

Bluefield College

a magazine for alumni & friends

SPRING 2012

**Veronica Brooks:
Unarmed and
Dangerously
Inspirational: 6**



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Our Vision

Bluefield College will be a nationally recognized Christ-centered liberal arts college, preparing innovative learners and transformational leaders to impact the world.

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Bluefield College

Phone: 276.326.3682
www.bluefield.edu

Editors

Betty Carroll, Vanessa Scruggs,
and Chris Shoemaker

Submissions / Feedback

by mail: Office of Marketing and
Public Relations, 3000 College Drive,
Bluefield, Virginia 24605
by email: bcnews@bluefield.edu
by phone: 276.326.4212 or 800.872.0175 (4212)

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the president

Dear Bluefield Alumni and Friends:

Inauguration for
President David Olive, 2007.

Looking back over the past five years, I am amazed and humbled at what we have collectively accomplished by God's grace and goodness during this period of time as a college community. Here are just a few of the highlights denoting the College's achievements.

- Opened the Daniel G. MacMillan Center for Service, Mission and Ministry.
- Made significant improvements to Rish and Cruise Halls, including new windows and furnishings.
- Refined the College's vision, mission and core values and launched a new strategic plan, *Imagining Our Future*.
- Launched Winter Blast, an extreme weekend of snow skiing, tubing, worship and fellowship, which now draws more than 350 youth to the event each year.
- Entered into an international exchange with Jiangsu Institute of Education in Nanjing, China, providing student and faculty exchanges each year.
- Constructed a 100-bed residence hall – East River Hall – the first new residence facility built in 30 years.
- Achieved national accreditation for the Teacher Education Program from the Teacher Education Accreditation Council and obtained licensure in Special Education from the Virginia Department of Education.
- Hired Mike Gravier as head football coach to help guide the resurrection of the football program after a 70-year hiatus.
- Initiated online degree programs in criminal justice, management and leadership, human services, and nursing.
- Enrolled the largest incoming class of traditional students in nearly two decades this past fall, as well as being just three students shy of setting a historical record of new students since the College began offering baccalaureate degrees.
- Hired Dr. Carolyn Lewis as the inaugural dean of the new School of Nursing, which opened this spring.
- Adopted a university model that includes the College of Arts and Letters, the College of Sciences, the College of Professional Programs, the School of Education, and the School of Nursing.
- Crossed the \$3.2 million threshold in gifts this year, more than any other year in BC history.



Where do we go from here? In the coming months, we will once again embark upon the important and treasured work of a new strategic plan to serve as a roadmap for the next five-year horizon and beyond. We know critical aspects of what we are doing now must be part of the next plan, such as completing the fundraising objectives in the *Capturing the Imagination* comprehensive campaign and constructing the Campus and Community Wellness Center (CCWC); revisiting and identifying the purpose and outcomes of our academic common core; weaving into the fabric of our academic programs our Quality Enhancement Plan: The Competent Communicator; and strengthening our abilities to help each student hear and respond to her or his vocational calling.

As noted above, part of our future is happening now. We are grateful for and excited to receive a \$1 million matching grant from the Hugh I. Shott, Jr. Foundation for the first phase of the CCWC. Now is a great time for you to give to this effort; double your dollars by taking advantage of this generous challenge!

In closing, as we look to the future, I also reflect on the past in helping guide and shape the path we are forging. In so doing, I came across these closing words I shared with you shortly after my arrival that still have profound meaning for me and where we are going as a Christ-centered College:

"I am committed to this cause. As an expression of this commitment to you, to the College, and to God, you will find in my closing of correspondence a constant reminder. I am here to faithfully serve. Will you join me, and numerous others, in living lives filled with faith and faithful service to Bluefield College? Our founders would have expected no less."

Partnering with you in faithful service,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "David".

David W. Olive
President

What's the Next Horizon?

As we embark on the next strategic planning process, please participate in this journey with us as we seek to set aspirations for what Bluefield College will become for the next generation. Everyone is invited to participate. Please answer these two important questions:

- 1) What do you treasure most about your experiences and association with BC? In other words, what can the College never give up?
- 2) In dreaming about the College's future, what images bring you the greatest excitement as you envision what Bluefield College looks like in 10, 25 or 50 years from now?

Please send your responses via e-mail to president@bluefield.edu or by mail using the postage paid reply envelope provided with this publication.

Chantel Blunt: From Victim to Victor through BC's inSPIRE Degree Completion Program

Graduates of Bluefield College's inSPIRE degree completion program often speak of the significance of earning that long anticipated bachelor's degree. It's the fulfillment of a lifelong dream or the key to career success. For winter 2011 BC graduate Chantel Blunt, it means even more, considering the road she traveled to get there.

As a child, Chantel showed great promise, but her mother and maternal grandparents died from cancer while she was still young, and her father was just never in the picture. Soon after, Chantel found herself in foster care, where she endured abuse that forced her to choose to live in the streets.

"My three brothers and I were separated and lived on the streets of many different cities," Chantel recalled. "Homelessness became a way of life for me. I wanted to change that, but I was unaware of how to do so. I was always a bright young lady, and I received scholarships to many prominent schools, but I was not emotionally stable to pursue an education."

Chantel, who grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, attended six different high schools and stayed where she could to find shelter. Despite the obstacles, she persevered and finished secondary school.

"I had to become an adult early in life, and I was not the average kid," confessed Chantel. "I had no support system. I never fit in anywhere, so I kept running."

In fact, Chantel continued to wander until she was 25 years of age. That's when she met Sean Blunt, a young man from Brooklyn, New York,

whom she fell in love with and married. Sean, she said, brought stability, joy and fulfillment to her life, but she knew she needed a college degree to better herself. She took community college courses when she could, but her job came first since she "had to work to eat."

Through a college fair, Chantel learned about BC's inSPIRE degree completion program, an accelerated program designed to provide working adults with a convenient, flexible opportunity to complete their bachelor's degree. And, for the first time, she began to see herself fulfilling that goal.

"Before, I never thought I was worthy of great things happening to me," said Chantel. "I was accustomed to abuse and poverty. I never envisioned the riches that God had in store for me. But, I was worthy, because God said that I was. So, I began to think, I can do this, because God doesn't make junk."

It was this same "infectious excitement" that convinced her husband to pursue the journey at Bluefield College with her. Together, they researched BC's credentials and were impressed with its Christian emphasis, accreditation, and quality curriculum. As a result, they both enrolled, knowing all too well the challenge that lie ahead.

"In addition to going to school full time," said Sean, "we had to maintain our normal lives, from balancing the day-to-day family operations with two children to supporting my full time work schedule in management. It was tough, but we knew it would be worth it."

The professors, they said, were "amazing," and the staff "like extended family." In addition to

the tools necessary for career success, they said the inSPIRE program gave them "focus," "discipline," and "confidence." And, on December 18, 2011, they both walked across the stage of Harman Chapel to accept their bachelor's degree.

"I have overcome many obstacles," said Chantel, "but the one thing the inSPIRE program gave me that no one can ever take away is an education. Since the death of my mother this is the first goal that I have successfully accomplished."

Now living in Locust Grove, Virginia, Chantel and Sean said earning their bachelor's degree also was a great opportunity for them to teach their children to be "survivors" and to "show them first-hand that they can overcome any hurdle they face."

"The inSPIRE program has shown us that we can do anything, through Christ," said Sean. "Our kids had an opportunity to see their parents walk across the stage during graduation. That was one of my proudest moments."

With his BC degree, Sean is now pursuing a master's degree at Liberty University. Chantel is exploring programs that offer a master's degree in human services, all for the purpose of dedicating her life to helping others the way Bluefield College helped her.

"I want to help change the lives of children and young adults by showing them that their past does not define their future," said Chantel. "The inSPIRE program allowed me to believe that. Now, I no longer live as a victim, and because of my faith in God, I live in victory."

Article by BC student Angi Highlander



Chantel Blunt



Sean Blunt



Alumna Judy Castele is considered one of Virginia's most influential advocates to end domestic and sexual violence.

Judy Castele: A Voice against Violence

Bluefield College takes pride in helping students discover, nurture and live their passion. Alumna Judy Castele is a prime example.

Just ask the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, a coalition committed to ending sexual and domestic violence that just recently named Castele one of the industry's "Top 30 Most Influential People."

In celebration of its 30th anniversary, Action Alliance selected "30 voices" whose service to the development of the statewide coalition has been "indelible," "far-reaching" and "fundamental" in moving forward the work against domestic and sexual violence in Virginia.

In fact, Action Alliance recognized the "30 Voices" in *Revolution*, a journal published by the organization. In the magazine, Action Alliance called Castele's commitment to the cause, "tremendous" and the difference she's made, "substantial."

"Judy's passion, vision, and work in the sexual and domestic violence movement," the journal said, "involve a moral compass that orients around the voices and experiences of survivors."

Castele began her work against domestic violence at the Women's Resource Center in Radford, Virginia, in the 1980s, where she touched virtually every aspect of that agency's efforts. Later, she served as interim director of Virginians Aligned Against Sexual Assault, and today she is executive director of Project Horizon,

a non-profit organization in Lexington, Virginia, dedicated to reducing domestic, dating, and sexual violence through crisis intervention and prevention programs.

"Vast and substantial as these accomplishments are," said Action Alliance, "they reflect only a tip of the iceberg of Judy's impact on sexual and domestic violence coalition work in Virginia."

*"I'm not sure
a person could
survive in this field
if it were only
a job..."*

*As a Christian, I
believe that this is
the place I've been
called to serve."*

— Judy Castele

Castele has served multiple terms on the Governing Body of Action Alliance, impacting services and policy at both regional and state levels, including championing the first forensic nursing program in the New River Valley and advocating for widespread changes to marital rape and sexual assault laws.

"In my eyes, Judy has made the largest contribution to the movement through her consistent mentoring of new professionals in the field," said her nominator. "Without her, I would not have had the confidence

or opportunity to actively participate in the work of the Alliance. If I, along with the others she has touched, can make half the impact that she has, the next 30 years of Action Alliance work will be tremendous."

Castele, who earned her bachelor's degree from Bluefield College in 1992 through the inSPIRE degree completion program, was already working in the field to combat domestic violence when she enrolled at BC. However, she said her studies at the college helped her make an even greater difference for the cause.

"My experience at Bluefield helped prepare me to move from doing advocacy and counseling with individuals to being an administrator," she said. "After earning my degree, I was promoted to associate director at the Women's Resource Center. What I enjoyed most about Bluefield was being in a small class and having the opportunity to learn from other adults in various fields. My classmates challenged me in ways I still appreciate."

Working at Project Horizon alongside fellow Bluefield College graduate Katrina Flowers (director of client services) and current BC degree completion student Leonard Stewart (director of community outreach), Castele said she's thankful to be considered one of Virginia's most influential voices against domestic violence. She's been able to reach that level of recognition, she said, because she's pursuing her passion and not just working a job.

"I'm not sure a person could survive in this field if it were only a job," said Castele. "I certainly have a passion for working to end violence against women, but it's more than that. As a Christian, I believe that this is the place I've been called to serve."

J.D. Taylor: Changing Lives with Charity and Water



Join the Charity Water project at www.mycharitywater.org/bluefield

"Every time you take a sip of clean water, someone dies of unclean water somewhere in the world." That's the profound statement that stirs the heart of Bluefield College student J.D. Taylor.

So much so, he's doing something about it through the help of Charity Water, a non-profit organization designed to bring clean, safe drinking water to underprivileged people in developing countries. In fact, Taylor is challenging the entire Bluefield College family to join him in the cause.

For as long as he can remember, Taylor, a rising senior biology major who plans to attend medical school after BC, has had a passion for missions and ministry. He has served on mission projects in South Africa,

Namibia, Peru, Italy, and New York City. He also has participated in street evangelism, after-school programs, praise and worship gatherings, and countless other service projects through his church and BC.

Lately, it's Charity Water Taylor has been sinking his passion into. After hearing during a leadership conference about the plight of people without clean, safe water in disadvantaged villages around the world, Taylor discovered Charity Water and how that organization is addressing the need.

Charity Water funds a range of water technologies for those in need, including hand-dug wells, drilled wells, rehabilitations, spring protections, rainwater catchments, and BioSand filters. To date, the charity has funded 6,185 projects, providing clean water to more than 2.5 million needy people in villages, clinics, schools and other facilities around the world.

And, according to Charity Water, a clean water project within a village provides more than safe drinking water. It protects the people from disease and gives them the freedom they need to change their community. In fact, diseases from unsafe water kill more people every year than all forms of violence.

And, in Africa alone, people spend 40 billion hours every year walking for clean water.

"Having such a profound impact on not only a village's water system, but their hygiene, life expectancy, income, educational opportunities, and overall standard of living is a chance very few people get," said Taylor, who is a member of BC's Student Government Association,

Residence Life staff, and men's varsity tennis team. "What an incredible thought — knowing that we as a campus community were able to change an entire way of life for a group of people."

Taylor's goal: raise \$5,000 to build a water well in a needy village. To get there, he has written letters to students, faculty, and staff, inviting them to get involved. He's created a fundraising portal on the Charity Water web site. And, he has distributed rice bowl piggy banks to students, encouraging them to save their spare change for the cause. He's also planning a Mr. BC pageant, sports fundraising tournaments, and a benefit concert.

To double the impact, Taylor has partnered with the Alan Morefield Charitable Foundation, who agreed to match his \$5,000. In other words, if Taylor meets the \$5,000 goal, the Morefield Foundation will contribute another \$5,000 to build not just one, but two water wells.

"The thought of providing not just one, but two villages in desperate need of water will be an amazing experience," said Taylor, "giving our campus the pride and satisfaction of knowing we've given such an incredible need to others, who otherwise wouldn't have had their needs met."

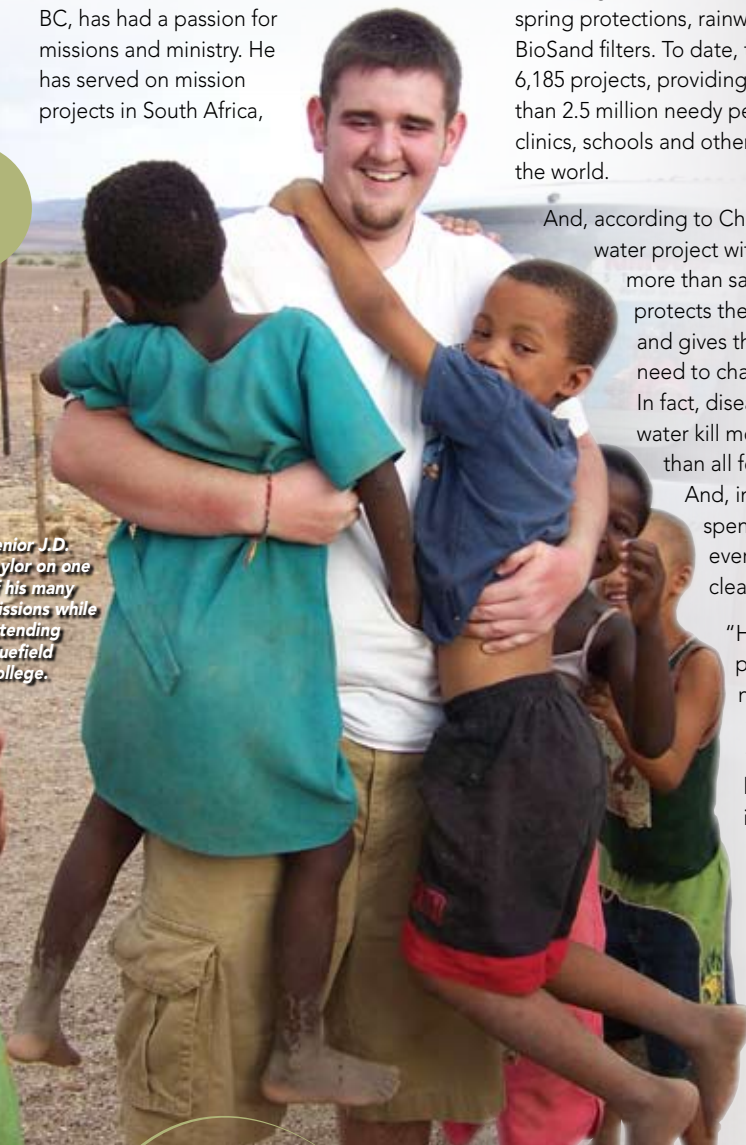
Taylor, who also serves as a worship leader for convocation and BC's weekly praise session Elevate, said his involvement in missions at the college has helped him grow spiritually and strengthened his relationship with Christ. This particular mission, he said, has helped him realize the value of sharing God's love and fulfilling the need to be a part of something larger than ourselves.

"Bluefield College has given me so many resources and opportunities to live my passion," said Taylor. "I honestly feel no other campus could have enabled me to bring this thing into the light. Having the chance to do so much with something I'm passionate about is a huge deal. It's now up to me, those involved in event planning, and the student body to help this passion become a reality."

For more information about Charity Water, visit www.charitywater.org. To contribute to Taylor's project, visit www.mycharitywater.org/bluefield.

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Senior J.D. Taylor on one of his many missions while attending Bluefield College.



Erin Darnell (left) enjoys a Ruth School student's painting.

Students Use Art to Share Faith

Christ centered

Integrating faith and learning is a major part of the Bluefield College mission. That's why this past spring a group of BC students used the gifts they've obtained from the art classroom to share their faith with Gypsy children in Romania.

For 10 days, March 1-10, students Erin Darnell, Melissa Hubert, Celia Jones, Pip Pattison, and Emily Sears served on mission at the Ruth School in Bucharest, Romania. Part of Project Ruth, a charitable organization designed to improve the lives of Roma (Gypsy) families, the Ruth School is committed to giving education to disadvantaged Roma children in order to help them reach their highest potential.

Joining the effort, the Bluefield College mission team set out to paint an 83-foot mural inside the Ruth School. Led by staff members Walter Shroyer, head of the Art Department, and registrar Amanda Parks, who studied art while a student at BC, the students also used the week to share the love of Christ with the Roma children.

"I had prayed for a long time that I could use the talents God has given me in a way that is good for others," said Jones, a graphic communication and art major from Brookneal, Virginia. "I feel like this was an opportunity to do that."

Hosted by Providenta Baptist Church and Bluefield College alumna Brittany Garton, who works with Project Ruth, the BC students worked on art projects with the Roma schoolchildren during the morning hours of their mission days and on the mural project during the afternoon hours.

"The children here crave words of encouragement and positive interactions," said Sears, a teacher education major from Hinton, West Virginia. "I know there are so

many children in America who need the same thing, and seeing how grateful the students at the Ruth School are has inspired me to go back to student teaching with a huge smile and the habit of constantly praising and telling my students 'bravo,' which means you did a good thing."

The BC mission team spent more than 200 hours painting the mural, which featured images of city and country life, including stars in the sky, trees, a schoolhouse, a downtown city street, a church and stained glass window, mountains, and a river.

"Everyone worked very hard on the mural," said Shroyer. "They all knew why we were there: to paint something beautiful for the kids in the Ruth School. It was one of the best weeks of my life. It was so gratifying to see the immediate impact you can have on people who are less fortunate."

Beyond the mural, the BC team led singing and games for chapel service at the school. They also played soccer with the Roma children and participated in youth group activities at a local church.

"I was really grateful we got the opportunity to speak at chapel, because it gave us a chance to say that we came there for a reason," said Jones. "And, that reason was for the students to be inspired and to not give up on what God can do in their lives."

Garton not only assisted the BC group in their mission, but also cooked for them most nights.

"Brittany is a great example for Bluefield College," said Shroyer. "She is really making a difference in people's lives, and she has such a love and passion for it. Knowing she graduated from BC makes me proud of our students, and her success in Romania makes me see great hope for the future."

The students spent the last two days touring Romania, including Castle Peles, Castle Braun, a fortified church in Prejmer, the Palace of Parliament, the Transylvanian countryside, and the Carpathian Mountains. But, in the end, what they remembered most about the trip were the "inspiring, strong, and beautiful people" of Romania.

"Our driver told us several times, 'My country is poor, but we are rich because we have God,'" said Jones. "I can't think of a better lesson to take away from this experience. This one week we spent covered in paint and surrounded by Roma children has been a richer experience than anything dollars, euros, or ron could buy. It's my prayer that I helped the Ruth School just a little, because this people, this place, and this country has a place in my heart forever."

Bluefield College Romania art mission team: (front, left to right) Pip Pattison, Melissa Hubert, (back, left to right) Walter Shroyer, Celia Jones, Erin Darnell, Emily Sears, and Amanda Parks.



Alumna Veronica Brooks: Unarmed and Dangerously Inspirational

As an occupational therapist at Princeton Community Hospital, Bluefield College alumna Veronica Brooks works mostly with people who have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

She helps these patients with limited strength and endurance breathe better and manage everyday tasks, since a simple household or personal chore could wear them out for the day. When new patients see just who will be helping them tie their shoes or button their shirt, eyebrows go up — because, you see, Brooks has no arms.

The youngest of six children, Brooks was born with what she calls a “compact” arm on her right side and a tiny appendage on her left. She started going to Shriner’s Hospital for treatment for scoliosis before she was even two years old. By age 11, she was wearing a Milwaukee brace for spinal curvature, and then nearly a full body cast.

While most would consider this tragic for a child, she counted it as a blessing, considering “most people with congenital scoliosis usually have surgery,” she said. But, what she didn’t like was a prosthetic hook that nurses and doctors tried to get her to use.

“I thought that looked like Captain Hook,” said Brooks, “and he was a bad man.”

Meanwhile, she began figuring out how to use her feet as her hands. She doesn’t remember asking anyone how to use her feet, but only asking for the feet to be removed from her footie pajamas. From there, she learned to tie her shoes by watching Sesame Street, and her brother, Tim, would take his socks and shoes off to play with her.

Brooks started school in 1975 at a time when there was still concern about where special needs students would go to school and how they would be accommodated under new laws. As she grew, Brooks didn’t want to be defined as “handicapped.” She proved that by carrying her own books to class.

“I was determined I was going to do things my way,” she said. “I couldn’t stand that, ‘Oh, poor thing.’”

With that same determined attitude, she learned to type, use scissors, button, snap, and zip with her feet. Along the way, she discovered she was left-footed in the way most people have a hand preference.



Using her feet as hands, Veronica Brooks (right) provides care for a patient at Princeton Community Hospital. — Photo provided by Richard Hypes, Princeton Community Hospital.

After earning her high school diploma, she enrolled in the Teacher Education Program at Bluefield College. She recalls that during the admissions process she did not check the box on her application indicating she was physically challenged.

“I did that on purpose,” said Brooks about not revealing her disability. “I intentionally left that off because I didn’t want people to have preconceptions. I wanted them to see me for me.”

Dr. Scott Bryan, a professor of exercise science, remembers Brooks’ first days at Bluefield College. She has had a profound impact on his life since she walked into his classroom.

“I was handing out the traditional syllabus, and she took off her shoes and grabbed it with her toes,” said Dr. Bryan. “The whole class was dumbfounded. We attempted not to stare.”

Without arms, Brooks embraced the challenge of the college classroom. She frequently made the Academic Dean’s List and earned a spot in the Alpha Phi Sigma National Honor Society. She was an active student, too, joining the sorority Phi Mu Delta, singing in the college choir, and leading worship and local youth programs through the Baptist Student Union.

“It was a time for me to prove to myself what I was capable of,” said Brooks, who also lived on campus as part of her independence statement. “I had a chance to be very outgoing, and I took advantage of that. I enjoyed my college experience and the fact that Bluefield was a Christian school.”

Brooks said the professors and students were very accommodating and helpful. She credits

Veronica Brooks (right) works with a patient in the Occupational Therapy Department at Princeton Community Hospital. — Photo provided by Richard Hypes, Princeton Community Hospital.



Dr. Bryan for preparing her the most with his “sink or swim” mentality that she said he literally tested on her one day by pushing her into a pool.

Having to adapt all her life, Brooks realized mid-way through college that occupational therapy was the path she wanted to pursue. By doing so, she could teach others to adapt just like she had. After earning her interdisciplinary studies degree from BC in 1991, she went on to complete her master's degree in occupational therapy at Temple University in Pennsylvania, where she used public transit and a large shoulder bag for trips from her apartment to campus or to the grocery store.

After college, Brooks returned home in 1995 to work as an occupational therapist at Health South in Princeton, West Virginia. In 2006, she became an occupational therapist for Princeton Community Hospital, where countless patients and co-workers have watched with fascination how she ties people's shoes and provides needed therapy.

“You get great ideas from things she has to do to manipulate her environment,” said Kimberly Keen, director of occupational therapy at PCH. “We don't see her physical limitations. She's just Veronica.”

“Just Veronica” — like the BC admissions application with the unchecked disability box — is just how Brooks likes it. In fact, she doesn't think she has had a hard time or a hard life, but believes instead that God has always had his hand on her.

“I used to be uncomfortable with recognition and would shy away from sharing my story,” said Brooks, “but then the Holy Spirit began to convict me about that. I felt like God was telling me that by saying ‘no’ to opportunities for stories like this that I was interfering with His business. By not being willing, I was being disobedient and robbing myself of His blessings. I realized that whatever He was trying to accomplish, I was His tool. Since I started saying ‘yes,’ opportunities like this have happened more often, and I have seen the results of people being inspired and blessed.”

Brooks also credits the support of her family and church — Crossroads Church in Bluefield, where she works with the middle school Girls' Auxiliary and the summer children's program. Her pastor: none other than Dr. Bryan, who is still inspired by Brooks after all these years. In fact, every time she walks through the church doors with her makeup on and her hair done, he knows she has done it all herself. He is moved to see her raise her compact arm in worship and thanks.

“Children are drawn to her like a pied piper,” said Dr. Bryan, praising her authenticity.

“She's phenomenal with the youth. You can't appreciate how amazing she is unless you ride in a car with her,” marveling at how she uses one foot to steer the wheel and another to change the radio station in a vehicle with a vanity plate that reads, “Unarmed and Dangerous.”

*Original article by
Mary Beth Jackson for
All About Her magazine.*

Shott Foundation Gives \$1 Million to Campus-Community Wellness Center

Construction of Bluefield College's state-of-the-art Campus and Community Wellness Center (CCWC) is one million steps closer to reality, thanks to a grant unveiled by the Hugh I. Shott, Jr. Foundation during a ceremony on the BC campus, April 20.

During the school's Night of Philanthropy, an evening set aside to thank supporters for their generosity and to showcase new college initiatives, the Shott Foundation's R.W. "Buz" Wilkinson announced a \$1 million challenge grant for phase one construction of BC's proposed CCWC.

"This is a significant and transformational gift for Bluefield College," said President David Olive. "The Campus and Community Wellness Center will be a state-of-the-art facility like no other building on campus. Students will have unprecedented opportunities for recreation and wellness in this facility. We can't wait to announce that we have been able to leverage funds to match the Shott grant."

As a challenge grant, the Shott gift calls on BC to raise an additional \$1 million to match the foundation's pledge. Once matched by gifts from other alumni and friends, the school will have \$2 million to add to the nearly half million already raised toward the \$4 million necessary for phase one of the CCWC.

"Our hope is to have \$4 million in gifts and pledges by December 31 of this year so that we can begin phase one of construction," said Ruth Blankenship, vice president for advancement. "As a result of this generous gift from the Shott Foundation, we are well on our way."

The Campus and Community Wellness Center is a proposed \$14 million structure to be constructed in three separate phases on the east

end of campus where the Dome Gymnasium currently resides. Once completed the building will total more than 65,000 square feet and house a 1,000-seat intercollegiate competition gymnasium, a recreation gymnasium, an indoor walking track, an athletic training center, classrooms, offices, and a natatorium.

"As the first free standing wellness center in Bluefield College history, this facility will serve



R.W. "Buz" Wilkinson announces a \$1 million challenge grant from the Shott Foundation to BC's Campus and Community Wellness Center.

the recreational, fitness and activity interests of Bluefield College students, faculty, staff and alumni," said Dr. Olive. "It will not only be an important asset to the college, but also to the community and region."

The college began initial discussions regarding a similar facility in 2008 with the Town of Bluefield. Since then, the cooperative plan with the Town has dissolved, and the college has been

busy redesigning the project. With new plans and sketches in place, BC's Board of Trustees approved formal plans for phase one fundraising during its fall 2011 meetings. Once complete, phase one of the CCWC will include multiple locker rooms, equipment storage, and a weight and cardio training center.

"We know how vital Bluefield College is to this community, and we want to support the school," said Wilkinson. "We're really proud to be a partner with the college on this new Campus and Community Wellness Center."

BC's Night of Philanthropy also included remarks from student Cheznee Daily, who shared how she benefits from donor contributions; a keynote speech from regionally recognized fundraiser Kyle Hauth, who spoke about the joy of giving; and the unveiling of the public portion of BC's new capital campaign, *Imagining the Future*, a \$14 million venture designed primarily for the new CCWC.

"It's time," said trustee Dr. David Bailey about the new capital campaign, which was shelved during its preliminary stages a few years ago due to a challenging economic environment and other priorities on campus. "This is nearly twice the amount the college has ever raised in a capital campaign. It's an ambitious goal, but one we're confident, with your support, we can achieve."

To be a part of the campaign, visit the BC web site at www.bluefield.edu/imagination.

Shott Foundation president R.W. "Buz" Wilkinson (right) and BC Board chair Julie Hull Johnson unveil plans for BC's new Campus and Community Wellness Center at the Night of Philanthropy gala.





Dean of Teacher Education Donna Watson (right) in the classroom with BC students.

Special Education Added to BC Programs

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To meet the needs of school systems across the region and to assist students who desire to work with children and adolescents who have special needs, the Bluefield College Teacher Education Program has added Special Education: General Curriculum K-12 to its degree programs offered for teacher licensure.

According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), special education is the teaching position that is most difficult to fill with qualified applicants. In fact, it is number one on the critical teaching shortage area list published by the VDOE.

"Unfortunately, there are not enough teachers with a special education endorsement to fill all the positions in school systems today," said Dr. Donna Watson, "dean of BC's Teacher Education Program. "We hope to contribute to a solution by graduating highly qualified teachers in special education and in regular education with a special education endorsement."

Through Bluefield College's new special education program, students may obtain a teaching license for special education by completing the requirements for a bachelor of science (BS) degree in interdisciplinary studies with a minor in special education, along with student teaching in an inclusion or resource classroom.

For students who are in the BS degree program for elementary education, they may add the special education endorsement to their Virginia license by completing three additional courses and half their student teaching in a special

education placement. And, if students are in a secondary licensure program, they may add special education through five additional courses. Current teacher education students just learning about the new special education program at Bluefield are already taking advantage of the dual-licensure opportunity.

"After being in inclusion and special education classrooms, I am very excited about student teaching," said Bethany Liddle, a rising BC senior from Galax, Virginia. "I am confident that I have made the right career choice."

Liddle will be BC's first student to earn a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies with licensure in both elementary grades PreK-12 and special education: general curriculum K-12 when she graduates in December 2012. Hannah Spicer-Owens, a rising teacher education senior from Bluefield, Virginia, will be the first to receive the special education license along with a secondary teaching field when she graduates in the spring of 2013.

"Getting endorsed in special education will help me reach my students more effectively," said Spicer-Owens, an English major who will earn a license to teach English 6-12 along with the special education endorsement. "In the realm of education, why wouldn't you want to know how to address all of your students' needs?"

Adding special education to an existing licensure program can still be accomplished in the typical four-year plan. In addition, for teachers who are teaching on a provisional license in Virginia, Bluefield College can provide

the course work to complete the requirements for full licensure.

"I'm delighted that Bluefield College will now offer special education in addition to its many elementary and secondary licensure programs," said Dr. Watson. "The new special education program will provide a wonderful opportunity for our pre-service teachers to gain the knowledge and skills they need not only to help students with disabilities reach above and beyond their potential, but also to increase their opportunities for a teaching job."

Joining BC's full-time education faculty to spearhead the special education program this fall will be April Workman, a longtime special education teacher for Tazewell (VA) County Schools, who holds a bachelor's degree in education for the deaf and hard of hearing and a master's degree in special education. Workman, who is pursuing her Ph.D. this summer at Virginia Tech, will be teaching BC's special education courses, along with advising and supervising pre-service teachers who seek the special education endorsement.

"I am very excited for the opportunity to help launch this special education program," said Workman. "There is always a need for qualified and knowledgeable special education teachers in all areas. I am certain that the high expectations of the Bluefield College Teacher Education Program will produce educators with these characteristics. In turn, students with disabilities in our surrounding areas will benefit from additional licensed special education teachers."

For a complete list of spring
2012 graduates, visit
www.bluefield.edu/newsandevents



Spring Commencement 2012

One hundred twenty-six Bluefield College seniors accepted diplomas during the school's 90th Annual Spring Commencement, May 5, outside in the campus quad against the backdrop of the majestic East River Mountain.

In addition to the conferring of degrees, the graduation ceremony also featured a Commencement address from Major General Robert B. Newman, Jr., adjutant general of Virginia, and the presentation of two Wampler-Caudill Student Leadership Awards and one Wampler-Caudill Distinguished Faculty Award.

Made possible by former BC professor Dr. Don Caudill in honor of his parents, Alfred and Shirley Wampler Caudill, the Leadership Awards recognize graduating seniors who have demonstrated academic excellence, Christian character, and leadership, and a BC professor who exemplifies classroom excellence, Christian character, and professional, community and church involvement.

Earning the student awards this spring were Daniel Gough of Gainesville, Virginia, and Celia Jones of Brookneal, Virginia. Gough, a graduate of BC's inSPIRE adult degree completion program, was acknowledged for his "dedication to learning," "faith in God," and "service to his country." Jones was recognized for her "obedience to God's call on her life" and her significant contributions to campus life.

Dee Shoemaker, an assistant professor of business, earned the Distinguished Faculty Award for her "classroom excellence," "enthusiasm for lifelong learning," and "passion to serve God by teaching students."

The 90th Annual Spring Commencement also included a scripture reading by nursing professor Dr. Carolyn Lewis; special music by BC music students; induction for the graduates into the Alumni Association, led by Association president Dan Agee; and the singing of the school's alma mater, led by music professor Bryant Moxley.

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Major General Robert B. Newman, Jr. uses the acronym ISE to challenge graduates to live with "integrity," "service," and "excellence." Everything we do in life, he said, "should start with integrity." Service, he added, requires "putting the needs of others before our own." Excellence, he concluded, entails "giving our all in everything we do."



BC Board chair Julie Hull Johnson (right) presents a Five-year Service Award to President David Olive. Both offered greetings to seniors during Spring Commencement. Dr. Olive told the graduates he hoped they would have more than a successful career, but also an enjoyable and meaningful life, grounded in faith and service to others, while Johnson ('88) challenged the students to begin each day asking, "God, what can I do for you today?"

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Senior graphic communication and art major Celia Jones (left) accepts the 2012 Wampler-Caudill Student Leadership Award. During her senior year, she served as a resident assistant, Student Ambassador, and a member of the Honor Society, Honors Program, missions team, Art Club, Alpha Delta Sorority, and tennis team.



Bluefield College Dedicates Century-old Easley Quilt

While the hand-made quilt was a necessary commodity for warmth in every remote house in Appalachia in the early 1900s, it also served as a decorative piece or an expression of love or remembrance of a person, time or place.

Bluefield College dedicated a century-old Appalachian quilt during a ceremony on campus, April 20, that will hang as a decorative piece inside Easley Library and serve as an expression of love and remembrance of the late Eva Vest Easley, who donated the family throw to BC some 44 years ago.

Crafted in 1901 by Manerva Boyd Pack Easley, mother to Frank Smoot Easley, one of the founding fathers of Bluefield College, the quilt was a mainstay in the Easley family until 1968. At that time, Eva, one of many in the family who continued to support the college, donated the piece to the school.

"This quilt was made as an expression of love by Manerva for her son, Frank, and it was given to Bluefield College as an expression of love by Eva," said Ruth Blankenship, vice president for advancement. "And today, all of you are here as an expression of your love for Eva to help us dedicate the quilt in her memory."

More than 50 friends and family members, from as far as North and South Carolina and as near as Bluefield, attended the dedication ceremony, which included a prayer of dedication by Rev. Michael E. Snider of Christ Episcopal Church and remarks by Blankenship and President David Olive.

"We're so thankful to those of you who have come to join us. This is a great day to see friends of Bluefield College celebrating the Easley legacy," said Dr. Olive. "This college would not be the same without the Easley family and without Eva Easley."

Since its founding in 1922, members of the Easley family have played significant roles in the development and growth of Bluefield College. In fact, a member of the Easley family has served on the school's Board of Trustees since its formation, including Eva's husband, trustee emeritus Tyler Easley, and their daughter, Rebecca Easley Beckett, who serves as a trustee today.

Before her death in August 2008, Eva had been a longtime member of the Board, where she served on a variety of committees to further campus facility improvements, fundraising, and student development. Her love for BC students was most evident in her contributions to the areas of athletics, fine arts, scholarships, and the missionary-in-residence program. As a result of her faithful service to the college, she was named an honorary alumna in 1988. She also

received the school's Mildred Sullivan Award for service to the community in 1995.

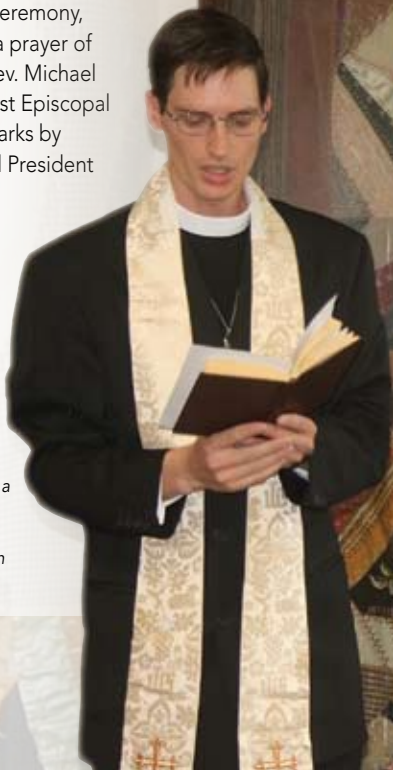
Using gifts to BC in memory of Eva, the college constructed a display case to preserve and permanently exhibit the quilt inside Easley Library. The throw, said Beckett, who spoke on behalf of the family during the dedication ceremony, had survived more than a century "because of the strength of the Appalachian woman who created it." It will continue to survive, she added, and serve as a reminder of the legacy of love and support of the Easley family.

The quilt dedication was just one of many activities in Bluefield College's yearlong "Celebration of Appalachia" symposium, featuring lectures, concerts, exhibits, discussions, movies, theatre, tours and other educational and entertaining events designed to honor the Appalachian heritage.



Easley family and friends gather for a keepsake photo in front of the century-old quilt dedicated in their name to hang in Easley Library.

Rebecca Easley Beckett (right) and her husband, John (far right), join Rev. Michael E. Snider in a prayer of dedication for the Easley family quilt that will hang in BC's Easley Library.



BC Business Students: Best in Virginia

Students from Bluefield College's chapter of Phi Beta Lambda (PBL), a national business student organization, competed in April in the PBL State Leadership Conference in Richmond, Virginia, and brought home 34 awards — more than any other college PBL team participating in the statewide academic competition.

The 26 Bluefield College scholars competed against students from 12 other Virginia colleges, including the likes of Virginia Commonwealth, Radford, Emory and Henry, UVA-Wise, Longwood, and Sweetbrier.

The BC students developed business plans, designed service projects, offered presentations, participated in interviews, completed tests, and took part in other competitive activities en route to 14 first place awards, 13 second place prizes, and six third place honors. The Bluefield team also was recognized as a bronze member of the Virginia FBLA-PBL Foundation.

The 34 total awards for Bluefield College this spring marks the seventh time in eight years since the creation of the school's PBL chapter in 2005 that BC students have collected either the most or second most number of awards in state competition.

In addition, during the state conference Cary Carpenter, president of the BC chapter of PBL, was elected to state office as secretary/treasurer for 2012-2013. Faculty advisor Dee Shoemaker, an assistant professor of business, was recognized for five years of service as a PBL counselor.

For their success at the state level, 20 of the 26 BC students qualified for the national PBL competition in San Antonio, Texas, in June. In addition to competing in Richmond, Bluefield's PBL team toured the Volvo Trucks North America New River Valley plant in Dublin, Virginia, where BC alumni

Zack Holderfield, a Volvo engineer, and James Osborne, a Volvo manager, arranged and guided the visit.

Award-winning Bluefield College PBL members (front, left to right) Lydia Freeman of Bristol, Virginia; Jasmine Washington of Cleveland, Ohio; Elisabeth Willson of Amissville, Virginia; DeArra Darling of Powder Springs, Georgia; Courtney Dutton of Abingdon, Virginia; (back left to right) Ben Shumate of Bluefield, West Virginia; Tyler Giles of Roanoke, Virginia; Ed Folden of Richmond, Virginia; Bo M'Bala of Paris, France; Kenssy Quezada of New York, New York; Alex Jentzen of Queen Creek, Arizona; and Jordan Johnson of Chantilly, Virginia.



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Trustees Discuss Capital Improvement Projects

Capital improvement projects were the topics of discussion — and plenty of them — when Bluefield College's Board of Trustees gathered on campus for its annual spring meetings in April.

During the two-day session, the BC governing body gave the go-ahead for renovations to Lansdell Hall to create an integrated administrative center for students; analyzed plans to construct a new clock tower sign and message board on the east end of campus; continued to explore the possibility of constructing a townhouse complex to increase student housing; and celebrated a \$1 million gift to support construction of a new Campus and Community Wellness Center.

The renovations to Lansdell Hall, set to begin this summer and to be completed by the fall, will create what administrators are calling "BC Central," a one-stop shop for serving students' needs," by relocating and combining offices or personnel in the Registrar, Financial Aid, and Student Account offices in one place on the third floor of Lansdell Hall.



A sketch of a proposed townhouse complex the Board of Trustees is considering to expand the opportunities for student housing on campus.

The Board also reviewed plans for a proposed clock tower sign and LED message board. Once fully approved, the sign will be located on the east end of campus near the intersection of College and Stadium drives and will feature three electronic LED panels for marketing BC news and events. Assisting with the proposed project are alumni Garry Jones and Steve Nolley and local businessmen Bud Acken and Brad Ayers.

During the spring session, the trustees continued discussing a proposed townhouse complex for campus. In fact, the Board has been considering expanding student housing

since the fall of 2010 when residential population began to reach capacity despite the construction of East River Residence Hall in the spring of 2009. Its latest action this spring included a review of information related to funding and the loan process with the USDA.

In other capital improvement project business, the Board celebrated the announcement of a \$1 million challenge grant from the High I. Shott, Jr. Foundation for the first phase of construction of a new Campus and Community Wellness Center (CCWC). The CCWC is a proposed \$14 million facility to be constructed in three separate phases on the east end of campus where the Dome Gymnasium currently resides. The school needs \$4 million to begin the first phase of construction.

In other business, the Board endorsed the administration's pursuit of accreditation for a master's degree in education and recognized retiring trustees Bill Evans of Bluefield, Virginia, Steven Layfield of Abingdon, Virginia, and Joseph Tatum of Vinton, Virginia.

Students Celebrate 34th Annual Mud Pig Day

"I was there for the first Mud Pig Day in 1979, and it was so much fun. It was a great opportunity for students and staff to join together for a day of fun. Students will remember this day for years to come." — alumna Susan Myers



Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers" may be the unofficial creed of the United States Postal Service, but it just as well might be the motto of Bluefield College students when it comes to celebrating the school's longstanding year-end tradition of Mud Pig Day.

Despite heavy rain and gloomy clouds throughout the day, April 26, BC students stormed a greasy waterslide, dove in a murky mud pit, and enjoyed other outdoor recreation in celebration of the school's 34th Annual Mud Pig Day.

A beloved tradition since 1979, Mud Pig Day is designed to give students a break from classes, studying and books to celebrate the culmination of the academic year just before the start of final exams.

"I enjoy this day because it's a day off from class to relax and not worry about anything. It's also fun to get out on the slide and not act your age, but just have fun. It's a good time for everyone. It's something we look forward to every year."

— sophomore Pip Pattison





The 2012 version of Mud Pig Day featured the ever-popular mud pit — a man-made pool of cold water and murky mud — and the Mud Pig Day waterslide — a long plastic tarp on BC's high hill beside the Dome Gymnasium doused with water and cooking oil.

Donning commemorative Mud Pig Day t-shirts, students also took part in carnival-like games, including a dunking booth, an inflatable bull ride and human bowling, as well lunch, featuring the time-honored roasted pig and other barbecue picnic favorites. Evening activities included a concert with the contemporary Christian band The Afters.

"Mud Pig Day is an event that we look forward to as students every year. It's a great way for us to relax one last time before we plunge into final exams. It's the last social event of the year for most students before they head home for the summer or go their separate ways through graduation."

— senior Trey Wilson

Faculty-Staff Distinctions

Dr. Cindy Bascom, professor of communication, was selected by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) to participate in a Latin American Studies Professional Development Tour in May 2012. Designed to provide professors with an opportunity for experiential learning of the political, economic, social, and religious realities of Latin America, the tour took Dr. Bascom to Costa Rica and Cuba for fieldtrips, homestays, community immersion, and other cross-cultural educational ventures.

Paula Beasley, Easley Library circulation supervisor, was promoted in April 2012 to reference and electronic resources librarian. A 1993 BC alumna, Beasley also has worked as a manager of an educational materials company, a secondary school library media specialist, a college library technical services clerk, and a pre-school teacher.



Wendy Beavers

Wendy Beavers, assistant professor of history, received a 15-year Service Award from BC in May 2012. In addition to teaching European history, world civilizations, and other upper level courses in history, Beavers has studied abroad in England, France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, Italy, Greece, Ireland, and Scotland. She also has participated in workshops and seminars on the ancient Greek world.

Werner Lind, assistant director of Easley Library, received a 20-year Service Award from BC in May 2012. For two decades, Lind has managed the library's book collection, handled periodicals, provided reference assistance, worked with the vertical file, supervised the interlibrary loan, and served library visitors in a variety of other capacities.



Ann Looney

Ann Looney, director of academic programs, received BC's Distinguished Staff Award in May 2012 for her "excellent work," "Christian attitude," and "gracious heart." She was also acknowledged for her contributions this year to the school's compliance report for reaffirmation of accreditation. Looney joined the college in 1999 as an administrative assistant for adult and continuing education before being promoted to an administrative assistant and academic coordinator for degree completion programs and then later director of academic programs.

Dr. Rob Merritt, professor of English, published a book of poetry in April 2012 titled *The Language of Longing*. A collection of poems about perseverance, travels, and the things that matter most in life, *The Language of Longing* is a testament to the old adage that "the journey is more important than the destination." This spring's publication is Dr. Merritt's second in the past two years. He also published a poetry collection called *Landscape Architects* in the spring of 2010.

Tammy Pennington joined the college in January 2012 as the assistant director of the new nursing program. A nurse for 14 years, Pennington has worked in medical, surgical, intensive care, and emergency room acute care settings. She has also worked in home health, school nursing, and mobile intensive care transports. In academia, she has served as an adjunct instructor and a coordinator of Weekend College at Virginia Highlands Community College.



Tammy Pennington

Dee Shoemaker, assistant professor of business, received BC's Wampler Caudill Distinguished Faculty Award in May 2012 for her "classroom excellence," "enthusiasm for lifelong learning," and "passion to serve God by teaching students." A professor of both traditional and inSPIRE students since 2000, Shoemaker was also acknowledged for her leadership with BC's award-winning Phi Beta Lambda business club and her church and community involvement.



Dee Shoemaker

Spring Scenes



Rising contemporary Christian rock band The Afters performed live in concert on campus in April. Hundreds of BC students came out to hear the group sing their hit soundtrack singles made popular on MTV's "8th and Ocean," ABC's "Grey's Anatomy," and NBC's "The Biggest Loser." The messages behind their music focused on God's faithfulness and forgiveness. The band's performance was a part of BC's 34th Mud Pig Day. Charlottesville, Virginia's Brightwork opened the concert for The Afters.



The college paid tribute to the work of local journalists during its 13th Annual Media Appreciation Day in April, which featured remarks from alumnus and nationally known performance improvement specialist Spencer Wood ('98) and the presentation of Shott Excellence in Media Awards to WVVA-TV videographer Mark Hughes (pictured right) and BC communication student Lydia Freeman (pictured left). Twenty-four journalists from seven local media organizations attended the event, which also featured a roundtable discussion between the journalists and BC communication students.



Students rallied together in February to "style soles" and to provide new shoes for children in need. As part of a TOMS Shoes ministry called "Style Your Sole," students purchased blank white shoes and decorated them into unique self-expressions that ultimately provided needed footwear to underprivileged children. For every pair of TOMS shoes purchased by the students, the company matched to give to needy kids around the world. More than 40 students participated in the event.

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As part of its yearlong "Celebration of Appalachia," the college hosted an Appalachian Festival in April, which featured music, dancing, storytelling (pictured), workshops, and other festival fun. Music for the day was provided by bluegrass performers Clinton Collins and the Creek Boys and Stacy Grubb. The daylong event also featured craft demonstrations in basket making, yarn spinning, and pottery. Food for the day included fried apple pies and an Appalachian-themed lunch. Appalachian authors were also on hand to sale and sign their books, and Appalachian artists to show and sale their works.



BC Theatre presented a celebration of Appalachian storytelling, music and dance in an outdoor drama titled "Mountain Jack" in April. As part of the school's yearlong "Celebration of Appalachia" symposium, "Mountain Jack" was a rollicking production of Appalachian folk tales and rousing mountain music that featured not only outdoor drama, but live music and spontaneous improvisation consistent with the loose oral history traditions of Appalachian storytelling.



The college took its talented music students on the road in March. Students from the school's select voice ensembles, Variations and Praise Singers, who have already sang at prestigious venues like Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center, completed a six-day, 11-event tour, performing at six churches, two Christian schools and other sites across Virginia, including the historic Bruton Parish Episcopal Church in the heart of Colonial Williamsburg.



Award-winning author Rebecca Elswick, creator of the book "Mama's Shoes," spoke on campus in March as part of BC's yearlong symposium, "A Celebration of Appalachia." Elswick, a native of Grundy, Virginia, and the winner of the 2011 Writer's Digest Award, spoke about the process of writing her book and becoming an award-winning debut novelist. The daughter and granddaughter of coal miners, she also shared her thoughts about other Appalachian writers and works. Elswick was the fourth of five speakers in a lecture series for BC's Appalachian symposium.



Dozens of local business and civic leaders gathered on campus in May for the Chick-fil-A Leadercast, a professional development opportunity featuring simulcast speeches from the likes of CNN's Soledad O'Brien, the NFL's Tim Tebow, leadership expert John Maxwell, and other internationally known leaders and speakers. Sponsored by Chick-fil-A and broadcast live from Atlanta, Georgia, to more than 125,000 leaders at 600 venues around the world, including BC, the Leadercast was designed to inspire "every leader at every level" to make better choices and to be leaders of leaders.

Former Music Students Return for Alumni Choir Concert

Former Bluefield College music students joined current BC music scholars for a three-day Alumni Choir Reunion and Concert, March 16-18, featuring recognition for longtime music professor Bryant Moxley, who inspires the voices at BC.

Designed primarily as a reunion weekend for past members of Bluefield College voice ensembles, including Variations, Bluefield Singers and Praise Singers, the weekend gathering included a celebration of 10 years of service from Moxley, who chairs the Department of Music, directs Variations, and teaches aspiring musicians.

"Mox (Professor Moxley) played an important role in my life and in my family's life, so it's nice to celebrate this with him," said Leah Gilbert Harlow, a 2008 alumna who came back to sing and to celebrate with her former professor. "It's great to see him again and to sing again."

During the celebration, Moxley spoke about the pleasure of not only seeing his former students again, but also the joy of teaching at BC over the past 10 years.

"I enjoyed seeing the former students and sharing memories and catching up on what they have been doing since Bluefield College," said Moxley. "Any time I see our students reach for and discover the potential that God has for their life, I'm pleased."

In addition, the Alumni Choir Reunion and Concert weekend provided former students the chance to develop relationships with the current students. Together, they shared stories and traditions and watched videos of past music tours.

"I came just to relive the old days and to see friends I haven't seen in a while," said Jamar Bennett, a 2010 grad, who now helps lead the music ministry at Bland Street United Methodist Church in Bluefield, West Virginia. "I enjoyed the laughs and old jokes and being around friends."

The former and current music students also rehearsed music together in preparation for two weekend performances — a concert on campus on Saturday, March 17 and a recital at Bland Street United Methodist Church on Sunday, March 18.

"This is a great way to reconnect," said Harlow, who now serves as a youth director at First Baptist Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland. "When I was at Bluefield, I wanted to graduate and start my life, but now I miss BC. I loved the atmosphere, the music, the people, the entire package when I was a student. You don't get that experience again."

Other reunions hosted by the Office of Alumni Relations this spring included gatherings in Atlanta at a BC baseball game at Point University; Roanoke at a Rams baseball game at Roanoke College; Williamsburg during a BC student choir performance at historic Bruton Parish Church; Bristol at a Rams baseball game at Virginia Interment; Bluefield during a BC baseball game against UVA-Wise; Fredericksburg at a local restaurant; Richmond during a golf tournament at Stonehenge Golf and Country Club; and Charlotte at a local restaurant.

Former music students join current music students for an Alumni Choir Reunion Concert on campus.



Dr. John H. Sproles (right) creates a scholarship to support BC students from southwest Virginia.

Sproles Scholarship to Aid Students from Southwest Virginia

Students at Bluefield College now have access to even more financial aid, thanks to the generosity of alumnus Dr. John H. Sproles ('39), who established the Alvah Vernon and Bertha Mae Sproles Endowed Memorial Scholarship in honor of his parents and as a means to support BC students.

"My hope is that this scholarship will offer advantages to students in the area where I grew up," said Dr. Sproles, a native of Pocahontas, Virginia, who now lives in Daleville, Virginia. "And, it's particularly important to me that it benefit students who otherwise may have difficulty obtaining their educational goals."

While a student at BC, Dr. Sproles studied biology in preparation for medical college. He also was a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. After BC, he attended the University of Richmond and the Medical College of Virginia, before serving in World War II.

After the war, Dr. Sproles came back to southwest Virginia to practice general medicine. He later returned to the Medical College of Virginia to take a residency in obstetrics and gynecology, before opening an OB/GYN practice in Bluefield, West Virginia. His career also includes medical practice in California. He retired from medicine in 1985.

His parents, for whom the scholarship is named, were lifelong residents of Pocahontas. Alvah Sproles worked for the Pocahontas Fuel Company, where he eventually became president. He also was an active lobbyist for legislation supporting miners. In addition, before his death in 1979, he served as a consultant and bank director.

Bertha Sproles was a strong supporter of her husband's interests and an active civic leader. In fact, she remained involved in community activities in Pocahontas until her death in 1993 at the age of 102.

alumni

HOMECOMING

OCTOBER 26-28 2012

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26

Welcome Parties

Applebee's of Bluefield, Virginia, will be one host location with appetizers provided by the Office of Alumni Relations. Fincastle Country Club will host a second Welcome Party. Hors d'oeuvres will be provided at Fincastle by the Office of Alumni Relations.

Golden Graduates Society Dinner

50-year graduates will be honored on campus during a dinner hosted by President David Olive. All Golden Graduates and alumni are invited to attend.

BC Theatre

Bluefield College theatre students present "Fiddler on the Roof."

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Alumni Association Meeting/Breakfast

Served in the newly renovated dining room in Shott Hall, a breakfast buffet will be offered while the annual meeting is conducted.

Live Scholarship Auction

A live auctioneer makes this auction just as good as a comedy routine with funds being raised for the BC Fund for Scholarships. Trips and weekend get-a-ways, electronics, artwork, jewelry, memorabilia, home décor, and dining gift certificates are just a few of the items that will be available for bid.

Football Tailgating

The tailgating zone opens at 11:00 a.m., and alumni and friends are welcome to bring food, drinks, corn-hole boards, ladder-ball, and anything else to enjoy a tailgate before the first intercollegiate football game for Bluefield College since 1941.

Rams Homecoming Football

Watch the Rams take on Lindsey-Wilson College in the first full season BC Homecoming football game in 70 years, tentatively set for 1:00 p.m. at Mitchell Stadium.

Alumni Awards Reception

Good music, great food, dancing, and the presentation of annual alumni awards are all a part of the Alumni Awards Reception, tentatively set for 6:30 p.m. at The Ramsey in downtown Bluefield, West Virginia.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

Campus Community Worship Service

Closing the weekend will be the annual worship service where alumni, students, faculty, staff, and the local community are invited to worship collectively as one body.

Sunday Brunch

Enjoy a Sunday brunch with current BC students in the newly renovated dining room in Shott Hall.

BC Theatre

Bluefield College theatre students offer a final performance of "Fiddler on the Roof," tentatively set for 2:00 p.m.

SUMMER ALUMNI REUNIONS

While it may not be Homecoming, it is a Bluefield College reunion, and maybe right in your own back yard. Watch for details in the mail for summer alumni reunions in July and August for alumni and friends in Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Martinsville, and Richmond, Virginia.

Or, check out the details as they become available on the BC web site at www.bluefield.edu/reunions.



Visit the Homecoming
2012 web page:
www.bluefield.edu/homecoming2012



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Class Notes

1939

Carl E. Ralston of Statesville, North Carolina, retired from William T. Burnett and Company at the age of 65. Now 92 years old, he still swims and drives his own car.

1941

Joseph P. Davidson of Bluefield, West Virginia, retired in 1986 after serving 40 years as a parts manager for local Ford dealers.

1947

Paul A. Cole of Miami, Florida, retired after a career in the United States and abroad with Poly-Fluff, a florist plastics manufacturer, and Florafax Delivery, an international florist delivery company. His professional career also includes work as an owner and manager of various flower shops. Before Bluefield College, Paul attended Beaver High School in Bluefield, West Virginia, with classmate John Nash, a BC alumnus and 1994 Nobel Prize winner.

1959

Thomas L. Clark of Brentwood, Tennessee, published a historical fictitious book titled *Courage for Living*, which recalls the life and times of Harriet Maxwell Overton during the Civil War in Nashville, Tennessee. The book is available at Nashville bookstores and online at www.amazon.com.

1964

Nancy Austin Spencer of Galax, Virginia, married Charles Frangos on February 25, 2012. Nancy retired from Galax City Schools after teaching the second grade for 35 years.

1965

Dennis L. Null of Mayfield, Kentucky, was appointed chairman of the Kentucky Bar Association's Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Commission, which is charged with administering and regulating all continuing legal education programs and activities for more than 16,700 association members. After BC, Dennis attended the University of Richmond and the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University in Macon, Georgia. He has managed his own law office since 1971, while serving 40 years as a member of the Mayfield Rotary Club. He and his wife, Karen, a retired schoolteacher, are the parents of six children and have seven grandchildren.

1969

Adrian Whitcomb of Newport News, Virginia, was honored in February 2012 as a 2011 *Daily Press* Citizen of the Year for his help in persuading President Barack Obama to designate part of Fort Monroe, a former Army post on the Chesapeake Bay in Hampton, Virginia, as a national monument. He and other board members of Citizens for a Fort Monroe National Park (CFMNP) traveled to Washington, D.C., in March 2012 to receive the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Award from the National Parks Conservation Association. A writer, photographer, and webmaster

for CFMNP, Adrian's work can be seen at FortMonroeCitizens.org.

1977

Dr. Chris A. Brammer of Hampstead, Maryland, was named pastor of Chestnut Ridge (MD) Baptist Church. Chris also serves as senior pastor of Hampstead Baptist Church, where he has worked for the last 25 years, and pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Upperco, Maryland. After BC, he attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Texas and Luther Rice Seminary in Georgia.

1988

Howard A. Mayo of Fancy Gap, Virginia, has been a head basketball coach for 19 years, including nine at Mount Airy (NC) High School. He was named *Roanoke Times* Coach of the Year in 2001 and is a four-time Northwest Conference Coach of the Year. He and his wife, Deborah, have three children: Alex (16), Abby (14), and Adam (9).

1990

Stephen R. Hill of Alta Vista, Virginia, completed 20 years of service with Valspar Corporation in February 2012. He and his wife, April, have three children.

1998



William E. "Billy" Berry, Jr., of Richmond, Virginia, reached a pinnacle in his profession in June of this year when the Tennessee Wesleyan College baseball team he coaches won the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) World Series. The Bulldogs, making their third straight appearance in the NAIA National Tournament with Coach Berry, defeated Rogers State (OK) University in the championship game, 10-6. Before Tennessee Wesleyan, Billy was the head baseball coach for Bluefield College. He was inducted into BC's Sports Hall of Fame in October 2009.

1999

Robert J. "Bob" Walsh of Norfolk, Virginia, is a retired chief of police that continues to share his faith-based messages on character and safety through ventriloquism. Bob just recently returned from his third trip abroad to China, where he and his ventriloquist friends shared character education with children in Sichuan, Kunming and Hong Kong. Check out Bob during his trips to China at www.youtube.com/deputybobj479.



2000

Sarah Hart Fawley and her husband, Jason, of Weyers Cave, Virginia, welcomed their second and third children to the family. Jacob Lee and Elizabeth Kaye joined proud big sister, Rebecca, on October 20, 2011.

James T. "Tommy" Nowlin of Petersburg, Virginia, was promoted in April 2012 to vice president with responsibility for law enforcement for the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Virginia. Tommy, who joined the Federal Reserve Bank in 2007, also holds 25 years of service with the Chesterfield County

(VA) Police Department, where he worked as a commander for criminal investigations, internal affairs, and uniform operations.

2002

Patricia Woodard Synan of Pocahontas, Virginia, published her first book, *Kidd's Country Grocery*. She and her husband, Russell, live on Peel Chestnut Mountain, where they help host an annual Pumpkin Festival.

2005

Mark Sinquefield of Moreland, Georgia, was named director of police for Norfolk Southern in Atlanta, Georgia. Mark began his career with Norfolk Southern in 1985 as a special agent and advanced through a number of positions within the police department. He was the first Norfolk Southern police officer to complete the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy in Quantico, Virginia.

2007

Gina Adkins Vaughan and her husband, **Marcus ('08)**, of Saluda, Virginia, celebrated the birth of a son, William Hunter, in February 2012. Marcus is the youth and children's director for Harmony Grove Baptist Church in Topping, Virginia.

2008

Anthony J. "A.J." Panebianco of Buena Vista, Virginia, was named chief of police for Middleburg, Virginia, after serving as chief of police in Louisa, Virginia. A.J.'s 22 years in law enforcement also includes service for the Town of Warsaw, Virginia, and the City of Buena Vista, Virginia. He is a graduate of the Professional Executive Leadership School (PELS) at the University of Richmond and is a recipient of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police Challenge Award.

19

Obituaries

BC Loses Oldest Living Alumnus

William E. "Bill" Osborne of Bluefield, Virginia, died March 17, 2012. A 1931 Bluefield College graduate, Bill was BC's oldest living alumnus at age 101. Before his death, he served in the United States Army during World War II and worked as a salesman and buyer for Chicago House Furniture Company for 40 years. He was a faithful member of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Bluefield, where he served as lay reader, senior warden, and Sunday School superintendent. Bill also was a member of the American Legion, a 40-year board member of the Bluefield Union Mission, a founding member of the Children's Temple Mission, a charter member of the St. Luke's Hospital Volunteers, a member of the Graham Historical Society, chairman of the Maple Hill Cemetery Board, and an election official for Tazewell (VA) County. In addition, he was well known for having designated Bluefield as "Virginia's Tallest Town," an entry he submitted to a Bluefield, Virginia motto contest that remains the town's slogan today.

1937

Mattie Sue Shrewsbury of Bluefield, West Virginia, died January 4, 2012. Mattie had worked as a secretary at Bluefield Supply Company for 38 years. She was a member of Trinity United Methodist Church in Bluefield, where she was a Circle member. Mattie also was an active member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

1940

Zane Grey Ross of Richmond, Virginia, a husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and, above all, minister of faith, passed away April 12, 2012.

1941

James Pearce Edwards of Naples, Florida, died April 22, 2012. During his career, primarily in southwest Virginia, he was president of Barnette's Auto Parts, White Front Auto Repair, and Counts Automotive. He served on the board of S&S Machinery, First National Bank, and Dominion Bank. He also served on the Virginia Board of Aviation and had two local airports built in Richlands and Abingdon, Virginia. James was named Citizen of the Year by the Richlands Chamber of Commerce in 1974 and won the Excellence in Service Award from Virginia Governor Gerald Baliles for his work in aviation.

Milton Lemmerman of Middletown, New Jersey, died July 10, 2011. Milton was a medical technician for the United States Army during World War II, where he was involved in the liberation of the Philippines. He also was an active member of the Jewish War Veterans, serving as a post commander for many years. His career included 30 years as vice president of H. Corenzwit, a toy wholesaler.

Stephen Austin Phillips of Sun City Center, Florida, passed away November 14, 2011. He was a United States Navy veteran, having served in the Pacific theater, before becoming an assistant professor of mechanical engineering at Virginia Tech and later a mechanical engineer at the University of Virginia. Stephan also was a member of the Civil Air Patrol.

1942

Jesse Franklin Ball of Bluefield, West Virginia, died April 23, 2012. A United States Army veteran of World War II, Jesse began his career working at his father's grocery store in Bluefield before managing the family dairy farm near Midway (WV). He also was a well-known writer of stories about farm characters caught in comical situations demonstrating the ironies of life.

1943

Ernest Saunders, 86, of Wytheville, Virginia, died December 15, 2009. A United States Army

veteran of World War II, Ernest was a prisoner of war in Germany. After BC, he earned a chemical engineering degree from Virginia Tech before beginning a career with the Mead Paper Corporation. He also was an active member of the United Methodist Church, an avid golfer, a devoted Bridge player, and an excellent ballroom dancer.

1948

Lee Roy Brooks, Jr. of Bluefield, West Virginia, died April 17, 2012. Lee Roy served in the United States Army Air Force during World War II as a radio operator. He was a member of the Military Amateur Radio Service (MARS) and a trustee of the Amateur Radio Club of Bluefield. He also worked as a postal carrier in Bluefield for many years and was a member of the Valley View Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Annie Armentrout Potanovich of Vero Beach, Florida, passed away October 15, 2011. A native of Bluefield, West Virginia, Annie retired from Avco Lycoming Company as a payroll processor. She also was a member of the Red Hat Society and Asbury United Methodist Church.

1949

Robert T. "Bob" Barbour of Centennial, Colorado, passed away May 15, 2010. He was a native of Bossevain, Virginia.

James Harry Thompson of Princeton, West Virginia, died March 19, 2012. A native of Bland, Virginia, James studied chemical engineering at Virginia Tech after BC, before beginning a career with DuPont and East Coast Foods. He also was president of the Princeton Rotary Club and a member of the Princeton Jaycees. He spent his latter years of life farming and being around animals.

1950

Jane Lee Musick of Roanoke, Virginia, died January 4, 2012. A United States Air Force veteran, Jane was retired from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Disability Determination Services and was a member of Our Lady of Nazareth Catholic Church.

Clifford Morris Slack of Ravenswood, West Virginia, died November 13, 2010. He was a United States Navy veteran of World War II, having served in the Navy Seabees in the Philippines and China. His career was spent primarily with Kaiser Aluminum. He also was a member of First United Methodist Church, where he sang in the choir and worked on mission projects.

1956

Kenneth A. Burnette of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, died March 16, 2012. As a chaplain, Kenneth was director of pastoral services and clinical pastoral

education at Lancaster General Hospital from 1978 to 1998. He also founded and directed the chaplaincy and the Clinical Pastoral Education program at Altoona (PA) Hospital and served as assistant director of pastoral care for Baptist Hospital and the Bowman-Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. In addition, Kenneth was an adjunct professor at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Charlie Dee Doughton of DeLand, Florida, passed away September 21, 2011. A native of Bluefield, West Virginia, he served in the United States Army and earned a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Virginia Tech before beginning his career with Pratt-Whitney Aircraft and finishing with 32 years as an aerospace engineer for Hercules Industry. Charlie also was a member of First United Methodist Church in DeLand and a former member of the DeLand Country Club.

Curtis R. Dunnivan, 79, of Tazewell, Virginia, died September 14, 2011 after a long battle with cancer. A graduate of Tazewell High School and the University of Richmond, Curtis retired from First Merchants Bank in Richmond, Virginia, before opening an antique and furniture shop. He also was a member, elder and trustee of Tazewell Presbyterian Church.

1968

Margaret Willis Collis of Falls Church, Virginia, passed away March 21, 2012. She is survived by her husband, Thomas ('69), and their children, Crystal and Kenny.

1970

Stephen Ensley Fuller of Windsor, Virginia, died December 6, 2011, after a long career as a schoolteacher at Smithfield (VA) and Windsor high schools. Stephen also was a member of Colosse Baptist Church, the Smithfield Union #18 Free and Accepted Masons, and the Eastern Star Chapter #127.

Friends

Paul E. Grigsby of Gratton, Virginia, died March 24, 2012. Paul was a longtime director of maintenance at Bluefield College. He also was a United States Army Veteran of the Vietnam War, retiring as a Sergeant First Class with 22 years of service. In addition, he was a member of Grace Full Gospel Church in Adria, Virginia, and the American Veterans Association Honor Guard, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the American Legion.

Editor's Note: Bluefield College reserves the right to edit class notes or other content submitted for publication in the Alumni Magazine based on space, grammar, style, content, and other formatting standards. The college also may edit or not include submissions that promote beliefs contrary to the values and mission of the school.

What's new with you?

We want to know what you've been up to. Let us know where you are and what you're doing. Have you been promoted? Did you get a new job? Did you marry or have a new addition to the family? Let us know what's new with you. Complete, detach, and mail this form using the postage paid reply envelope provided with this issue, or e-mail the same information to bcnews@bluefield.edu.



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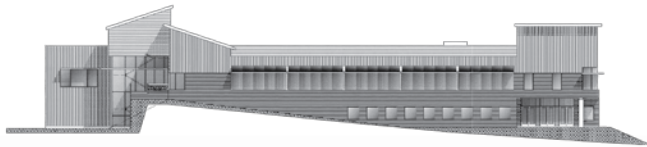
Name: _____ Class Year: _____ Degree: _____

Home Address: _____ E-Mail Address: _____ Phone: _____

Personal News: _____

Career News: _____

ARE YOU UP FOR A CHALLENGE?



On Friday, April 20, Bluefield College transformed its Dome Gymnasium from an athletic facility into a setting of elegant dining to host an "Evening of Philanthropy." Designed to give the college an opportunity to thank its supporters and to showcase new BC initiatives, the event featured regionally recognized fundraiser and speaker Kyle Hauth, who spoke about the benefits of philanthropy.

However, the real excitement of the evening came when President David Olive and Board Chair Julie Johnson joined R.W. "Buz" Wilkinson, president of the Hugh I. Shott, Jr. Foundation, in announcing the Foundation's \$1 million challenge grant to Bluefield College for construction of phase one of BC's Campus and Community Wellness Center (CCWC).

Phase one of the CCWC is a \$4 million project. With the generous gift from the Shott Foundation and additional gifts and pledges from other alumni and friends, the college hopes to reach the \$4 million fundraising goal by December 31 of this year to begin phase one construction, which will include multiple locker rooms and a cardio and weight training center.

The complete Campus and Community Wellness Center is designed to be built in three phases. In addition to the locker rooms and cardio and weight training center, the facility will include a new competitive gymnasium for seating up to 1,000 spectators, a recreation gymnasium, indoor walking track, multi-use classrooms, coaches' offices, and a natatorium. The building will have approximately 60,000 square feet, and the total cost of all three phases will be \$14 million.

Are you up for a challenge? Join us in building the historic state-of-the-art Campus and Community Wellness

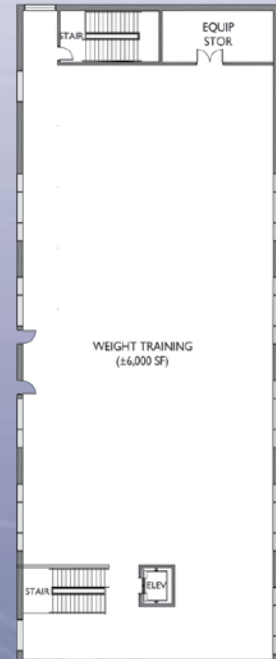
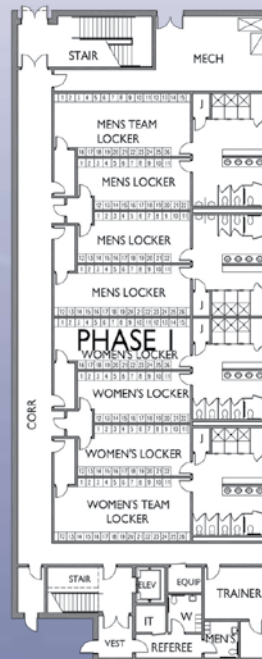
Center. Make a gift or pledge today:

www.bluefield.edu/ccwc



The CCWC is the centerpiece project of Bluefield College's *Capturing the Imagination* campaign, which is the largest fundraising campaign in BC history with a goal of \$20 million dollars for the CCWC, new academic and athletic programs, renovations to existing campus facilities, endowment, and the Annual Fund.

Help us "capture the imagination" first by meeting the Shott Foundation's million dollar challenge. Make a gift or pledge today by visiting www.bluefield.edu/ccwc, or by contacting Ruth Blankenship, vice president for institutional advancement, by e-mail at rblankenship@bluefield.edu or by phone at 276-326-4556.



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Join the 167 Club

As part of the *Capturing the Imagination* campaign, donors who make a gift commitment of \$10,000 or more over the next five years are included in a special campaign giving club – the 167 Club.

A gift of \$10,000 for the next five years is the equivalent of only \$167 per month. \$167 per month x 12 months = \$2,004 per year x 5 years = \$10,020.

Join today: www.bluefield.edu/imagination



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Remember Bluefield College in your will and estate plans.

Mark Your Calendar

June • July

Summer sports and fine arts camps. Visit www.bluefield.edu/camps for details.

July 14

Greater Charlottesville Alumni Reunion at noon at the Gentry Farm, 1814 Ashton Church Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

August 20

11th Annual Golfers' Challenge, Pipestem (WV) Resort State Park.

August 25

Rams football 2012 season opener vs. the University of Pikeville, Mitchell Stadium, 6 p.m. First BC intercollegiate football game since 1941.

October 26-28

Homecoming 2012, featuring the return of football, tailgating, golf, a Golden Graduates Reunion, BC Theatre, the Scholarship Auction, alumni awards, and a campus worship service.

To transform imagination into reality, Bluefield College is embarking on the largest fundraising effort in its history. **Capturing the Imagination** will put vitally needed resources behind priority projects.



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to support
tomorrow.

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