Each year, during April we celebrate Community College month. The community college model was created in America in 1901, the only American education invention. According to 2017 research by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), there are 1,108 colleges across the nation serving under the AACC mission which is “Building a Nation of Learners by Advancing America’s Community Colleges.” In that same report, we find that 12.2 million students are enrolled in credit and non-credit courses, and 806,766 associate degrees and 516,820 certificates were awarded between 2014-2015. These numbers are not only impressive but life-altering for many citizens across our nation. NWF State College plays a critical role in building a nation of learners right here in our communities, and is doing so with pride.

(continued, page 2)
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In a recent article from the AACC Community College Journal, Mary Brumbach, Chief Strategy Officer for Dallas County Community College District, asked this question, “Before, we had pretty much focused on questions related to what the colleges were doing. Now we’re asking, ‘what does our community need from us?’” I agree with Mary’s question, and I believe that NWF State College is listening and providing for the needs of our communities.

One way we are providing for our communities is through the recent legislation on Military Tuition Assistance (HB 75) legislation. I mentioned this in last month’s column, but during our April Board of Trustees meeting our Trustees stepped up to honor our active duty military students. During the monthly meeting, our Trustees voted unanimously to waive all college fees for active duty military students using tuition assistance beginning fall semester 2018. As you know, this vote comes just days after the signing of Military Tuition Assistance Bill (House Bill 75) by Governor Rick Scott on April 6th.

We are proud of the position our Trustees are taking to make college more affordable for our military students. Our military citizens are the lifeblood of Northwest Florida, and it is imperative that we take a stand to help them reach their educational and career goals. We believe that the passing of the Military Tuition Assistance legislation and the significant action of our Trustees have further removed any barriers these students may have had to help them improve their lives.

At NWF State College, active duty military personnel receive:

- NO state fees and NO college fees
- Priority registration and financial aid assistance
- Free tutoring
- Flexible classes offered online, hybrid (online and traditional) and traditional classes at one of our six campuses and centers.

We are continuing to expand our offerings to all students through new programs. All of these programs are a direct result of listening to our communities and providing exceptional educational opportunities for our students to improve their quality of life. And, we continue to listen and learn about programs we may need to add!

John Wesley once said, “catch on fire with enthusiasm and people will come for miles to watch you burn.” Our team at NWF is on fire with enthusiasm, and we are on an upward trajectory to be the best community college in the nation. People in our communities are noticing and joining our effort! Won’t you join us too?

#TheBestIsOurStandard
Devin Stephenson, President

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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**NWF STATE REGISTERED NURSING PROGRAM ANNOUNCES ADDITION OF SPRING SEMESTER START**

NWF State College Department of Nursing is pleased to announce that they will begin offering the Associate of Science in Nursing program with a spring semester start date in addition to fall semester start dates. In previous years, this program has only admitted new students during the fall terms.

The Spring 2019 application will be available on nwfsc.edu beginning on May 1, 2018 through June 1, 2018.

For more information on the NWF State College Nursing program, please contact Kathy McNair, Nursing Instructional Support Specialist, at 850-729-6400 or mcnairk@nwfsc.edu.

**STRATEGIC PLAN**: Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

**IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**: Goals 1 and 3
NWF STATE COLLEGE ANNOUNCES  
**Arnie Hart Juried Student Exhibition**

The winners of the annual Arnie Hart Juried Student Art Exhibition were recently announced at the galleries' opening reception.

Each year the finest student works are juried by an art professional and a competitive selection process for an exciting exhibition in the McIlroy Gallery. Student works in a variety of two- and three-dimensional media, including painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography and ceramics, comprise the exhibition. Artwork produced by faculty is on display in the Holzhauer Gallery.

Arnie Hart Juried Student Exhibition Winners for 2018 include:

- **Best in Show**: Taylor Martin for his pastel drawing on paper, *Abigail*
- **First Place 2-D**: Vuong Nguyen for his charcoal drawing on paper, *The Shortness of Life*
- **First Place 3-D**: Isabel T. Collins for her ceramic pot, *Dogwood Circle*
- **Second Place 2-D**: Sandy Harrison for her oil painting on campus, *Rabbit Stew*
- **Second Place 3-D**: Matthew Owen Williams for his mixed-media and wood sculpture, *REST*
- **Third Place 2-D**: Jose Molina for his color pencil drawing on paper, *Tools*
- **Third Place 3-D**: Jarett Costner for his wood and mixed-media sculpture, *Confusion*

Honorable Mention: Margaret Bartlett, *Alice*; Elise Pounders, *Water and Poison*; Toby Cimino, *Drifting Away*; Jose Molina, *Fort Barancas*

The galleries are open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., and 90 minutes prior to most Mattie Kelly Arts Center performances. For more information about the galleries or the Arnie Hart show, please contact K.C. Williams, Gallery Director, at 850-729–6044 or artgalleries@nwfsc.edu.

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ATHLETICS

**Basketball Athletes Garner National Honors; Baseball and Softball Postseason Report**

After the 2017-2018 basketball seasons concluded, multiple Raiders garnered postseason accolades. Raider standout Andres Feliz was honored as a member of the NJCAA All-Tournament team as well as an NJCAA Division I First Team All-American. Lady Raiders Trinity Baptiste and Georgia Gayle were also selected for their NJCAA All-Tournament team to cap off their first seasons.

The Lady Raider Softball team finished their season at 31-24-1 after falling to Pensacola State 5-0 in the Panhandle Conference postseason play-in tournament. They were led this season at the plate by sophomore Britani Crawford with a .356 batting average that included nine homeruns and 53 RBIs. In the circle, Amber Byrd was the workhorse for the Raiders totaling 169.2 innings pitched and a 3.96 ERA.

Raider baseball ended their season at 29-21 overall and 10-14 in league play to finish third in the Panhandle Conference standings. After being plagued by injuries throughout the season, the Raiders finished on a high note with a win streak that included a 7-1 decision over #8 Chipola and an 11-1 run-rule victory over Tallahassee.

A bright spot for the Raiders has been Paxton native Grant Stewart, who earned two FCSAA/NJCAA Region VIII Pitcher of the Week honors and one NJCAA Pitcher of the Week nod over the course of the season.
In March, CBA partnered with the City of Valparaiso, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Northwest Florida Water Management District, USFWS Coastal Program, Lowe's Home Improvement in DeFuniak Springs, Southern Company, and Gulf Power's Five Star Restoration Grant to bring Fort Walton Beach High School students to the Choctawhatchee Bay to build a brand new reef breakwater.

CBA PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO BUILD NEW REEF BREAKWATER WITH FORT WALTON BEACH HIGH SCHOOL

As part of CBA’s Spat On! education program, Fort Walton Beach students have spent the year growing their own oysters and learning about both the oyster life cycle and restoration techniques. To try their hand at restoration itself, the students built sections of a new reef in Valparaiso and set up monitoring protocols. The oysters they raised were used to seed the new reef and improve water quality, as each individual oyster can filter up to fifty gallons of water every day.

EGLIN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION ESTABLISHES AEROSPACE EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

The Eglin Air Force Association (AFA) Chapter 365 presented Northwest Florida State College with a gift of $25,000 to establish AFA’s fifth scholarship endowment at the College. The endowment, named after Col. Robert E. Patterson and Shirley Pigott, will support aerospace education. The Eglin AFA Aerospace Education Foundation selected Col. Patterson and Ms. Pigott because of their unique and lasting contributions to the Air Force and its mission.

The Eglin Air Force Association Bob Patterson/Shirley Pigott Scholarship will provide assistance to a graduating senior at Niceville, Choctawhatchee, Fort Walton Beach, Crestview or Walton Senior High Schools. The recipient must be enrolled in a field of study that supports Aerospace Education Foundation (AEF) objectives of advancement of scientific, mathematical or technological knowledge or enrolled in a vocational field of study that directly supports the Air Force mission.

For more information regarding this endowment or partnership opportunities please call the NWF State College Foundation office at 729-5357.