# **CONTRACT DESCRIPTION OF ACULTY & Staff NEWSLETTER**

Volume III

#### Winter 2011

## Is AC's Dental Clinic Best in the Land?

## Company that Installed the Facility Thinks It's Tops, too

Getting Dr. Mike Henderson to praise the new dental facility in flossy-clean Jones Hall is not difficult—nothing at all like pulling teeth—because he knows Amarillo College has acquired something special.

"I don't believe there's another program anywhere that has an educational facility as fine as we have," Henderson said, "unless it's an actual school of dentistry, and even those are probably fairly few.

"For dental hygiene and dental assisting, what we have here is the top of the line, possibly tops in the nation."

With 30 years in dentistry and a decade as AC's hospitalbased dentist and instructor of dental hygiene, Henderson knows what he's talking about. Still, you don't have to take just his word for it.

MidwestDental, the firm primarily responsible for installation of AC's new dental digs, features the facility on a full-page spread in its sales catalog, the idea being to lure other institutions of higher learning to acquire what AC has—the finest teaching facility available today.

The spread is accompanied by a substantial endorsement from Bruce Cotgreave, director of AC's Physical Plant, which concludes: "The dental school is so beautiful and we are really proud of the final results. A special 'Thanks' to . . . everyone that helped make Dr. Steven W. Jones' dream a reality."

The essence of that reality is obvious in the 25 full functioning operatories, a spacious sterilization center, digital radiography equipment, a lab and classrooms with touchable teaching computers, all pristine and featuring the best of high technology.

"When I came here 10 years ago, we had no computers and tried to do everything on paper," Henderson said. "We were really crammed into our old building. It was easy to become distracted by the jumble.

"This new facility has incredible technology with computers at every chair for computerized x-rays. No filmdeveloping, no chemicals. It's comfortable, safe and clean. "For a community college to accomplish something like this is just incredible," he said, "just amazing. We've lost some exceptional potential students to other schools in the past because of our facilities. I doubt that will happen again."



Dr. Mike Henderson points out some technology that makes AC's dental facility special.

The modern facility is advantageous not only for students seeking dental-related careers but for improving the health of the Amarillo Community, as well. That's due to AC's agreement with Northwest Texas Healthcare Systems to house the Wyatt Dental Clinic.

AC dental hygiene students treat Wyatt indigent patients each day at Jones Hall. Seeing worst-case patients on a regular basis prepares students especially well, Henderson says, while helping those within the community who have the greatest need.

"Our primary focus is education," Henderson said. "But serving the public is a nice by-product of what we do. Prevention is the answer to most dental problems. Our graduates have a very good idea of what happens to someone without access to dental care or hygiene."

As for the bottom line, each of Henderson's students provide about \$35,000 in services per year at the AC clinic, which comes to about \$1 million per class.

That's value you can't brush off.

# Science Guy Takes Stage for Distinguished Lecture

Bill Nye, encyclopedic star of the syndicated television program we identify by that pithy augmentation of his surname—the Science Guy—headlines AC's 2011 Distinguished Lecture Series.

The bow-tied Nye will deliver his lecture at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 8 in the Grand Plaza of the Amarillo Civic Center.

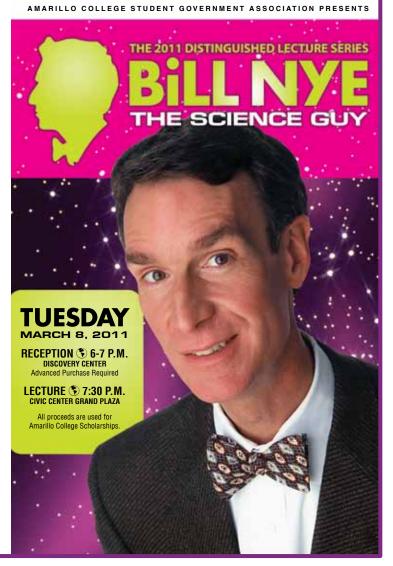
Cost of the event is \$5 for AC students and \$15 for everybody else, although \$50 will get you reserved seating and admittance to a pre-lecture reception (6-7 p.m.) at the Discovery Center. Just call AskAC, 371-5000.

The Distinguished Lecture Series is orchestrated each year by the Student Government Association, and proceeds go to student scholarships.

Nye's online bio states "Bill Nye, scientist, engineer, comedian, author and inventor, is a man with a mission: to help foster a scientifically literate society, to help people everywhere understand and appreciate the science that makes our world work."

His *Science Guy* programs on public television have focused on such wide-ranging topics as gravity, dinosaurs, eyeballs and the solar system.

"The students are very excited to bring one of their childhood heroes to Amarillo," Heather Atchley, director of student activities, said. "We're looking forward to having a great crowd and an exciting lecture."



## **Cabinet Hopes Digital Suggestion Box Makes Cents**

By Ellen Green Chief of Communication & Marketing

In the coming weeks and months, the President's Cabinet will be asking you to contribute your best cost-saving ideas through a digital suggestion box. Employees and students will be able to offer ideas through the college website at www.actx.edu —click on the graphic that reads "cost-saving suggestions" (on the bottom left side of the homepage) and use your ACnetID and password (same login as WebAdvisor) to leave your submission.

Each individual proposal will be acknowledged through the Outlook email system, and everyone will have an opportunity to read every suggestion submitted.

The President's Cabinet has been vetting cost-saving ideas since October (2010) and will continue to look

for ways to meet AC's mission—to enhance the lives of our students and our community—during these tough economic times.



We hope that we can benefit from your best thinking. All suggestions are welcome and will be given serious consideration. Please comment whenever an idea strikes, and please do not hesitate to respond to other posted submissions.

Here are guidelines for participation in the digital suggestion box site:

**Be responsible:** AC offers this digital suggestion box to encourage <u>meaningful</u> and <u>positive</u> cost-saving ideas; be sure

your posts offer reasonable and creative solutions.

**Be credible**: Impress yourself and others by presenting your insights with care.

**Be ethical**: Respect privacy; avoid deception, libel, or falsities; post only non-copyrighted material.

**Be forgiving**: We all make mistakes; if something offends you, express a genuine response while giving others the benefit of the doubt.

**Be safe**: Since the digital suggestion box is public, avoid posting personal information; use private messaging.



## **Moller Receives National Acclaim**

Amarillo College clearly knew what it was doing way back in red-hot August when it named Jerry Moller Administrator of the Year. We know this because it was in balmy December when the National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA) took AC's ball and ran with it.

Before Christmas Break, the NCIA selected Moller, dean of academic transfer programs, as one of four community college administrators nationwide to receive a 2010 Instructional Leadership Award. He will accept that award April 6 during the International Conference on College Teaching and Learning in tropical Jacksonville, Fla., where one of those four recipients will be singled out as Instructional Administrator of the Year.

Instructional Leadership Awards

are based on demonstrated exemplary leadership in such areas as student outcomes assessment, curricular transformation, institutional effectiveness, and faculty development.

Moller's nomination was submitted to NCIA by Lou Ann Seabourn, associate dean of instruction and dual credit, and it was bolstered by letters of support from AC faculty and fellow administrators.

"This is an overwhelming honor that caught me completely by surprise," Moller said. "A smooth-running college is the result of great team work, and that's how it is at Amarillo College.

"I will humbly accept this recognition on behalf of everyone who works so hard to make AC the great College that it is. I'm thankful to Lou Ann and to everyone who



helped my nomination along."

The other three recipients of 2010 Instructional Leadership Awards are from Southeastern Community College, North Carolina; Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Minnesota; and Neosho County Community College, Kansas.

## FM90 Plans Homecoming-Style Birthday Bash

On March 15, 1976, with Merle Haggard's "The Roots of My Rising" comfortably perched atop the country charts, AC radio station FM90 cut its first swath through our Panhandle airwaves.

FM90, which originated as a "progressive country" station, will celebrate its 35th birthday this March at a homecoming-style shindig with former on-air staffers returning to the roots of *their* rising.

Everyone who has ever served as onair staff at FM90—it's estimated there are more than 1,000 such folks—will be welcome. However, since the Ides of March falls during Spring Break, the actual party has been set for Thursday, March 31 at the Gilvin Broadcast Center.

"Pretty much every commercial radio station in town employs people with connections to our program," Brian Frank, program director at FM90, said. "Many local radio personalities will be here to reminisce on a special day of broadcasting. But whether they work in the communications industry or not, we hope they stop by that day



to remember their good times here. We'll play some of the old songs. We'll have giveaways and cake. It should be great fun and a lot like a family reunion."

FM90 features alternative music these days and touts itself as "AC's Cutting Edge!" The station boasts 100,000

watts of power and a service radius of 70 miles.

"We're pretty unique because 100,000 watts is as powerful as it gets," Frank said. "There's only one other station like ours in this country that plays secular music and is owned by a community college."

#### **Simulations Address End-of-Life Process**

Caring for terminally ill patients and comforting their anxious loved ones—is bedside manner not easily gleaned from a textbook.

That's why Dr. Richard Pullen, professor of nursing, and Khristi McKelvy, clinical simulation coordinator, continue to introduce AC nursing students to manikin-aided, end-of-life simulations.

Such simulations have been part of AC's nursing curriculum since 2006.

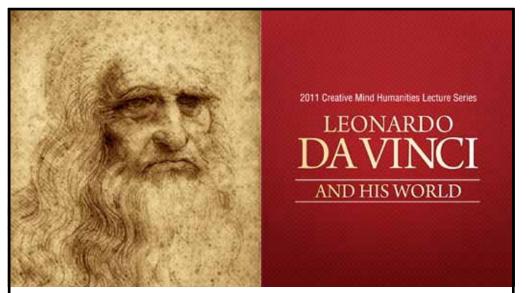
To begin, members of BSA's Hospice Team, from nurses to spiritual caregivers, share their interdisciplinary expertise. Then small groups of students assess dying patients (highfidelity manikins) and interact with anxious spouses portrayed by willing faculty.

The latest such effort was on Jan. 21, and Pullen and KcKelvy invited students and faculty from West Texas A&M to take part for the first time.



About 140 AC and WT students took part, and the event garnered extensive local media coverage.

"It's a sensitive area of the healthcare profession that is difficult to prepare for." Pullen said. "Nurses, especially when they are new to the profession, need to know what to say to a fearful and grieving spouse as well as how to care for a patient when death is imminent."



#### **Creative Lectures Remaining**

**Thursday, Feb. 24**—Dr. Pamela O. Long, Independent Historian 12:30 p.m.—Leonardo: Engineer and Investigator of Machines Washington Street Campus College Union Building, Oak Room

7:30 p.m.—Leonardo, Human Anatomy, and the World of Nature Business & Industry Center, Auditorium, 1314 S. Polk St.

**Tuesday, March 8**—Dr. Steve Weber, Amarillo College: Assisted by AC Concert Choir 7:30 p.m.—An Evening with Josquin des Prez, Musical Genius of the Italian Renaissance St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Sanctuary, 1601 S. Georgia



#### AC Accolades

**Robert Austin**, vice president of student affairs, and **Dr. Paul Matney**, president, served on the Campaign Cabinet, while **Ernesto Olmos**, recruitment specialist, and **Eric Wallace**, coordinator of intervention programs for criminal justice, served as loaned executives during the 2010 United Way of Amarillo and Canyon campaign. The campaign exceeded its goal by more than \$100,000.

**Dr. Lana Jackson**, director of the Quality Enhancement Plan, co-authored an article titled "Faculty Actions that Result in Student Satisfaction in Online Courses" that appeared in the December 2010 issue of the *Journal of Asynchronous Learning*. Her two coauthors work at Texas Tech University.

**Dr. Richard Pullen**, professor of nursing, and **Ruth Whitehead** and **Phyllis Pastwa**, instructors of nursing, had a continuing education unit article titled "Caring for a Patient with Malignant Melanoma" in the Jan. 11 issue of *Nursing Made Incredibly Easy*.

**Pullen** and **Jennifer Siess** and **Rebecca Vincent**, instructors of nursing, had an article titled "The Puzzle of Antiphospholipid Syndrome" in the February issue of *Nursing Made Incredibly Easy*.

Pullen and Kerrie Young, instructor of nursing, D'dee Grove, assistant professor of nursing, Mark Rowh, assistant professor of nuclear medicine, and Dr. Gayle Bickers, retired radiologist from Baptist St. Anthony's Health System, had an article titled "Case Study: Diplopia in a Patient with Lupus Erythematosus" that appeared in the December 2010 issue of the Journal of Neuroscience Nursing.

#### A Health Fair with Flair

It is not too soon to make plans to attend a humdinger of a health fair from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tuesday, April 5 at the West Campus.

It's being billed as the West Campus Wellness Roundup—a Health Fair with Flair, and in addition to the usual health screenings it will offer things like mini dental exams and end-of-life planning.

It's the brainchild of the Allied Health Divison. Don't miss it.

## EJVP Names Bruce Moseley Attorney of Year

Bruce Moseley, attorney at law and director of AC's Paralegal Program, has met plenty of low-income folks who cannot afford even the simplest of legal services. He's met them because he often works for them, pro bono free of charge.

For his many hours of volunteer legal service on behalf of indigent clients, from probating wills to landlordtenant disputes, Moseley was named Attorney of the Year in 2010 by the Amarillo-area Equal Justice Volunteer Program (EJVP) of Legal Aid of Northwest Texas.

"To receive an award for helping people, well, it's certainly not why anyone does it, but still it was a nice surprise," Moseley said. "I'm honored, humbled and appreciative."

On several occasions, Moseley has invited his paralegal students to attend EJVP clinics for extra credit. Entire



classes have turned out and assisted clients with necessary paperwork while obtaining hands-on experience with real-life legal issues.

"Bruce has been a wonderful volunteer and done a lot of pro bono work," Luisa Vigil, Amarillo coordinator for EJVP, said. "He also gets his students involved, which is a great benefit to everyone involved."

Legal Aid of Northwest Texas provides free civil legal services to low-income residents in 114 Texas counties.



#### **Tunes Yule Enjoy**

Jim Laughlin, professor of music, directs the Jazz Ensemble during the Student Government Association Christmas Party on the second floor of the College Union Building.

## Nursing Pass Rate Receives Commendation

Based on its exemplary pass rate on the national licensure exam for registered nurse candidates, the Associate Degree Nursing Program at AC has earned an official commendation from the Texas Board of Nursing.

Amarillo College, the third-largest pre-RN associate degree nursing program among 62 such programs in Texas, achieved a 93-percent, first-time pass rate among its RN candidates in 2009-2010.

Of 131 AC graduates to take the exam, 122 passed the first time. The Texas Board of Nursing extends commendations to programs in which 90 percent of candidates pass the first time they take it.

"The first-time pasas rate for the Associate Degree Nursing Program at AC is something that we can be very proud of," Sheryl Mueller, program director and chair of the Nursing Division, said. "It is clear that our ADN faculty is working very diligently and that our students are dedicated to the profession of nursing."

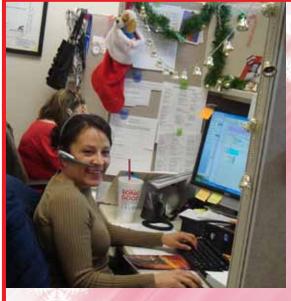
Amarillo College, which had 557 students enrolled last fall in its pre-RN associate degree program, provides training for approximately 70 percent of the nurses who work in the Texas Panhandle.

#### Vocational Nurses also Achieve Excellence

AC's Vocational Nursing Program is no stranger to commendations from the Texas Board of Nursing.

For the fourth consecutive year, students of the program exceeded the 90-percent pass rate that defines commended nursing programs in Texas.

From a 2010 class featuring 76 graduates, the program achieved a 93.4-percent first-time pass rate on the national licensure exam. It's an impressive string of successes for the program, which had pass rates of no less than 95 percent each of the preceeding three years.







#### **Cubical Christmas**

AskAC, our customer-service hub on the second floor of the Student Service Center, got into the holiday spirit with its Cubicle Decorating Contest just before the Christmas break.

Rubi Garcia (above) was awarded the prize in a heated competition for Most Christmasy.

Maria Juarez (upper left) also was in the running, and Harmonie Hefley (lower left) picked up the prize for Most Budget Conscious.

The prizes consisted of candy and other holiday treats, and no reindeer were harmed in the staging of this contest.

## **Power Failure Sheds Light on AC's Emergency Plans**

#### By Rusty Cornelius Emergency Manager

What many considered to be a nuisance when the lights went out on Wednesday, Feb. 2, was actually a practical, if unplanned, test of AC's emergency plans.

With no power and all the modern communications systems down, this became a challenge for our emergency management skills. Here's what transpired.

The electrical grid that provides the Washington Street and Polk Street campuses with electrical power failed at 2:30 p.m. The Threat Response Team assembled and began coordinating the College's response and resources by 2:40 p.m.

The first AC Alert message was sent within 18 minutes of the Threat Response Team's mobilization. I know many will argue they did not get the message until 3:15 p.m. or later, however the College has no control over how long it takes your individual carrier to process and deliver the AC



Alert messages to you. We can only control the length of time it takes the College to draft and send an emergency message.

By 3:05 p.m, College Police and Physical Plant employees had made rescues from two elevators of persons trapped. The chemicals in our labs had been placed back in storage areas, and flammable cabinets closed. Buildings had been cleared of anyone needing assistance. Initial reports of the extent of the power outage and estimates for the length of time for service restoration had been made. Contingency plans for closing both campuses were prepared.

Much to the relief of everyone, the power was restored at 3:15 pm. As a result of the planning and leadership of the Threat Response Team this incident was more of an irritant. However, our emergency management system worked. The students and employees of the College remained calm. Order was maintained, information provided.

Was it a perfect response? No, there has never been a perfect response to any emergency, by anyone, anywhere. Did we learn anything? Yes: now we can hone our emergency responses and be even better next time.

Those people who are really responsible for the success of the College's response to emergency situations are faculty, staff and students. Thanks for facing the challenge so well.

## Administrative or Classified: Not Decided by Darts

#### By Lynn Thornton Director of HR

How does HR decide if a position is Administrative or Classified? Is it strictly a matter of pay? What difference does it make?

Contrary to popular opinion, HR does not use darts or a Ouija board to make the decision whether a position is "Administrative" or "Classified." There is nothing "cloak and dagger" or mysterious about the process.

The department and personalities of those involved have no bearing on the decision, and compensation level is not a consideration in placement. While the Administrative Salary Schedule is generally higher than the Classified Salary Schedule, if you compare the two you will notice there are overlaps. AC does have some Classified employees earning more than some Administrative employees.

When a department starts the process

of hiring a new position, we begin by writing a job description. The job description is a joint effort of the hiring department and HR. The department



head or supervisor will provide a list qualifications, duties, reporting structures and responsibilities of the position and through a process of give-and-take a job description is created. The duties of the job are key to determining if a position is Administrative or Classified.

The criteria for a position being Administrative is found in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 19, Part 1, Chapter 25, Subchapter A, Rule §25.4. This portion of the Code deals with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Co-Board) and the Optional Retirement Program (ORP). If the responsibilities and reporting relationships of the position don't match the criteria in this Code, the position is Classified, not Administrative.

What do the Co-Board and ORP have to do with how AC classifies a position? The answer has to do with retirement options.

All employees are eligible for TRS retirement but by state law, the positions eligible to participate in ORP are limited to Faculty and a very limited, well defined group of positions that generally fall under the Administrative label. The primary reason the State of Texas is concerned with AC's classification of positions is purely economic. ORP costs Texas more money than TRS.

Classified or Administrative has nothing to do with value of the work performed or the credibility of the individual doing the work. It has everything to do with specific job duties and state law.

## Regents Approve New Electric Lineman Program

The AC Board of Regents gave its consent in January to launch a program that will produce qualified manpower to fill a void that otherwise might short-circuit regional efforts to construct and maintain new wind-power transmission lines.

Pending final approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, AC proposes implementation of an Electric Lineman Program in fall 2011.

The 18-month, 43-hour certificate program was developed with significant input and support from local industry and the Amarillo Economic Development Corporation, according to Dr. Shawn Fouts, dean of career and technical education.

He also credits the diligent efforts of AC's Ron Faulkner, technical training solutions; Dr. Kim Hays, manufacturing technology; and Ed Nolte, industrial & transportation technology.

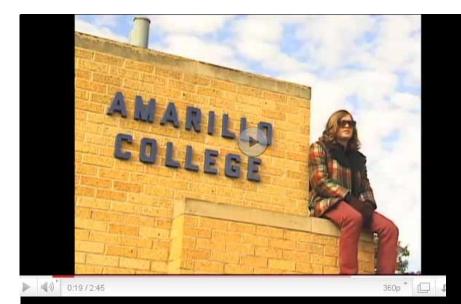
New electrical workers are needed nationwide, and not only for future construction. The Department of Labor, noting high industry-wide attrition, mainly due to an aging workforce, projects that qualified electrical linemen will be in high demand for at least the next 10 years.

"Regional industry mirrors this trend," Fouts said. "Some local companies project a need for up to 400 new electrical workers simply to construct and maintain our portion of the grid.



"Our local workforce is not positioned to meet this demand, much less the natural attrition of those linemen who retire, but it sees Amarillo College and the Electric Lineman Program as the ideal means to fill these voids."

Fouts said AC proposes training linemen in cohorts of approximately 15 students, probably with single cohorts beginning in fall 2011 and spring 2012.



## Original Tune Prevails in AC and Me Video Contest

Skateboarding enthusiast Clark Griffin, a member of the Blue Blazers at AC, wrote and sang an original song and wound up the winner of the AC & Me Video Contest .

The contest was sponsored in December by the Division of Communication and Marketing, and Griffin won an Apple iPad for his effort.

Griffin performs his catchy tune and is seen briefly skateboarding in the video, which you can view at http://www.actx.edu/collegerelations/video. Fellow student Nick Eakes handled the filming and editing chores.

"We had some pretty good entries, but our judges agreed hands down that Clark's video was the best," Ellen Green, chief of communication and marketing, said. "We love that he wrote and performed his own song. We can't get it out of our heads."

## **New Teaching-Excellence Model to Promote Collaboration**

#### By Carol Buse President of Faculty Senate

A fun thing about being on the Faculty Senate is the opportunity to voice ideas and opinions, and to perhaps even help implement some of them. Dr. Russell Lowery-Hart has encouraged the Faculty Senate officers and the Rank and Tenure committee leaders to pursue an idea to formulate a 'model of teaching excellence' so that instructors have additional avenues to gage the effectiveness of their classroom skills, rather than only relying on the evaluations from their students.

The purpose of the model is to enhance the teaching effectiveness of faculty members through peer mentoring processes that promote mutual trust, respect, collaboration and collegiality. Instead of relying primarily on student evaluations (a number), this model will allow faculty members to engage in professional development activities that in turn, can be beneficial to their students. Instructors will have the autonomy to write about their experiences and reflect the relevance of those experiences within their faculty performance reviews, allowing them to substantiate and take ownership of their performance.

The "Encouraging Excellence" model is directed by the faculty member. It is important that growth activities not become prescriptive, mandatory, or directed by the department chair or other. The faculty member must retain ownership. Decisions to include growth activities during an evaluation period are entirely at the discretion of the faculty member.

The model will consist of a narrative, written by the faculty member being evaluated, about *what* they have done to enhance their classroom instruction, *how* it enhanced classroom instruction, and *what* they've learned from it.

The activities a faculty member can do to enhance teaching excellence are endless and varied as their teaching styles are. However, one particular activity that could have some real potential is the use of a Peer Teaching Advocate. A Peer Teaching Advocate (PTA) is a trusted colleague, friend, helper, and/or mentor. Selected by the faculty member, the PTA could visit the classroom at the faculty member's invitation and observe ways to improve classroom teaching and learning. The power behind using a PTA for growth activities is that the "mentoring" relationship is voluntarily initiated by the faculty member and the faculty member alone. It would not be required nor be an "assigned" relationship by any outside party. The PTA is but one of many growth activities a faculty member could participate in.



Some benefits from the proposed "Encouraging Teaching Excellence Review Model" may include:

- There is infinite potential for growth as a teacher.
- · Faculty members move toward excellence.

• Risk taking is rewarded—whether the activity was a success or failure, because failure can also be a necessary learning tool.

- Collaboration is encouraged and rewarded.
- It provides a framework for every faculty member to become better (whether new, poor, experienced, good, etc.).
- It encourages experienced faculty members to continue to grow professionally.

• The focus is on current performance, and faculty members can adjust teaching techniques in the current semester, instead of waiting several months to receive data from student evaluations.

• The process is proactive rather than reactive. Faculty members look for ways to enhance teaching skills in a proactive way and are rewarded by their efforts.

• The proposed model supports self-directed learning. The model encourages faculty members to help each other. A major tenet of adult education is "helping adults learn." The same concept can be applied to faculty members helping each other: "faculty helping faculty."

A pilot of the proposed model will be launched in the near future so that select faculty members and department chairs can test the effectiveness of this approach to evaluating faculty performance and enhancing teaching excellence initiatives.

Stay tuned for more information.

## Marcus Engel Guest Speaker at LITE Lunch

Marcus Engel, a young man who lost his sight after a collision with a drunk driver, will be guest speaker at the 2011 LITE (Living Independently Through Education) Scholarship Luncheon.

The annual event to benefit AC students with disabilities is Wednesday, April 6 at the Amarillo Civic Center, so mark your calendar.

Engel will share how he has found inspiration in unlikely places and discovered ways to turn adversity into victory.

All proceeds, including those earned from an extensive silent auction, will go to students with disabilities who attend AC.

Thanks to the LITE Luncheon, more than \$130,000 has been awarded to approximately 250 students attending Amarillo College since 2002.

For more information, visit actx.edu/ disability.





WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 2011 • 11:30 a.m Amarillo Civic Center • Heritage Room



## AC Enrollment Springs Past 11,000 Students

AC has more than 11,000 students enrolled in spring-semester classes for the first time ever.

AC's 12th-class-day enrollment (Feb. 2) stood at 11,208, a 2.7-percent increase from the previous spring.

Bob Austin, vice president of student affairs, attributes the enrollment upswing, at least in part, to improved participation in student orientations and to the success of the new advising program.

Naturally, economic conditions also are part of the equation.

"Our student numbers are up 2.7 percent over a year ago, but the number of credit hours our students are taking is up 4 percent. That's significant," Austin said, "because state funding is tied to credit-hour production, and students who enroll full time have a better chance of graduating."

