**Outstanding Faculty**

**Arkansas Northeastern College**

**Dr. Gary Yarbrough**

**Associate Professor of Psychology**

**2011 to Present**

Dr. Yarbrough, Associate Professor of Psychology, has been highly engaged in efforts to increase student success at Arkansas Northeastern College. His efforts have led to tangible increases in student success that have been presented at the national level. Additionally, Dr. Yarbrough is actively engaged in the experimental analysis of behavior and has made scholarly contributions to the field of psychology. In his teaching, he helps students to understand the relationship between the science of psychology and their everyday lives. Dr. Yarbrough is highly respected by both his colleagues and students.

**Arkansas State University Beebe**

**Jake Marquess**

**Associate Professor of Biology**

**2012 to Present**

Dr. Jake Marquess holds a Doctorate in Biology from the University of Mississippi and has taught life sciences at ASU-Beebe since 2012. He has served as Faculty Senate president and on numerous committees including Academic Leadership, Curriculum, University Awards, Concert-Lecture, Employee Development, and Global Awareness. Dr. Marquess organized and hosted faculty and students in an exchange partnership with the Catholic University of El Salvador. He co-developed online biology courses and updated the life science labs with equipment and technology. Dr. Marques is an advisor for the Ecology Club and developed interactive natural science activities for local summer camps and programs.

**Arkansas State University Mid-South**

**Gary Giordano**

**Lead Faculty, Machining**

**2013 to Present**

A highly confident and committed Lead Instructor who has gained much respect from his students and peers alike, Gary displays a positive attitude and does not give up on his students. He has helped, in many ways, to put our college on the map, gaining added visibility with the only NIMS accredited machining program in the region. He actively participates in campus activities and is usually one of the first on campus in the mornings.

**Arkansas State University Mountain Home**

**Mindy Fulcher**

**Art, Graphic & Web Design Instructor**

**2013 to Present**

Mindy Fulcher is an Art, Design, and Photography instructor at ASUMH. She has 15 years of experience in advertising, publication, and marketing as an art director, graphic designer, and photographer and editor. She received a Master’s in Fine Arts from the University of Memphis and studied fine arts and graphic design at ASTATE and the Lorenzo de Medici Art Institute in Florence, Italy. ASUMH relies on Mindy's design skill in many ways - as a part-time graphic designer, as an Art Club sponsor, and as an interior designer for spaces where students learn and relax on the ASUMH campus.

**Arkansas State University Newport**

**Shannon Riley**

**Instructor of Surgical Technology**

**2015 to Present**

Shannon has a heart for service that shows in everything she does. Although relatively new to teaching, Shannon has jumped in and made an immediate impact on the lives of her students. Shannon has led her students to board exam pass rates well above the national average and served as a mentor both in and out of the classroom. She is involved in the ASUN community and played an integral role in completing accreditation for ASUN’s Surgical Technology program. Shannon regularly serves on college committees and in community organizations. She inspires not just her students, but also her coworkers.

**Black River Technical College**

**Christina Derbes**

**BS, DTR, Nutrition and Dietetics Instructor**

**2013 to Present**

Christina is a full-time instructor and alumni of the Nutrition and Dietetics Program at BRTC. Christina is passionate about her profession and her students. She enjoys her job and makes BRTC a better place to work. She was instrumental in starting a food pantry on campus for students and is involved in every activity, always one of the first to volunteer. Christina always has a kind or funny thing to say and brightens everyone's day. Her colleagues are proud to have her at BRTC.

**College of the Ouachitas**

**Sean Elkin**

**Senior Instructor of Mathematics**

**2014 to Present**

Sean Elkin has served as Math faculty at College of the Ouachitas for four years. He earned his BS from Louisiana State University and his MA from the University of Central Arkansas. Sean has served on various committees, holding both the vice chair and chair positions on the Faculty Council committee. He worked diligently to revamp the math curriculum and spearheaded the addition of Quantitative Literacy. He is committed to his students and is constantly brainstorming new ideas to help them learn and be successful. Sean is a valuable member of the COTO family and very deserving of this award.

**East Arkansas Community College**

**Dr. Heath Sanders**

**Faculty, Sociology & Anthropology**

**2010 to Present**

Dr. Heath Sanders not only displays a passion for the field of education, but also compassion for students. Throughout his instruction, he uses various forms of technology to complement his lectures, and he is constantly updating and refining his material. He interacts with students in and out of the classroom on a continuous basis, and he impacts students and stimulates lifelong learning. One student said, “It is apparent that his main goal is to instill an enjoyable learning experience for his students. His passion paired with his unique teaching style and enthusiasm is contagious.”

**National Park College**

**Janice Ivers**

**Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences**

**2001 to Present**

Janice Ivers, Dean of Nursing and Health Sciences, is a leading health care education professional in Arkansas and a rock star at NPC. She has been with the college for 17 years and has served as dean since 2014. She maintains an active role in the classroom and clinical settings of the programs that she leads, and she models a commitment to lifelong learning and professional involvement to both her staff and students. In 2016, Governor Asa Hutchinson appointed Janice to serve on the State Board of Nursing. She is also a member of the nursing board’s Education Committee.

**North Arkansas College**

**Cheryl Keymer**

**Department Chair of Business and Information Technology**

**1982 to Present**

Cheryl's career began 36 years ago when Weldon Stevenson, Director of Twin Lakes VoTech, took a chance on a new college graduate. Cheryl served as a faculty member and PBL adviser for 30 years. Cheryl’s hard work and ethics are an example for those pursuing their dreams. She says, "As a former graduate of Northark, it was a dream to come back to the institution where I began my education and give back in some way." Cheryl is a native of Western Grove where she resides with her husband and furry friends. Her daughter, Ashley, also graduated from Northark.

**NorthWest Arkansas Community College**

**Sheila Smith**

**Business Faculty**

**2005 to Present**

Sheila Smith is a Professor of Business and Computer Information Systems at NorthWest Arkansas Community College. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, she also coordinates the AAS Accounting Technology program, develops classes and programs, and has a strong student-centered focus and dedication to improving student success. She has worked tirelessly to improve the Accounting program and courses at NWACC. Sheila holds an MBA, an MS in Accounting, and a BS in Business Education and Computer Science. She has worked at NWACC for 12 years.

**Ozarka College**

**Jo Ann Counts**

**Early Childhood Faculty**

**2016 to Present**

Jo Ann Counts has been associated with student learning and Ozarka College since 1991 where she began her Ozarka career in Adult Education. She assumed the position of Program Director for Early Childhood Development in August 2016. Over the past couple of years, the ECD program has grown and improved under Jo Ann’s leadership. She was selected as the Ozarka College Faculty Member of the Year because of her clear commitment to student success and her support of fellow faculty members. She epitomizes the Ozarka College mission: “Providing life-changing experiences through education.”

**Phillips Community College of the UA**

**Kirk Whiteside**

**Director of Performing Arts**

**1988 to Present**

The perfection Kirk Whiteside expects in the classroom and onstage is what drives him to excel in his profession. As Director of Performing Arts, Whiteside is known for his supportive teaching style, his talent in casting and directing, his knowledge of theatre and music, and his outgoing personality. Whiteside joined PCCUA in 1988, has been teaching for over 30 years, and has directed over 70 performances. He received his MFA in drama and musical theatre from the University of Miami. Among his outside interests are traveling, cooking, running, and spending time with his dogs and friends

**South Arkansas Community College**

**Dr. Sterling Claypoole**

**Professor of Psychology**

**2010 to Present**

Sterling D. Claypoole is a graduate of South Ark Community College and Southern Arkansas University with a degree in Psychology, Master’s degrees in Religious Education and in Counseling, and a Doctorate of Educational Ministry from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Sterling is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Professor of Psychology at South Arkansas Community College. He is also the regional chaplain for the United States Secret Service and chaplain for the El Dorado Fire & Police Departments and Union County Sheriff’s Office. Sterling is married to Jennifer and has two children, Brennan and Bradley.

**Southeast Arkansas College**

**Dr. William Layher**

**Biology Instructor**

**2011 to Present**

SEARK’s Dr. William Layher serves as the Coordinator for the Bayou Barthomomew Alliance and participated in the AETN documentary The World’s Longest Bayou. Dr. Layher involves his students and the College community in many activities including exploring the Bill G. Layher Bayou Barthomomew Nature Trial, which was dedicated in honor of Dr. Layher in 2003. His willingness to go the extra mile in areas of volunteer activities immediately made Dr. Layher a favorite instructor at SEARK College. His students are influenced by his encouraging attitude and eagerness to restore and preserve our nation’s natural resources.

**Southern Arkansas University Tech**

**Jodi Eppinette**

**Division Chair and Business Administration Faculty**

**1984 to Present**

Jodi has been employed by SAU Tech for over 30 years. She serves as full-time instructor and division chair for her department. She is a member of the AQIP Steering Committee. She has volunteered to assist in putting together the systems portfolio in whatever capacity she can. Jodi is proactive and forward thinking in her role as division chair. She is leading the reactivation of advisory committees for her division, has led the development of a common internship for all technical programs, and constantly offers to take on additional responsibilities. She is a role model for all.

**UA Community College at Batesville**

**Dr. Ted Allder**

**English Faculty**

**1991 to Present**

Ted Allder has worked in administration and teaching at the University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville since 1991. He began teaching English and World Literature when the College was Gateway Technical College. From 1999 to 2003, he was Division Chair of Arts and Sciences. He now serves as an English faculty member. He holds Bachelor of Arts degrees in English and Art, a Master of Arts degree in English, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in English.

**UA Community College at Morrilton**

**Kara Jones**

**Education Instructor**

**2011 to Present**

Kara Jones received an MS in Education from UCA and has continuously modeled a commitment to teaching and learning inside and outside the classroom for students who also aspire to become teachers. She serves as a PTK Advisor, NAEYC Peer Reviewer for national accreditations, and a curriculum consultant. Additionally, she teaches for the U of A Early Care and Education Projects and is a dedicated and tireless community volunteer, even spearheading the creation of a free food pantry on campus. The students at UACCM are lucky to have Ms. Jones as a professional and personal role model.

**University of Arkansas Cossatot**

**Marvin Terrell**

**Welding Instructor**

**2006 to Present**

Marvin Terrell worked for over 25 years in several roles in the welding field but always dreamed of teaching. He gained that opportunity 12 years ago when he joined the UAC team. Marvin was extremely dedicated and was instrumental in building the UAC Welding program to what it is today. During his time at UAC, Marvin changed the lives of hundreds of students not only through teaching, but also through his sincere passion for his students. Marvin elected to retire in May to spend more time with his wife and grandchildren. His presence at UAC will be greatly missed.

**University of Arkansas Hope/Texarkana**

**Amanda Ritter-Maggio**

**English Instructor**

**2013 to Present**

Amanda is a sought-after instructor on campus, and she is a model for how liaisons should mentor and support our high school concurrent instructors. She is hailed as “the best colleague an academic could ask for.” She is serving her second term as the Faculty Senate secretary and has been elected to serve as the next Faculty Senate vice-president. She also serves as an advisor for the Fine Arts Club and Phi Theta Kappa and volunteers her time to work as the Applied Music Coordinator on campus and as faculty liaison in the concurrent credit program.

**University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College**

**Rebecca Stone**

**Instructor of History**

**2007 to Present**

Rebecca Stone earned a Master of Arts from the University of Central Arkansas and is a full-time instructor of history. Rebecca is an outstanding faculty member who continually improves her courses to better reflect new pedagogies in the field of history. She also gives her time to the college by serving on the Faculty Involvement Committee, leading Criterion 2 for accreditation, and serving as the current Faculty Senate President.

**University of Arkansas Rich Mountain**

**Janet VanDeest**

**Health Information Systems Technology Instructor**

**2011 to Present**

Janet began her adjunct faculty career at UA Rich Mountain in 2011. She was instrumental in the development of certificate programs for the Health Information Technology Medical Billing and Coding program. In 2016, she transitioned to full-time faculty member and developed relationships with industry partners to better advocate for those served by the College. She is committed to providing current information and trends in the healthcare industry to better prepare students for their careers. Her colleagues and students describe her as driven, selfless, inspirational, and willing to go the extra mile to help students succeed.

**Outstanding Staff**

**Arkansas Northeastern College**

**Melissa Arledge**

**Coordinator of Early College**

**2012 to Present**

As Lead Career Coach, Melissa Arledge worked tirelessly in area high schools to help build ANC’s Early College Program. She has built a close network with industry partners through the development of job shadowing for high school students and by asking experts to serve as guest speakers in the classroom. She has played a crucial role in the implementation of the Nucor Diploma Squared Scholarship Program for area high school students. Melissa is willing to put in extra time to make sure students get everything they need.

**Arkansas State University Beebe**

**Tonya Tucker**

**Assistant Registrar**

**2002 to Present**

Assistant Registrar Tonya Tucker began her career at ASU-Beebe in 2002 as the Administrative Assistant to the Registrar. She later moved to Admissions Analyst and then Records Management Analyst before being promoted into her current position. Over the course of the last 15 years, Tucker has strived to help students as they maneuver through the phases of the academic process. She goes above and beyond to help the students, faculty, and staff of ASUB. One of the most rewarding pieces of her job is working with students and seeing them achieve their academic goals.

**Arkansas State University Mid-South**

**James Ed Cook**

**Director, Facilities and Maintenance**

**2012 to Present**

As Director of Facilities & Maintenance, Ed is constantly trying to blend the old and the new. He has jumped into this position with an approach that contiunuosly balances emergencies and facility responsibilities. He is willing to give the hours it takes to get the job done. As an example, I recently witnessed him take on West Memphis Utilities when he realized they had read a water meter incorrectly. He’s willing to take on any task required to save his department and ASU Mid-South money. I think this is just one example of his integrity and support for the University.

**Arkansas State University Mountain Home**

**Roberta Heldenbrand**

**Payroll Technician**

**2003 to Present**

Roberta Heldenbrand has been with ASUMH since 2003 and has worked as the payroll technician that entire time. She holds two degrees from the college - an AA and an AAS - and grew up in Mountain Home. Roberta is an active volunteer on campus and in the community, supporting such causes as the Food Bank of North Central Arkansas, Relay for Life, and the Koman Race for the Cure. She enjoys yoga and reading and has been a member of the ASUMH Staff Senate.

**Arkansas State University Newport**

**Chris Doyle**

**Coordinator of Applications Technology**

**2011 to Present**

Chris is 100 percent student-focused. He puts countless hours into ensuring that students are taken care of promptly – often helping students while others are sleeping. Chris is always thinking about the student experience, looking for ways to be more efficient, and challenging the status quo to ensure the best possible experience for students, faculty, and staff. Chris’ solutions are always innovative and often groundbreaking. He takes great pride in establishing and maintaining a good rapport with everyone he encounters, both inside and outside the college. Chris is a model for all customer service providers and a model employee.

**Black River Technical College**

**Eric Sullinger**

**Information Technology Manager**

**2013 to Present**

Eric has an unwavering dedication to getting the job done. He is always willing to help students, faculty, and staff to ensure computers and networks are functioning properly. In May of 2017, when the college again faced flood waters, Eric worked tirelessly to make sure the computers and servers were out of harm’s way. He then made sure BRTC was ready to start the fall semester on time. Eric received his AA from BRTC and has a BS in Computer and Information Technology from Arkansas State. BRTC is fortunate to have such a dedicated employee.

**College of the Ouachitas**

**Allison Malone**

**Director of Library/Learning Resource Center**

**2017 to Present**

Allison Malone, Director of the Learning Resource Center/Library at COTO since 2017, earned her MLS from TWU. Prior to coming to COTO, Allison worked as LRC Director at SAU Tech for twenty-two years. She has implemented several library system updates, conducted COTO’s first automated inventory, and continues to systematize and streamline processes in the COTO LRC. Allison is always mindful of the resources needed to help students succeed and works closely with faculty to obtain those necessary resources. She is a member of ARKLink, American Library Association, and Kiwanis, and she actively serves on COTO’s HLC Criterion Five Taskforce.

**East Arkansas Community College**

**Layla Stallings**

**Data Analyst/Perkins Coordinator**

**2009 to Present**

Layla continually goes above and beyond her work duties and responsibilities and is truly deserving of recognition. She consistently performs her job well, displays a willingness to assist co-workers, and shares creative ideas. Her approachable manner and cheerful disposition contribute to her excellence in working with others and serving the EACC campus and community. She helps when needed, even when it doesn’t fall within her job responsibilities. She is respected by her collegues for her outstanding service to our students as well as her professionalism, work ethic, and dedication to the College.

**National Park College**

**Mary Kay Wurm**

**Director of Career Services**

**Present**

Mary Kay is passionate about internships and student learning. In 2017, she executed the Great Lakes Career Ready Internship Program at NPC. She also organizes the NPC Job Fair, resulting in a 65% hire rate for our students. Mary Kay is active in the community, serving in Hot Springs National Park Rotary, as past president of Arkansas Association of Colleges and Employers, and as Leadership Hot Springs alumni. She works on projects including a partnership with Arkansas Workforce Centers and the Governor’s Dislocated Workers Task Force. She was also a 2018 nomine for Hot Springs Woman of the Year.

**North Arkansas College**

**Mary Mallet**

**Accounting**

**1981 to Present**

Mary Mallet has worked for North Arkansas College in Accounting for 37 years. During this time, she has completed three degrees, taught part-time, and worked on all three campuses. Her job is mainly behind the scenes but is crucial to the overall operation of the college. Her personal ethics, sense of duty, and willingness to help with any problem are great motivators for her coworkers. She says, "I believe education changes lives, and I am proud to be a part, in some small way, of that experience." Mary is also actively involved in her church and community.

**NorthWest Arkansas Community College**

**Ann Turner**

**Enrollment Specialist**

**2000 to Present**

Ann Turner is the Outstanding Staff member because of her continued excellence in helping students with their admissions, financial aid, and records questions. Not only does Ann advocate for hundreds of students every day in the Enrollment Support Center, but she also volunteers her personal time after business hours to attend community events on behalf of NWACC, such as FAFSA Nights. Ann believes in every student who walks through the doors of NWACC and demonstrates that belief with her constant encouragement and understanding.

**Ozarka College**

**Chaney Coleman**

**IT Technician**

**2002 to Present**

Ozarka College has selected Mr. Chaney Coleman of Melbourne, Arkansas as recipient of the Outstanding Staff of the Year award. Chaney, who has been employed at the College since 2002, currently serves as an IT Technician. He always has a positive attitude and a smile on his face. He is strongly committed to his work as well as to our students.

**Phillips Community College of the UA**

**Stan Sullivant**

**Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration**

**2012 to Present**

Whether in his work at PCCUA or in his side interests, Stan Sullivant is well respected for his accuracy, knowledge, creativity, and friendly nature. Sullivant joined PCCUA first as Controller, then served as Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, and he is relied upon daily for the smooth functioning of the Business Office. He received his Bachelor of Professional Accountancy from Mississippi State University. Prior to PCCUA, he worked as Director of Accounting at Northwest Mississippi Community College for six years and in the Mississippi Office of the State Auditor for 19 years.

**South Arkansas Community College**

**Mary Kate Sumner**

**Administrative Analyst in Institutional Research**

**2016 to Present**

Mary Kate Sumner came to South Arkansas Community College in December 2016 and quickly made a name for herself on campus as an extremely helpful colleague. In her role as administrative analyst, she has applied her significant skill to assisting departments across campus with their data needs and reporting. She treats others with consideration and always seeks out positive solutions. Mary Kate is an asset to her department and to the college.

**Southeast Arkansas College**

**Angelia Williams**

**Accountant I**

**20017 to Present**

Angelia graduated from Southeast Arkansas College with an Associate of Applied Science and earned her Bachelor of Science from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Angelia returned to Southeast Arkansas College in 2010 and began working as an Accountant I in our Fiscal Affairs Department. She is always positive and smiling, even when she is being pulled in multiple directions. Angelia served diligently on the Internal Presidential Search committee in 2017 as well as volunteering countless hours at SEARK's Food Bank. She was a dedicated student and is a proven leader, passionate servant, and valuable asset to the campus.

**Southern Arkansas University Tech**

**Laura Johnson**

**Director of Information Technology & Communications Services**

**1982 to Present**

Laura Johnson is an asset to the Center for Online Learning, and she plays an important role in helping students, adding instructors, and building semester courses. She goes above and beyond her job duties to ensure a successful experience for our instructors and students. She has completed 35 years of service with SAU Tech and has been a tremendous asset to the college throughout the years. Her experience and dedication has never wavered. She is the real deal! It is a pleasure to work with someone with such dedication and passion for this college.

**UA Community College at Batesville**

**Debbie Wyatt**

**Director of Career Pathways**

**2011 to Present**

As Director of the Career Pathways Initiative Program at UACCB, Debbie enjoys helping students realize their potential. She appreciates working for UACCB - one of the leading intellectual, cultural, and economic drivers of the region. Ms. Wyatt received an MA in Public Administration and a BA in Political Science from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. She holds a Career Development Facilitator Credential and is a Certified Economic Developer.

**UA Community College at Morrilton**

**Kim Darling**

**Director of Adult Education**

**1994 to Present**

The UACCM community is very grateful to have Kim Darling leading the adult education team. In their words, here is just a sampling of how her colleagues feel about her: She “makes me feel important!” “She makes me feel valuable.” “She is the perfect example of a great leader.” She works “tirelessly.” “She has worked numerous hours above and beyond her normal schedule.” She is “teaching by example.” She is “one of the most selfless individuals on this campus.” “Her energy inspires every teacher.” “She is easily the most deserving person I know for Staff of the Year….”

**University of Arkansas Cossatot**

**Christine Vertiz**

**Testing Coordinator**

**2004 to Present**

Christine Vertiz worked 25 years in the poultry industry until her young daughter’s battles with cancer forced her to leave work. Christine’s own health then declined, landing her in a nursing home for two years. During that time, Christine started classes at UAC while also working as a part-time tutor. She completed her AA and then Bachelor’s in Psychology. Christine now works as UAC’s Testing Coordinator. She loves making students feel a little more at ease as they come in to take an exam. Always wearing a smile, Christine strives to make a difference in whatever way she can.

**University of Arkansas Hope/Texarkana**

**Cindy Phillips**

**Accounting Technician**

**1996 to Present**

Cindy is a leader in the Business Office; her tenure, experience, knowledge, and demeanor draw others to ask her opinion often. She has acquired a vast knowledge and understanding of the details necessary to keep the business office running smoothly. Cindy is loyal to the College and its mission. Her excellent service has been demonstrated most recently in the manner in which she served the College during a co-worker’s extended absence. Long days and heavy workloads did not deter her. Her “can do” attitude and “sharp as a tack” aptitude saved this institution during that period of time.

**University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College**

**Lavonne Juhl**

**Director of Financial Aid**

**2000 to 2008, 2010 to Present**

Lavonne Juhl has worked in financial aid for over 21 years, 18 of those at UA-PTC where she is currently the Director of Financial Aid. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Arkansas at Monticello. As a member of the Arkansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, she has served in many roles, including President. Lavonne has been instrumental in the success of UA-PTC’s implementation of PowerFaids and Jenzabar EX. She strives for professional excellence and focuses on continuous improvement in quality and student services.

**University of Arkansas Rich Mountain**

**Jeanette Berry**

**TRiO Educational Opportunity Center Outreach Representative**

**1998 to Present**

This year, Jeanette celebrates her 20th anniversary at UA Rich Mountain. She serves as the TRiO Educational Opportunity Center Outreach Representative for the Mena campus. She is an advocate for first-generation, non-traditional students as it parallels her own college experience. Jeanette stated, “I am proud to be associated with UA Rich Mountain and TRiO programs. Thankfully, the people of the Ouachita Mountain Region receive assistance with applying for admissions and financial aid here at their local college. I am very proud of our students as they graduate and move on with their careers or enter a four-year institution.”