

OZARKA COLLEGE

Campus Connection

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Richard Dawe

I want to wish everyone a well-deserved Christmas holiday. This has been a tough year for us all and we are hopeful for a much better 2021 and spring semester. I am proud and grateful how each of you have supported our maintenance of safety protocols. That has taken great understanding and patience at times. We continue to provide quality support and education to our students, and I am confident we will be able to do so while we await a safe vaccine and hopefully a cure to Covid.

While enduring these challenges we have added new programs, advanced tech center plans and are finding new ways to celebrate student accomplishments. I continue to pray and take actions to ensure everyone's health and safety for the holidays and into the new year!





ASHLEY WALKER, APRN

THE ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

*Ashley Walker, MSN, APRN, FNP-C
Baxter Regional Health System, Hometown Clinic at Melbourne*

Ozarka College would like to recognize an outstanding alumnus! Ashley Walker, Nurse Practitioner for Baxter Regional Health Systems Hometown Clinic at Melbourne has been selected for this edition's Alumni Spotlight. Ashley is a native of the Izard County area who says her greatest professional accomplishment is becoming a Family Nurse Practitioner and being able to provide care to her own community.

When asked about her career path, Ashley said, "I started the LPN program at Ozarka College in 1998 straight out of high school. Choosing Ozarka College because it was close to home, offered the degree I wanted, and their RN nursing program was tailored for working nurses. I graduated in December 1999 and went to work as a LPN. I worked for 13 years prior to going back to pursue my Associates degree. My experience included: long term care, acute care(hospital), physician's office, travel nursing, and pharmacy. I was accepted into the ARNEC program at Ozarka and graduated in 2013. It was during the ARNEC program that I realized my dream of becoming a nurse practitioner. I completed my pre-requisites at Ozarka for the BSN program through UAMS. Once I graduated with my BSN I had a decision to make. I was accepted into 2 MSN programs, one-part time and one full time. I chose to go full time while still trying to work as a nurse. It was definitely trying at times, but worth every minute. I finished my Master's Degree in two years and passed my certification test. I have been working as a nurse for 20 years and as a Family Nurse Practitioner for three years. It has been a long road, but rewarding. I can't see myself doing anything else. Nursing is definitely a work of heart; I love what I do."

Ashley's advice to those pursuing a career in nursing is: "Don't give up on your dreams and it is never too late to further your education. When you work in the nursing field you are a lifelong student. Nursing practices change as evidence based research and information becomes available. This ensures that we, as nurses, provide the highest quality of care and the best patient outcomes."

TIME AT OZARKA

Ashley Walker experienced many influences at Ozarka. "I had so many positive influences during my time at Ozarka. All of my instructors were caring and patient. When I started the LPN program in 1998, I was young, shy, naive, and didn't even know how to take a blood pressure. However, my instructors were compassionate and encouraged me to grow not only in my skills but also as a person. My best college memory is gathering with my classmates in the lounge of the John E Miller building prior to class. Whether it was just catching up or studying for our weekly exams."

When asked what advice she had for current students who want to make the most out of their experience at Ozarka her answer was immediate, "Use your resources and don't be afraid to ask questions. Not only are the instructors great resources, but also use TRIO, Career Pathways, the Student Success Center, Library, and Financial Aid Services. Everyone that I encountered was helpful and always willing to answer my questions."

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If you are determined and work hard, you can achieve your goals.

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Ashley reflected on how her education at Ozarka has prepared her for working in the frontlines of healthcare. "My love of nursing was discovered during my first enrollment at Ozarka in the LPN program. I felt confident in my skills as a working nurse upon completion of the LPN and RN program at Ozarka college. I was also given the opportunity to continue my education when Ozarka/ARNEC was chosen to participate in a pilot program with UAMS that allowed a few chosen students to pursue a non-traditional BSN degree. That opportunity is what allowed me to further my education to become a nurse practitioner. If you are determined and work hard, you can achieve your goals."

Ashley's Tips for staying healthy this winter:



Wash your hands



Avoid touching your face



Take Vitamin C



Eat healthy, exercise, and drink water



Avoid sick contacts

The Foundation Golf Tournament

On September 26, the annual Ozarka College Golf Tournament was held at Cooper's Hawk Golf Course in Melbourne. The day turned out to be a beautiful fall day and the tournament turned out to be the most successful in its history. Ozarka College has long upheld the reputation for hosting the best tournament of the year and this year did not disappoint.

The success of the tournament can be attributed to the hard work of the Foundation Board members as well as the generous support from both individuals and businesses alike. Major sponsors included FNBC, First Community Bank, Centennial Bank, Bank of Cave City, Silica Transport, Inc., BancorpSouth, Ink Spot Graphics, Jordan's Kwik Stop and Evolve Bank & Trust. Additional businesses participated as hole sponsors and twenty-nine teams vied for bragging rights. The winning team was sponsored by IZARD COUNTY PROPANE and team members included Justin Burns, Jeremy Burns, Rusty Campbell and long-driver Aiden Campbell.



*Photo Caption: Dennis Thielemier, Winner of the Hole-in-One

HOLE-IN-ONE

To add to the excitement of the tournament, Freedom Ford sponsored a hole-in-one prize contest. Although no one won the new car offered for a hole-in-one on hole number 7, Dennis Thielemier connected with a hole-in-one on the back of the course on hole number 12 that resulted in a new set of golf clubs. He also cashed in for \$100 prize sponsored by Evolve Bank & Trust for hitting the shot closest to the hole; and on top of that, our very own Susan Thielemier collected \$100 for closest to the hole on hole number 12 as well.

The golf tournament proves to be a very important fundraiser for the College and we look forward to next year's tournament and new records to be set!



*Photo Caption: Cooper's Hawk Golf Course



TECHNICAL CENTER SIGNAGE

New signage was recently installed on the Technical Center in Ash Flat. Earlier this fall, FNBC announced it would honor the Carpenter family with the naming of the facility; therefore, the signage reflects this significant donation.

The Carpenter family name is a familiar name to the Sharp County area. The family has long supported the community and contributed significantly to education, both K-12 and higher education for many years. The official signage for the naming was added in November.

According to President & CEO Marty Sellars, “Boyd and Martin Carpenter have always shared a passion and drive to see Sharp County reach its fullest potential. FNBC is proud to name the Technical Center at Ozarka College in their honor”

Over the years, FNBC has been instrumental in providing scholarship support, sponsoring annual fundraising events, and supporting past campaigns in big ways, including \$50,000 gifts to each the purchase of the land to build the Ash Flat campus and to the Student Services Center at the Melbourne campus.

We could not be more excited to partner with FNBC on such a transformational project as this new technical center,” said Dr. Richard Dawe, Ozarka President. “The impact the Carpenter family has had on Sharp County is immeasurable and the naming of the Center will proudly honor the Carpenter family for decades to follow.”

Hopefully, in the near future, the building will be available for tours, at which time we invite you to stop in and admire the renovation project compliments of the fantastic Ozarka College Maintenance Team. In the meantime, when in the area, look for the Carpenter Technical Center lettering on the side of the building – you can’t miss it!





REMEMBERING JIMMIE MICHELLE CRIDER

Scholarships change lives. We are all familiar with the fact that a scholarship can oftentimes allow an Ozarka College student to continue in a program or perhaps provide a strong finish to a degree, but a scholarship is also deeply rewarding to a donor or a loved one memorialized by an endowment.

The first ever Jimmie Michelle Crider Memorial Scholarship was awarded to pre-nursing student Stephanie Ellis this fall. Friends and family of Jimmie Michelle, as well as co-workers of Ozarka's Bonnie Crider, pulled together to create and complete an endowed scholarship which will be awarded each semester to a deserving Ozarka College student.

Jimmie Michelle Crider was diagnosed with hepatocellular carcinoma at the age of fifteen and succumbed to the cancer battle after fourteen months. According to Bonnie, "She was funny, sassy, vivacious, and full of spunk. She never met a stranger. She had a heart as big as Texas, and a smile that could light up a room. To know her was to love her."

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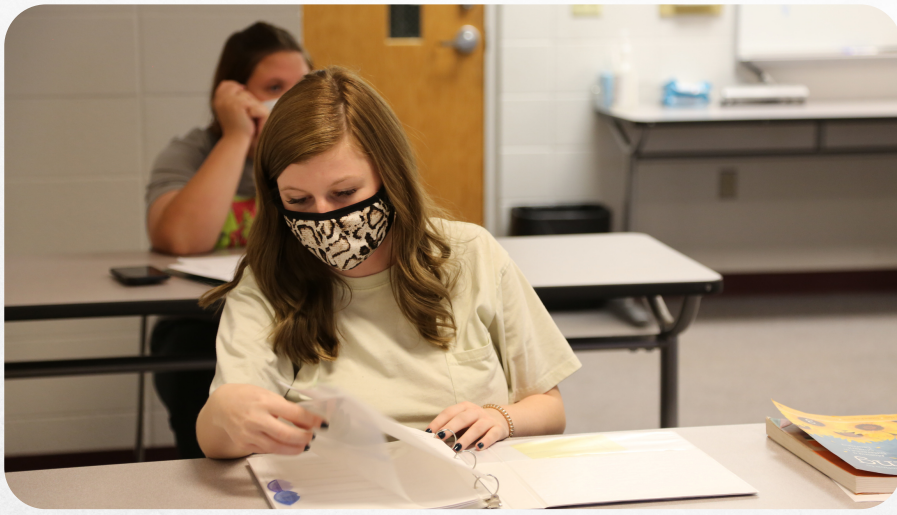
To know her was to love her.

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When asked what kind of impact the scholarship has on Jimmie Michelle's family, her sister, Christie Massey said, "This scholarship is important to us because even though she is gone from us here on Earth, she is not forgotten. When she was called home, it left a hole in our hearts that cannot be mended, but we know she is in a better place, as she is walking with her Savior on streets of gold. And we believe that if everyone in the world could know someone like her, the world would be a better place because she radiated true, genuine love. And we all could use more love like that."

Photo Caption: *Christi Massey, Jimmie Michelle Crider





STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Karisa Phelps, AS Education

Karisa Phelps is currently working towards her Associate of Science in Education degree at Ozarka College. She has a heart for younger students and wants to pursue a degree in elementary education. Eventually, she would like to work on a Master's Degree in Special Education.

Karisa is hard-working and conscientious in all of her assignments in her education courses. She always goes the extra mile and works on her assignments as if she was preparing for her own classroom. As a student, Karisa has had several influential teachers and that is one reason why she chose the field of education herself because she wants to create a lasting impact on her future students' lives as well. Her instructor, Maggie Campbell, said "I have no doubt that she will shine as a classroom teacher and be a light for her students."



UPCOMING...

CHRISTMAS DASH

Santa will be making his way to Ozarka College - Melbourne on Friday, December 11 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Ozarka College's Carpenter Technical Center on Saturday, December 12 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for this year's Holiday Drive-Thru Christmas Dash!

Attendees can drive through the parking lot at the listed locations. You may drop your letter to Santa in the special North Pole mailbox and receive a gift while supplies last!

This event is free to attend and will take place rain or shine. However, it will be canceled in the case of inclement weather. For more information, please contact Suellen Davidson, Ozarka College Director of Development, at 870.368.2059 or email: sdavidson@ozarka.edu.



