Student Teachers Reflect on ACC, Fulfillment of Dreams

Alamance Community College’s involvement in providing teacher assistants in the Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) with a pathway to a B.A. and a teaching career is now in its sixth year. The partnership began with the state’s Model Teacher Education Consortium, which offered tuition assistance and other services to teacher assistants. Cathy Johnson, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences, headed ACC’s effort to partner with the school system to train and keep new teachers in Alamance County to teach.

This spring, several women who earned their associate degrees at ACC as the first step toward becoming fully-certified teachers, are completing their student teaching in Alamance County. These women, who work by day as ABSS teacher assistants, are finishing up their requirements for their bachelor degrees. A year from now they hope to be finishing up their first year as certified teachers with their own classrooms—in Alamance County.

TWO STUDENT TEACHERS: TAMMY MOIZE AND PAIGE CHEEK

Beginnings

Eastern Alamance graduate Tammy Moize gave up the idea of continuing her education after high school, found a job, and married. Her stint as a stay-at-home mom, for her own son and neighborhood children, led to a desire to find work as a teacher assistant. She’s been doing that at South Graham Elementary School since 2005.

Paige Cheek’s path was different. The Western Alamance High graduate took secretarial classes at ACC in the early 1980s. Within the year, she took an office job that lasted seven years until the company moved to Atlanta. On the advice of a friend, Paige interviewed for work as a teacher assistant at Alexander Wilson Elementary and got the job, but had no aspirations to ever become a teacher.

After five years at Alexander Wilson, Paige became a stay-at-home mom until she enrolled her children at Hillcrest Elementary, their neighborhood school. Returning to the classroom as a parent volunteer and later as a substitute teacher, her passion for education was revived and, consequently, a desire to once more work as a teacher assistant. But higher qualifications for teacher assistants had been instituted and Paige, not deterred, retrieved her credit hours earned at ACC in 1981, and passed a required Work Keys Test to determine proficiency in math, reading, and writing. It was 2005 and Paige, meeting all the new qualifications, was hired as a teacher assistant at Hillcrest.

“My goal is to learn as much as I can so I can teach my students in ways they remember. We are all lifelong learners and I have to keep learning to help my students be the best they can be.”

—TAMMY MOIZE

Tammy Moize student teaching her first grade class in math at South Graham Elementary School.

The Oracles is a publication of the Public Information and Marketing Office. Read it in full color each week—visit www.alamancecc.edu, then click Oracles under the News heading.
Me, a Teacher?

In 2007, Tammy and Paige were among 50 teacher assistants who attended a central office meeting about the new Model Teacher Education Consortium. Within a year, more than half of those who heard about this plan enrolled at ACC as the first step toward becoming fully certified teachers. Like many other teacher assistants, Tammy and Paige were embarking on something brand new to them: a college education.

“I wanted to be the person the students looked to for their education,” says Tammy. “I saw the teachers’ satisfaction [at South Graham] and the proud looks on their faces when their students were learning. I wanted that feeling too. Going to school as an adult made me appreciate the opportunity more, and work harder to be the best.”

“It wasn’t about going back to school,” says Paige. “I was going to college [for the first time]. My earlier stint at ACC wasn’t very long and I had no credentials. The big deal for me was making the decision for it to be a reality. I had always wanted a college education but always felt like it was too late. Then when I felt that ABSS was in my corner, that was one step closer to a reality, to a hope I had always had.”

Stepping Stones: Alamance Community College

Going to school and working is hard for anyone. But Tammy and Paige say their experiences while at ACC helped prepare them for transferring to a four-year school later.

While continuing to work as a teacher assistant at Hillcrest, Paige says her writing and research skills improved under ACC instructors Ben Shirley and John Neathery, which she says helped her in her classes at Greensboro College.

Cathy Johnson, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences, was (and still is) a positive influence in both women’s education. “Cathy was there when I was frustrated and needed some guidance,” says Tammy. “She was there to guide me through the entire experience and then she made sure I had the resources I needed to choose my next step to becoming a teacher.”

The Big Three: College, Work… and Student Teaching

Tammy and Paige both chose Greensboro College for part two of their education after graduating from ACC. Two years later they are earning their bachelor degrees in elementary education.

Continuing to work full schedules as teacher assistants, commuting to Greensboro College classes in the late afternoons and evenings, and completing student teacher duties this spring have been exhausting, yet fulfilling, for both Tammy and Paige.

Tammy, student teaching in a first grade classroom at South Graham, says she has benefited from teacher Karen Alford’s many years of experience. Alford allowed Tammy to try things she learned in her college classes so she could see how the students reacted and could learn from them.

Says Tammy: “The entire first grade team has been very helpful, including my principal Elizabeth Price. They have included me in all planning, staff development and shared ideas with me for my lessons and I have done the same. They have all made me feel a vital part of the team. I have seen the students grow and learn from lessons I have taught and that really makes my heart smile.”

Paige says ABSS supported her when she needed to leave Hillcrest early to make it to her late afternoon college class this spring. She also had access to classroom resources that aided her in the successful completion of her student teaching.

“Everyone at Hillcrest—my principal Julie Bethea, and other teachers—adjusted their schedules so I could still do my job [as teacher assistant] and fulfill my student teaching component,” Paige says. “No one there had any problem with it because they have all been in this position themselves.”

Hope for the Future

Tammy and Paige are finishing up their student teaching this month in anticipation of their Greensboro College graduation. But their sights are set on what the future holds.

“My goal is to learn as much as I can so I can teach my students in ways they remember,” says Tammy. “We are all lifelong learners and I have to keep learning to help my students be the best they can be.”

“My greatest pleasure is in watching children actually learn,” Paige says. “It is amazing to see when the light comes on for them and they understand what has been taught and can apply that skill. That’s where the fulfillment comes for me as a teacher. I really believe my journey is the way it was supposed to be.”

Finally, both teacher-elects are glad their educational journeys took them through ACC. As Tammy Moize summed it up: “I would recommend ACC to anyone who wants to prepare to move on to a four-year college to finish up their degree. There are always people to help you every step of the way and I would not be where I am today without ACC.”
Students Awarded Prizes in Writing, Art, Academics

ACC presented its annual Arts and Sciences Convocation on April 30, awarding more than two dozen students in academics, writing and art.

Matt Gordon, a student in Advertising and Graphic Design, was the big winner. He took first place honors for Drawing and Illustration, Photography, Graphic Design, and Fiction Writing. He also had second place in Photography. [Gordon was featured in last week’s newsletter as the designer of the Horticulture greenhouse “wrap” that faces the interstate.]

Academic honors were selected by a consensus of department instructors. Student club honors were made by faculty advisors. Writing was judged by a panel of ACC faculty and administrators. Design winners were chosen from a field of 120 entries by three outside judges: M. Wayne Miller, Illustrator; Ben Schwabauer (1998 ACC Alumnus), Creative Director at Mellonaid; and Kent Murray, Photographer.

Monetary prizes, provided by the SGA, were presented to the winners of first, second, third, and honorable mention (HM) in the writing and design categories. All first place winners in the writing categories will be published in this fall’s campus literary magazine, The Explorer.

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

Biotechnology – Sarah B. Schmidt

English – Tanner Barcus, Leia Eller

History – Sarah Comstock

Humanities – Benjamin E. McVey

Math – Leah Neese

Psychology – Dustin Gantos

Sociology – Julie Tyson

Natural Sciences – Leah Neese, Zachary Allen

STUDENT CLUBS

History Club – Allegra Creasy

Music & Dance Club – Hannah Brewer-Jensen

Sigma Psi – Caroline Anders

STUDENT WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

Academic Essay

1st: Joe Baker – Pay It Forward
2nd: Hannah Brewer Jensen – Exercise: A Crucial Ingredient for Successful Education
3rd: Christina Anderson – Our Need to Believe
4th: Emily Wood – Dismal Friday

Personal Essay

1st: Kenneth Russell – Sleeping With Ten Toes
2nd: Jennifer Hodges – A Change in Life
3rd: Diamond Pinnix – Spanish Excellence
4th: Joe Baker – A Life Changing Moment

Writing contest winners included I-r: (front) Kenneth Russell, Caroline Anders, Diamond Pinnix, Christina Anderson; (back) Hannah Brewer-Jensen, Sarah Comstock, Tanner Barcus, Julie Tyson.

Fiction

1st: Matt Gordon – Cold
2nd: Caroline Anders – Hera in Manhattan
3rd: Christina Anderson – Words Will Never Hurt Me…Right?
4th: Victoria Delaney – To Be Under the Sun

Poetry

1st: Acie Vanhooke – Dark So Bright
2nd: Danielle Friddle – Old Flame
3rd: Alyssa Ferry – A Stranger Called Themselves Love
4th: Leslie Fleckenstein – Tiny Treasures

Congratulations to All Winners!
And the Winners Are...

Winners have been announced for the 2013 faculty/staff writing competition. First place winners in each category will appear in this fall’s literary magazine, The Explorer.

**NARRATIVE/STORY**

**Faculty**

1st Place: Olivia Stogner – Mollie and Jack  
2nd Place: Thomas Drago – Gentle Hands  
3rd Place: Melissa Cook – Coming Full Circle  
HM: Robert Carter – An Outlaw in Training  
HM: Debra McCusker – An Unsung Woman of Science

**Staff**

1st Place: Ed Williams – How I Met Your Mother  
2nd Place: Valerie Whitley – I’d Walk a Million Miles for One of Your Smiles, for My Mammy  
3rd Place: Belinda Smith – Family Ties but in Whose Eyes  
HM: Ed Williams – A Street Sign  
HM: Ed Williams – Play Ball  
HM: Ed Williams – Emerald Reflections

**Poetry**

1st Place: Olivia Stogner – Prussian Blue  
2nd Place: Dr. Marla Dunham – The Bird Feeder  
3rd Place: Susan Hunt – A Butterfly  
HM: Inez Bostic – Dreams

**GRAPHIC DESIGN COMPETITION WINNERS**

**Photography**

1st: Matt Gordon – Bridge to Nowhere  
2nd: Matt Gordon – Captivating  
3rd: Mary Alva – Just Dandy  
HM: W. Tyler Payne – A Small Part  
HM: Madison Childress – Horizon

**Drawing/Illustration**

1st: Matt Gordon – Balti Girl  
2nd: Mary Alva – Pop Portrait  
3rd: Danielle Johnson – Silhouette  
HM: Juan Dark – Rosita’s Torso

**Graphic Design**

1st: Matt Gordon – Mallo-Art Website  
2nd: Jose Ortiz-Fuentes – Apple iPhone Ad  
3rd: Jon Zurowski – Shakori Festival Poster  
HM: Brittany Gaither – ACC Horticulture Lettuce Label  
HM: Briana Pascual-Mejia – Remember Your First?  
HM: Rachel Godsmark – Keeping the Dream Alive

**High School Photography (Williams HS)**

1st: Andrew Stephenson – Academia  
2nd: AJ Fields – Adidas  
3rd: Destinie Fowler – Transendental  
HM: Madeline Williams - Untitled  
HM: Mikayla Tate – Tractor

Congratulations to All Winners!

“Bridge to Nowhere” by Matt Gordon  
First Place Photography
Q. Your curriculum and why you chose it?
A. Medical Assisting, because I want to help people in a hospital.

Q. What you wish people knew about you—but probably don’t?
A. I like to write poetry.

Q. Your 15 minutes of fame (a time when you received recognition/won a contest/ performed, etc.)?
A. In high school, I won four art contests with my painting skills.

Q. Something you always wanted to do—but haven’t yet?
A. Go to Europe.

Q. Something you can’t live without?
A. My mom.

Q. If you could visit any place in the world for free, where?
A. Disney World.

Q. TV program you never miss?
A. MTV.

Q. What person (living or dead) would you most like to have dinner with, and what would you ask him/her?
A. Abraham Lincoln. Question: Do you think it’s cool being on the five dollar bill?

ACC’s Career College Graduates 18

ACC’s Career College, begun in spring 2009, graduated 18 students last week with a ceremony that brought cheers and tears from family, friends, and instructors.

Career College is a one-year certificate program for adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Hands-on job-specific training is provided along with classes that further develop reading, math and computer skills. This spring eleven students earned certificates of completion in Health and Public Services Assistant, and seven received certificates in Automotive Assistant.

Tim Haith is Career College Coordinator and Monica Isbell oversees the program as Coordinator of Special Needs and Counseling Services. Career College instructors are Deborah Sellers, Health and Public Services Assistant; Tamari Harris, Automotive Assistant; Jill Baker and Barbara Blair, Basic Skills; and Judy Nunn-Snipes and Dee Kuhn, Human Resources Development.

Two Elon University students who mentored some of the graduates this year as part of Best Buddies spoke about their involvement. The ACC students participated in social and career development activities on the Elon campus twice a month.

Graduation speaker was Dr. Gene Couch, Executive Vice President, who told the graduates to become known as positive persons; add value to whatever they are engaged in; and to keep learning and growing. More photos in Campus Life, page 6.
CHARITABLE STUDENTS. Sigma Psi completed a successful community service project this spring for Our Sister’s House, an Alamance County domestic violence organization. Club members have made this an annual event in recent years, collecting needed household items and used cell phones for use in emergency situations by women in abusive relationships. The club thanks the ACC community and all who donated items. Instructors John Neathery and Ben Shirley are faculty advisors.

SCIENCE FICTION/FANTASY AUTHOR DR. JOHN KESSEL, two-time winner of the Nebula, the genre’s top literary award, read from one of his winning short stories, “Pride and Prometheus,” last week in the auditorium. ACC English instructor Sarah Boone, who arranged for Kessel’s visit, was a student of his in a past writing class. The event was sponsored by ACC’s Creative Writing Club.

Exam Cram. More than 200 students participated in Exam Cram in the student activities center “quiet zone” prior to finals week, sponsored by the Social & Behavioral Sciences Dept. Students who participated in the study and tutoring opportunity received “brain food” coupons for use in the ACC canteen.

Career College Graduates (see story inside) were celebrated by family, friends and their instructors after receiving certificates of completion for Health & Public Services Assistant and Automotive Assistant, skills for which they seek employment. The Career College program is coordinated by Monica Isbell and Tim Haith.