

# OZARKA COLLEGE

*Campus Connection*

*Inside the Issue*



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New scholarship donor to provide scholarship support that will help to transform the lives of nursing students . p. 5

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Dr. Richard Dawe*

Greetings colleagues and friends, and happy spring! I want to wish everyone a heartfelt congratulations for enduring a very stressful health crisis. We came together as a college community and I believe had the best outcomes possible. There were of course individual and family losses and great hardships but Ozarka has weathered the storm in an admirable manner.

I want to thank everyone for the remarkable work preparing for the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) ten-year review of our college which leads to the desired outcome of Reaffirmation of our Accreditation. This is the most important event in the life of a college or university and often identifies areas of concern or things that must be improved. I am proud to say that ours was the most positive review that I have ever seen as a long time HLC peer reviewer. Our teamwork and efforts quickly became clear to the reviewing team and they were impressed! They were especially impressed with our students and our amazing faculty.

Finally, I want to congratulate Dr. Chris Lorch on his promotion to Ozarka College Provost! His promotion is well-deserved and earned through excellent work as our Chief Academic Officer.





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*When I decided to enroll at Ozarka the staff were extremely helpful.*

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In his free time at Ozarka, Clayton enjoys reading in the Paul Weaver Library and hanging out in the common area of the Student Services Center. Clayton has a heart for history and plans to pursue a career in history upon his successful transfer to Lyon College. Clayton plans to eventually come back to Ozarka to earn his pilot's license to complete his Ozarka bucket list.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

*Clayton Willis, AS Criminal Justice, SGA President*

Clayton Willis is currently working towards an Associate of Science degree in Criminal Justice at Ozarka. During his time at the College he has maintained a 4.0 GPA and currently holds the office of president for the Student Government Association (SGA). “When I decided to enroll at Ozarka the staff were extremely helpful.” said Clayton. “During my whole time here at Ozarka I never hesitated to email when I needed something, someone always got back with me instantly.”

“Clayton is an impressive and engaged SGA President and I appreciate his presence and input at our meetings” said Dr. Richard Dawe, Ozarka President.

SGA has been busy with Clayton as president and even through the trials of the pandemic, SGA officers have led worthwhile efforts this year for our local communities. In the fall, SGA collected toys for families in need for Christmas. More recently, SGA wrapped up their canned food drive, and proceeds will be donated to the Manna House. SGA is already preparing for finals week with a coordinated effort to provide snacks throughout the week to students on at all Ozarka campuses.

“We are very proud of the leadership that Clayton has shown in organizing Student Government activities.” Said Zeda Wilkerson, Registrar, Senior Director of Enrollment, “He has a bright future ahead of him and we appreciate the dedication he has shown to his fellow students.”



**\*Photo Caption: Hope Johnson, Student, donating non-perishable items to be donated by SGA to the Manna House in Melbourne**

# GETTING TECHNICAL AT OZARKA

If you haven't dropped in at the Carpenter Technical Center (CTC) lately, chances are you won't recognize the technical training hub in Ash Flat. For months the CTC has been constantly changing. Thanks to the tireless talent of Marty McFarlin and Penny Ramsey, the CTC has been transformed with a redefined entry way and a polished floor for the Welding and Machining Lab spaces.

That is not all. The CTC has welcomed two new personnel this semester, specifically the new director, Marcus Orf and new machining instructor, Todd Smith. Both bring exceptional talent to their new roles and with Ms. Kaye and Chris Layne there to show them the Ozarka way, the CTC is in good hands.

But wait there's more...



**\*Photo Caption: Marcus Orf, (Right) Carpenter Technical Center Director; Todd Smith, (Left) Precision Machining Technology Faculty**



Over the next few months the look will continue to change. First, Todd will lead the charge by installing new precision machining equipment and begin offering hands on training to new students before the end of the semester. Also, within a couple of months you will start to see construction on the new welding lab which we hope will be fully operable by the end of 2021. Stay tuned for further updates.



# VACCINES AND THE RENEWED HOPE FOR NORMAL

To say that the COVID pandemic has been a game changer worldwide would be an understatement. The virus and its rippling effects have affected all of us to a person. However, Ozarka staff, faculty, administration, and importantly, students have pressed on resiliently pursuing the College mission. With the arrival of vaccines over the past two months, we have hope for normal days ahead.

Tight-knit communities rally to the cause and rise to the challenge, and this year has definitely been a time of unprecedented hardships. Thankfully, vaccines became available to our community and Ozarka College offered space and support to administer the vaccines. As distribution ramped up in recent weeks, Abby Everett, of Corner Drug, teamed up with her predecessor Lisa Gardner, and quickly coordinated with Ozarka to get shots in arms. Nursing students were vaccinated in the first group as allowed by state guidelines followed by additional groups of the general public. This important partnership with Corner Drug is ongoing and will continue until our local communities are fully vaccinated.



**\*Photo Caption:**  
Abby Everett  
administering the  
Covid-19 vaccine to  
Bennie Banning,  
Izard County  
Community  
Member.

# THE WEATHER IS GETTING WARMER...





## LAWRENCE NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

Cherokee Village residents, Garry and Carol Anne Lawrence, have a passion for philanthropy. Throughout the years, the Lawrences have supported several local nonprofits, but possibly their greatest contribution has been their commitment to fund nursing scholarships at Ozarka College – Ash Flat.

As an avid entrepreneur and an Ozarka College Foundation Board member, Garry is constantly looking for ways to raise money to support Ozarka students. “I own several rental properties and started thinking about how rent money could be used for scholarship dollars.”, according to Garry “and thus was the beginning of the Garry and Carol Anne Nursing Scholarships”.

The first arrangement of this sort was brokered with a piece of property owned by Doug Southard of Memphis, TN. The cabin wasn't being used by Doug's family and had fallen into disrepair. Garry offered to make the necessary repairs and manage the property and Doug agreed to allow all of the rent money to go toward scholarships. Since 2017, twenty-four students have been awarded the Garry and Carol Anne Lawrence Nursing Scholarships for a total of \$27,500 in scholarship aid.

At this time, the income from the rental property is enough to support five student scholarships, each student receives a \$1,500 scholarship. The recipients of this year's scholarships are: Joy Wood, Savanna Ingram, Jennifer Case, Cassie Smallwood, and Chazz Jewel.

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Spring 2021 brings new energy and a new challenge with significant reward to this project. Doug Southard, property owner, has graciously committed to match all donations to the Lawrence Nursing Scholarship Fund up to \$5,000. “This has been a very rewarding project for the Ozarka College Foundation,” said Suellen Davidson, Ozarka's director of development. “With Mr. Southard's commitment, it proves once again the impact that generous friends of the College can have on individual students, as well as an entire program of study.” For more information you may reach Suellen Davidson, at [sdavidson@ozarka.edu](mailto:sdavidson@ozarka.edu) or 870-368-2059.

# HLC VISIT PREPARATION: COLLABORATION AT ITS FINEST

In March the Ozarka College family experienced something that only comes around every ten years....and no, it was not the Census survey. It was a culminating event known as the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation visit, an ever-looming endeavor for institutions of higher education, the regional accreditor charges a review team to converge on colleges to inspect how well they meet their missions. In this year's reaffirmation bid, Ozarka's faculty, staff, students, and administration came together to showcase the great work done at Ozarka to ...provide life-changing experiences through education.

Led by our academic leader and recently appointed College Provost, Dr. Chris Lorch led the HLC coordination efforts. Leaning heavily on the fastidious and highly competent faculty and staff, Ozarka put the finishing touches on its Assurance Argument in anticipation of the March visit.

"I firmly believe we have the most talented and dedicated educational professionals in the state," said Lorch. I am so proud of our efforts to provide opportunities for the students in our communities, an endeavor that reaches every aspect of what we do here at Ozarka and it resonated loud and clear during the HLC visit!"

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There will be a college - wide celebration when conditions allow us to acknowledge this achievement.

## EVENTS UPDATE...

Greetings on behalf of the Ozarka College Foundation Board. Spring is always a busy time of year, including signature fundraising events. The annual Spring Gala will be scheduled when we are safe to gather again and we are certainly looking forward to opening our doors to constituents and friends of the College very soon. We are also hopeful the Ladies Luncheon will take place in June.

Looking even further into the future, we plan to host several events in September and October; including the Mountain View Fall Concert, Golf Tournament, Scholarship Reception, Sprint at the Spring and a benefit concert in memory of former Sheriff Earnie Blackley.

The Ozarka College staff and faculty play a huge role in the success of our fundraising events so please stay tuned for invitations to attend and ways to support our future events.





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