

22.6% ENROLLMENT INCREASE

Since Fall 2023

\$2.7M

Grant Awarded: TRIO Student
Support Services

ACTS 906, 907

Alison Guthrie, UA-PTC Alum Helps Author and Advocate AR State Legislation

CONTENTS

THE BIG PICTURE A Letter from Chancellor Summer DeProw COLLEGE LEADERSHIP Board of Visitors, Chancellor's Executive Council, Foundation Board of Directo ENROLLMENT: 22.6% INCREASE OVER TWO YEARS 9.7% Increase for Fall 2025	3 4 5		
		GRANTS: \$2.79 MILLION FOR TRIO PROGRAMS Renewed Trio Funding Fuels Student Success At UA - Pulaski Tech	6
		ALUM: ALISON GUTHRIE How UA-PTC Forged Her Path To Policy And Academic Excellence	9
FACULTY: LANA RIDING The Power of "Yet:" How a Veteran UA-PTC Educator Inspires Success	10		
PROGRAM: AVIONICS UA-PTC, Arkansas Aerospace and Defense Alliance Celebrate Program Launch	11		
PROGRAM: CAREER CLIMB Partnership with the City of Little Rock Prepares Next Generation Workforce	12		
AWARDS: AR COMMUNITY COLLEGES Awards to UA-PTC Stundent, Staff, and Faculty	13		



IMPACT - Fall 2025

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THE BIG PICTURE

A Letter from Chancellor Summer DeProw

reetings, and welcome to the third issue of *IMPACT*. University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College (UA-PTC) continues to change lives and career trajectories for our students and graduates, and plays a strategic role in shaping the economy of the capitol city and beyond. The third issue of *IMPACT* brings me to a theme that emerged this semester: the power of three.

We are moving into year three of our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan: Resilience, Aspiration, and Purpose and with this we are evaluating all of our metrics and key performance indicators. The strategic plan has three broad and ambitious goals:

Goal 1 – Student Recruitment and Persistence: UA-PTC will develop effective recruitment and persistence strategies that remove barriers to student success.

Goal 2 – Community Engagement and Partnerships: UA-PTC will build and maintain strategic partnerships to increase visibility and collaboration benefiting our community and region.

Goal 3 – Employee Esprit de Corps: UA-PTC will foster a culture that encourages employee growth, belonging, and pride in connection with our shared mission and vision.

The plan has resulted in many meaningful improvements, such as a 22.6% enrollment increase and a 19% gain in student persistence. Other notable items include our partnerships forged through Governor Sanders' HIRED grants, investing \$4.5 million to start new programs in critical infrastructure protection, energy grid operations, and avionics, and the innovative new workforce development initiative in collaboration with Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott, "Career Climb."

Additionally, UA-Pulaski Tech received its third Student Support Services grant from the U.S. Department of Education. MaryKate Snow, Associate Vice Chancellor for TRIO Programs and Veterans Services, crafted a TRIO grant application for our South Location on Interstate 30 to advance Goal 1 of our strategic plan. UA-Pulaski Tech was the **ONLY** Arkansas institution to receive a TRIO grant in the latest phase of funding. The South Location on I-30 now has the same support structures for our first generation and low socioeconomic students as our Main Campus. I am grateful for MaryKate and her team. Their work to retain and mentor these students is outstanding

There are many other key performance indicators that are moving in the right direction, but one performance indicator makes me very proud: the number of professional development hours UA-PTC faculty and staff have completed to support our students, teaching, learning, and operations. The UA-PTC team earned 11,000 hours of professional develop over the last two years. That is a remarkable accomplishment and shows the commitment our employees make everyday to support our students, each other, and UA-PTC's mission.

We will be developing the next three-year strategic plan during the spring semester. Please be on the lookout for invitations to share your

thoughts on UA-PTC's forward momentum. In the meantime, we have crafted stories from students and graduates for you to enjoy that share the meaningful impact UA-PTC has on our community.

I recently had the privilege and honor of being the keynote speaker at the Arkansas Delta Women's Leadership Academy graduation ceremony. I was so excited to see the invitation in my email inbox that I could have pinched myself. Andrea Allen and Dr. Cherisse Jones-Branch co-developed the Arkansas Delta Women's Leadership Academy and they are among my list of great leaders in Arkansas. Then, reality set in and I wasn't sure I could speak to a room full of women who were leading in the Mississippi Delta, but I did what all academic types do. I panicked and then Googled "what is a keynote speech?" The results were "introduce a central them and motivate the audience to find renewed confidence or heightened optimism." Then, I panicked again.

However, I regrouped and wrote my keynote titled "Self-Respect: No Compromises." I shared my three-part journey to self-respect, which is: (1) do the work and walk the talk; (2) if others are working to regain their self-respect, help them; and (3) build trust as you go. At the end of everyday I ask myself three questions: Did I have a productive day and walk the talk? Did I help others? Did I add a brick to building a fortress of trust?

The last "three" is my third anniversary as chancellor is January 2, 2026. As I reflect on this extraordinary adventure, I am taking stock of my decisions over the last three years and the forward momentum our institution has made. We have made some strategic hires in areas such as social media, student success coaches, and science, nursing, avionics, and energy systems faculty. We have written and were awarded many grants and revitalized our Foundation Board and Diamond Chef of Arkansas. Leadership is not without mistakes and I have made several over the last three years, but leadership must include learning. In my opinion, good leaders surround themselves with people much smarter and more experienced than they will ever be. I am sad that Rita Fleming, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration and Michele Grainger, Interim Vice Chancellor for Advancement are retiring in early 2026. However, I know that I am a better leader and person for the time I have spent with these incredible women.

Please enjoy the stories and accomplishments you will read in our third edition of *IMPACT* and please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My email address is sdeprow@uaptc.edu. I look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. Summer L. DeProv

Chancellor, UA-Pulaski Technical College

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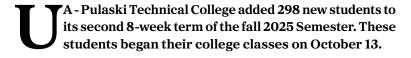
Ex-officio Faculty and Staff Representatives - Amber Lewis and Braden Taylor

ENROLLMENT: 22.6% INCREASE OVER TWO YEARS

9.7% Increase for Fall 2025



Respiratory Therapy students practice test their skills in a lab exercise.



The college began the fall 2025 semester with 4,825 students, a 7.7% enrollment increase over last fall. However, the additional new students from the second 8-week term increased UA-PTC's fall headcount to 5,122, a 9.7% enrollment increase. Overall, UA-PTC has seen a 22.6% growth in enrollment since Fall 2023.

UA-PTC received 6,117 admissions applications for Fall 2025. Of these, 4,525 (71%) completed the process and were accepted to register for classes.

"The addition of 8-week courses allows for a degree of flexibility in scheduling that is a game-changer for some UA – Pulaski Tech students," said Chancellor Summer DeProw. "Many of our students hold down full-time jobs, so the more concentrated approach to earning college credit fits into their busy lives. We look forward to offering more 8-week courses in the future."

Of the 298 new students, the most frequently sought-after program was the Liberal Arts and Sciences Associate of Science. Students pursue this time-and-money-saving degree to gain versatile skills, explore career options, and prepare for transfer to a four-year university.

The second most sought-after program for second-8-week students was the Pre-healthcare Studies Technical Certificate. This is a short two-semester program that students pursue to build a strong academic foundation for entering nursing or allied health programs, gain essential healthcare knowledge, and improve their chances of admission into competitive medical fields.



Students study in the Ottenheimer library on UA-PTC's Main Campus in North Little Rock.

"This fall's enrollment surge is more than just numbers—it's a reflection of how UA–Pulaski Tech is meeting students where they are," said Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management John Lewis. "The second-8-week term gives working adults and nontraditional students a powerful opportunity to start college mid-semester without missing a beat. We're proud to offer flexible pathways and services that help Arkansans advance their careers and education."

Approximately one-third of UA-PTC's students enroll to earn technical certificates and degrees designed to facilitate direct entry into the workplace in fields such as nursing and advanced manufacturing. Two-thirds enroll in Associate of Arts or Associate of Science curricula designed to satisfy requirements of the first half of a four-year degree. These students may transfer to UA Little Rock, UA Fayetteville, or many other four-year institutions in Arkansas. Specifically, UA-PTC graduates who transfer to UA Fayetteville or UA Little Rock pay the same tuition as UA-PTC, which yields substantial savings for students.

UA - Pulaski Tech's enrollment includes students attending the college's Main Campus in North Little Rock, Little Rock-South on Interstate 30, Aerospace Technology Center near the North Little Rock Airport, Business and Industry Center near the Little Rock Airport, online classes, and high school students taking concurrent college classes.

Contact UA-PTC Admissions to learn more or schedule a tour.

www.uaptc.edu/college-admissions
admissions@uaptc.edu

501-271-9891

GRANTS: \$2.79 MILLION FOR TRIO PROGRAMS

Renewed Trio Funding Fuels Student Success At UA - Pulaski Tech



(L - R) Dr. Summer DeProw (Chancellor), Mary Kate Snow (Associate Vice Chancellor for TRIO Programs and Veterans Services), Dr. John Lewis (Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management and Student Life)

A - Pulaski Tech has secured over \$2.79 million in combined federal grants for its TRIO Student Support Services program, receiving both a renewal for its Main Campus and a new award to expand to the Little Rock-South site, thus underscoring the vital role the program plays in student success and persistence and ensuring its life-changing services continue through 2030.

The renewal of the competitive TRIO SSS grant for the Main Campus, totaling \$1,430,545, is a testament to the program's long-standing success, which has served students at UA-PTC since 2006.

"TRIO Student Support Services is a competitive grant and earning a five-year grant is very difficult," said Vice Chancellor for TRIO Programs and Veteran Services MaryKate Snow. "The TRIO SSS program at UA-PTC has an excellent record of success, with 87% of participants persisting in college from one program year to the next and 65% of participants graduating within three years."

In addition to the renewal, UA-PTC received a new TRIO SSS grant totaling \$1,361,820 to expand its vital services to the Little Rock-South site.

"The effort to expand TRIO Student Support Services to Little Rock-South has been a long-term goal for the college. Ours was the only new program funded in the state," said Snow.

The expansion will allow the program to serve an additional 140 students at the Little Rock-South site, which offers university transfer curriculum and key technical programs like Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, and Cosmetology. This is in addition to the 180 students currently served at the Main Campus.

"TRIO has truly changed my life in the best ways possible," said Sheenique Murray, who is pursuing her associate of science in business. "Through TRIO, I've gained confidence, learned valuable life skills, and built a stronger foundation for my future with knowledge about financial literacy, homeownership, and goal setting. For me, TRIO is more than just an organization, its family."

The core goal of TRIO Student Support Services is to cultivate essential skills and guide students to scholarly attainment, aiding in their transition to higher levels of education. Services offered under the program include:

- Professional tutoring
- · Academic advising
- · Financial literacy education
- College transfer assistance
- Cultural events and enrichment workshops

By providing this comprehensive, integrated support, TRIO programs equip students with the tools they need not just to survive college, but to excel and ultimately achieve the career and life goals that will uplift themselves and their communities.

"I am grateful to the leadership and staff at TRIO Student Support Services for their commitment to student success," said UA-PTC Chancellor Summer DeProw. "The program's effectiveness is illustrated by the facts: TRIO students persist in college, graduate, and move into successful careers at higher rates. The improvement in the lives of students is real. It's an important achievement that improves the lives of their families as well."

The TRIO SSS program is entirely funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is dedicated to supporting college students who are low-income, first-generation (neither parent has a baccalaureate), and/or have a documented disability.

CHARTS THEATER

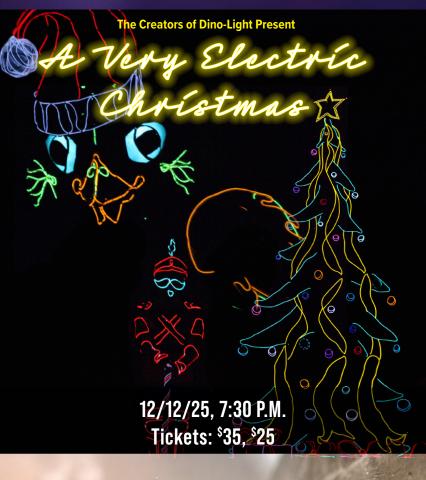
CENTER FOR HUMANITIES AND ARTS

3000 W. Scenic Dr., North Little Rock

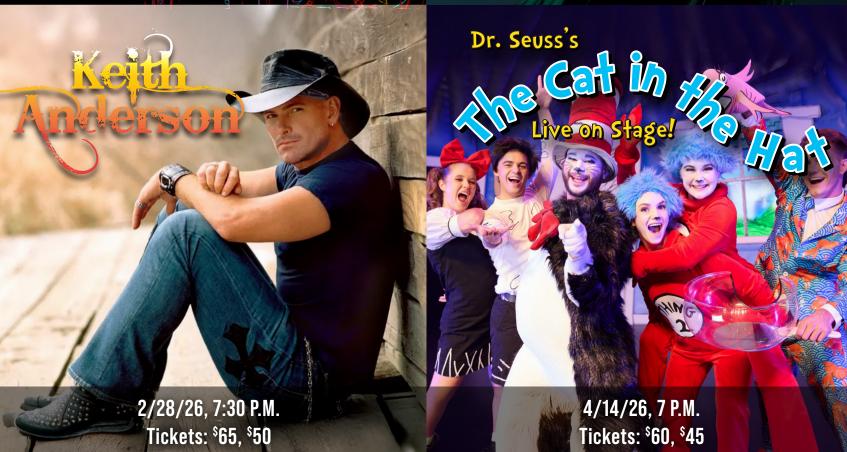


Add-on: a buffet dinner from the UA-PTC Culinary School

Purchase: beer, wine, and light concessions









This event, made possible by our generous sponsors, funds: student scholarships, culinary school equipment and supplies, student-focused success initiatives and facility improvements.

























ALUM: ALISON GUTHRIE

How UA-PTC Forged Her Path To Policy And Academic Excellence



(L-R) Denise Ennett (AR State Rep.), Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Alison Guthrie

lison Guthrie's remarkable journey – from high school dropout to an honors graduate, legislative advocate, and soon-to-be Ph.D. student – is a testament to perseverance and the transformative power of a focused education. As she prepares to enter a doctoral program in Cognitive & Experimental Psychology, UA - Pulaski Tech stands out not merely as a starting point, but as the deliberate, foundational launchpad for her later success.

Alison, a 2022 UA-PTC honor graduate with a perfect 4.0 GPA and a member of Phi Theta Kappa, she anticipated the demands of a master's degree, intentionally choosing advanced electives to prepare for the challenges ahead.

"I intentionally took harder, more relevant courses at UA-PTC because I wanted to be prepared," she shared. This foresight meant taking Intro to Statistics, Behavioral Statistics, and Intro to Computer Science. These choices proved invaluable. Now, as a graduate teaching assistant at Illinois State University working toward her Master of Science in Cognitive and Experimental Psychology, she writes code for her Multi-Variant Analysis class, a task she says would be impossible without her UA-PTC computer science foundation. This tactical approach to her associate degree laid the foundation for her subsequent 4.33 GPA at Arizona State University and her success in graduate-level coursework.

Alison's early involvement in student life was crucial. While at UA-PTC, she didn't wait for opportunities; she created them. She started the Psychology Club during the initial phase of the pandemic recognizing the need for student connection.

"Seeing what came out of that, I knew we had to keep meeting," she said. The club became the only active student organization during the isolation of lockdown, bringing in speakers and offering a gathering place. This experience taught her an important lesson that has stuck: "It gave me confidence to see you can use your voice; you can make people listen."

That confidence propelled her into public policy. Driven by her lived experience with hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (hEDS), Alison partnered with Arkansas State Representative Denise Ennett to author and advocate for two Arkansas bills concerning disability rights. Act 906 and the Arkansas RISE Act (Act 907) —which mandates universities track student accommodation data and improves the process for students with disabilities— both passed with near-unanimous support and became law. This impactful legislative work bridged her psychological research with real-world policy, demonstrating her aim to "bridge the gap between empirical evidence and policy."

For someone who had twice dropped out of high school, the initial fear of failure in higher education was strong. Alison credits the UA-PTC support system with dissolving that doubt. A pivotal moment came in a Mathematical Reasoning class with Instructor Lana Ridings. Despite having to take a remedial class, Alison persevered, but often panicked and even considered dropping the course.

"As soon as I finished the final exam, I emailed Ms. Riding to tell her how grateful I was to her and how I proud I was of myself. She responded back, telling me that I had made a 100% on the comprehensive final," Alison recalled. That moment, combined with winning scholarships that recognized her perseverance and merit, changed her internal narrative.

"Receiving scholarships based on my writing about the challenges of my disability showed me that people didn't just believe in me, they saw that I was worth the investment and recognition. For me, that was everything. These scholarships don't just provide financial opportunity for students with disabilities, they signal that we are valued, that we matter, and that we belong in higher education."

Alison's journey culminated in a powerful lesson: "Perseverance is the ability to hear a 'no' and keep going until you get a 'yes' or a 'maybe." Her next goal is to pay this belief forward by creating scholarships for students with disabilities at the universities she has attended, ensuring that the next generation of academic leaders also has the foundation they need to succeed.

FACULTY: LANA RIDING

The Power of "Yet:" How a Veteran UA-PTC Educator Inspires Success

or Assistant Teaching Professor of Mathematics Lana Riding, teaching is less about formulas and more about building confidence. With a teaching career that began in 1984, 17 years of which have been dedicated to UA–Pulaski Tech students, Riding is a relentless cheerleader for her students.

Riding's extensive career in education began after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Hendrix College and a Bachelor of Science in Education from UA Little Rock. While teaching in the PCSSD and LRSD school districts, she continued graduate coursework and, as a high school teacher, taught everything from Pre-Algebra to AP Calculus BC. She also taught three summers at the Arkansas Governor's School.

Riding joined UA-Pulaski Tech in August 2009 as an adjunct instructor, becoming full-time in 2016. Her mission is to debunk the myth of the "non-math person." She recognizes that math anxiety is a significant obstacle, often trapping students in a vicious cycle of fear and poor performance. Her strategy is simple yet profound: creating a classroom that is calm, patient, kind, and where mistakes are expected.

When a student says, "I can't do this," Riding immediately adds the powerful word "yet", reminding them they are in the process of learning.

This supportive environment is established with engaging icebreakers -one involving gummy worms and paperclips- to quickly foster a united community of learners. To minimize pressure, she prioritizes lower-stakes projects and activities over traditional tests to assess mastery without triggering high anxiety.

Beyond classroom dynamic, Riding's most effective tool for persistence is intentional teaching and focused feedback. She avoids meaningless praise like "good job," instead providing comments written clearly and solely for that student. This feedback identifies areas of mastery, notes where the student showed growth or strength, and pinpoints specific areas for improvement. Her ACUE experience has reinforced the power of validation.

her upbringing in Blytheville, where her family placed a strong emphasis on education and the local community college.

"After the first year of Covid, I thought it might be time to retire," Riding said. "Everything was so difficult with all the challenges during and immediately after the pandemic. But each year, as we start to wrap up the academic year, I realize that I'm not ready to give this up yet. I love my students and my colleagues."

She and her husband have been married for 40 years and have two accomplished adult children: a daughter who is a hospital pharmacist and a son who is a CPA in Denver.

She currently teaches two courses crucial for future educators, Math for Teachers 1 and 2, alongside Mathematical Reasoning.

These are her favorite courses, as they allow her to work closely with future elementary teachers, helping them to "stop fearing math and embrace the beauty and joy that can be found within."

Riding was honored to receive UA-PTC's Susan K. Reid Award for Teaching Excellence for the 2019-2020 academic year, and was recognized as UA-PTC's Faculty of the Year (2020). She continues to innovate, recently becoming a QuantNet Scholar to further enhance her curriculum. Her greatest joy lies in helping students see that math is a critical tool tied to current events and their everyday lives.

Riding's commitment is deeply rooted in



PROGRAM: AVIONICS

UA-PTC, Arkansas Aerospace and Defense Alliance Celebrate Program Launch



A-PTC and the Arkansas Aerospace and Defense Alliance (AADA) celebrated the official launch of the new UA-PTC Avionics Program at an event Thursday, Oct. 16 at the UA-PTC Aerospace Technology Center in North Little Rock.

AADA President Mark Bremer, Arkansas State Senator Jane English, Arkansas Secretary of Commerce Hugh McDonald, and industry representatives joined UA-PTC leadership, program faculty, and students to outline the ways the new program will address skills gaps and further propel Arkansas as a national leader in aerospace and defense.

The event began with welcome remarks followed by a facility tour. One Avionics classroom featured a demonstration of Pennant Software's cutting-edge computer training capabilities used in technical training. An AADA board meeting and working lunch followed.

"We are profoundly grateful to every partner in the Aerospace Centers of Excellence endeavor," said Summer DeProw, chancellor of UA – Pulaski Tech. "This isn't just a college initiative; it's a commitment shared by industry leaders like Dassault Falcon Jet, Arcturus Aerospace, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and the Arkansas Aerospace Defense Alliance. The collaborative model we've adopted extends to the North Little Rock School District, the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, and Apprenticely. This is not just a program launch, but the beginning of a long-term, self-sustaining future for workforce talent development in the aerospace sector."

The workforce development initiative is the product of the \$2.5 Million HIRED Grant for the Aerospace Center of Excellence (ACE) announced last year. The grant, secured with support from industry partners like Dassault Falcon Jet and Arcturus



Aerospace, is dedicated to substantially expanding employeraligned training in avionics, aviation maintenance, and composites.

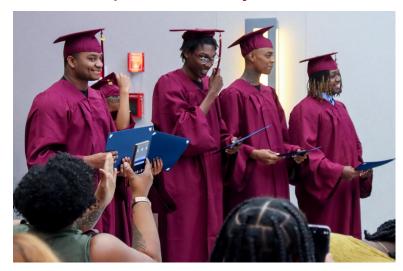
"Good things happen when the private and public sectors work together, said Executive Director of the Arkansas Aerospace and Defense Alliance Chad Causey. "Arkansas aerospace and defense companies provided input on what is needed for sector success and our State leaders acted. This one-of-a-kind avionics program in Arkansas will be a catalyst for industry growth and AADA is proud to play a small role in supporting the Governor and her team to bring this initiative to fruition."

The new UA-PTC Avionics Program is a specialized training track designed to prepare students for certification as Certified Aircraft Electronics Technicians (CAET). This high-demand program will provide hands-on experience in diagnosing, repairing, and wiring complex electronic systems, including communications, navigation, and flight instruments. This initiative, part of the ACE objectives, aims to create clear educational pathways and internship opportunities for diverse learners, including high school students and incumbent workers.

The collaborative model we've adopted extends to the North Little Rock School District, the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, and Apprenticely.

PROGRAM: CAREER CLIMB

Partnership with the City of Little Rock Prepares Next Generation Workforce



ive students celebrated their graduation from the University of Arkansas – Pulaski Technical College's Career Climb for Advanced Manufacturing program and City of Little Rock's Career Climb Internship program July 24, marking the completion of a six-week training program designed to prepare young adults for careers in the skilled trades.

The ceremony took place at UA-PTC's Little Rock – South site and celebrated the students who completed 192 hours of training focused on workplace skills, safety, financial literacy, customer service, conflict resolution, team-building, resume writing, and other aspects of succeeding at a job.

The program is a partnership between UA-PTC, Little Rock Mayor Frank Scott, Jr., and the City of Little Rock's Career Climb Program, and the University of Arkansas System Workforce Center (housed at Arkansas Economic Development Institute). Career Climb is a community-supported initiative aimed at addressing the growing need for skilled employees as the baby boomer generation retires from the workforce. "As the baby boomers age out of the workforce, there is a growing need for young employees with the skills and work habits to be productive partners for economic growth," according to a statement from the City of Little Rock.

Throughout the program, graduates participated in industry tours, mock interviews, and engaged with guest speakers from Little Rock-area industry partners. The graduates earned several certifications that qualify them for entry-level manufacturing work: OSHA 10, which provides a comprehensive introduction to workplace safety regulations; the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate, which assesses foundational skills like applied math and graphic literacy; and the Future Fit or Advanced Manufacturing certificate, a 96-hour course covering technical skills such as blueprint reading and machine operations, as well as professional communications and critical thinking.

The wide-ranging curriculum also included sessions led by UA-PTC college presenters, such as Robbie Gill from Career Services, who provided instruction on resume writing, interviewing skills, and emotional intelligence. The students also received a math refresher course and took the WorkKeys test, which measures foundational skills and aptitudes relevant to the workplace, with guidance from UA-PTC Director of Testing Services Dee Smith. Students also learned about financial aid from UA-PTC Director of Financial Aid Robert Ellard. Other topics included email etiquette, time management, and stress management, led by UA-PTC Professional Development Training Coordinator Mary Gall.

Industry tours with local employers Essick Air and Dassault Falcon Jet provided firsthand experience, while guest speakers and mock job interviews from companies such as 3M, Elopak, EssickAir, Lexicon, Revolution, Ring Container, and Union Pacific gave students insight into various career paths.

"Our Career Climb partnership with UA-PTC is a great example of innovative collaboration to improve the lives of young people in our community," said Mayor Scott. "This rigorous workforce training initiative is a pathway to better job opportunities and a stronger economy. We hope to continue to grow this valuable partnership and provide meaningful opportunities in the job market for youth and young adults."

This skilled workforce training project is the third demonstration by the UA System Workforce Center. Its effort brings more than 500 degrees and certificates in high-demand careers offered from all campuses across the UA System together into one place, so that they can be "lifted and shifted" from one campus to any other UA campus in any area of the state that needs the training to meet the unique and immediate economic development needs of that area.

"This is a true "earn and learn" program and wonderful partnership with the City of Little Rock and the U of A Workforce Center. I was also very impressed by the enthusiasm from the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce and our industry partners" said, Summer DeProw, Chancellor at UA-PTC. "At the end of the six weeks, all interns were either going to college this fall or had job offers from an industry partner. Overall, the program was wildly successful and we are looking forward to our next cohort."

AWARDS: AR COMMUNITY COLLEGES

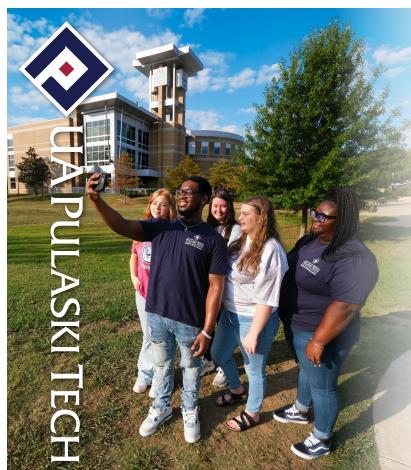
Awards to UA-PTC Stundent, Staff, and Faculty







At this year's Arkansas Community Colleges Confterence, Dr. Collin Callaway presented awards to three distinguished members of UA-PTC: Kristy Browning - student, Blaise Hale - Student Assistance Coordinator, and Samantha Staggs - Teaching Professor of Political Science.



You can easily create a scholarship to help a student at UA-PTC!

The UA - Pulaski Tech Foundation awards more than \$100,000 in privately-funded scholarships to students each semester. You are invited to consider creating a scholarship of any amount to help a student overcome financial challenges and stay in college at UA-PTC until he or she earns a technical certificate or associate degree.

You can create a one-time scholarship of any amount or endow a scholarship so your gift continues to support a student year after year. Your scholarship criteria will be set by you and confirmed through a Scholarship Gift Agreement. Endowment funds are invested by the UA Foundation, with a typical return of 4% annually, and a scholarship can be offered to students after endowment gifts have been completed. Your endowed scholarship is a gift that lives on forever.

You can name your scholarship in honor or in memory of a friend or family member, or even a favorite professor.

You will be recognized at the annual UA-PTC Foundation Scholarship Luncheon and have the opportunity to meet your scholarship recipient.

