RPCC
RIVER PARISHES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE RIVER REPORTER

RPCC Student Wins Education Honor

Nisha Hebert was honored by the Phi Theta Kappa service organization on Wednesday, Feb. 10, for her scholastic excellence and academic achievements. Hebert was named to the PTK All Louisiana Academic Team. Phi Theta Kappa is the international honor society for two-year colleges.

Hebert was recognized at a ceremony and luncheon put on by the LCTCS and Phi Theta Kappa. The ceremony honored each of the 20 All Louisiana Academic Team members in the state.

"I'm very proud of Nisha," said RPCC Chancellor Dr. Joe Ben Welch. "Nisha has worked hard to achieve this academic honor, and she deserves to be recognized. Honors like this speak well of Nisha, and also of RPCC."

Hebert, who lives in French Settlement, is currently on the Chancellor's list and the Dean's list. She is also an RPCC Foundation scholarship recipient. She has just been named vice president of the PTK chapter at RPCC. Hebert already has earned an associate degree in general studies. She is now working toward a degree in elementary education and has a 3.95 GPA.

"It's an honor to have been selected for this All Academic Team," said Hebert. "I plan to teach fourth or fifth graders somewhere close to French Settlement, so I take my education very seriously. Thanks to PTK for this honor."

The All State Team is a program started by PTK, the American Association of Community Colleges and USA Today. The program recognizes high academic achievement in students attending community and technical colleges. PTK also provides opportunities for individual growth and development through participation in honors, leadership, service and fellowship programming. The students are recognized by the awarding of medallions, certificates and scholarships. The LCTCS hosts the All Academic Team Ceremony each year to recognize the students selected for the team.

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Nisha Hebert poses with state Rep. M.J. "Mert" Smiley and Chancellor Dr. Joe Ben Welch after receiving her Phi Theta Kappa All Louisiana Academic Team certificate.

Chancellor's Corner

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the River Reporter, RPCC's quarterly newsletter. This newsletter represents a heightened effort to communicate with all of our stakeholders, from students, to alumni, to members of the general public in the river region. We have a lot of good stories to tell, and a lot of positive things happening at our college.

First of all, RPCC has entered the world of social media. Look for us on Facebook, by doing a search on the site for "River Parishes Community College." The RPCC

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Faculty News

Three at RPCC Receive Awards at Statewide LCTCSConference

Three RPCC employees were honored on March 26, for their efforts on behalf of the college. Dr. Iris Henry, Kim Dudley and Yvonne Butler were recognized at the annual conference of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System.

Henry, an assistant professor of biology and chemistry, has taught at RPCC for 5 years. She won the Outstanding Faculty Award for her leadership in service learning projects.

Henry holds a Master of Science in Chemistry from Long Island University in Brooklyn, NY and a doctorate in podiatric medicine from Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine in Philadelphia, Pa. Before coming to RPCC, Henry worked in the medical field in New Jersey and Philadelphia.

At RPCC, Henry teaches biology and chemistry, providing instruction for pre-nursing and general education students. The active contributions Dr. Henry has made to service learning have led to three consecutive selections for the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Director of Financial Aid Kim Dudley won the Outstanding Professional Staff Member Award. She has been an employee of RPCC for a total of 7 years. Dudley was the first director of that department, hired when RPCC opened its doors in 1999.

In 2004, Dudley initiated the student loan program at the college. Also, under her guidance, RPCC's financial aid department became the first of any such office in Louisiana to begin direct lending.

Kim Dudley, Dr. Iris Henry and Yvonne Butler pose with Dr. Welch after recieving their awards at the LCTCS Annual Conference.

Dudley is a graduate of the LCTCS Leadership Development Institute Class of 2005-2006 and was voted LOSFA Woman of the year in 2006.

Dudley holds a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in counseling from Louisiana State University.

The Outstanding Professional Support Staff Award for RPCC went to custodian Yvonne Butler. Butler is a four-year employee of RPCC, and a 15-year veteran of LCTCS. During RPCC's initial days in 1999, Butler routinely came to campus to assist with upkeep after a full day of work at the Louisiana Technical College - Ascension campus. Butler transferred to RPCC in 2006 from LTC-Ascension.

She maintains the cleanliness and appearance of the college. Butler is a certified floor technician and takes pride in performing those duties. Butler is thought of as a very dependable employee who goes the extra mile for the faculty, students and staff of RPCC.

GOT A RED HOT NEWS ITEM? PLEASE MAKE SUGGESTIONS FOR ITEMS IN THE NEXT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER TO STEVEN JOHNSTON AT SJOHNSTON@RPCC.EDU.

Faculty and Staff News

Dr. Ben Nabors, assistant professor of English, plays bagpipes outside Building A on March 17, St. Patrick's Day.

New Employees at RPCC

Dianna Gilbert started at RPCC on Jan. 4 as an admissions recruiter. She is a graduate of White Castle High School and received her Bachelor of Science in Biology from Southern University. Before working at RPCC, she was a Member Services Representative at Keypoint Federal Credit Union in Port Allen. One of her first challenges was taking over many of the tasks which normally were done by Jennifer Kleinpeter, who is currently on maternity leave. Dianna says she's loving every minute of RPCC.

Brandon Keller joined RPCC March 15 as the new Public Information Coordinator. Brandon is a Vacherie native and a recent graduate of Nicholls State University, with a bachelor's degree in mass communication. He served as editor-in-chief of the campus newspaper for two years and interned in the Washington, DC office of Congressman Charlie Melancon. Brandon looks forward to informing faculty, staff, students and the community about all the great things happening at RPCC.

RPCC Participates in College Goal Sunday

For the first time, RPCC served as a host for the statewide College Goal Sunday event. College Goal Sunday is a free event sponsored by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance. At the event, prospective college students got help filling out Free Application for Federal Student Aid – FAFSA – forms.

Filling out FAFSA forms is seen as a daunting task for many high-school seniors and others looking to start a college career. Those who participated in College Goal Sunday were able to take advantage of the expertise of college financial aid professionals - namely Kim Dudley and Allison Vicknair - while filling out the forms.

College Goal Sunday was conducted at locations around Louisiana on Sunday, Feb. 21, from 2 to 4 p.m. RPCC was one of 16 participating locations around the state.

Participants did not have to pledge to attend RPCC in order to take advantage of the free assistance. All in all, over 15 families participated.

Dean of Students and Enrollment Management Allison Vicknair, and Director of Financial Aid Kim Dudley, take time out to pose for a photo at RPCC's College Goal Sunday event.

Student News

RPCC Earns National Recognition on President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll

RPCC has been named to the 2009 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. This honor roll is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning and civic engagement.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, which administers the annual Honor Roll award, recognized more than 700 colleges and universities for their impact on issues from poverty and homelessness to environmental justice. On campuses across the country, thousands of students joined their faculty to develop innovative programs and projects to meet local needs using the skills gained in their classrooms. Business students served as consultants to budget-strapped nonprofits and businesses, law students volunteered at legal clinics, and dozens of others organized anti-hunger campaigns.

"This is a great honor for RPCC," said Chancellor Joe Ben Welch. "We place a high priority on service-learning here because it's the right thing to do. It's great to see that others recognize our efforts as well."

The Honor Roll includes six colleges and universities that are recognized as Presidential Awardees, with an additional 115 named to the Distinction List and 621 schools named as Honor Roll members. Honorees are chosen based on a series of selection factors including the scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

RPCC students Byron Lucas and Felicia McGee hand bags of clothing destined for Haiti, through a window in Building E, to a Salvation Army worker. Students began collecting clothing items as part of an academic service-learning project.

During the 2008-2009 school year, 237 RPCC students participated in a variety of service-learning projects. Students in an African-American studies course helped at the "Juneteenth" celebration at the African-American Museum in Donaldsonville. Microbiology students were instrumental in organizing the college's March 11 community fair.

River Parishes students in biology and computer science classes collaborated on Project HEAL, while students from several other disciplines collaborated on a Three-Plus Circle of Service grant. Both of those projects were designed to increase the awareness of emergency preparedness to K-12 students in Ascension and St. John the Baptist parishes.

One RPCC student, Todd Borne, was awarded a grant which was used to assist the Ascension Council on Aging in setting up their computer lab and computer instruction. Several Computer Science classes assisted with web page and brochure designs for some area businesses.

The Corporation oversees the Honor Roll in collaboration with the federal Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Campus Compact and the American Council on Education.

Find us on Facebook

Student News

RPCC Community Health Fair a Success

Twenty-three community agencies and health-related companies helped RPCC provide its 2nd Annual Community Health Fair on March 11.

Staff from St. Elizabeth Hospital drew blood; hearing specialists from LSU's Auditory Department gave hearing tests. Our Lady of the Lake College gave physical therapy consultations, and information on everything from organ donation to gym memberships was available as students and staff visited the vendor booths.

Sharon Lagarde, who teaches microbiology and anatomy, coordinated the event with help from RPCC's Student Government Association, Phi Theta Kappa honor society, and her biology students.

Lagarde teaches several courses which are pre-requisites for students working toward degrees in nursing or other medical careers.

RPCC thanks all of the agencies and companies who participated in the health fair. The college especially wants to recognize Murray's, Payless, and Tureau's Grocery Stores for donating food for this event, and Pepsi and McDonald's for donating the soft drinks and ice.

HAVE YOU FOUND US ON FACEBOOK YET?

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 21:	RPCC Day at the Legislature
May 6:	RPCC Day at the Legislature
May 7:	Last day of classes
May 10 - 15:	Final exams
May 21:	Early registration payment deadline
June 1:	First day of summer classes/Last day to add classes
July 4:	Independence Day holiday

RPCC student Tim Atkins listens as a health-care practitioner explains the Body Mass Index calculator.

Nolan Boudreaux watches as a nurse from OLOL College draws blood for a blood test.

The Rest of the Story

chancellor's corner, cont.

site on Facebook is updated almost daily with news, links, photos, and even the occasional video.

Also, this semester saw yet another record enrollment. With almost 1,800 students enrolled, we have the most students for any Spring semester since we opened our doors in 1999. Thanks and congratulations to the Student Services department and to all who assist them. Let's see if we can break the record once again for the Fall 2010 semester!

Congratulations are in order for Dr. Iris Henry, Kim Dudley and Yvonne Butler. They were rewarded for their hard work and dedication to River Parishes Community College on Friday, March 26 at the Louisiana Community and Technical College System's annual conference in New Orleans. Dr. Henry won the Outstanding Faculty Award for her work with service learning. Kim won the Outstanding Staff Award, for her work in establishing the financial aid departments at RPCC. Yvonne won the Outstanding Support Staff award for always going the extra mile to keep the campus beautiful and clean.

This semester, RPCC participated as a host for College Goal Sunday. Future students came to RPCC on Feb. 21 for assistance in understanding and filling out federal financial aid forms. The statewide event was a success, and RPCC gained good exposure by participating.

In the future, hopefully the near future, we will be updating you on some exciting changes to RPCC. We'll be delivering information on these possible changes as soon as the details develop. Until then, thanks for everything you do, students, faculty and staff. Keep up the good work.

Dr. Joe Ben Welch

PTK, cont.

Students were presented their medallions of achievement by local legislators. Hebert's medallion was presented by state Rep. M.J. "Mert" Smiley, R-Port Vincent. Commissioner of Higher Education Sally Clausen also attended and addressed the students.

After completing coursework at RPCC, Hebert plans to enroll in Southeastern Louisiana University to study education. Because of the 2+2 articulation tied to the Associate of Science in Teaching degree, Hebert will automatically begin as a junior at SLU.

Hebert is married and has one child.

RPCC students enjoy the outside air between classes on the first day of the Spring 2010 semester.

Foundation Annual Campaign Begins with Bang

The RPCC Foundation began its Annual Fund Campaign in March with a bang. Thus far, the campaign has met with great success, having secured donations from almost all of the individuals and businesses which were asked. The Foundation has set a campaign goal of $100,000 for the year.

Now, more than ever, Louisiana needs an educated and well-trained workforce. Statistics show that only 8% of Louisiana high school graduates go to community or technical colleges to learn the skills and gain the experience necessary to fill industry jobs that are vacant TODAY. Statistics further show that Louisiana's business and industries will need 55% of the total workforce to have 1 to 2 years of specialized education by 2014. Please help RPCC stand ready to fill this gap and train tomorrow's workforce today.

The Annual Fund Campaign is a great opportunity for alumni, staff, faculty and residents of the river region to help make RPCC one of America's leading community colleges. RPCC attracts students from 19 parishes; Acadia, Ascension, Assumption, EBR, Iberville, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Vernon and WBR. A donation to RPCC will bring a future return on the investment in these areas.

The Foundation would like to thank the initial donors; Atmos Energy, EATEL, GSA Engineering, Inc., Ms. Vivian Guidry - in honor of Charles Guidry, - CF Industries, River Region Chamber of Commerce, and all those Board members, faculty, staff and individuals who have donated anonymously.

Library News

April is National Poetry Month

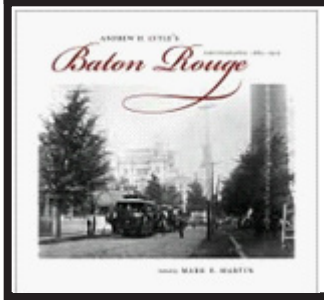
April is National Poetry Month. Look for displays and events in the Library. Visit http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/41 to learn more about this celebration inaugurated by the Academy of American Poets in 1996.

The library will be open on Saturday May 1, 8, and 15 from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. for final exams. Proctored testing services will also be available on these dates at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.. Visit http://library.rpcc.edu/testing.html for complete information on proctored testing services.

New Services Added to Library Website

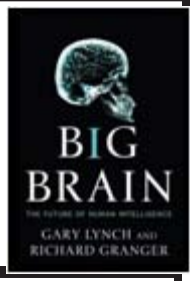
The RPCC library website will soon feature two new services, AtoZMapsOnline, and Global Road Warrior. The online map service will allow students to download about 145,000 maps, royalty-free. That includes topographic maps and scientific maps of any area of the globe. The Global Road Warrior service will give students access to information - society and culture, business culture, travel, maps, etc. - about any country in the world. Each service will require a username and password, which will be provided by the library when the services come available.

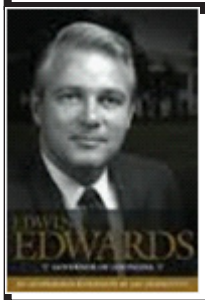
What's New at the LRC?



Andrew D. Lytle's Baton Rouge: Photographs, 1863-1910 edited by Mark E. Martin

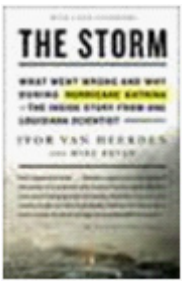
Big Brain: The Origins and Future of Human Intelligence by Gary Lynch and Richard Granger





Edwin Edwards: Governor of Louisiana by Leo Honeycutt

The Girls Come Marching Home: Stories of Women Warriors Returning from the War in Iraq by Kirsten Holmstedt



The Storm: What Went Wrong and Why During Hurricane Katrina: The Inside Story from One Louisiana Scientist by Ivor van Heerden and Mike Bryan

Forecast: The Surprising and Immediate Consequences of Climate Change by Stephen Faris

Foundation News

Look for Online Foundation Giving Soon

Soon, anyone who wishes to give to the River Parishes Community College Foundation will be able to give online, via the Foundation's website. Foundation board members approved the move at their March meeting.

RPCC Foundation, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization established to provide assistance to RPCC by promoting the educational and cultural welfare of the college and its facilities.

The RPCC Foundation Board of Directors is comprised of community leaders from the parishes surrounding RPCC. The Foundation's purpose is to raise funds for scholarships and other worthy projects on campus. The individual board members are very active; they volunteer as well as make resources available from their respective companies.

Only four months into the year, significant strides have been made toward the 2010 goal of $100,000.

The Foundation thanks those who have donated in 2010 thus far: Atmost Energy, GSA Engineering, Inc., Ms. Vivian Guidry, CF Industries, and the River Region Chamber of Commerce. Be sure to look for additional significant contributions in the near future!

For additional information on becoming involved, contact any of the members or the Foundation liaison, Brandon Keller, at (225) 644-5750 or bkeller@rpcc.edu.

RPCC Foundation Board

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River Parishes Community College
P.O. Box 310
Sorrento, LA 70778

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