

Greetings from the President and the Executive Director



Blaise King

As we move toward the close of another school year, I want to take a moment to recognize the incredible work each of you does every day. We all play a vital role in preparing students for high-demand careers, equipping them with real-world skills, and driving economic growth in our state. Your dedication and passion make a difference in the lives

of countless students, families, and communities.

We have a responsibility to teach skills and follow curriculum and guidelines, but that's where it stops; it's about innovation. We're in a space that is evolving rapidly, and the future workforce depends on how well we prepare our students today. I want to encourage you to embrace new ideas, integrate emerging technologies, and continue to refine your programs to meet industry demands. As you look to be innovative, I also want to encourage you to challenge the status quo, explore new ways to engage and inspire your students, and make new connections. Find ways to be involved that you haven't been before. Engage with business and industry on a deeper level. Most importantly, never lose sight of the passion that brought you to this profession. The work we do matters – not just in classrooms and labs and shops, but in shaping the future of your students and Mississippi's economic future. Your influence extends far beyond graduation; you are developing the next generation of leaders, problem-solvers, and innovators.

To continue growing and supporting our mission of providing leadership in developing an educated, prepared, and competitive workforce, I want to invite you to join us at the MS-CTE Summer Conference (www.rcu.msstate.edu/professional-learning/events). This event is more than just professional development – it's an opportunity to connect with fellow educators, exchange ideas, and gain fresh perspectives that will strengthen our work. Whether you're a seasoned CTE professional or new to the field, this conference will provide invaluable insights, resources, and inspiration.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to our students and the future of CTE. I look forward to seeing you at the summer conference and working alongside you to keep CTE in Mississippi strong, relevant, and forward-thinking.

On behalf of the MS ACTE state office and executive board, I want to thank you for being a member of ACTE! I am excited to share that Mississippi was once again presented the national Quality Association Standards (QAS) award at the Vision Conference in San Antonio, TX in December 2024. We had seven voting delegates attend the national business meeting on behalf of our state (see photo). MS ACTE appreciates all those who attend the national conference on behalf of our state.

Congratulations goes to the 2025 MS ACTE Excellence Award winners announced in February by our Awards Committee. Our state winners will go on to represent Mississippi at the Region IV Conference on April 23-25 in Oklahoma City, OK. The link to register for the conference is available on the Region IV website at www.okacte.org/2025-regioniv.



Congratulations also goes to all of the National ACTE Achieve 100 Award winners who were announced by the national ACTE office at the National Policy Seminar. The list of award winners will also be posted in the April edition of the Techniques magazine. Mississippi was well represented with many schools who completed the process to be recognized at the national level. As a reminder we will recognize all schools with 100 percent membership at the Summer Conference this year.

Please be sure to mark your calendars to attend our MS ACTE Summer Conference July 14-16. The conference will once again be at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Convention Center. The MS ACTE

State Executive Board leaders along with the Mississippi Department of Education and the RCU are planning a great conference to meet CTE professionals' needs. Registration for the conference is now open on the RCU's website located on the professional learning tab.

Finally, the resolutions committee each year creates resolutions recognizing our retiring or deceased members during the past year at the annual Summer Conference. The Resolutions Submission Form has been created for members to submit information regarding MS ACTE retirees and/or deceased members. The information gathered will be used exclusively to recognize their service during the upcoming summer conference. It is our earnest desire to celebrate the lasting impact these individuals have made on the CTE community and express our deepest appreciation for their contributions. The deadline to submit members for Resolutions is May 2.

As always if I can be of assistance regarding any of your membership needs, please email mississippiacte@gmail.com. I look forward to seeing you all in Biloxi in July.

Educator Preparation Pathway

Submitted by: Connie Nutt

The Benton County CTC embarked on the 2024-2025 school year with a new program: Educator Prep. Ms. Connie Nutt, a veteran educator in Benton County, is the instructor. Students have observed and evaluated classrooms across the district, followed by teacher-led discussions about what was observed and how each experience affects the learner and a conducive environment.

“The students decorated for our yearly Halloween Event and invited the elementary students from the district to enjoy the festivities. We collaborated with the art teacher at Ashland High School, Mrs. Victoria Fowler, to help and assist with decorating and giving out candy,” Ms. Nutt explained.

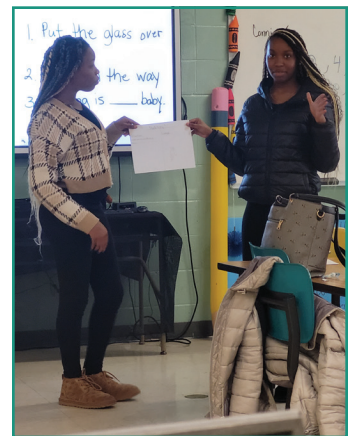
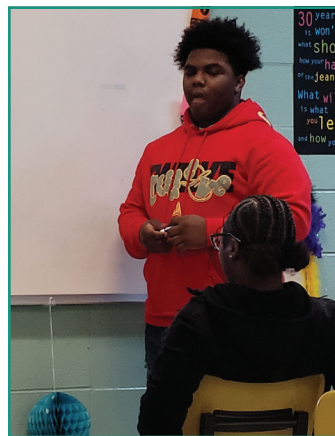
Ms. Nutt added, “The ED Prep students read and discussed Ron Clark’s Essential 55, leading us to create our own classroom procedures and expectations. The book also sets a precedence for success, not only in the classroom but in life as well.”

Queen Harge, a student at Ashland High School, stated, “We are creating a professional portfolio with our philosophy of education, resume, accomplishments, and research, which will all be used for future interviews and teaching opportunities.”

Ms. Nutt stated, “We are currently tutoring k-5 grades at Ashland Elementary with Mission Acceleration “Science of Reading” program provided through Ole Miss. Ed Prep students become Academic Guides and tutor their very own group of students to help elementary students who are struggling in reading to advance to a higher reading level. The Academic Guides tutor twice per week through the duration of April.”

In conclusion, the Educator Prep program at Benton County CTC has made significant

strides in its inaugural year, fostering growth, collaboration, and leadership among its students. Through hands-on experiences, community engagement, and a strong emphasis on professional development, the program is shaping future educators who are prepared for teaching careers and equipped with the skills and compassion needed to make a lasting impact in the classroom and beyond. As Ms. Nutt aptly stated, the student’s educational and emotional growth is a testament to the program’s success and its potential to inspire excellence in education for years to come.



Forrest County AHS Collaboration Activity

Forrest County Agricultural High School CTE classes collaborate to enhance learning experiences throughout the school year. One of the most recent collaborations was between Law & Public Safety and Health Science. Staff Sgt. Christopher Smith, of the United States Army, was invited to lead PT with the LPS II class. Throughout the PT session, Health Science II students utilized their skills checking vital signs of the LPS II students. Students commented afterward that the activity gave them a sense of what to expect when they “entered the real world of work.”



Forrest County AHS – DECA District Competition

Mr. Jason Wheat, Business, Marketing and Finance instructor at Forrest County Agricultural High School, sponsored DECA members to participate in District Competition at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in January.

Front row (L-R) Lauren Westfaul, Sarai Villasana, Ramiyah Clark. Back row (L-R) Jadyn Bowles, Summer Shelton, Sierra Ratley, Yuliana Perez, Elizabeth Wheat and Alivia Byrd. Jadyn placed first in Hotel & Lodging Management, Alivia placed third in Human Resource Management, Sierrra placed third in Entrepreneurship, Ramiyah & Sarai placed fourth in Buying & Merchandising Team, and Yuli & Elizabeth placed fifth in Travel & Tourism Marketing Team.

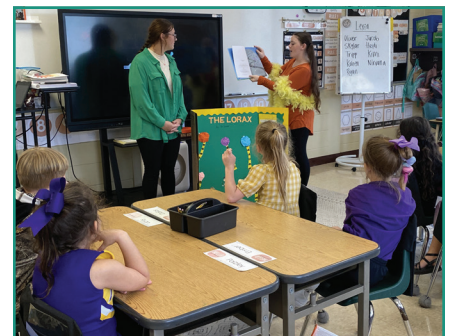
Congratulations to all who participated and placed!



Future Educators Share Love of Reading

Submitted by: Debra Baird

Lamar County Teacher Academy students used the Halloween season to promote reading for the first graders at Purvis Lower Elementary. On Friday, Nov. 1, the high school students from across the district, dressed up as characters from some favorite children's books in order to share the love of reading with the first graders. Breleigh Adkins, a junior from Purvis High School, enjoyed "seeing the kids' faces and hearing them laugh about the books and our costumes." The Teacher Academy students gained some valuable experience by preparing reading boards and presenting the children's books to classes of elementary age students. For an added element of fun, the first graders also had the opportunity to "trick or treat" from the high schoolers as they displayed their reading boards on the sidewalk.



Culinary Arts Students Give Back to Our Community

Submitted by: Billy Carroll

This Thanksgiving season, our Culinary Arts program partnered with Good Brothers Seafood to prepare for their First Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway. Our talented students and staff prepared 22 turkeys and 120 pounds of chicken, helping to make this incredible community event a success!



Good Brothers Seafood hosted the Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway on November 28th, serving delicious meals to the community until all the food was gone. The best part? Everything was absolutely free! Everyone who attended was able to enjoy an amazing meal.

We are proud of our students' hard work and grateful for the opportunity to have supported such a meaningful event. Special thanks to Good Brothers Seafood for their generosity and partnership in spreading holiday joy!



Early Childhood Education Students Spread Holiday Cheer With Toys for Tots

Submitted by: Billy Carroll

This holiday season, the Early Childhood Education students demonstrated the true spirit of giving by participating in the Toys for Tots initiative. The students collected and donated toys to bring joy to children in need, ensuring they experience the magic of Christmas.

Under the guidance of their instructor - Mrs. Kenya Smith- Key, the students rallied together to gather a variety of toys, from stuffed animals to educational games, that will brighten the holiday season for local children. Their efforts reflect not only their dedication to their studies but also their commitment to making a positive impact in their community.

Through this project, students gained hands-on experience in organizing a

Itawamba CTC Students Document Car Show

Submitted by: Andy Nichols

The Digital Media and Multimedia students recently took photos and conducted interviews at the 15th Annual Car Show at the Itawamba Career & Technical Center.



meaningful initiative while learning valuable lessons about empathy and giving back.

By participating in this project, they not only brought smiles to countless children but also showcased the values of compassion and service that we strive to instill in all of our students.



Business Students Shine at DECA District Competition

Submitted by: Billy Carroll

Our Career and Technical Education (CTE) Business, Marketing, and Finance students showcased their skills at DECA's district competition, held at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College in Biloxi, MS. Led by their dedicated instructor, Ms. Kamryn Tart, the students delivered outstanding performances, earning impressive results.

Six students represented our school, with five of them placing in their respective events.

Emilee Barnes: 4th Place - Principles of Entrepreneurship, De'Asia Burkes: 3rd Place - Principles of Hospitality and Tourism, Johnathan Jackson: 6th Place - Retail Merchandising, Raegan Ware: 4th Place - Apparel & Accessories Marketing Series, and Jameria Zinnimon: 6th Place - Food Marketing Series.



All participating students have qualified for the state competition, a testament to their hard work and the strength of our Business, Marketing, and Finance program.

We are incredibly proud of these students and their accomplishments. Their success reflects not only their dedication, but also the commitment

of Ms. Tart and our Business program to prepare students for excellence in their future careers.

Congratulations to all participants, and best of luck at state!

Employability Soft Skills

Submitted by Ms. Eunice Polk

On December 16, 2024, Ms. Eunice Polk's Introduction to Career Academy classes at Vicksburg High School celebrated the earning of their Certificates of Completion in Employability Soft Skills and Energy Micro-Credentials.

The Employability Soft Skills certificate, a collaboration with the National Technical Honor Society, and the Energy certificate, a partnership with Dominion Energy, were both completed through the Major Clarity platform. Dominion Energy emphasized the phrase "Action Speaks Louder" in recognition of the program's impact.

To earn the Employability Soft Skills Micro-Credential, students completed 19 modules covering 6 core competencies and 22 sub-competencies. They demonstrated mastery by achieving a score of 80% or higher on 13 knowledge checks, and scored 80% or greater on the final assessment.

The Energy Micro-Credential required students to complete 16 modules focused on 13 core competencies. Mastery was demonstrated through scores of 80% or higher on 6 knowledge checks, with all students achieving at least an 80% score on the final assessment.

The following students also earned their certificates: Shanique Butler, Jayden Morris, Eduilianny Urdaneta-Contreras, King Bland, Markeia Carson, Jaleia Estenze-Irvine, Layla Johnson, Haydee Machado, Gamari'ay Parker, Angel Scott, Jaiden Thomas, Camaren Anderson, Charleston



Dating Abuse Prevention

Submitted by: Janetria Smith

The Family Dynamics students from Vicksburg High School led by Ms. Janetria Smith participated in the Dating Abuse Prevention course taught by Ms. Damoise Brown. She discussed the signs of abuse among teens and how to protect themselves. The students learned that anyone can be a victim no matter the gender or background.



Brown, Janiya Carson, Montrell Cook, Mariae Cooper, Jordan Cruthirds, Deriyah Dixon, Isaiah Drake, JaKira Galimore, Lakira Galimorew, Lamarous Igbokwe-Martin, Malik Jackson, Anaiyah Kelly, Kamyra Kelly, Dabrielle McCauley, Joye Minor, Lorenzo Reed, Valerie Wheeler, MaK-ennli Ross, Kolten Thomas and James Rowell.

Pictured left to right is Ronald Williams, Za'myia Wilson, Ta'niya Sims, Eric Tolliver and Eriyah Foster

Pontotoc Ridge Career and Technology Center First in State to Host Ashley Furniture's Mobile Skills Lab

Submitted by: Beth McCuller

Pontotoc Ridge Career and Technology Center (PRCTC) in partnership with Ashley Furniture Industries, LLC, proudly inaugurated the Mobile Skills Laboratory. The ceremony, attended by Governor Tate Reeves, school faculty, Ashley team members, and community members, signals a new era of educational opportunities for local students. Hosted at PRCTC, the lab aims to serve nearly 350 students each year.

This state-of-the-art mobile classroom commenced operations in the 2024-2025 academic year, offering specialized training in electronics, manufacturing, automation, and robotics. Its primary objective is to equip students with critical hands-on skills necessary for their future careers. PRCTC will utilize this resource for its Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering, Architecture, and Drafting programs. Students enrolled in these courses will engage in practical modules within the lab, preparing them to obtain industry-recognized credentials through the Smart Automation Certification Alliance (SACA).

In 2018, Ashley invested over \$3 million to develop this custom Mobile Skills Lab, offering over 300 competency-based courses for high school credit in STEM fields such as electrical wiring, programming, and mechanical fabrication. This initiative is focused on aligning education with the skills needed in today's job landscape. Since 2018, the Mobile Skills Lab has positively impacted over 1,000 students in Wisconsin through partnerships with educational institutions. The previous host, Whitehall School District, recently opened the Whitehall Regional Emerging Technology Laboratory, showcasing the importance of evolving educational opportunities. Ron Wanek, Founder and Chairman of Ashley Furniture Industries, stated that by bringing advanced technology directly to students, the program fosters a new generation of innovators and leaders.

Governor Tate Reeves highlighted the importance of collaboration between schools and industry leaders in providing students with necessary tools for success, which enhances educational outcomes and strengthens the workforce. As the Mobile Skills Lab begins its journey in Mississippi, it aims to nurture well-prepared, innovative leaders, underscoring the significant impact of collaboration between educational institutions and industry for individual and economic growth. Todd Wanek, President and CEO of Ashley Furniture Industries, affirmed the commitment to expanding these opportunities for students in Mississippi, ensuring their readiness for the evolving job market.

Amanda Wood, Instructor at PRCTC, Ronald Wanek, Ashley Furniture Industries Founder, Todd Wanek, CEO, Governor Tate Reeves, and Brock Puckett, Pontotoc County Schools Superintendent, cut the ribbon on the new Ashley Furniture Mobile Skills Lab surrounded by PRCTC students along with leaders in industry, education and the community.



Advanced Manufacturing students: Brody Ross (left) and John Robert Wortham (right) along with their instructor, Phillip Robbins, demonstrate a skill for Governor Reeves



**Inside look at the Mobile Skills Lab*



**PRCTC Student Ambassadors pictured with Governor Tate Reeves*



Constructing Strong Foundations: Grand Gulf Nuclear Plant Industry Visit

Written by: Dr. Tonya Drake

Students in the Vicksburg Warren Career & Technical Center visited the Grand Gulf Nuclear Plant, located in Port Gibson, Mississippi. Grand Gulf is one of the largest nuclear power plants in the United States, and an important site for students learning about energy production, nuclear technology, and environmental science. The Grand Gulf Nuclear Plant provides a rare opportunity for students to witness firsthand how nuclear energy is generated, explore the technology behind it, and understand its role in today's energy landscape. During the industry visit students participated in interactive exhibits that allowed them to design, build, and test their own scaffolding structures. This hands-on activity helped students connect real-world engineering practices involved in nuclear plant operations with fundamental concepts of structural engineering, material science, and team collaboration.



Whether it's fostering a passion for engineering, raising awareness about energy sustainability, or inspiring future careers in nuclear science, the experience at Grand Gulf provided students with a powerful educational experience that connects classroom learning with real-world applications.