



Ozarka College

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Ozarka First - Culinary Student Wins Gold at National Competition

For the first time in the history of Ozarka College competing at the national level SkillsUSA Conference, one of its culinary arts students brought home a gold medal. Kimberlee Bledsoe of Bald Knob (White County) competed and won first place in the post-secondary Food and Beverage Service competition against other students from across the United States.

After winning Gold medals in their divisions at the Arkansas Association of SkillsUSA Leadership and Skills Conference, which was held in Hot Springs in April, three Ozarka College culinary arts and hospitality students competed at the 41st Annual National SkillsUSA Championships in Kansas City from June 20-24. Bledsoe also competed at the national level in 2004 where she placed fourth in her division.

Sean Reynolds of Mountain Home (Baxter County) also competed for the second consecutive year in the post-secondary culinary arts competition and finished in the top ten. Meridith Luter of Corn-

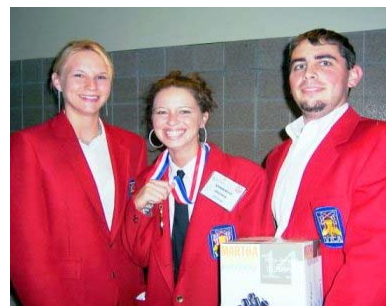
ing (Clay County) competed in the Commercial Baking category and finished in the top twenty. This was Luter's first year to compete in SkillsUSA.

Ozarka College's Culinary Arts and Hospitality instructor, Chef Richard Tankersley, and Assistant program instructor, Linda Taylor, accompanied the students to the competition in Kansas City. Tankersley expresses his enthusiasm for the students' accomplishments. "Just making it to the national competition is a success in itself, but to win gold at that level reflects on the quality of our students and the hard work and effort they put into their training and education." He adds, "I applaud my fellow instructors and the administration of Ozarka College for their efforts and support for the culinary department and its outstanding students."

The SkillsUSA Championships is the showcase for the best career and technical students in the nation. Contests begin locally and continue through the state and national levels.

The philosophy of the Championships is to reward students for excellence, to involve industry in directly evaluating student performance and to keep training relevant to employers' needs

This year, there were over 4,600 contestants in 80 separate events during the competitions, with more than 13,000 people drawn to the competition.



From left, Meridith Luter, Kimberlee Bledsoe and Sean Reynolds.

Ozarka College Hosts Open House for Mountain View Campus



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Ozarka College Mtn. View

Ozarka College Mountain View's new facility is up and running for the Fall semester. For two weeks, faculty and staff members worked diligently between the Summer II and Fall semesters to equip and move everything so students on that campus could begin classes in the new building.

Ozarka hosted a Ribbon Cutting and Open House ceremony on

Thursday, September 15 for the public giving tours of the new facility. In addition, a *Ginkgo Biloba* tree was planted to coordinate with the *Ginkgo* trees planted earlier this year on the Melbourne and Ash Flat campuses.

The building, 9,322 square feet, sits on a 10-acre parcel of land on Ozarka College Drive off

Meadow View Drive. It houses five classrooms, a reference room and faculty and staff offices. Fundraising efforts for a science lab have been successful and the new lab is nearing completion.

Ozarka College Mountain View currently enrolls approximately 150 students and enrollment is expected to increase.

Ozarka College Alumni Newsletter

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«Address 3»

A Short Drive to Great Distances

Ozarka Enrollment Surpasses Record

Ozarka College has exceeded its record for enrollment during the Fall 2005 semester. With 1052 students currently enrolled, there has been more than an eight percent increase over last Fall. The last record was set in 2002 when 1004 students were enrolled.

According to Interim President of Ozarka College, Gayle Cooper, "We have to credit increased enrollment to the hard work of the many individuals employed at Ozarka College who are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty for our students. The dedication and enthusiasm of the entire Ozarka family is one of our assets in showing our students how much we do care about them and their future." Cooper goes on to say that the outreach programs which have been realized in Sharp, Fulton and Stone Counties has also been a factor to the increased enrollment. "With our new state-of-the-art facilities in Ash Flat and Mountain View, we are able to increase the class offerings and reach more students in those areas. The added technology through distance learn-

ing courses and an increase in web based classes has also become an important part of Ozarka's curriculum because individuals are able to carry on their day-to-day activities, such as family and jobs, and still obtain an education around their schedules without having to drive great distances. This has become even more important in light of the recent tragic events which have caused gas prices to increase."

Ozarka's interim Vice President of Academics, Gary Phillips along with the entire team of Ozarka employees made a huge push to add evening classes and some Saturday classes to the Fall schedule in order to accommodate additional students. Department Chairs, Judy Cannady, Ruby Johnson, and Kathryn Langston were instrumental with the flexibility of adjunct and fulltime faculty members allowing expanded course offering to become reality, further affecting the increased enrollment.

Another record which has been set during the Fall 2005 semester is the FTE

(fulltime enrollment) for Ozarka College. There has been approximately a 14% increase in the fulltime enrollment numbers over the 2004 Fall semester. FTE's play a major role in the funding received by each state institution and those numbers are reported to the Department of Higher Education.

In Arkansas, there has been a significant increase of enrollment in two-year public institutions above four-year colleges over the past several years. One considerable factor in this trend is the affordability of two-year institutions. It is more feasible for someone who wants to pursue their education to be able to remain in the region of their hometown, especially considering the great number of students who have families and/or children. Another reason for this trend is the atmosphere of a smaller campus. When the student-teacher ratio is substantially lower, students are receiving more personal attention from their instructors, which enhances the learning experience.