

# A-B Tech EDUCATION Journal

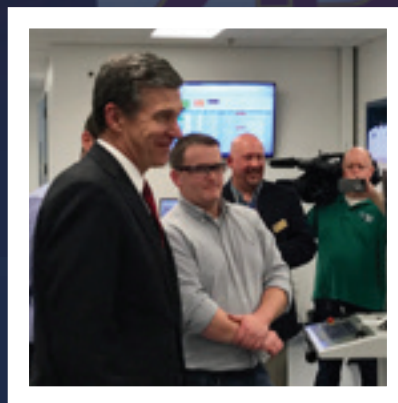
WINTER/SPRING 2017



**Gov. Roy Cooper Visits  
A-B Tech and Linamar**

Students Honored for  
Academic Success

Entrepreneurs Partner with  
Business Incubation Program



**ABTech**  
Community College

# A-B Tech EDUCATION Journal

VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 4 | WINTER/SPRING 2017

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Cover: A-B Tech Scholarship Luncheon



**GOV. ROY COOPER, PAGE 8**



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# A Message from the President



Dennis King

The Spring semester and the 2016-17 academic year will almost be at an end by the time you receive this issue of the A-B Tech Education Journal. I am pleased to report that it has been a successful year for our students and the College.

Our enrollment, pending the conclusion of the summer session in July, is slightly up this year, which is encouraging at a time college enrollment nationwide is trending downward. Particularly promising is our minority enrollment, which was a record high 18.1 percent this fall -- slightly better than

the percentage in our service area and double our minority enrollment a decade ago.

A-B Tech's efforts to increase minority enrollment are assisted by state programs, such as the Minority Male Success Initiative Grant received this year from the NC Community College System. Among many things, it allowed us to expand the role of Marshay Proctor-Bates, an advisor and success coach who will connect minority students with resources. You can read more about the grant and Marshay's work in the following pages.

Expanding access to college, particularly for minorities and first-generation college students, is part of A-B Tech's strategic plan and one of the most important objectives for any community college. We have an open access policy and our tuition rates are approximately 75 percent lower than four-year institutions. Whether students are seeking a two-year degree to prepare for specific careers or plan to complete an associate degree at A-B Tech and then seek a four-year degree, community colleges are the best option for quality education and affordable tuition. A recent study

by Student Loan Hero found that students can save an average of \$11,337 by completing the first two years at a community college.

In this issue, you also will read about Governor Roy Cooper's recent visit with A-B Tech and Linamar, where he praised our workforce training partnership and announced his NC GROW scholarship plan, which seeks to make community college tuition-free for most students.

If you live in our service area, I hope you will visit our Asheville, Madison, Enka, South, Woodfin and Goodwill locations to learn more about A-B Tech and all of the good things happening here. A-B Tech is designed to serve the residents, employers, and economic development of our region.

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



# College Receives Grant Funds to Improve Minority Male Success

A-B Tech has received a 2016-17 Minority Male Success Initiative Grant that is designed to help attract and retain minority male students.

Awarded by the State Board of Community Colleges, the \$17,234 grant helps move assistance provided to minority male students from the previous cohort-based model to an institutional action plan. During this first year, A-B Tech will focus on assessing and improving the academic achievement of first-year minority male students who have not previously attended college.

The Minority Male Success Initiative is a redesign of the NC Minority Male Mentoring Program (3MP) that was established in 2003 to improve retention and graduation rates of minority male students in the state's community colleges. The NC Community College System redesigned the program to more closely align with the student success initiatives currently taking place throughout the system.

The new model is designed to strengthen minority male student outcomes by encouraging greater participation and collaboration with the College. The primary reasons for the redesign were to increase student success, maximize student and campus participation, and increase program effectiveness and efficiency.

"Once a student is on campus, we want to know how we eliminate any system barriers that might prohibit folks from completing their educational goals," said Michele Hathcock, Title IX Compliance and Student Life Development Director. "Working with the Progress and Completion committee on campus, the project aims to see what can be done to increase success from semester to semester."

The grant has helped the College expand the role of Marshay Proctor-Bates, an academic advisor who also serves as a success coach to students. In her expanded role, she will be able to connect minority students with resources.

"My goal is to create supportive relationships where students feel confident in accessing the college resources and services available on campus. As well as promote student success through leadership, personal validation, purpose, self-efficacy, engagement, social integration, self-awareness, and reflection," said Proctor-Bates.

A-B Tech also will concentrate on the assessment and identification of policies and procedures that may impede or boost student completion. Funding will be used to support the College's Academic Learning Center, which provides free tutoring services to A-B Tech students.

"Historically, the Academic Learning Center does not have a large number of minority identified students who utilize that service. One of the factors to success is utilizing the academic center. It covers all subjects. If you take a class at A-B Tech, they have a service to assist you," Hathcock said. "Sometimes people just go sit in the lab and do their



Academic Advisor, Marshay Proctor-Bates

homework even though they never get the tutoring, but it is there if needed. It's that safety net if you get stuck."

The grant funds also will enable the Academic Learning Center to hire additional staff and expand its hours to include evenings. Ron Layne, Dean of Academic Success, and Sharon Smith, Academic Learning Center Coordinator, also are working to bring in tutoring staff of diverse backgrounds.

"As the College looks to support all student groups, it is vital to provide the services needed to underpin success," Layne said. "The ALC includes tutoring in mathematics, as well as the sciences and English. The Writing Center offers both drop-in services and appointments for students needing work with academic writing of all types."

Layne said data indicates that students who utilize the services are more successful. "The earlier students begin garnering support while building a network for success, the better their academic progress and overall performance," he said.

Contingent upon state funding approval by the General Assembly and the State Board of Community Colleges, A-B Tech will receive a total of \$51,702 for three academic years. In all, 47 community colleges of the 58 in North Carolina received Minority Male Success Initiative grants.

# A-B Tech Students Selected to Visit NASA



Elizabeth O'Nan



Colter Burress



Rose Easterday



Nick Long

Students Elizabeth O'Nan, Colter Burress and Rose Easterday of A-B Tech have been selected to travel to NASA's Langley Research Center, and student Nicholas Long to the Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, to participate in the NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars project (NCAS).

They were selected as four of 348 community college students from across the United States. To be part of NCAS. O'Nan and Easterday are the first women chosen from A-B Tech. So far, 10 A-B Tech students have participated in the program.

"I'm looking forward to meeting the NASA engineers, the on-site event and seeing all of the testing facilities and new engineering concepts," said O'Nan, an Associate in Science student. After graduation, she would like to continue work in engineering.

The five-week scholars program culminates with a four-day on-site event at Langley or Glenn Research Centers and offers students the opportunity to interact with NASA engineers and others as they learn more about careers in science and engineering. While at NASA, students form teams and establish fictional companies interested in Mars exploration. Each team is responsible for developing and testing a prototype rover, forming a company infrastructure, managing a budget, and developing communications and outreach.

The on-site experience at NASA includes a tour of facilities and briefings by NASA subject matter experts. "I've always been amazed by what NASA is working on and has accomplished. I applied so I could learn more about this organization and get a glimpse of what day to day life is like for employees of this organization," said Long.

NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars is a project funded in part by the Minority University Research and

Education Program, or MUREP, which is committed to the recruitment of underrepresented and underserved students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to sustain a diverse workforce.

With this project, NASA continues the agency's tradition of investing in the nation's educational programs. It is directly tied to the agency's major education goal of attracting and retaining students in STEM disciplines critical to NASA's future missions, which include missions to Mars and beyond.

"NCAS not only inspires community college students to advance in STEM fields, but it also opens doors for future careers at NASA," said Tania B. Davis, Minority University Research and Education Project (MUREP) Manager. "NCAS has a legacy of alumni moving from NASA internships to and ultimately entering the NASA workforce. It is rewarding to see the progression of a student from NCAS participant to NASA colleague."

# A-B Tech's Small Business Center and Business Incubation Program Making Visionary Dreams Come True

If you have a vision for a product or service and dream of starting your own business, A-B Tech's Small Business Center and Incubation Program can help. Located at A-B Tech Enka, the Small Business Center provides entrepreneurs with the training and tools needed to build and grow successful businesses.

Last year alone, the Small Business Center provided training to 1,027 entrepreneurs, offered 103 small business seminars, and counseled 285 clients. Its consulting services and training also helped businesses create 29 new businesses and create or retain 112.5 jobs.

The Business Incubation program, which currently hosts 22 incubating businesses, provides a dynamic process of entrepreneurial development designed to increase business success through consulting services, coaching, access to shared resources, and web, wet lab, and manufacturing facilities. The program creates an atmosphere that encourages the development of businesses that promise a public or private good, have the potential to create single or multiple additional jobs, and which contribute to the economic development once formally established.

Two of the region's most well-known former Business Incubation Program clients are AvL Technologies, a manufacturer and supplier of mobile satellite antenna systems, and Plum Print, which preserves children's art work. Other clients have launched an array of products in the food, technology and medical industries, among others.

Current clients who have unique ideas include Bellyak, CabHound, and Simple Shot Shooting Sports.

## BELLYAK

bellyak.com

Adam Masters, founder of Bellyak, created an innovative paddle board that sprung from an idea from years of being a whitewater kayaker.

"I was a whitewater kayaker for years," Masters said. "I was hand-paddling in 2004 and had the idea to lay down on top of the kayak. The sensation was great, but the ergonomics weren't. In 2010, I revisited the idea and started building prototypes."

Masters began his business in 2012 and invested money to make aluminum molds. In late 2012, his business grew out of its first location and moved to a warehouse in Weaverville. After a few years of having his product built in Georgia shipped to the warehouse in North Carolina, Masters began looking for a local manufacturer and settled on Liquid Logic Kayaks in Fletcher.

"They are the best molders in the business and provide great consistency," Masters said. "Finally, I was able to be mold, assemble, warehouse and distribute from here. Just this March, I moved into the Incubator."

Masters said he needed assistance developing a business model. "Our main thing is marketing and promoting the sport and marketing the product. I came from a whitewater background, but we have branched to adaptive paddlers, lake markets, surfing, swimmers, summer camps. We're able to help more people get into water sports."

Masters said his company currently has two part-time staff. He also is taking part in the Business Incubator's Embedded Entrepreneur program. "Having the support and copy and print services, and conference center is amazing. I didn't do this early, and it's an amazing resource to have," he said.

Masters has patented Bellyak and eventually hopes to license it to larger companies. "We've not only created a product, but created our own sport. I want to see it take off," he said.



Photo Courtesy of Bellyak





# cab-hound

## CAB HOUND™

[cabhound.com](http://cabhound.com)

George Wheeler, founder and president of Cab Hound is a technology and services company for the taxi cab industry.

Cab Hound™ is a powerful smartphone based dispatching and payment system. Cab Hound™ enables passengers to find, track, coordinate, and pay for trips with the best available drivers and allows drivers to promote themselves, accept credit cards, and utilize timesaving tools like GPS navigation.

“Our portfolio of technology and service solutions for the taxicab industry helps companies achieve operational efficiency and increased revenues in today’s competitive taxicab industry,” Wheeler said. “We look at each client individually as an opportunity for what the specific customer actually needs. We look at what hurdles and challenges they have and offer solutions.”

When it came to starting his business, Wheeler said A-B Tech was the best option possible. “The best place to start your business is at the A-B Tech Incubator supported by entrepreneurs who are going through the same things you are,” he said.

Kelsey Queen, General Manager of J & J Cab. In Asheville for almost 50 years, said she welcomes Cab Hound because there is more competition in the cab industry with the arrival of Uber and Lyft.

“Before Cab Hound, we did things in an old school way with paper tickets on a board,” she said.

“Each driver had their own stack of tickets that were time-stamped and hung on the wall. People aren’t calling cabs like they used to, but once we introduced Cab Hound, we gave customers another option with the mobile app, and that has helped out.”



*Photo Courtesy of Simple Shot Shooting Sports*

## SIMPLE SHOT SHOOTING SPORTS

[simple-shot.com](http://simple-shot.com)

Nathan Masters, founder and craftsman of Simple Shot Shooting Sports (and Adam’s brother), is one of the first participants in A-B Tech’s Embedded Entrepreneur program. Founded by Masters in 2012, Simple Shot Shooting Sports’ goal is to provide the finest gear and equipment that embodies the principle of the “Simple Shot” through the use of simple shooting tools.

The Embedded Entrepreneur Program offers an innovative approach to assisting startup and growth-stage companies in reaching new levels of success. Five companies were selected for the pilot year of the program.

“Unlike many entrepreneur support programs that can only hit the high spots by providing guidance in short meetings and limited work sessions, the Embedded Entrepreneur Program (EE) intends to move participating companies forward by changing the typical support equation,” said Steve Poland, Director of the Embedded Entrepreneur Program.

Poland will work in each of the companies over the course of an entire year, helping company founders reach new milestones. Other participating companies are WEMA Global, 5th Element Camping, Big Boom Design, and AshevilleVillian.

The Embedded Entrepreneur Program is a program of the A-B Tech Small Business Center and Business Incubation program. There is no cost to the participants, but they must meet certain criteria, such as having been in business for at least one year, be a for-profit company based in Western North Carolina, be revenue generating and have at least the founder working full time in the business.

“Example program elements include the high-level One on One Technical Support & Embedded Work,” said Poland. For example, skills development will cover time management coaching, delegation skills, critical path analysis, team building and employee retention. Other areas include business and financial training, execution guidance, lender and equity funding preparation.

For more information, visit:  
[abtech.edu/SBC](http://abtech.edu/SBC) or call 828.398.7950.



# Governor Roy Cooper Visits Linamar and A-B Tech, Praises “21<sup>ST</sup> Century” Workforce Training Partnership

Gov. Roy Cooper visited Asheville on March 21 to learn about the workforce training A-B Tech provides for Linamar North Carolina, Inc., and to promote his NC GROW free community college proposal.

The visit took place at Linamar’s facility in Arden, where Cooper held a roundtable discussion with A-B Tech and Linamar officials, then toured the plant and met with employees and the press. Cooper praised the workforce education programs A-B Tech has provided for Linamar employees since the Canada-based manufacturer announced the opening of its Asheville plant in 2011.

Pictured: A-B Tech Board Chair Joe Brumit, A-B Tech Vice President Shelley White, and Gov. Roy Cooper



"In my talks with business owners, I hear time and time again that they have job openings, but can't find workers with the skills necessary to fill them," Cooper said. "Making community college more accessible means more of our high school graduates can learn the 21st century skills they need to get good paying jobs."

Expanding access to community college will benefit the state's economy, Cooper said. Since the recession, 95 percent of newly created jobs have required education beyond a high school diploma.

"We all appreciate the interest Governor Cooper is showing in the significant role we play in training the workforce of North Carolina, including the employees of Linamar," said A-B Tech President Dennis King.

Since Linamar announced its Asheville facility 2011 and an expansion in 2014, A-B Tech has created two training projects for Linamar employees through the NCWorks Customized Training Program, said Shelley White, A-B Tech's Vice President for Continuing Education and Economic and Workforce Development.

During the first phase, from March 2012 to June 2014, 183 new positions were filled and 174 people were trained by A-B Tech, said Kevin Kimrey, A-B Tech's Director of Economic and Workforce Development. Training included such areas as ISO Ready, Leadership Development, various Safety and Lean Principles, Computer-Aided Design (Master CAM and Solid Works), Powered Industrial Truck Safety, various maintenance-related (Siemens, Fanuc) programs, and Tool Change and Setup. Before being hired by Linamar, many candidates also completed A-B Tech's short-term (15 weeks) Fundamentals of Machining training program. Over the life of the project, NCWorks provided \$122,572 for training, materials and supplies to support training and administrative functions.

The second phase, which began in July 2015 and will end in July 2018, was developed as a result of Linamar's expansion into automotive gear technology and a serendipitous A-B Tech visit to Linamar headquarters in Ontario, Kimrey said. The trip was intended to help A-B Tech officials learn more about Linamar's culture, expectations, and training needs. While there, the group visited Linamar's corporate training facility and a plant that produces transmission gears for the automotive industry. As a result, A-B Tech also was able to customize and build a training to help the company expand its transmission gears business to Asheville.

Last year, A-B Tech trained 149 Linamar employees in additional areas, such as Original Equipment Manufacturing, OEM Robotics, Automotive Manufacturing, Introduction to

Statistical Controls, Lean Green Belt, and more. NCWorks contributed \$45,266 for training, materials and supplies. So far this year, A-B Tech is providing training in Original Equipment Manufacturing (Makino), and Maintenance Training related to Siemens PLCs and Fanuc Robotics. NCWorks has spent \$30,814. Ongoing trainings include OSHA 10 Safety, Statistical Process Controls and Siemens Programmable Logic Controls.

"Since we started in 2012, we have worked closely with A-B Tech. As we continue to grow and require more technical skills A-B Tech has continued to support our changing needs," Jim Jarrell, President and COO of Linamar, said.

Kimrey said A-B Tech provides training for many other area manufacturers, including GE Aviation, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Eaton Corp., Kearfott Corp, New Belgium Brewing Co., Jacob Holm Industries, and more.

**For more information, contact Kimrey at 828.398.7923.**



## NC GETTING READY FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN THE WORKFORCE

Cooper also highlighted his NC GROW (Getting Ready for Opportunities in the Workforce) Scholarship, which he says will make North Carolina a Top 10 Educated State by 2025.

Beginning next year, students who graduate high school with a 2.0 GPA or higher would get free tuition to any NC community college through the NC GROW scholarship. NC GROW would cover last-dollar tuition and fees for students who have used up other financial aid options.

"We don't want cost to be a barrier to good students getting a higher education," Governor Cooper said. "The NC GROW scholarship is a smart and strategic investment in our people and our state's economy."

In addition to the NC Grow Scholarship, Cooper's budget invests \$18 million in workforce training, with up to \$1,000 in financial assistance available per student to pursue non-credit, short-term workforce credentials.

# Sustainability Program

## ISSUES CARBON CHALLENGE



Instructor Heath Moody with his Issues in Sustainability class and the certificate they earned for offsetting their carbon.

Students in A-B Tech's Issues in Sustainability and Introductory to Sustainability classes have issued a Carbon Offset challenge at A-B Tech and hope to extend it to other colleges and universities in Western North Carolina.

Heath Moody, Chair of Construction Management, Building Science and Sustainability Technologies, said his students decided to offset the carbon they will be using during class this semester, as well as issue the campus and community challenges.

The WNC Green Building Council has a program called Appalachian Offsets, which allows the class to offset its carbon use. "Carbon offsets are pollution equivalents that can be purchased, thereby resulting in the reduction of carbon-dioxide pollution in the atmosphere," Moody said.

"For example, if you purchase carbon offsets, your money is used to fund a public project such as solar system or maybe an energy-efficiency upgrade that supports a local school or non-profit. Not only does this help reduce carbon emissions in WNC but also helps some of the same businesses that students in our program may end up working with after they graduate."

Both of Moody's classes use a carbon calculator at [cutmycarbon.org](http://cutmycarbon.org) that can be used to determine carbon use which includes lights, projector, computers, and the students' commutes.

"We first determined ways to initially reduce class energy usage," Moody said. "One way to do this was by only using half of the lights in the classroom. Even with only a couple of windows, we felt there was plenty of light so we were able to only use half of the light bulbs in our calculation. After working through the calculations, we basically determined that our class was going to generate less than 2.5 tons of carbon over the course of the semester. This cost us a little less than \$50."

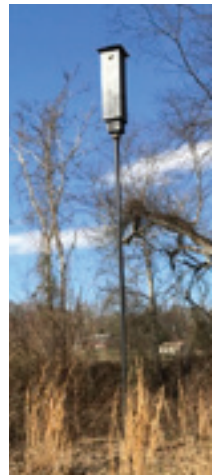
"We felt that this was a small action that we could do to lessen the overall carbon footprint of the college," said Matt Buswell, Sustainability Technologies student. "We hope that the college will eventually incorporate more renewable energy and other sustainability technologies that would lessen the overall carbon footprint of A-B Tech. We would like to take it even further and have UNC Asheville and other colleges join us."

Moody's classes have a sticker and certificate to display in the classroom, showing their commitment to reducing their carbon use. "Classes can become empowered by this small positive action. The idea is that our small actions becomes bigger actions as we initiate this carbon challenge to the rest of campus," Moody said.

## STUDENTS BUILDING BAT HOUSES FOR THE VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK

The Village of Flat Rock now has bat houses, thanks to the efforts of A-B Tech's Construction Management and Sustainability Technologies Departments.

Students Shannan Schanbacher, Emily Tokarski, Elizabeth Martin and Foster Griffith, supervised by instructors Eric Hurley and David Fortner, built the bat boxes based on specifications provided by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission.



According to the Commission, bats are an important part of a healthy, balanced, well-functioning ecosystem. They help control the mosquito population and crop and forest pests, saving the agricultural industry about \$1 billion annually.

"Bats are currently faced with white-nose syndrome, a deadly disease that does not affect humans but that has caused the death of millions of bats. In providing roosting places for bats, we are helping in their conservation," said Hurley.

"The Village of Flat Rock is very grateful for the generous donation of time A-B Tech students gave to construct bat houses for the Park at Flat Rock," said Judy Boleman, Village Administrator for Flat Rock. "We are in the process of having them installed now and we know the community of people and nature will benefit from having them in the park."

Hurley brought his commitment to community service projects from previous teaching jobs at A-B Tech. "If you've ever been to DuPont State Recreational Forest in Brevard, you've seen my students work -- road signs, wooden pedestrian bridges, sheds, picnic shelters, docks, gazebos and our famous 112-step stairway to Triple Falls," he said.

He was able to keep the tradition going with A-B Tech students. This past fall, he took a group of students to DuPont and they built a replacement barn door and three kiosks for the forest. They will return again in April to rebuild a dock at one of the smaller ponds.

"The students get to build something that they can be very proud of to aid our environment. As a teacher, there is nothing more rewarding to me than hearing that students returned to where they completed a project, just to share with family and friends," Hurley said.



# GENTRY, MADISON COUNTY CAREER CENTER Provide One-Stop Service at A-B Tech Madison

A-B Tech Madison has a vital partner in the Madison County Career Center. Both are located in the Ramsey Building in Marshall, providing a convenience for Madison County residents to pursue education or train for and find jobs.



**“Most people I run into are still optimistic about the future. If they take advantage of those opportunities, they can move up.” - Norris Gentry**

“We do a lot of the different things you would expect in terms of an NCWorks-type center, though we don’t have the designation because we operate more of a full-service career center,” said Norris Gentry, Coordinator of the Madison County Career Center. “We have partners with the Community Opportunities, SHIP Seniors Health Insurance Health Program, and Medicare, as well as vocational rehabilitation.”

Gentry said the Career Center helps Madison County residents with job placement and job skills, including A-B Tech students, high school and Early College students, and people in the community. In his role, Gentry also oversees workforce development.

“I wear two hats,” he said. “We are able to reach and pull in the economic development folks. It becomes a sort of hub for those sorts of activities. The traffic comes through and it has increased.”

Gentry said two-thirds of Madison County’s population leaves every day to work in Buncombe County, “and they are not used to coming here for services in the county, but that is changing.”

Being located with A-B Tech Madison and working with its Director Sherri Davis has broadened his programs’ community reach, Gentry said. “Sherri and everyone is wonderful to work with here,” he said. “They are exceptional people who are dedicated, hardworking ... and very committed to the community and the mission of the community college system.”

The Career Center has multiple missions, “but our number one job is to try to connect one-on-one to help people move

up in this economy,” Gentry said. “We are in a fortunate position we have not been in 20 years. We have a strong economy where there is upward mobility for workers in Western North Carolina.”

Madison County has rich diversity for economic development, he said, citing tourism, manufacturing, and organizations such as the Friends of Madison County, Madison County Arts Council and its wART Radio, as well as senior games and preservation of country music programs.

Despite the progress, Gentry said Madison County and Western North Carolina still face a challenge with underemployment. “We have a lot of underemployed people who are hardworking, working two to three jobs to make the ends meet. We help these people with moving up. The workforce training (for advanced manufacturing and other areas) is there.”

For example, people who obtain a commercial driver’s license can train for about a month and go from making minimum wage and to a salary of \$35,000-40,000 a year.

“That’s life-changing,” said Gentry. “It’s one of the most rewarding parts of the job. Most people I run into are still optimistic about the future. If they take advantage of those opportunities. They can move up.”

Gentry also serves on the Madison County Commission and was elected its Chair this year. “I love being a county commissioner and working in workforce development,” he said. “I think the two work together. The days are fun and busy, but busy is good. I’m very happy to be here and happy that people come here to work with us.”

Born in Madison County, Gentry went to high school in Marshall, graduated from Mars Hill College in 1967 and had a teaching job lined up until the Vietnam War thwarted his plans.

After the Air Force, Gentry began working in Madison County Schools and has since earned his Master’s and Ed.S. degrees from Western Carolina University. He has worked in all but one public school in Madison County, retired from the school system three times, and been called back twice. “I was a teacher, counselor, vocational director, assistant principal, and founding principal of Early College,” he said.

Gentry is not ready to slow down. In addition to his two official roles and community activism, he drives part-time for Young Transportation and conducts tours.

For more information, visit [abtech.edu/madison](http://abtech.edu/madison).



# POWER UP, POWER ON: Empowering Women in Technology



A-B Tech's Women in Technology sponsored "Power Up, Power On: Empowering Women in Technology" March 16 in the Mission Health/A-B Tech Conference Center. Marilyn Ball, founder of 12Twelve Marketing in Asheville, presented on the Magic of Collaboration, citing local examples of collaboration that led to great success, such as Manna Food Bank.

Anna Szymanski and students in the first graduating class of the Health and Fitness Science program got participants up and moving by teaching how to find the right balance of work and life.

Participants were able to meet other students, faculty, and community members interested or working in technology. The work is supported by the National Science Foundation.

A Journey into Robotics was presented by Camille Beatty. Beatty, 17, gave live demonstrations of her most famous robots, which are custom built for museums and science centers all over the world. By age 11, Camille and her sister Genevieve, 9, had started Beatty Robotics.

It started at a young age for Camille, when she was fascinated how everything worked and started taking household items apart. Her father, Robert, suggested that maybe she should build something for a change and the love of robotics started.

When they started, they didn't know a thing about building robots, but they spent hours watching YouTube and researching various technology sites to learn how to design a circuit, solder wires, configure servos, machine metal parts, program micro controllers and all the other skills needed. A trip to the local Radio Shack got them the parts they needed to start.

Now, they make robots that roll, crawl and fly out of their home-based workshop. "We will work in our dresses or pajamas. It doesn't matter what we are wearing," Camille said. "My message is how women can work in math and science. I want to show that technology is relevant and accessible."

For more information, visit [abtech.edu/WIT](http://abtech.edu/WIT).



## 16<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL A-B TECH Scholarship Luncheon

The 2017 Scholarship Luncheon, the 16th annual celebration of Foundation student scholarship recipients, was held March 14 at the Crowne Plaza Expo Center. The College Advancement event attracted a crowd of almost 400 student scholarship recipients and other guests, including scholarship donors, A-B Tech Board of Trustees members, Foundation Board members, community leaders, elected officials, and A-B Tech staff and faculty.

Keynote speakers were scholarship recipient Bridget Cain and A-B Tech graduate and employee Marshay Proctor-Bates. Bridget received the Pathways Scholarship for second-year students who are in long-term recovery, and the Lavender Fund, established to assist single parent students. She shared her story of perseverance and success as a single mother of two who is excelling academically as a full-time student and working full-time as a substance abuse counselor. Upon graduation in May, Bridget will transfer to East Tennessee State University to pursue a bachelor's degree in Human Services and a Master's degree in Social Work.

Marshay, who is now an academic advisor and success coach at A-B Tech, talked about her journey as a single mother who worked and raised two sets of twins while earning her associate's and bachelor's degrees. She is now pursuing a master's at Western Carolina University.

## Students Honored for **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**



A-B Tech Community College honored outstanding students during its Academic Awards Ceremony April 11 in Ferguson Auditorium. The annual awards ceremony recognizes top students in individual programs.

In statewide awards, student Christiana DeLoach received the Academic Excellence Award from the North Carolina Community College System. Elizabeth Hall was honored for being the college's nominee for the Dallas Herring Achievement Award and Jessica Olin was A-B Tech's nominee for the Robert W. Scott Student Leadership Award.

"My success at college has been based on my drive and motivation," DeLoach said. "When I started school at A-B Tech, I was afraid of failing. However, I decided that I wanted success more than anything. I believe the best things in life are the things I have to work hard for and achieve on my own."

Jennalee Rogers and Rebekah Waldrop both won the Developmental Studies awards for their commitment to learning and pushing themselves to do their best. Both will be transferring to a four-year university after graduation.

Student Government Association Officers Andrea Howell, president; Iris Frost, vice president, and Darinda Noah were given plaques for their year of service to A-B Tech and its students.

Students were also recognized from the divisions of Allied Health, Engineering and Applied Technology, Arts and Sciences, Business and Hospitality Education and the Emergency Services Academy.



# Employee News

## ADAMSON NAMED DEAN OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AT A-B TECH

Kenet Adamson has been named A-B Tech's Dean of Arts and Sciences. He previously served in the role and as coordinator of the Transfer Advising Center, chair of the English and communications department, and as an English and humanities instructor for the College. He also taught full-time at Southwestern Community College in Sylva for three years.

Adamson has a bachelor of science in journalism from the University of Florida, a bachelor of arts in English from Georgia State University, and a master of arts in English from Western Carolina University. He has been with the College full-time for 13 years.



## SPARKS ACCOMPANIES WALKER COLLEGE OF BUSINESS TO CUBA

Jill Sparks, Executive Director of the Small Business Center, took educational leave in October to accompany a delegation from the Walker College of Business at Appalachian State University to Cuba. An ASU alumnus, Sparks worked with the director of the Transportation Insight Center for Entrepreneurship at ASU, speaking to various groups about entrepreneurship, a relatively new concept for the country.

*Pictured (left): Jill Sparks, center, with ASU students and A-B Tech alumni, Lennon Redford and Michael Bremer, in the Matanzas skyline.*

*Pictured (right): Jill Sparks under a banana tree in Cuba.*

## LAVIE MONTGOMERY JOINS A-B TECH

LaVie Montgomery has joined A-B Tech as a College Liaison for High School Programs focusing on Buncombe County and Asheville City Schools. She is an Asheville native who attended T.C. Roberson, Asheville High, and A-B Tech. After transferring from A-B Tech, LaVie earned an undergraduate degree in English/minor in Sociology at UNC-Greensboro and a Master of Science Degree in Healthcare Management from Winston-Salem State University.

*Pictured: A-B Tech High School Program team members – Fairly Pollock, Stephen Maag, LaVie Montgomery and Becky Garland.*





# News Briefs

## STAND AGAINST RACISM AT A-B TECH

A-B Tech Community College held a community-wide Stand Against Racism event April 13 titled, "Stand Up, Speak Out for Respect and Dignity," featuring a panel discussion that explored how community members can embrace and support each other. The panel included members of Asheville's diverse faith community, LGBT community, and minority communities.

Stand Against Racism is a signature campaign of YWCA USA to build community among those who work for racial justice and to raise awareness about the negative impact of institutional and structural racism in our communities. This campaign is one part a larger national strategy to fulfill the YWCA's mission of eliminating racism.



## FIND YOUR FUTURE COLLEGE AND CAREER OPEN HOUSE

A-B Tech hosted its annual Find Your Future College and Career Open House on March 30, with representatives of all academic programs and more than 60 employers on hand in the A-B Tech/ Mission Health Conference Center. The event attracted more than 500 attendees this year.

## PLANT SALE ON APRIL 28

The 11th Annual Sarah R. Gnilka Memorial plant sale is scheduled on Friday, April 28 on the front lawn of the Sycamore Building. This year's event will offer more than 70 different varieties of plants raised from seed in the A-B Tech greenhouse. All proceeds go directly to Sarah R. Gnilka Memorial Scholarship.



# Calendar of Events

May 13      **Commencement Ceremony, U.S. Cellular Center**

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May 22      **Summer Classes Begin**

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May 27-29   **College Closed for Memorial Day Holiday**

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June 2      **Foundation Golf Tournament**

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July 10      **Fall Registration Opens**

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# Congratulations to our 2017 Graduates!

We hope you will stay involved with A-B Tech! Learn more at [abtech.edu/alumni](http://abtech.edu/alumni).



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