

A-B Tech EDUCATION Journal

FALL 2018



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Philip Cooper changing lives as Career Navigator

Students Win NASA and NC Space Grant Honors

ABTech
Community College

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FRIENDS BUILD CAREERS, PAGE 6



TRAILBLAZER BEAR MASCOT, PAGE 7

A Message from the President



If you have been to A-B Tech events this year or follow us on social media, you may have noticed that there is a new “face” on campus this fall! A-B Tech students and employees had long wanted a new mascot to promote the College and rally A-B Tech spirit, so we engaged in a year-long process that culminated in the introduction of Trailblazer Bear.

The majority of our employees selected Trailblazers as the new mascot, with Bears coming in a close second. Our students, who were surveyed after employees, then asked to depict the Trailblazer as an animal

and overwhelmingly voted for it to be a bear. Trailblazer Bear has already proven to be a welcome presence, whether dancing at campus events, making the rounds on campus, visiting with children, or “going viral” while dancing in a video clip from WLOS TV. You can read more about our new mascot on page 7.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will see various reports that depict the many ways in which A-B Tech engages in our community, particularly with economic development. In addition to our two-year degree programs, A-B Tech offers a myriad of short-term training programs, customized skills training for industries, and assistance for individuals who are seeking training and employment to get jobs, advance in their careers, or start a business. The articles on customized training for GE Aviation and Avadim Health, Philip Cooper's work with the justice involved population, Jo Doyle's new career in the craft beverage industry, our client Bellyak's continued success as an innovator in outdoor recreation, and our Quick Skills programs are just some of the ways A-B Tech supports economic growth in the WNC region.

The College also celebrated Veteran's Day this year with a special award to our Police Chief Kara Walker. Kara received a Patriot Award from the NC Employer Support of the

National Guard and Reserve, specifically for her support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserves. As a veteran myself, it meant a great deal for A-B Tech to be recognized for our support of employees who continue to serve our country.

I wish each of you a happy holiday season and a rewarding new year. We hope to see you at A-B Tech in 2019 at one of our six locations: our main campus in Asheville, A-B Tech Enka, A-B Tech Madison, A-B Tech South, A-B Tech Woodfin or Goodwill in West Asheville.

Sincerely,

Dennis King
President

VISION

Changing Lives, Strengthening Communities

MISSION

Dedicated to student success, A-B Tech delivers quality education to enhance academic, workforce, and personal development.

VALUES

Excellence, Integrity, Supportive Learning Environment, Innovation, Service, and Engagement

Sustainability Brings Solar Workstation, Challenge and Commitments to Campus

Sustainability Technology and Construction Management students prepared sites and set up three solar workstations under the direction of instructors Ashley Edwards, Heath Moody and Eric Hurley.

The first solar workstation was installed on campus in front of the A-B Tech/Mission Health Conference Center, with others set up in front of the Dogwood Building and Locke Library. Each workstation is solar-powered and self-contained, meaning they aren't hooked into the grid. They have multiple 110-volt outlets and USB ports for charging, along with LED lights on a timer for night time use.

During October, Construction Management Technologies Instructor Lin Orndorf invited employees and students to join the EcoChallenge. "The EcoChallenge was created by the Northwest Earth Institute to help educate folks about sustainability and get them engaged in taking small actions to increase their own personal sustainability and that of their communities," Orndorf said.

Orndorf created the A-B Tech team to provide her Introduction to Sustainability students with another resource and tool for learning, but wanted to get more of the college community involved.



"The EcoChallenge is a great way to engage with all aspects of sustainability across the social, economic, and environmental spectrums. Some actions may save you money. Some actions will improve your health and well-being. Any action you take will move us closer to sustainability and the possibility of all life flourishing on this planet for a long time," she said.

A-B Tech also recently became a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education to further campus efforts toward building a healthy and just world. Through membership in AASHE, A-B Tech will receive support in advancing its sustainability initiatives throughout the institution and in the community.

AASHE enables higher education institutions to meet their sustainability goals by providing specialized resources, professional development, and a network of peer support. Membership covers every individual at an institution, so the entire campus community can take advantage of member benefits.

AASHE hosts the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), a comprehensive campus sustainability rating system that enables institutions to measure their progress and learn from others. With STARS as a roadmap, institutions can select meaningful and appropriate pathways to sustainability while conserving valuable resources, combating global warming, and building healthier communities. AASHE also offers extensive online resources and discussion forums for professional development and sharing knowledge.

AASHE is one of two supporting organizations for the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment. Over 860 presidents and chancellors have committed to lead their institutions to climate neutrality.



Brewing Professional Jo Doyle Teaches AT CRAFT BEVERAGE INSTITUTE

From restaurant manager, to home brewer, Cicerone certification, industry professional and A-B Tech's Craft Beverage Institute of Southeast instructor, Jo Doyle is packed with knowledge and willing to share it.

She teaches the classes Business of Beer Parts 1 and 2, Sensory Analysis of Beer and Craft Service Professional. Not only is she a former A-B Tech student, Jo is also a Beer Judge Certification Program Recognized Beer Judge.

Jo started as a restaurant and bar manager in Dupont Circle, Washington DC. "It was there that I became fascinated with craft beverages and started learning everything I could on my own," she said.

She moved to Asheville in 2009 and started home brewing, a passion she shares with her fiancé. "One day a friend brought me the A-B Tech Continuing Education schedule and I saw the Business of Beer classes offered. I knew I wanted to get into the Craft Beverage Industry and thought these classes might help me."

Her instructors at that time, Cliff Mori and Matt McComish, encouraged her to take the Cicerone Certification exam, a beer knowledge credential. Through A-B Tech classes and additional study, Jo took and passed the Certified Cicerone.

"It is a very difficult exam with an average 80% percent failure rate," Jo said. Upon earning the Cicerone, she advanced into a sales position with her then employer, Catawba Brewing. While at an Asheville Brewers Alliance event, Jo connected with individuals from White Labs, a yeast producer newly-located to Asheville. "Yeast is the least understood ingredient in the brewing process and very specialized". She started working at White Labs during the startup, doing everything from shipping to production.

Jo started teaching craft beverage classes at A-B Tech sharing her knowledge with others passionate about the field. In 2018, Jo was promoted to Education and Engagement Curator at White Labs. When asked how A-B Tech affected her career path, she said, "as a student, A-B Tech was affordable, offered evening classes and the



Jo Doyle of A-B Tech's Craft Beverage Institute of Southeast.

instructors were top notch. I walked away from these classes with the knowledge to go forward in the field. It was the best investment I made in myself hands down for growing personally and professionally."

Jo was honored when asked to be an instructor at A-B Tech, and believes her teaching role helped with her recent promotion. "A-B Tech is highly regarded and respected at White Labs," she said.

Jo can be found daily at White Labs in Asheville, and teaching the Business of Beer 1 and 2 this winter at A-B Tech through Continuing Education Workforce Programs.



DeAngelo Wright



Camron Davis

Friends Build Better Future for Themselves and Their Families Through A-B Tech

Camron Davis and DeAngelo Wright are both working in a great career and have bright futures at GE Aviation, after taking aerospace composites training classes at A-B Tech. However, these friends didn't always have the best opportunities.

"What put me over the edge was when on my twelfth work anniversary, I got a ten-cent raise," Davis said. "I promised myself I wouldn't be there the next year." Two and half years later, working at GE, Davis makes more than double what he did then with great benefits and serious opportunity for advancement.

Davis was supporting his wife and children on less than living wages stocking shelves at night for a big box store. He'd gotten small raises over the years but his family still struggled on to get by. He had tried several times to advance within the company. Four years earlier he had been promised an entry level managerial position, only to be told days later that they'd "made a mistake—it had already been promised to someone else."

"I knew I could not provide for my family how I wanted to making nine dollars an hour," said Wright. "What was the worst thing that could happen if I didn't take the chance? I'd end up right here still making nine dollars an hour. Or I was going to try to make five or six dollars an hour more?"

"At my two-year mark with GE I got my Level B rating and started making more than double what I was making at my previous job," said Wright. "I knew about carbon fibers from working with it around cars but I didn't know it was used in aviation and I didn't know you could get paid for it."

"I'd tried to get into manufacturing but they always wanted manufacturing experience," Davis said. "I didn't have it. How was I supposed to get experience when they wouldn't hire me without manufacturing experience?"

"For years my mother pushed me to go back to school, to get some more training. But I was always working. I told myself, 'I have to work. I have to work. I have to work'. I didn't have the time. But when they gave me that ten-cent raise, I realized the only way I could do better was to go get more education. Nobody else was going to do it for me," Davis said.

"I'd heard GE was beginning to hire people for a new plant and they were training them at A-B Tech, so I went to the GE booth at the next Job Fair and Ashely [GE's HR rep] told me exactly what to do. I signed up and took two Advanced Aerospace Composites courses. Andy McNeal, the Instructor, was great. A-B Tech was great. I finally learned enough to get their (GE's) attention. I applied for the job. It all took several months and a lot of work but I got the job."

"I get to use my skills every day," said Davis. "It's challenging to work with the new materials and their applications. There's always more to learn and new things to do. And GE treats everyone the same—they give you an equal chance to keep growing through more training, hard work, and taking on new responsibilities."

"Take the gamble," said Wright, currently employed at GE also, after short-term training courses at A-B Tech's Advanced Manufacturing Center in Advanced Aerospace Composites. That and some smart stick-to-it ness certainly paid off for him.

When his friend and co-worker, Davis, told him that GE needed people for its new plant and that it was working with A-B Tech to train prospective applicants, Wright listened.

"When I first started I was in a low rough patch of my life. Then it was like a trampoline. I jumped on that composites trampoline and then I just wanted to learn more."

"We came to A-B Tech every Friday evening and Saturday for eight weeks and then we did it again. We didn't have a guarantee but we took the risk. We had a plan: the next time that job fair came around we would have these two courses on our resumes and go straight to the GE booth."

They did exactly that. Then they spent many nights checking for emails from GE, waiting for word. And the word from GE finally came: "You're hired."

"I'm more than two years in now," says DeAngelo. "The work environment is great. The higher-ups treat everybody with respect. There's nobody I couldn't talk to over there. It's more than throwing boxes and sinks on shelves all night long. I learn something new every day. I can go almost any place on the entire line to work. I can train someone who doesn't have any experience."

"And there's still room to advance—we're growing hand over fist daily with the demand, the parts that we need, the people coming into the shop. It looks to me like that will continue for the next two to three years because the demand is so high."

"We've continued our education since we've been there so we continue to advance there," he adds. "I think Camron and I are up to nine or ten A-B Tech Certificates now."

"I don't think anybody should be afraid to go back to school," says Wright. "Everybody at A-B Tech has been so good to me. They're always available to listen to my questions. And Andy McNeal's knowledge of composites is amazing."

Asked his advice to others stuck in low-paying, dead-end jobs, Davis is quick to answer, "Go learn something new. Make yourself more valuable. You are the only one who can make it happen—and you can."

A-B Tech Debuts New Trailblazer Mascot



Trailblazer Bear

LOGO AND TRAILBLAZER BEAR UNVEILED AFTER A YEAR-LONG SELECTION PROCESS

A-B Tech's new mascot made its official debut this fall after a year-long selection process involving students and employees. The new Trailblazer logo has been incorporated into college branding and the Trailblazer Bear mascot was created to attend college events and generate enthusiasm among students and employees.

A new mascot was requested by the Recruiting Department and Student Government Association (SGA) as a way to energize current and prospective students about campus life at A-B Tech. In May 2017, the first step was an email survey that was sent to all employees, who selected three finalists: Trailblazer, Bear and Groundhog (both animals with frequent sightings on the Asheville campus). With input from a mascot committee comprised of SGA members and employees, it was determined that the mascot should be an animal and gender-neutral. Students were surveyed in November 2017 on the following options: Trailblazer Bear, Trailblazer Groundhog, Bear, Groundhog, or "Other". There was a terrific response, with students voting overwhelming for the Trailblazer Bear and Bear. The final selection was revealed in February.

The mascot committee was led by Becky Garland, Recruiter and College Liaison for High School Programs, and Josh Weaver, Graphic-Web Designer and Print Shop Manager. Other members represented SGA, Student Life, Student Services, Community Relations and Marketing, Instructional Services, and the Bookstore. Weaver designed the logo that was ultimately selected by the committee and approved by the Executive Leadership Team.



Cooper Changes Lives as Career Navigator for A-B Tech

Philip Cooper's role as a Career Navigator for A-B Technical Community College is a dream job that he says has enabled him to become a "change agent" with people he knows he can help transition to better lives because he's been in their shoes.

There have been several significant turning points in Cooper's 34 years, but one stands out to him as the moment his current mission was crystallized. On October 27, 2015, Cooper's longtime friend Uhon Johnson was shot and killed by Pierre Lamont Griffin, who has since pled guilty to three murders, including Johnson's.

Johnson was studying accounting at A-B Tech and trying to make some life changes, with Cooper as a mentor. At the time, Cooper was an administrative assistant in A-B Tech's Student Services Division, but he also helped mentor individual students and the college's Minority Student Leadership Academy.

"I was sitting in an open area and was the only black male, so a lot of students gravitated to me," Cooper said. "I was able to help them with a lot of things, like finding resources and getting jobs. I also had contacts from my previous work with the Neil Dobbins Rehab Center, my participation in a "Ban the Box" panel at Stand Against Racism event with the YWCA and Mission Health, and other things, so I began to see the connections I could help people make."

When Johnson was killed, "that's when I really got engaged. I was getting burned out, needed to make more money, but wasn't sure what I wanted to do next until Uhon was murdered. That was my turning point when I knew my passion was helping former offenders who are serious about re-entry," Cooper said.

During the same timeframe, Cooper also reunited with Brent Bailey, who handled Cooper's project re-entry during his time in prison. Cooper conducted specialized tours for former offenders in the VERA Pathways program, which was run by Bailey. "There are no coincidences. It was another sign of what I should be doing," Cooper said.

The perfect opportunity arose when A-B Tech's Michael Carter called to say the college had a new position that might be perfect for Cooper. It was created through the UpSkill WNC program and funded by an Innovation Grant from the N.C. Department of Commerce to the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board. The award was used to create more direct engagement with



Philip Cooper (right) helps clients like Michelle Hurst with resumés, job coaching, and connections to jobs and resources.

members of the community who encounter barriers to accessing higher education and sustainable wage jobs, including the justice involved.

"The UpSkill WNC grant has given us the opportunity to expand tailored workforce support to the justice involved," said Dr. Shelley White, A-B Tech's vice president of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. "Philip is uniquely prepared to support students and community members seeking a positive step forward. He is an expert motivator and his approach is holistic, weaving resources together, connecting individuals to employers and resource partners."

Cooper spends each day working with clients, employers and other organizations throughout Buncombe County. He has a caseload of about 30 clients, all justice involved, whom he helps with resumes, job coaching, and connections to jobs and resources. But, more important, he helps them stay on track and succeed.

"The piece that was missing before was peer support," Cooper said. "Considering I am a former offender myself, I like being able to be the bridge and to eliminate barriers for my clients. I want to change stereotypes and be the conduit to resources."

As someone who has lived the experience, Cooper said he is better positioned to help his justice involved clients succeed. "When I got out of prison, I had the emotional support and structure from my dad, counseling and a probation officer, so I understand the support system and wraparound services they need."

In his youth, Cooper grew up in Hickory and moved to Asheville in seventh grade. He said he began using marijuana at age 12 and began selling drugs as a teen. He was first charged with a felony in his teenage years and later got a trafficking conviction that landed him in prison from 2008 to 2011.

"Going to prison was the best thing that ever happened to me because I couldn't have stopped using drugs without it," Cooper said. "I was trafficking and using my own supply. In prison, I learned to experience pain without drugs -- my ex-wife left me then -- and I learned how to pray and know God."

Upon release, he enrolled at A-B Tech, lived with his father and worked as a substance abuse case manager at Neil Dobbins Center.

"People were telling me to slow down, but I wanted to change the world. I finally said to myself that MLK, JFK, Malcolm X and Nelson

Mandela weren't worried about burning out when they were changing the world," he said.

After graduating from A-B Tech in 2013 with a degree in Human Services Technology, Cooper was hired by the college. Although he recently lost his beloved mother, Cooper's future is bright. Earlier this year, he married Renee Cooper, who he met at The Rock Church. His three biological daughters and a step-daughter are all thriving. Currently a member of the 37th Leadership Asheville class, Cooper ultimately plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Business Administration so that he can run a non-profit dedicated to helping the adult justice involved population.

Cooper said 700 people come back to Buncombe County from prison each year. With his current caseloads getting larger, there also is a need to manage them with limited resources. In addition to the Justice Resource Center and NC Works, Cooper works with Goodwill, the SPARC Foundation and Green Opportunities and other organizations that have partnered with A-B Tech to leverage resources and support each other.

"Philip and I have been working together to serve the justice involved," said Jonathon Knight, Project Re-Entry Manager for Goodwill Industries. "As Philip refers people to us, they will get an additional level of support, more job coaching and referrals. It creates natural community support."

White said A-B Tech is actively seeking additional partnerships and funding to sustain and expand the program and resources for the justice involved population.

Cooper said Michelle Hurst is one of his all-star clients, who initially sought his help because he could provide peer support and advocacy. Hurst, whose primary goal was to help people and give back, received a certified peer support specialist certificate from Vaya Health and now works for Mountain View Treatment Center. Cooper provided coaching, job counseling, and helped secure funding for her education from the Skills, Training and Employment program (STEP).

"I've been able to help Michelle and many other former offenders who are now working," Cooper said. "I am blessed to have been a part of Michelle's journey and many other former offenders who are now employed and making a living wage. Passionate people are going to do whatever it takes."



Sally Reeske, second from right, discusses planting options with a Corrections Center resident.

A-B TECH TEACHES CLASSES IN AREA PRISONS to Prepare Residents for Re-entry

Women residents at the Swannanoa Correctional Center have a number of classes and programs offered to them by A-B Tech to give them skills to prepare them for life after release.

One of the favorite classes is Foundations in Horticulture, taught by Sally Reeske. It's a hands-on class that starts with seeds in a greenhouse in early spring, all the way to the harvest in late autumn. "The skills set these women get are also therapeutic," Reeske said. "They work outside with the earth and they get to see the benefits of their work efforts."

The grounds at Swannanoa Correctional Center have evolved over the years, adding more land to the gardens and growing food including garlic, tomatoes and spinach. The class splits its time between being outdoors and learning in the classroom.

The department of Transitional Studies and Continuing Education offer High School Equivalency prep classes at Craggy Medium and Minimum Security Correctional Center and at the women's facility in Swannanoa. Other classes offered at area facilities are listed below:

Craggy Correctional Center

Facilities Maintenance
Culinary Fundamentals I & II
Quest for Success 1-6
Thinking for a Change

Swannanoa Correctional Center

Computer Basics
Focus on Freedom
Horticulture Foundations
Hospitality Skills Training
Money Smart
Pathways to Employment
Petcare Provider
Petcare Technician
Thinking for a Change
Working Smart

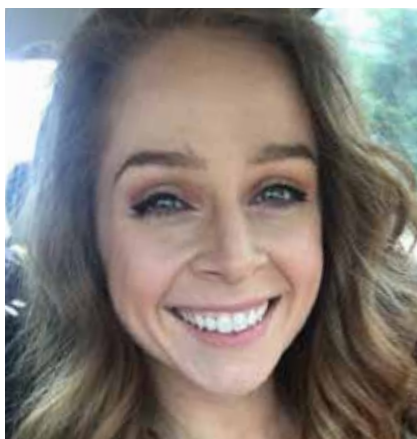
Black Mountain Substance Abuse

Treatment Center
Computer Basics
Hospitality START
Money Smart
Pathways to Employment

Students Achieve NASA and NC Space Grant Honors

Students at A-B Tech have received NC Space Grant Scholarships, been accepted into the NASA L'SPACE Virtual Academy, and were invited to Wallops Flight Facility as a NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars.

Three A-B Tech students were named winners of the 2018-19 Community College STEM Scholarships. William Smith, Christian Donaldson and Adam Burkins won the competitive scholarship opportunity for community college students majoring in STEM disciplines, with plans to continue their education through graduation or transfer to a four-year institution. Twelve students were selected statewide.



Christian Donaldson

Previous scholars have established a track record of success over the years, eventually landing positions in multiple STEM fields and at aerospace companies like Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin and NAVAIR, among others. One 2014-15 scholar recently accepted a rocket science position at United Launch Alliance as a decontamination specialist.

Burkins, along with student Rose Easterday were accepted into the NASA L'SPACE Virtual Academy, which is collaboration with NASA's Lucy Mission to Jupiter's Trojan asteroids. "It's the virtual academy," said Easterday. "It's a 12-week program preparing us for the design process. We are building an extremely tiny spacecraft with a budget of 20 bucks."



Adam Burkins

The academy will give participants the opportunity to learn NASA mission procedures and protocols from mission professionals. Students work on team projects with science and engineering students from across the country. Those who complete the assignments and demonstrate proficiency in specific skills and tasks will earn a certificate with endorsements to show applied workplace competency.

Alexander "Coco" Van Dalen attended the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars onsite experience earlier in the year and was invited back to help host the fall NCAS because of the leadership showed at Langley. "I will be leading an NCAS team facilitating everything I did on my trip. One of my duties on this campus is to help recruit for the NCAS program. There is a big opportunity and I didn't think I could get in when I applied. It's free to apply and is seriously a life changing experience," Van Dalen said.

He led the program attended by A-B Tech student Krista Runion at Wallops Flight Facility in September. "I first heard about the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholar program through the Education Journal by A-B Tech," Runion said. "I thought I might be interested so I looked into it. I was still trying to decide whether or not to apply when I heard a student who had attended the NCAS onsite experience speak about his experience at the A-B Tech Scholarship luncheon. That is when I convinced myself I should apply."



Rose Easterday

Learn a New Career IN MINIMUM TIME



A-B Tech has many short-term training options designed to help students get started in a new career quickly. Instead of training in terms of years, these classes operate in terms of months or weeks. Completing short-term training courses at A-B Tech can prepare students for higher paying jobs. New skills lead to career advancement, higher salaries and new jobs! Many A-B Tech students have started great careers after successfully completing their short-term training program or programs.

Explore our options and find the path that's right for you.

Advanced Manufacturing

WNC's manufacturing sector is still booming and it provides some of the higher paying jobs in the area with the best benefits.

- Machining Fundamentals
- Industrial Maintenance Academy
- Creating with Aerospace Composites
- CNC Machining 101
- Manufacturing Boot Camp

Skilled Trades

For those who like to work with their hands, our skilled trade classes provide training to hone skills and turn them into a career.

- Welding
- Electrical

Healthcare

The Healthcare field has such a wide variety of job opportunities from working directly with patients, to office positions.

- Personal Care Aide
- Electronic Health Records
- Nurse Aide
- Clinical Massage

Business and Hospitality

With Asheville's tourism industry, is it any wonder that business and hospitality positions are in demand?

- Office Professional Certification
- Whitewater and Zipline Guide Training

Online

Learn from the comfort of your own home with our flexible online options for earning nationally-recognized certifications.

- Comp TIA certifications
- Administration Assistant

Learn more at abtech.edu/quick-careers



Walker Receives PATRIOT AWARD



A-B Tech Police Lt. Josh Edwards and Chief Kara Walker

A-B Tech Police Chief Kara Walker was presented with a Patriot Award from the NC Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense Office.

Walker was nominated by A-B Tech Police Lt. Josh Edwards, who serves in the NC National Guard's 105th Military Police Battalion. The award recognizes employers who make it possible for employees to serve in the National Guard and Reserves, which comprise 53 percent of the national defense. The ceremony was hosted by ESGR volunteer and First Sergeant (Ret.) David Ponder. A-B Tech President Dennis King and other members of the National Guard also participated in the ceremony.

News Briefs

MADISON CAREER CENTER RECEIVES CERTIFICATION AS NCWORKS

The Madison County Career Center located at A-B Tech Madison received certification as a Level II NCWorks Career Center. "Now Madison County residents won't have to go Buncombe County to look for jobs or file for unemployment. It puts all the resources in one place and be a little more recognizable in the community for residents, and especially businesses," said Stacy Peek, Coordinator, NCWorks Career Center-Madison.

The center certification process was established by the NCWorks Commission to ensure a consistent level of quality customer service throughout the career center system, to promote an integrated service delivery approach, and to maintain service expectations of the NCWorks Career Center brand.



GETTING BACK TO WORK AFTER 50

A-B Tech has partnered with NCWorks Career Center and AARP Foundation to bring the BACK TO WORK 50+ program to Asheville. The program is aimed at job seekers who would like take advantage of free strategies for gaining entry back into the workforce.

AARP Foundation launched the Smart Strategy Workshops to increase the services and resources available to 50+ job candidates nationally and in communities and to facilitate their access to in-demand jobs. The program offers workshops on the strategies needed to compete for full-time, in-demand jobs. Workshop participants can also apply for the free coaching program offering skills training, job search guidance and more.

To register, call toll-free (855) 850-2525.



BELLYAK WINS OUTDOOR INDUSTRY BUSINESS PITCH COMPETITION

Bellyak, a company in the A-B Tech Business Incubation program, was named the winner of the inaugural Outdoor Industry Business Pitch Competition sponsored by The Small Business and Technology Development Center and partnering organizations. The competition was open to small Western North Carolina-based businesses in the outdoor industry and held at Highland Brewing.

Adam Masters, founder of Bellyak, created a "lay on top kayak" that sprung from an idea from years of being a whitewater kayaker. "I was handpaddling in 2004 and I had the idea to paddle prone. The sensation was great, but the ergonomics were not," Masters said. His Bellyaks allow the user to lie stomach within the craft, which is what he calls the best combination of swimming and boating.

News Briefs



Kevin Kimrey, Director of Economic and Workforce Development at A-B Tech

WNC COMMUNITY COLLEGES PARTNER TO CREATE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

A coalition of community colleges in Western North Carolina – A-B Tech as the lead, Blue Ridge Community College, Haywood Community College, Isothermal Community College, and Southwestern Community College have received an ApprenticeshipNC Collaboration and Expansion grant from the North Carolina Community College System to implement a regional apprenticeship program.

The one-year grant will be used to hire an individual to spearhead an industry-led program that will put structure around an effort to increase worker's skills and advance apprenticeship throughout the region. The apprenticeship coordinator will be housed at A-B Tech and will be supervised by the college's Director of Economic and Workforce Development Kevin Kimrey.

COLLEGE BRINGING CUSTOMIZED TRAINING TO AVADIM HEALTH



A-B Tech has received funds to provide customized training to Asheville-based Avadim Health, a life sciences company, after the company announced a major expansion at its operations in Buncombe County that will create over 250 jobs over the next five years.

Avadim is a life sciences company delivering Pathogenesis Based Therapies, addressing infection prevention, neuromuscular disorders and barrier repair. Avadim will invest nearly \$20.4 million in its North Carolina expansion over the five-year period, including building a new facility in Black Mountain.

The Customized Training Program project is designed to assist Avadim with its expansion. Because the company's products focus on life sciences, BioNetwork will conduct several training events such as CGMP, Aseptic Processing, Good Lab Practices, Fundamentals of Validation. The production and packaging part of the business will increasingly employ automated practices, so the project will assist with automated original equipment training. In other support categories, the project will support forklift train-the-trainer, First Aid/CPR, safety and Lean Six Sigma principles.

Calendar of Events

November 26 **Spring Registration opens for all students**

December 15 **Last day of fall Semester**

December 24 - January 1 **College closed for Winter Break**

January 7 **Spring Semester begins**

Campus Events



Lisa Johnson and Heather Vaughn

WRITING CENTER

A-B Tech dedicated its Writing Center in honor of Lisa Johnson, the first director of the center, who retired earlier this year. Johnson is shown with English Chair Heather Vaughn. "Students' ideas were valued, their worries could be expressed, and without judgement," Vaughn said about Johnson's leadership when the Writing Center first opened in 2008. "Tutors offered direction and support. Students were given an opportunity to learn how to critically think, ask questions, be curious, re-work and re-write. Because of Lisa and her leadership, so many of our graduates earn their credentials."

EBLEN CHARITIES WALK

A-B Tech employees participated in the annual Eblen Charities Walk on the Asheville campus October 13 to raise funds for the college's Employee Emergency Fund. The top three A-B Tech teams were Research, Planning, and Assessment Suite; Continuing Education/Workforce Development; and the Emergency Services Division. Altogether, 39 A-B Tech employees participated in the walk which raised a total of \$1,335.



HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR WALTER ZIFFER SPEAKS TO PACKED AUDITORIUM

A-B Tech had the honor of hosting Holocaust survivor Walter Ziffer on November 8 where he spoke to a near-capacity crowd in Ferguson Auditorium. Ziffer, who was born in Czechoslovakia in 1927, told his story of surviving the Holocaust through the Polish and German invasions of his home country, his 1942 deportation, and his experiences in eight Nazi concentration camps. His presentation was followed by a question and answer session from the audience. Walter Ziffer, pictured on the left, shortly after the Nazi invasion of his hometown in the former Czechoslovakia, and an unnamed friend wear white armbands with the Star of David.

AUTUMN IN ASHEVILLE

On October 18, the A-B Tech Office of College Advancement, in conjunction with the College's Culinary Arts, Baking and Pastry Arts, Hospitality Management programs, hosted its annual Autumn in Asheville fundraising event, raising funds for the Student Emergency Fund, student scholarships, and the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management Departments. The eighth annual fundraising event honored the movies filmed in Western North Carolina.





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