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a biweekly publication for the Middle Tennessee State University community

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the RECORD

Voluntary Buyout Program info now available

by Dr. Sidney A. McPhee
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This is to update all MTSU employees on one of the key parts of our "Positioning the University for the Future" Initiative, the Voluntary Buyout Program or VBP.

I submitted the VBP plan to Tennessee Board of Regents Chancellor Charles Manning, and he has approved our plan. The plan will be open for application beginning Monday, Nov. 30, 2009, with an employment separation date no later than Wednesday, June 30, 2010.

The VBP is a unique opportunity for those eligible employees who feel it is the right time for them to leave the university to pursue other opportunities.

Participation in this program is voluntary, and eligible employees should consider the program carefully before making their decisions.

To find out if you are eligible and to review all details related to the program, please consult with the Human Resource Services office. To do so:

- go to the program Web site at <http://hrs.web.mtsu.edu/VBP/index.html>, where you will find answers to frequently asked questions, a calendar of important VBP dates and the schedule of information sessions, news and updates, as well as links to other resources;
- attend one of the group information sessions that are scheduled at various times in September and October (visit the Web site mentioned above or see

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Insurance audit proof due Sept. 4

by Gina E. Fann
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Questions on a dependent-eligibility audit of the State of Tennessee's group insurance program, which covers MTSU employees, can be answered with a phone call or Web site visit in plenty of time to meet the Friday, Sept. 4, information deadline, Human Resource Services officials say.

Employees can learn more by visiting <http://hrs.web.mtsu.edu/> and clicking on any of the links below "Dependent Eligibility Verification." They also can call the Benefits Administration Division of the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration at 615-741-3590.

"A lot of our employees have asked, 'Do I have to do this?' and 'Is this legitimate?' and our answer to both questions is 'Yes,'" said Lisa Batey, director of employee benefits for MTSU. "This is a legitimate audit being conducted for the state, sanctioned by the State Insurance Committee, after a recommendation from Benefits Administration.

"It is for all state employees—and for all benefit purposes, MTSU employees are state employees—with family coverage in a

See 'Audit' page 4

Ghana guests learn about teacher quality



WELCOME—Officials from University of Cape Coast's Institute of Education in Ghana visit MTSU. From left are Dr. Diane Miller, interim executive vice president and provost; Dr. Cosmas Cobbold, University of Cape Coast faculty; Dr. James Adu Opore, director, UCC Institute of Education; MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee; Dr. Cynthia Sena Kpeglo, UCC senior assistant registrar; Mr. Might Kojo Abreh, UCC senior research assistant; and Dr. Augustine Tawiah, president of Ghana Bible College.

photo by Andy Heidt

by Lisa L. Rollins
lrollins@mtsu.edu

Five educators and officials from the University of Cape Coast visited MTSU July 29 to meet with university faculty members and Tennessee Board of Regents representatives to design a sustainable model for teaching quality for the Republic of Ghana.

During their daylong visit, UCC guests met with MTSU President

Sidney A. McPhee, as well as College of Education and Behavioral Science representatives, to learn about the TBR-initiated redesign of teacher-education programs and MTSU's leading role in the process through its Teaching Quality Initiative.

MTSU's TQI pilot program focuses on using a problem-based learning approach to help prepare future educators to meet the needs of 21st-century learners with an

emphasis on providing real-world learning activities and an extended residency program for would-be teachers at the undergraduate level.

MTSU launched the pilot project last fall using a four-module model that meets TBR's guidelines. Education faculty at MTSU designed each module: Drs. Terry Weeks (instruction), Kyle Butler (classroom management), Linda Gilbert

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PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS

The State of Tennessee deferred compensation program is offering free seminars on Tuesday, Aug. 18, at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in

Nashville to address issues related to retirement and benefits associated with participation in a 401k, 457 or Roth 401k program. For more information, please visit www.dcpvprovider.com/PDF/tn/HTML/TN_Retiree_Invite_2009.html.

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MTSU Solar Boat Team makes big splash at annual contest

by Dr. Saeed Foroudastan
sforouda@mtsu.edu

For our fourth year of competing in the "Solar Splash," the 2009 World Championship of Intercollegiate Solar Boating, MTSU had a brand new team, a brand new craft and a fresh outlook on the competition.

Despite facing the difficulties of forming a completely new team, the students came together for an excellent performance and were able to participate and finish each event.

The team's innovation paid off. This year they won the Outstanding Hull Design trophy for having the lightest, most aerodynamic hull.

MTSU also was presented with the 2009 Participation Award, which highlights the students' cooperation and collaboration in the face of several obstacles.

The team tied for the highest score in the "Workmanship" category, earning the full 20 out of 20 possible points. It also tied for third-highest score in the "Technical/Design Report" category, earning 82 out of 90 possible points.

The 17th annual American Society of Mechanical Engineers Solar Splash took place May 27-31 in Fayetteville, Ark., with the first day spent entirely on a thorough technical inspection of each craft. The remaining four days were occupied with on-water competitions, including sprint, maneuverability, endurance and speed competitions.

Each craft is powered solely by batteries and a solar array. This power combination on a watercraft creates its own interesting set of challenges: not only must the craft be very efficient hydro-dynamically, but it also must use its power extremely effectively.

This new team was especially ambitious, creating a new vehicle from scratch. Original plans included ample time for testing, but constructing the new boat took longer than expected and the craft was not finished in time to test it in the water more than once. The new Solar Boat's second run in water took place at the Solar Splash competition. Having little time to test the craft, MTSU's team did incredibly well in the sprint competition, but they ran into a complication in the endurance competition: the boat's combination of electronics and motor system did not work well. The group promptly removed the boat from the water and started problem-solving as a team. They consulted me, their faculty adviser, and the director of the Department of Engineering Technology's Machine Shop, Rick Taylor, as they worked on a solution to the problem.



SUNNY CREW—MTSU's Solar Boat Team and supporters pose with the craft at the 2009 World Championship of Intercollegiate Solar Boating. From left are supporter Sherry Harner, May '09 graduates Jason Burks and Bryan Bodkin, senior Lance Coulter, supporter Spencer Horner, senior Patricia Jones, James Rancaster, Rick Taylor of the Engineering Technology Machine Shop, adviser Dr. Saeed Foroudastan, supporter Paul Martin III, May graduate Ian Cole, sophomore Stanley Whitehouse and senior Johnny Guidry.

photo submitted

Unfortunately, however, the setbacks in the first part of the race prevented MTSU from finishing at the top overall, but the team is very eager to continue testing on this year's boat in order to dominate the endurance race in the 2010 Solar Splash competition.

Judges said they were impressed by the teamwork displayed as well as the team's ability to participate and complete every event for the full three days of competition. In recognition of this, MTSU received the 2009 Participation Award.

The competition was extremely challenging. Eighteen teams from around the world registered for the Solar Splash, and MTSU was the only team from Tennessee. The 2009 Solar Splash competition included teams from Cedarville University, the University of New Orleans, University of Northern Iowa, College of New Jersey, University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, Washington State University, Kansas State University, Geneva College, University of South Hampton, Carnegie Mellon, Elizabethtown College, University of North Florida, SUNY-Stony Brook and Technologico de Monterrey.

MTSU has a strong record of success at the Solar Splash. In 2006, the team finished 11th overall, won the Perseverance Award and was the rookie team with the highest overall score. In 2007, MTSU won the Outstanding Drive Train Design Award and placed third in the Technical Report. Last year, the group won the Teamwork Award.

The 2009 MTSU Solar Boat Team members are Bryan Bodkin, captain; Jason Burks, co-captain; James Rancaster; Ian Cole; Stanley Whitehouse; Lance Coulter; Patricia Jones; and Johnny Guidry. I truly enjoyed seeing the students work together as a team and represent MTSU in this manner. It was a pleasure for me to watch them succeed, and I am very proud of their hard work and dedication.

The team is indebted to Rick Taylor in the ET machine shop for his continued support. His exceptional assistance and mentorship among the students with machining and design has been invaluable. I would also like to offer a special thanks to Paul Martin III and Sherry Harner for their support of the team and Jacqueline Victory for the support from the Student Government Association. Finally, I would like to thank Drs. Walter Boles and Charles Perry of the engineering technology faculty and Dean Thomas Cheatham of the

College of Basic and Applied Sciences for their encouragement and support.

Dr. Saeed Foroudastan is associate dean of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences and a professor of engineering technology. He also is faculty adviser for the MTSU Experimental Vehicle Project Competitions, which include the Solar Bike, Solar Boat, Mini Baja, Formula SAE and the Great Moon Buggy Race.

In a matter of one hour, the team had changed the boat's configuration and was back in the race! The boat was able to compete eight one-kilometer laps in the first part of the endurance competition and came back in the second part to finish 19 laps and place first.



A SOLAR WIN—MTSU Solar Boat Team members compete in the 2009 World Championship of Intercollegiate Solar Boating in Fayetteville, Ark. At top left, member Johnny Guidry races across Lake Fayetteville in the sprint event, and below left, Lance Coulter awaits the starting signal in the endurance heat. In the group photo above, team members pose with their plaque from the competition. Kneeling from left are Guidry, Jones, Rancaster and Cole; standing are Burks, Bodkin, Whitehouse, Foroudastan and Coulter.

photos submitted

Military Science now includes Lt. Col. Kast in lead role

by Randy Weiler
jweiler@mtsu.edu

Lt. Col. Tharrel "TK" Kast became the newest professor of military science at MTSU July 1. The announcement, made in March, came from former department leader Lt. Col. Michael T. Walsh.

Kast, who visited MTSU March 23-26 to get acquainted with the program, will be coming "home" from Fort Bragg, N.C., where he has been operations officer in the 1st Theater Sustainment Command.

"I'm dying to get over here," said Kast, who is originally from Pensacola, Fla., but lived in Spring

Hill when he worked for NCR. "I love the job (professor of military science) and what Mike's done while he has been here."

While sitting in Walsh's office in March, he reached for a photo taken in November 2008 of alumni who have been promoted to general officers through the years. MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee had invited the group to campus to be part of the Salute to Armed Forces.

"One of these kids out here will put on the stars. It doesn't get any better than



Kast

that," Kast said, pointing outside the door of what will become his office in Forrest Hall and in anticipation of the young men and women who will enter the building. "These are the future Army leaders. We have cadets here who will be in the National Guard, Reserve and active duty.

"With my past experience in all three components, I think I can talk to these guys and tell them where they're at."

Kast and his wife, Robin, a native of Hixson, Tenn., have a son, Clayton, 18, and a daughter, Shelby, 12. Their son, who visited MTSU, has been accepted at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.

It's all in the Cathey family in STEP^{MT} summer research

by Randy Weiler
jweiler@mtsu.edu

The Cathey family of researchers was one of the unique storylines featured during the 2009 STEP^{MT} Summer Research.

Mother Jan, an MTSU alumna, and MTSU physics majors Brandon and Erica Cathey worked on separate research teams.

Jan Cathey, a Siegel High School teacher working with her third STEP^{MT} research team in as many summers, was involved with research titled "Proximicins: New Anti-Cancer Agents." Under the guidance of MTSU chemistry faculty member Dr. Scott Handy, Cathey's team also included shared scholars Rachael Hall of MTSU and Stephanie Tudeme of Tennessee State University.

The STEP^{MT} program provides financial support for five teams to conduct research full-time during the summer. The teams include an MTSU faculty member, an upper-division research scholar, a lower-division research assistant, a Rutherford County high-school science or math teacher and a rising high-school senior interested in science or math.

"It's good for these kids," Cathey said of the participants. "Bringing high-school students (into the program) can help them learn advanced techniques in science and up-to-date

science research. Advances in science are so fast.

"I love to learn. Coming back here, I get to learn and not be the teacher. I love being a student again."

Brandon Cathey and fellow shared scholar Raymond Hendon of MTSU were part of the team studying "Mathematical Modeling and Control of Populations: Application in Biological Pest Control," which was led by math faculty member Dr. Wandu Ding.

The College of Basic and Applied Sciences presented the STEP^{MT} summer research poster presentations July 24 in Todd Hall.

Under the guidance of geosciences professor Dr. Mark Abolins, Erica Cathey and fellow research scholar Jordan Graw performed research called "Google Earth Update! Using Remote Sensing and Field Investigations to Map Natural, Agricultural and Built Land in Rutherford County, Tennessee."

Dr. Warner Cribb of geosciences mentored MTSU research scholar Jennifer Pickering and research assistant Miller Wylie in the research "Distributions, Concentrations and Transport Processes of Toxic Metals Released from TVA Coal-Ash Surface Impoundments into Public Waterways and River Sediments." This stemmed from the coal-ash spill near Kingston, Tenn., in December 2008.



FAMILY PROJECT—Erica, Jan and Brandon Cathey pose next to Brandon's research project during the recent STEP^{MT} presentations in Todd Hall. Jan Cathey, the mom of the family, teaches at Siegel High School, and Brandon and Erica are MTSU physics majors. All three worked on separate research programs this summer.

photo submitted

Biology faculty member Dr. Rebecca Seipelt provided guidance for research scholar Shannon Roche and shared MTSU assistants Nicholas Chamberlain and Brittany Brooks.

Shared scholars Tony Lee, a junior, and seniors DeAndre Reese and Raymond Dennis conducted research on "Development of an Intelligent Robotic Work Cell" under the guidance of engineering technology faculty member Dr. Ahad Nasab. Their research was partially funded by the Tennessee Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program, or TLSAMP.

"We have hands-on experience," Reese said of the research. "It gives us a heads-up in a couple of our (engineering technology) classes."

"It gives me a step up above other students at MTSU," Lee said. "It will help me with my resume when I'm trying to get a job in the industry or trying for a graduate scholarship."

"It gives me better insight of what to expect in my field while I'm here (at MTSU)," added Dennis, who said his future goals are electrical and

mechanical engineering.

The trio's poster presentation included a video. It's available on YouTube by searching "for "TLSAMP summer project."

STEP-IN Summer 2009 participants included MTSU juniors Matthew Petree and Luke Bolin.

Petree's poster was on "Fiber Reinforced Concrete Research Compilation." His faculty/industry mentor was Dr. Heather Brown, Concrete Industry Management director. The group he worked with was CIM Patrons, industry professionals who serve MTSU's CIM program.

Bolin, working with chemistry faculty member Dr. Ngee Chong, had a poster on "Development of Analytical Methods for Drugs of Abuse." He worked with Aegis Sciences Corporation, and his industry mentor was Dr. Darcie Wallace-Duckworth.

The National Science Foundation provided funding for the program, which is in its fifth year. Brad Rudnik serves as STEP^{MT} coordinator with assistance from Megan Hall.



STEPS TO RESEARCH—MTSU seniors DeAndre Reese, left, and Raymond Dennis and junior Tony Lee display their research on development of an intelligent robotic work cell in the photo above. At right, Dr. Heather Brown, director of the Concrete Industry Management program, and STEP-IN participant Matthew Petree listen to questions on his presentation, Fiber Reinforced Concrete Research Compilation.

photos submitted



Campus Calendar

Aug. 10-23

Please note:

Event dates, times and locations may change after press time. Please verify specifics when making plans.

TV Schedule



"Middle Tennessee Record"
Cable Channel 9:
Monday-Sunday, 7 a.m., 5 p.m.
NewsChannel 5+:
Sundays, 1:30 p.m.
Visit www.mtsunews.com for other cable-outlet airtimes.

Aug. 13

Thursday, Aug. 13
Retired Faculty/Staff Coffee
9:30 a.m., Foundation House
For information, contact:
615-898-5756.

Aug. 14

Friday, Aug. 14
Farmers' Market
Plant & Soil Science Club
1-5 p.m., Horticulture Center
For information, contact:
nphillip@mtsu.edu.

Aug. 16

Sunday, Aug. 16
Blue Raider Soccer vs. Jacksonville State (Exhibition Game)
5 p.m., Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium
For more information, visit www.goblueraiders.com.

Aug. 21

Aug. 21-23
Ole South Dressage Horse Show
8 a.m. daily, Miller Coliseum
Free admission
For information, visit www.tndressage.com.

Friday, Aug. 21
Farmers' Market
sponsored by Plant & Soil Science Club
1-5 p.m., Horticulture Center
For information, contact:
nphillip@mtsu.edu.

Aug. 23

Sunday, Aug. 23
Blue Raider Soccer vs. Alabama A&M (Home Opener)
1 p.m., Dean A. Hayes Track and Soccer Stadium
For more information, visit www.goblueraiders.com.

New dual plan

SIGNING OFF—Nashville State Community College President Dr. George Van Allen, center, talks about the new Dual Admission Program between MTSU and NSCC after the July 29 signing of the program paperwork. Listening are, from left, Dr. Diane Miller, interim executive vice president and provost; Kim Edgar, executive assistant to MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee; and McPhee. "As a college we have always enjoyed a good relationship with MTSU," Van Allen noted. "We are probably your second largest feeder school. This [partnership] will enhance our college's reputation to be associated with MTSU and add credibility to our programs." The two Tennessee Board of Regents institutions joined forces to open doors to more scholars with the new program, which permits NSCC students to work toward a bachelor's degree at MTSU while earning their associate's degrees. "We've had a long-standing relationship with Nashville State Community College," McPhee said. "I couldn't think of a better and more appropriate institution to pioneer this agreement with than Nashville State Community College. This is an excellent example of partnership. It is consistent not only with our mission but also with our Board of Regents and state mission in terms of improving access for our citizens to education."

photo by Andy Heidt



Audit

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state-sponsored insurance plan. If you have family coverage of any type with the state, you must respond to this audit request, or your dependent coverage will be terminated."

The audit, which is being conducted by Secova Inc. after a state bid process, was recommended to help save money—potentially as much as \$13 million—on state insurance premiums and expenses by removing ineligible dependents from employee coverage. Letters to affected employees went out statewide July 6.

"It's to ensure plan integrity and save money," Batey said. "This is not something that our HRS department is doing or even involved in, other than to answer questions and refer employees to Benefits Administration or to Secova."

"Although MTSU is not directly responsible for conducting or ensuring the success of this audit, I appreciate

the cooperation of our faculty and staff in providing the information that has been requested by the state," added MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee. "Although personnel may experience a slight inconvenience as it relates to locating and submitting the documents needed to verify dependent eligibility, the process is relatively simple, and confidential, around-the-clock assistance is available for those who need it."

To comply with the audit, covered employees must simply submit proof that their covered spouses and listed dependents are indeed eligible for coverage, HRS officials say.

The list of documents acceptable as proof of dependent eligibility is available online at http://tennessee.gov/finance/ins/pdf/deva_eligible_docs.pdf, or employees may call Secova anytime toll-free at 877-793-3589 to check whether their documentation is

acceptable. The documentation can be submitted online, via fax or postal mail. Secova will confirm receipt of the information ASAP by mail, securely maintain the documents until the end of the verification process and then properly destroy all paper copies.

Some employees have expressed concern about the timing of the request, fearing that faculty and staff who have been out of the country over the summer may not have sufficient notice to meet the Sept. 4 deadline.

"We've been assured that for special exceptions like being out of the country, employees should contact Secova directly, and they'll work with them," Batey said. "It's not a terrible hardship to submit this information, but people have a tendency to wait until the last minute, and that's why we're encouraging everyone to go

ahead and get it done now."

Batey added that the state will give employees a grace period to remove ineligible dependents from their plan coverage and will not penalize them for any benefits that these dependents may have incurred.

"We're doing some information sessions around campus on a by-request basis, so any department that asks us to provide information about this, we will," she said. "We're not going to hold a campuswide session because this isn't something MTSU is doing—it's statewide, and we are encouraging everyone to contact the state Benefits Administration Division or Secova with their questions."

For more information about the dependent-eligibility audit, call 615-741-3590 or e-mail questions to Dependent.Eligibility@tn.gov. Information also is available at <http://verify.secova.com/TN>.

(student assessment) and Allison Bass (teaching reading and content area).

Dr. Terry Goodin, assistant professor of educational leadership at MTSU, said the TQI's problem-based learning approach was inspired by the medical school system at the University of Missouri at Columbia, which transfers "didactic instruction in the classroom to concrete action in the field."

Sometimes referred to as "just in time" learning, Goodin told UCC visitors that the problem-based approach "can serve as a bridge between the theoretical classroom experience and the practical application of knowledge," since real-world problems cause students to apply what they've been taught.

Using this as the basis for its TQI program, MTSU recruited Sandra Parks, a local educator and retired Murfreesboro City Schools principal, to oversee MTSU students in the plan's instruction module. Parks worked with 12 undergraduate education students, all preparing to teach in different disciplines, and "expert teachers" recruited by MTSU to help mentor the undergraduates as part of a partnership between MTSU and area schools serving kindergarten through 12th grades.

Under the TQI pilot, fall 2008 pre-service teachers expanded classroom K-12 time from about eight hours to eight weeks of practical experience in schools. They were encouraged to utilize a variety of teaching styles, Goodin and Parks explained, from Socratic, inquiry and problem-based approaches to debate, role-play and jigsaw methods of instruction.

"The (expert) teachers' role is to keep that student from designing (a lesson) that is within their most comfortable way of teaching ... and (instead) stretch the limits of their teaching ability," Goodin said.

That created one of the initial challenges for the TQI model, MTSU educational leadership faculty told UCC educators. Because some of the undergraduates didn't feel each approach could be applied to their respective teaching areas—such as theater, English, physical education, art, history or foreign-language instruction—they were reluctant to expand their instructional approaches. But with time and mentoring, Parks observed, each student came to see otherwise and successfully met the teaching-method challenge.

Beginning this fall, pre-service teachers at MTSU, as part of TQI, will spend a year in the K-12 classroom, signifying a significant expansion of the required in-class residency time. In turn, said Dr. James Huffman, chairman of

the educational leadership department, MTSU's TQI-based partnership with K-12 schools will be crucial to the pilot program's success.

"One of the things that's different about us from other institutions," he noted, "is that we have a large (teacher-training) program, so we're not talking about needing just a handful of (K-12) mentor teachers but a much larger group, because of the sheer number of students we put out into the schools every semester."

It also is vital, Huffman added, that public-school teachers who take part in TQI as mentors adopt the mindset that they, along with MTSU faculty, are helping to train future teachers.

As MTSU moves forward in its TQI leadership role, Goodin said it's important to note that "the real power of (our approach) is that when students understand the importance of the knowledge that they are taking in, they see the need for it and they're more likely to remember it.

"In our professional approach to training teachers, we're trying to think of them as pre-service teachers ... and our goal is to come up with problem scenarios that are real in our region, in our service area, where our students are actually at work and in situations where they can apply what they have learned."

About the University of Cape Coast

The University of Cape Coast, Ghana's leading university in teaching and research, opened in December 1962 as a university college in a special relationship with the University of Ghana. In October 1971, UCC became an independent university and now serves about 17,000 regular students, 4,000 "sandwich" or summer students and 20,000 distance learners over two 16-week semesters per year.

The municipality of Cape Coast, founded as a Portuguese town in the 1400s and the first seat of the British Colonial Government until 1978, is located on the west coast of Africa in Ghana, along the shores of the Gulf of Guinea. UCC operates its original South Campus about five kilometers west of Cape Coast and its North Campus, or "New Site," about three kilometers from the South Campus.

Buyout

from page 1

the chart at right for a specific session to meet your needs);

- e-mail the VBP administrator, Kathy Musselman, assistant vice president for HRS, at kmusselm@mtsu.edu; or

- call 615-898-2929. This number is staffed during regular business hours by MTSU's HRS professionals, who will be able to give you personalized service and answer your specific questions.

Please also be aware of the deadlines and key activities associated with the VBP. More information on each activity can be found in the VBP program document at the HRS Web site.

I encourage you to review all documents carefully and make an informed decision if you desire to apply to participate in the VBP.

As always, I appreciate your dedication and support.

This is a reprint of recent e-mail communications from Dr. McPhee to the university community.

Important Dates for Voluntary Buyout Program	
Event	Date(s)
Application period	Nov. 30, 2009-Jan. 15, 2010
Information sessions	Wednesday, Sept. 9, 9-11 a.m., Room 100, Ingram Building Thursday, Sept. 24, 2-4 p.m., ING 100 Tuesday, Oct. 20, 9-11 a.m., ING 100 Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2-4 p.m., ING 100 (Please call HRS at extension 2929 to register for a session.)
Application deadline	Friday, Jan. 15, 2010
Revocation period	On or before Friday, Jan. 22, 2010
VBP participants notified of acceptance	No later than Monday, Feb. 1, 2010
Voluntary separation date for VBP participants	Wednesday, June 30, 2010*
VBP payment to participants	Within 31 days of receipt of waiver and release agreement
* Earlier voluntary separation date may be available for eligible employees by request.	

MTSU now offering new online degree programs

by Tom Tozer
ttozer@mtsu.edu

Online degree programs are becoming increasingly popular because students can fit their studies around work and home responsibilities.

Beginning this fall, MTSU will further accommodate those busy students by offering several new online degree programs.

Students in the online programs also may take classes on the MTSU campus, said Dr. Dianna Rust, associate dean of continuing education and distance learning. "A degree from Middle Tennessee State University shows you've worked hard to succeed at a nationally recognized, fully accredited state university," Rust said.

The Master of Professional Studies, or MPS, program has a new concentration in training and development with subspecializations in corporate training and online training. The MPS is a 33-hour interdisciplinary graduate program designed for the working adult and may be done completely online.

"The training and development concentration is particularly appropriate for human resource professionals, corporate trainers or those who wish to teach online courses," said Dr. David Gotcher, director of academic outreach and adviser for the program. Gotcher noted that the program is based on the

American Society for Training and Development E-Learning Competencies, which meet industry standards.

MTSU also is piloting a new online cohort program for a Bachelor of Science in psychology beginning this fall. A cohort is a model in which an entering group of learners stays together for the entire program. Students entering the program should have earned an associate's degree or 60 hours of general-education credit. The program is designed for full-time students who meet the requirements to finish their bachelor's degree program in approximately two years.

Students accepted into the cohort program will have reserved space in the cohort classes if they register during the priority-registration period. Due to space limitations, however, not all applicants who meet the requirements will be admitted to the cohort. Students not accepted into the cohort program can still earn their psychology major online.

For more information about these and other programs, please contact MTSU's College of Continuing Education and Distance Learning at 615-898-2177 or by e-mail at learn@mtsu.edu. The deadline to apply for the fall 2009 semester is Friday, Aug. 28; courses will begin Saturday, Aug. 29.

For more information on online programs from MTSU, please visit www.mtsuanytime.com.



Interior-design students earn cash, kudos for summer project

Five MTSU interior-design students took advantage of a “fabulous opportunity” this summer by participating in the Pro2Serve 2009 Summer Design Project and Scholarship.

Paul W. Martin Jr., MTSU friend and chief financial officer for the Oak Ridge, Tenn.-based Professional Project Services Inc., or Pro2Serve, contacted Associate Professor Deborah Belcher earlier this summer, seeking students from the Department of Human Sciences to help outfit a new headquarters for the nationally recognized technical and engineering services firm. Pro2Serve provides critical infrastructure engineering services in support of national security.

The students were asked to prepare a design solution for a new 115,000-square-foot building for Pro2Serve on the grounds of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. The project emphasized four executive offices and two reception areas and required:

- commercially available products to fit a practical need within a budget;
- an achromatic color scheme with gray and accents of blue; and
- an opening date of Dec. 1, 2009.

The MTSU team, with Belcher’s supervision, explored four design options with different price points and styles. They took a field trip to Alfred Williams & Company, a Herman Miller showroom and dealer in Nashville, to get more ideas and options for the project.

On July 24, junior Dana Gwinn, seniors Jennifer Mitchell and Brandy Simmons, junior Mary Vongsaga and senior Hilary Walker presented their design solution and alternative options to Martin. Other guests included Dr. Diane Miller, interim executive vice president and provost; Dr. Terry Whiteside, interim dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Science; and Dr. Janis Brickey and Dana Miller, interior-design professors.

Each student received an award certificate and a \$500 scholarship check for her contributions to the design project. They also have followed up with additional information for Martin, Belcher said.

“Their work and presentation were extraordinary. I can’t express how proud and pleased I am with each of these students,” Belcher said. “They really showed the benefits of their education at MTSU and the interior-design program.”



DESIGNING WOMEN (AND THEIR SUPPORTERS)—MTSU interior-design students are joined by university officials and Paul W. Martin Jr. of the Oak Ridge-based Professional Project Services Inc. after the students presented their summer design project for Pro2Serve’s new headquarters. From left in the photo above are interior-design students Mary Vongsaga, Brandy Simmons and Hilary Walker; project sponsor Martin; students Dana Gwinn and Jennifer Mitchell; Dr. Diane Miller, MTSU executive vice president and provost, and Dr. Terry Whiteside, interim dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Science. Martin sought MTSU’s help in preparing a design solution for Pro2Serve’s new 115,000-square-foot building on the grounds of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory and presented each student with a \$500 scholarship check for her efforts. The MTSU alumnus (B.S. ’75) and his brother, Dr. Lee Martin, gave \$2 million in seed money for the construction of the Paul W. Martin Sr. Honors Building, which opened in December 2003. In the photo above left, Martin accepts a thank-you gift from the design students.

photos by Professor Deborah Belcher

Check, report status of university master keys by Sept. 11

In an effort to maintain better control over grand master keys on campus, Facilities Services and the Key Shop are in the process of updating the university’s key database, so department heads are being asked to take an inventory of all master keys marked “X,” “XX,” “XXX” and “XXXX” in their departments as soon as possible.

Names of key holders, along with the key identification, should be reported in writing to the Key Shop at Campus Mail Box 32.

Each inventory will be checked against the

Facilities Services and the Key Shop records for accuracy. If an employee is no longer here, the Key Shop will make every effort to locate the key or keys in that person’s name. If an employee has a key that is recorded in another employee’s name, a key card must be filled out requesting a transfer.

University faculty and staff are being asked to search desk drawers, file cabinets and wherever office keys are stored to see if they have other “X-marked” master keys that are unnumbered.

“It is our highest priority to locate those keys,

serialize them and record them in the name of the appropriate employee,” said Senior Vice President John Cothorn.

He added that because some employees who have keys may not presently be on campus and will not be returning until the beginning of the fall semester, the process should be completed by Friday, Sept. 11.

Cothorn said questions should be directed to Gerald Caudill, Don Chumney or Tammy Hughes in Facilities Services.

Summer enrollment up 4.7%

from Staff Reports

MTSU’s summer enrollment is 8,603 students, said Sherian Huddleston, associate vice provost for enrollment services.

The total is a 4.7 percent increase from summer 2008, when MTSU’s headcount was 8,210.

The 2009 figure for May through August enrollment marks an increase of 393 students from last summer.

MTSU, similar to other schools

nationwide, had been experiencing a decline in summer enrollment, said Huddleston, who added that this year there has been a reverse in that trend for MTSU.

By comparison, the spring 2009 enrollment total was 22,511 students, which was a 3.99 percent increase for the same period in 2008. Fall 2008 enrollment was a record 23,872, and indications are that MTSU can expect another increase in enrollment for fall 2009, she said.

Get noticed
in MTSU’s official university publication!
Check *The Record*’s 2009 deadline schedule at
http://frank.mtsu.edu/~proffice/rec_deadlines.htm.

New student publication raises previously stilled 'Voices'

by Gina K. Logue
gklogue@mtsu.edu

Lines and images of assertion, anger, ennui, yearning, reverie—these are the contents of “Voices We Haven’t Heard,” a new collection of student art and literature compiled by the June Anderson Women’s Center at MTSU.

The inaugural edition is the first of many annual editions to come if Terri Johnson, the center’s director, has anything to say about it.

“I think it’s a wonderful way for students to express themselves in a creative, artistic forum,” says Johnson.

In “Please, Hear Me,” senior Julie Paige writes, “Hear me/my black man/my brother/my lover/and my friend/I know it has been hard for you/To keep your head held high/When the master is beating you/I know you love me and want to provide for me/And that is why you continue to work so hard/Even though the master continues to beat you.”

Another voice previously unheard, sophomore William Meek, states, “You wonder who we are,/And what we may do./You wonder what we say,/And about the things we believe./You ask all these questions,/But you never ask

us./What we believe,/Who we are./We believe in rights./We live for other, too./We want you to be happy./We live to love for you” in “This Is What a Feminist Looks Like.”

The works between the beige covers serve as the students’ rebuttal to the racism, sexism, harassment and homophobia they see in the world around them, both on- and off-campus.

Sometimes independence is message enough. In “In the Morning,” junior Stacie Wanamaker writes, “Don’t thrust a mirror in my face/Don’t tell me I need to find myself/I know what I want and it’s to be away from here/Away from everything I’ve known, Away from everything I’ve grown up near/It’s driving me insane to be, to not be me/I think you’d understand if you took the time to see.”

Johnson says she already has had tremendous feedback from parents and prospective students at CUSTOMS and elsewhere. She adds that she has heard remarkable interest from those who wish to contribute to the next edition.

Free copies of “Voices We Haven’t Heard” are available from the June Anderson Women’s Center. For more information, contact the center at 615-898-2193 or jawc@mtsu.edu.



Sells

they know why we are doing what we’re doing.

Q. What are the challenges for 2009-10?

A. We have several reports due this fall that will outline specific plans to restructure some programs and services within the division. Despite the stimulus money the university has received, which has been very helpful, the fact remains that our base budget has taken a significant hit, and we must make permanent adjustments. Determining how to best preserve essential services within a streamlined structure that combines, in some cases, two departments into one, will be very challenging.

Q. What is new or improved in the way of programs, student organizations or facilities for the new semester?

A. Cummings Hall will reopen in late August and will be a real showpiece as a residence hall for our new students. Our new Greek Life director, Angela King, will be on board and will help us to continue to move our Greek community forward. We’ve added two new counselors in counseling services to help us provide support to students dealing with emotional and other sorts of challenges.

Q. From all appearances, student affairs/enrollment are well-oiled machines. What’s your assessment?

A. Well, I hope the division does *look* like a well-oiled machine. ... Our division deals directly with students and with all the various issues and activities of their daily lives. On any given day, I may deal with a question about the design of the new student union; help proofread our resubmission of our \$1 million Student Support Services, or TRIO, grant; meet with student government while they debate a contentious issue; consult with concerned parents about a student struggling with a serious mental-health issue; and then attend an athletic event or concert. It’s no different for any other member of the staff. Students have a lot going on in their lives, and the Student Affairs staff is a part of most of it. That means that each day will be unpredictable and will require flexibility and ingenuity. Our staff does a great job, but I also know it takes supreme effort, long hours and a great deal of humor.

Q. Combined enrollment appears on target to surpass 24,000 for the fall 2009 semester. What does this next milestone mean, and what can you say about the efforts of all the folks who make it happen?

A. Growing the university’s enrollment is everybody’s job. ... The university’s enrollment growth is coming from our success in retaining our current students and in attracting increasing numbers of transfer

and graduate students.

... We’re not perfect, but I think MTSU does an exceptional job of working with students as individuals with unique issues and concerns. The same is true for retaining our current students. Our retention and graduation rates—which are true measures of the quality of our educational and support programs—will continue to climb as we improve in our ability to thoroughly engage students in their academic pursuits and in the campus community.

Q. Where do things stand on the new student union and a target date for completion? What’s in it as far as amenities for students? What offices/departments will be there? What becomes of the Keathley University Center? Any other thoughts?

A. We already have begun the infrastructure for the new student union. If you go to the site, you can see the earth-moving equipment already at work. Our actual official groundbreaking will take place in spring 2010. The new union will become one of the most important buildings on campus, serving as the gathering place for students, faculty and staff. The architects, Campus Planning staff and Student Life staff have done an amazing job of creating spaces that will have something for everyone. The building will include a food court, bookstore, meeting rooms, ballrooms, group and individual computing spaces, television lounges, game rooms, and offices for student organizations, student government and much of the Student Life staff. Parts of the building are more formal and impressive; other parts are very informal and lively. There will be places for large groups to gather and cozy corners for a couple of students to plug in their laptops and Web surf or play games. I am hoping the building will open by the end of 2011.

Q. What budget challenges are the numerous aspects of Student Affairs facing? What programs might be cut back, eliminated, etc.? What plans are you and staff implementing to meet the challenges?

A. Our challenge has been to carefully evaluate each and every program and department within the division and to really examine how it contributes to the enrollment and retention of our students as well as to their academic success. It has been important to clearly understand those programs and services within the division that make a difference for students, so that we can appropriately invest in those areas. ... It’s imperative we protect and continue to invest in offices like admissions and financial aid. More painfully, it has been equally important to look at how best to preserve the essential services involved in programs or activities that we must consider for downsizing, consolidation or elimination.

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Faculty — from page 8

Dr. Zachariah Sinkala (mathematical sciences) gave a talk on “Identifying the Active Site of Ribonucleoside Hydrolase of E. Coli Encoded by rihC” (a joint work with Drs. Anthony and Mary Farone [biology] and Abdul Khaliq and Terrance Quinn [mathematical sciences]) at the 2009 International Conference on Bioinformatics and Computational Biology in Las Vegas July 13-16. Sinkala also chaired two sessions at the conference: “Data Mining & Biomedical Engineering + Tools + Computational Biology and Drug Design,” and “Bioinformatics & Computational Biology + Tools.”

Publications

Dr. Kathleen Darby (social work) has published a paper, “Exploring the Financial Impact of Breast Cancer for African-American Medically Underserved Women: A Qualitative Study,” in issue 20.4 of *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*. The journal’s release date was Aug. 1.

Get noticed in *The Record!*

Submit your Campus Calendar information, Faculty/Staff Update items (including promotions and new hires) and other news tips to gfann@mtsu.edu by 3 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 12, for the Aug. 24 back-to-class edition of *The Record* or by 3 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26, for the Sept. 7 *Record*. Don’t forget to include specifics—who, what, where, when and why, plus contact information—with your contributions, so we can make sure your news gets noticed!

Check *The Record*’s 2009 deadline schedule anytime at http://frank.mtsu.edu/~proffice/rec_deadlines.htm.

VP Sells: 'We are making time to talk with students'

by Randy Weiler
jweiler@mtsu.edu

Benton Harbor, Mich., native Dr. Deb Sells will begin her 14th year in administration at MTSU this fall. Her MTSU tenure includes director of the Department of Housing and Residential Life (1996-2002) and associate vice provost for the Academic Support Center (2002-08). In July '08, MTSU President Sidney A. McPhee named Sells interim vice president for the Division of Student Affairs and vice provost for enrollment and academic services, replacing Dr. Bob Glenn, who became president at Athens (Ala.) State University. In January, the Tennessee Board of Regents accepted McPhee's recommendation to make Sells's appointments permanent. Sells discusses the past year and what's ahead for the Division of Student Affairs, Enrollment and Academic Services.

Q. In your various capacities, what has the past year been like?

A. The first few months were a blur. I tried to get a handle on the new schedule of meetings and to catch up with ongoing projects and issues. The other vice presidents were great about helping me understand the background on items that were already in process. I also relied on the support of my office staff to make sure I made it from meeting to meeting with the right set of files and background information! By the second semester, we had begun to settle

into a rhythm, and could start to anticipate a little bit of what might come up day to day.

Q. How have you handled the transition from associate VP in Academic Support Services to your present roles?

A. Actually, I'm still fulfilling both roles. I'm hoping to make some changes as we begin the new academic year so I can begin to transition out from under some of the responsibilities associated with my previous role. In the meantime, I've juggled the direct supervision and management of the Academic Support Services area along with doing the VP job. ... It only worked because the directors in this area are so experienced and so good at what they do.

Q. What do you feel was accomplished from fall 2008 through spring 2009?

A. We worked hard to manage a smooth transition from Dr. Glenn's administration. Obviously, I was very familiar with Academic Support Services issues, but I needed to quickly get up to speed with (the Department of) Student Life and (the Office of) Enrollment Services day-to-day issues. It was important for me to understand what we do and how we do it in those areas and where we could improve in both communication and effectiveness.

It was also important for me to



GOOD TO SEE YOU!—Dr. Deb Sells, left, vice president for student affairs and vice provost for enrollment and academic services, chats with Brenda Hill, center, of Memphis and her daughter, Lesha Hill, an incoming MTSU freshman, during a July 23 CUSTOMS session at Tucker Theatre.

photo by Andy Heidt

connect directly with our students—both typical students as well as our student leaders—so I could understand their needs, concerns and perspectives on what we do. ... We also worked hard to get the new student-union construction project moving forward with an aggressive design schedule, and we became very involved in working directly with fraternities and sororities to address recruitment, leadership and financial issues. We obviously also spent a good deal of time working on budget and restructuring issues.

Q. What, if anything, did not get accomplished during 2008-09?

A. I continue to talk with my staff about the importance of presence. I believe students know what we really value by watching how we spend our time—and *where* we spend our time. If we say we value students and that we're a student-centered institution, then we need to take a look at our schedules and make sure, in addition to all of our administrative or teaching duties, that we are making time to talk with students and to be a part of their community. We need to work hard at communicating with students directly, instead of assuming that we know what they think and feel or that

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the RECORD

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Faculty/Staff Update

Activities

Dr. Warren Anderson (agribusiness and agriscience) attended the first Wilson County Water Environmental Fair, hosted by the Sumner and Wilson County Stormwater Departments, on July 1. Anderson also participated in the "Project Learning Tree—Environmental Education Activity Guide," co-led by Dr. Cindi Smith-Walters (Center for Environmental Education), and he helped register 194 people for Boat Day at the Manson Pike Trailhead.

Conferences

Dr. Wandi Ding (mathematical sciences) attended the 2009 Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics Conference on Control and its Applications, held in Denver, Colo., July 5-9, jointly with the SIAM Annual Meeting. At the conference, Ding gave a mini-symposium presentation, "Optimal control for a discrete time rabies model on a spatial grid." She received a National Science Foundation/Association for Women in Mathematics travel grant for women researchers for this event and served as graduate mentor for the AWM workshop during the conference.

Elections

Veronica Edwards Milnar (music) is president-elect of the Tennessee Music Teachers Association.

Excursions

A team of MTSU professors visited Arnold Engineering Development Center July 20 to learn more about its Propulsion Wind Tunnel test complex and explore future collaborative opportunities for the university. Traveling to Tullahoma were Drs. Michael Allen (vice provost for research and dean of graduate studies) and Heather Brown (engineering technology), Assistant Professor Nate Callender (aerospace), Drs. Andrienne Friedli (chemistry and director of the Center for Advancement of Research and Scholarship), Ahad Nasab (engineering technology) and William Robertson (physics and astronomy). The trip netted a mention, with photos, in the July 24 edition of *High Mach*, AEDC's bimonthly employee newspaper.

Honors

Dr. Doug Heffington (history) has received the Tennessee Historical Commission's Certificate of Merit "for having made significant contri-

butions to the preservation of the historical and architectural heritage of Tennessee."

Presentations

Dr. Carol Boraiko (engineering technology) presented "Lead Dust Contamination of Paint Remediation Workers' Personal Vehicles" June 1 at the American Industrial Hygiene Conference in Toronto, Canada. The research is associated with the TN LEAP (Tennessee Lead Elimination Action Program), which is managed by the Department of Engineering Technology.

Dr. Rhonda Hoffman (horse science) gave an invited keynote presentation, "Carbohydrate Metabolism and Metabolic Disorders in Horses," at the Sociendade Brasileira de Zootecnia (Brazilian Society of Animal Science) in Maringa on July 16. Considered Brazil's most important animal science forum, the event had about 2,000 people in attendance.

Dr. Terrance Quinn (mathematical sciences) was an invited speaker at the Halifax Lonergan Conference 2009, held July 6-10 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. He spoke on "Generalized Empirical Methods and Functional Specialization."

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