nine percent of my classes were taught at HCC or through distance learning. As an adult with responsibilities, it would have been impossible for me to go away to get this degree. The convenience made the way possible for me," said Zdancewicz.



Freer with Gloria Tysinger, Advertising & Graphic Design Instructor

career. Freer is an Interactive Media Specialist with Mind & Media, Inc., in Alexandria, Va. A graduate of the Advertising and Graphic Design program, Freer's specialty is animation, working with Flash, Bryce, Actionsript, JavaScript and Motion on gaming graphics, branding for web and broadcast design. The Rocky Mount native said, "I even get to act in commercials sometimes since Mind & Media does work for various organizations including the Pentagon. I've been an extra in several commercial shoots."

HCC alumna, Dr. Judy Wilson felt she needed to get her education after suffering personal tragedy. "After my friend died, I was filled with a sense of urgency that is difficult to describe to do more with my life. My husband was very supportive of my decision to go back to school. Originally, I attended HCC with the intention of trying to get into the nursing program, but one class with Joe



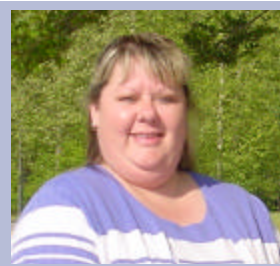
"HCC set the bar high for its students and helped me build a good foundation for the remainder of my university years."  
Dr. Judy Wilson

think HCC set the bar high for its students and helped me build a good foundation for the remainder of my university years," said Wilson.

Last December, HCC students Tammy Evans from Littleton, and Debra Walls from Roanoke Rapids, were the first



Bernard Zdancewicz



Tammy Evans

Visit  
[www.halifaxcc.edu](http://www.halifaxcc.edu)  
for updates on  
celebration  
events.



# Beginnings: 1967

## Halifax County Technical Institute

January 2007

Celebrating 40 Years: 1967-2007

Issue 1

### HALIFAX COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

was established by the N.C. General Assembly in September 1967 as one of 50 such schools operated by the NC Department of Community Colleges. It was governed by the local boards of education. Its purpose was to provide "trade and technical training and adult education" for the residents of northeastern North Carolina, particularly for Halifax, Northampton, and Warren counties. This training would benefit local industry as well as local public service agencies including, fire, police, and health care organizations.

Halifax County Board of Commissioners initially pledged to find a suitable accommodation for the school "if it materialized." Hence, they purchased the old Colonial Manor Motel near Halifax to be the school's first campus. Extensive remodeling ensued in preparation for classes to begin in the fall of 1968. The newly hired

HCTI president, Dr. Taylor used to joke that, in its beginning, HCTI had "more bathrooms than students."

HCTI actually graduated its first class the summer before the campus actually opened. HCTI had inherited local students from Pitt County Technical Institute in the programs of practical nursing and masonry (at Caledonia Prison) in the spring of 1968. The nursing program held graduation exercises for their students at the Roanoke Rapids Hospital in August, 1968.

During its first Fall Quarter, HCTI served 1,174 students with its "open door" policy. Programs of study included business, secretarial, electronics, auto mechanics, radio/TV repair, and nursing.

In 1970, HCTI contracted with East Carolina University to offer freshman college credit courses. By 1971, the school



*Students playing volleyball on the front lawn of the new HCTI at the remodeled Colonial Manor Motel located on Hwy 301 north of Halifax. [1969]*

had become a chartered institution governed by its own Board of Trustees and thus eligible to apply for accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In 1976, the NC Legislature upgraded the school's status to that of community college.

By 1977, the school had a new facility as well as its new name:

Halifax Community College  
Weldon, N.C.

#### Our First Decade:

- 1967: HCTI authorized
- 1968: Classes began
- 1969: Open House
- 1971: Charter issued
- 1975: Ground-breaking, Weldon
- 1975: SACS Accreditation
- 1976: Name changed to "HCC"
- 1977: Moved to new campus



Dr. Phillip Taylor, 1968

### Dr. Phillip Taylor: HCC President 1968-1988

Phillip Wynne Taylor became founding president of HCTI on February 1, 1968. He was a graduate of Aurelian Springs High School and NC State University. He had previously worked at LeNoir County Community College as Dean of Adult Education. He had also taught vocational agriculture in Northampton and Pitt counties.

As HCTI President, Taylor was pro-

vided an office in the Halifax County Civil Defense Building in Halifax to administer the establishment of the new school. As part of his duties he first surveyed the local population to determine what educational programs should be offered. He also began hiring staff and faculty for the new school that was scheduled to open in the fall of 1968.

Taylor dedicated 20 years of his professional career to the development of HCC. Under his leadership the school's curriculum had grown from two programs to 37. Its graduating students had increased from 15 (in 1968) to almost 5,000 (for both GED and college degree programs). It had gone from only a concept of a school to a prospering community college.

Dr. Taylor still lives in the Roanoke Valley area.

# McElheney Chairs Foundation Board

## Philanthropist believes in giving back to community



HCC Foundation Board Chairman Charles McElheney presents the Charles Preston McElheney Family Scholarship to HCC student Spinosa Gee of Roanoke Rapids during the recent HCC Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

After the departure of Halifax Community College (HCC) Foundation Board Chairman Jack Bryan last year, Charles McElheney stepped in and took the reins. The owner and operator of Halifax Linen Service, Inc. in Roanoke Rapids, along with his wife, Cheryl, the McElheney family is committed to the Roanoke Valley. The couple displays this commitment through unparalleled community service.

In 1999, the family decided to establish the Charles Preston McElheney Family Scholarship at HCC. The scholarship is awarded to students who are employees or children of full-time employees of Halifax Linen. Otherwise, the scholarship

is awarded to a full-time HCC student in the field of accounting, business administration or office systems technology who demonstrates high academic achievement. The McElheney family has also endowed scholarships at Virginia Tech and Chowan University.

A graduate of Virginia Tech, McElheney is the past chair of the Upper Coastal Plain Workforce Development Board, now called the Turning Point Workforce Development Board where he has served for 11 years. The organization's role is to ensure that the local workforce development system is market-driven and responsive to employment and training needs of employers and job seekers.

*"HCC inspires young people to reach for higher education and assists those who may need to acquire basic skills."*

*Charles McElheney*

McElheney is also the past president of the N.C. Association of Textile Services and was recently presented an award for outstanding individual service. The past president of the Independent Textile Rental Association of America, a national organization, McElheney is also on the board of the Boys & Girls Club of Halifax County and a member of the Lions Club of Roanoke Rapids. As a civic organization, Lions participate in vision, hearing, diabetes awareness, youth, and

senior citizens' programs to better their communities. Boys & Girls Clubs offer programs and services to promote and enhance the development of children.

Originally from Danville, Va., McElheney moved to Roanoke Rapids in January 1974 to purchase Halifax Laundry. Now known as Halifax Linen Service, the company is a commercial linen supply service and industrial launderer. McElheney first became involved with HCC in the early 1990s after a computer instructor asked if her students could visit Halifax Linen to view the operations, particularly the computerization of the machines. He was later asked to serve on the HCC Foundation board, moving from vice-chairman to chairman positions.

"The youth of the area have to have skills for today's workforce," McElheney stated as the reason for his involvement. He added that HCC inspires young people to reach for higher education and assists those who may need to acquire basic skills. He encourages other citizens to consider working, in some way, with HCC, "It all comes down to giving back."

McElheney and his wife have three children: Dawn Porch, Shawn Perkins and Charles Preston McElheney III, and 12 grandchildren. The couple recently celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. He is a deacon and member of Rosemary Baptist Church.

HCC Foundation, Inc. ♦ PO Drawer 809 ♦ Weldon, NC 27890

***Giving Makes A Difference***  
***Invest in a Student's Future Today.***

***For information on how to contribute to the HCC Foundation, call (252) 536-7234 or email [terry-maloneb@halifaxcc.edu](mailto:terry-maloneb@halifaxcc.edu).***

## Creativity On Display

Halifax Community College (HCC) student Marquel Richardson of Enfield loves art. A current Advertising/Graphic Design student who is slated to graduate in May, Richardson has even designed his own artwork signature, Quel.

Proficient in using charcoal, pencils, markers, and other materials, Richardson enjoys mixed media the best. "I love mixed media because you can do so much more with it," he said. Right now, he is involved with illustrating as well as design and logo work. "I want to try different things and bring something different to the table," he said. Eventually, Richardson would like to get into the production stage and animation.

"My art comes from the heart and that's why I displayed it," he added. After

breaking his right wrist in middle school, Richardson wanted to get back to his art so badly that he learned to draw with his left hand.

After HCC's spring graduation, Richardson plans to transfer to a four-year program and go on to work in a large business. "I have more ideas to give," he said. "I love HCC. The school

has given me a good education. I love my advisor, Gloria Tysinger - she is the best.

She has taught me to use my skills for a different point of view," he said.

Constantly coming up with new ideas, Richardson admitted that he even surprises himself.

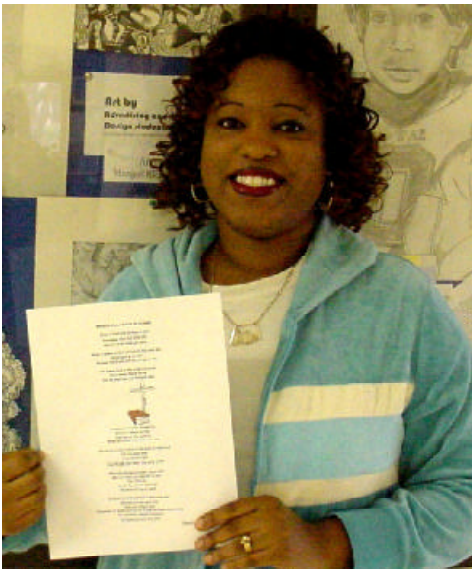
"Art is life to me. The most important thing to me is art," he added.

*"My work comes from the heart"*  
*Marquel Richardson*



Marquel Richardson displays unique creativity

## Resident Poet Published Online



Demeatrice Ward shares published work

Demeatrice Ward, an HCC student from Garysburg, is inspired by life. Ward is enrolled in the Associate in Arts program.

Her poem, "When All Hope Is Gone," was recently chosen by English Instructor Sandra Weden to be displayed. A friend inspired her to write the poem. "Whatever is going on at the time inspires me," said Ward.

Having attended HCC in 1992-94, Ward was comfortable with the college environment. While she was in an accounting class, she met her husband.

Ward eventually wants to go into the Teacher Preparation program and finish her degree through the educational partnership with Elizabeth City State University. Her goal is to become a teacher and to perhaps one day open a daycare. She worked for 13 years with children and six years with those who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder prior to re-entering HCC.

Ward said that her poetry and other creative pieces come to her when she is in the mood to write. She has successfully submitted "When All Hope Is Gone" to the online publisher, Poem Hunter. The poem is currently on the publisher's website, [poemhunter.com](http://poemhunter.com). According to the poem:

"When it feels like all hope is gone  
Remember that God loves you  
And will never leave you alone"  
—Demeatrice Ward



## Upcoming Events!

### History In A Bag

March 15, 2007

12 Noon

### Art Extravaganza & Reception for Roanoke Rapids Graded School District

March 31, 2007

Time TBA

### Laughing With The Legends

April 14, 2007

7:30 p.m.

For information call the Centre  
Box Office @ (252) 538-4336

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