

# Halifacts

Winter 2008

A publication of current events at Halifax Community College

## Griffin Inaugurated as Fourth President



Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. receives a congratulatory handshake from N.C. Community College System President H. Martin Lancaster

HCC held an Inaugural Convocation and Investiture of its fourth president, Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. Oct. 19 in The Centre. Community college representatives, government officials, community leaders, university and college delegates, and other distinguished guests were in attendance.

The event was described as a monumental and historic occasion, since Griffin is the first African-American president to serve at HCC. Speakers pledged unanimous support for Griffin during the proceedings. "It is a great day because we have all come together here with a common goal—the celebration of education," said Representative Angela Bryant.

"This is truly a celebration," said N.C. Community College System President H. Martin Lancaster. "Halifax Community College is a source of great pride to this service area, but it is also a source of important learning for the people of this area if they are to become a part of the economy of the future in North Carolina."

During the event, Griffin was referred to as a man of vision and purpose. Many program participants also said that Griffin had arrived in just the right place at the right time.

"It is really comforting to know that you're in the right place at the right time fulfilling the mission for Halifax Community College," said Griffin, who spotlighted HCC achievements of the past year and partnerships that have developed since his arrival last December. He added that he has found Roanoke Valley citizens to be warm and genuine and that he appreciated all of the support he has received. "I am living my dream," concluded Griffin.

A reception honoring Griffin was held that evening in The Centre, followed by a concert featuring The Manhattans.

## State Board of Community Colleges Visits HCC

HCC President, Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. kicked off a meeting of the State Board of Community Colleges in October at The Centre. The board conducts a retreat coupled with an on-location meeting at one of the 58 community colleges in the North Carolina Community College System each fall. The tradition gives the board a chance to visit a campus and interact with college personnel and students.

The retreat also gives board members the opportunity to address issues related to their governance of the N.C. Community College System. Their HCC visit began with a walking tour of the campus to provide board members a chance to personally see the college in action.

"This marked the first time the board had visited HCC," said Griffin. "It was a pleasure to have them visit our campus and community." During an official welcome, Griffin recognized HCC representatives. The formal board meeting began with a luncheon presentation, which included current HCC students, alumni and business partners. Vice President of Instructional Services, Dr. Joy Cooley talked about the college's 40 years of service to the community.

## Message from the President



A new year has arrived and we are busier than ever. We have just completed the process of gathering data for our Long Range Plan and will be working on a Facilities Master Plan in the coming months. This plan will charge the course of HCC, both locally and at the state level, for the next five years. I truly believe that appropriate programs and facilities are vital to the future economic success of HCC and the Roanoke Valley.

Also, we have received good news on recent grant requests. We were awarded a Student Success Activity Grant from the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) for the purpose of reaching out to those in the population who have multiple barriers to education. The plan will offer innovative recruitment and retention initiatives. We will also be able to hire a part-time Assessment-Retention Counselor to work with the program.

Plus, we have received a Minority Male Mentoring Program grant from NCCCS to provide comprehensive activities, including personal development, drug and substance abuse education, and other innovative activities to improve the academic success of students. Our goal is to improve college attendance and graduation rates of minority males. As its counterpart, we are also starting Sisters of Standards, a female mentoring group, dedicated to making a positive impact in our students' lives and the community.

We have a number of activities planned for the spring semester. As always, feel free to stop by campus, call us at (252) 536-4221 or visit us online, [www.halifaxcc.edu](http://www.halifaxcc.edu). Remember, HCC is where **Learning Comes to Life In Pursuit of Excellence.**

## Schwartz Selected As New VP



*The HCC administrative team including, front row from left, Dean of Curriculum Programs, Dr. Pocahontas Jones and Vice President for Administrative Services Deborah Armstrong; back row from left, Schwartz, Dean of Student Services and Enrollment Management Barbara Bradley-Hasty, Vice President of Instructional Services, Dr. Joy Cooley, and HCC President, Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. Not pictured: Dean of Continuing Education and Community Services Vera Palmer.*

Thomas W. Schwartz has been selected as the new Vice President of Institutional Advancement. President Ervin V. Griffin, Sr. noted that "his experience in higher education advancement, community colleges and the N.C. Community College System uniquely qualified Schwartz for the position." He began his new post Jan. 2.

Most recently the Director of Resource Development and Special Projects at Roanoke-Chowan Community College, Schwartz has been responsible for the direction of foundation activities, writing grants, organizing and carrying out fund raising efforts, managing the institutional planning and effectiveness processes and functioning as institutional liaison to the

Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS) accrediting agency.

At HCC, he will provide a framework for building strong support with a variety of college constituencies including alumni, donors, friends, federal and state agencies, accrediting organizations, and members of the community. He will also be responsible for directing the areas of Graphic Arts & Printing, Grants & Grant Writing (Resource Development), Public Relations and Marketing, and Legislative & Community Relations, and will work closely with the Institutional Research & Planning Department and the accreditation process with SACS. He will serve as Executive Director of the HCC Educational Foundation, Inc.

Schwartz brings experience as a former vice president for Institutional Advancement and adjunct faculty member at the College of the Southwest in New Mexico, faculty member at New Mexico Junior College, and housing consultant with Rio Grande Behavioral Health Systems, Inc. He was also a pastor with the New Mexico Conference of the United Methodist Church from 1984-2004, serving in Texas and New Mexico.

Schwartz holds credentials from the University of Kentucky, Asbury Theological Seminary, Indiana University School of Philanthropy, The Grantsmanship Center, Inc., and the University of Phoenix.

## Scholarship Awards Ceremony Held



*HCC student Barbara Motley Smith recognized donors during the ceremony.*

The HCC Foundation hosted its 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony this fall. A luncheon for donors and scholarship

recipients followed. More than 120 scholarships were awarded to nearly 75 HCC students.

New scholarships included: Dr. Laura Walton Buffaloe Scholarship, Robert L. Armstrong Memorial Scholarship, Presidential Initiatives Fund, Emery W. Doughtie Memorial Scholarship, Homewood Scholarship, and New Life Scholarship.

Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce and KapStone Paper and Packaging Corporation were recognized as the foundation's largest donors since its inception.

## HCC Alum: From Dropout to Stand Out

In 1987, Carrie Gearing dropped out of the eighth grade to begin her family. Three children and four years later, she earned a high school equivalency diploma from HCC. She returned to HCC to obtain an Associate of Arts Degree in 1998.

Carrie Gearing went on to North Carolina Wesleyan College, where she graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in Psychology in 2000. While at Wesleyan, she served as vice president of the Psychology Club and was inducted into Psi Chi, a national honor society in psychology, and into Pi Gamma Mu, an international honor society in social science. After taking one year off from school, she went on to obtain a dual master's degree in psychology and counseling from Goddard College in 2005.

Carrie Gearing has achieved much in her field. She is a Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist, a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor, a Certified Criminal Justice Addiction Professional, and a Licensed Professional



Carrie Gearing

Counselor. She is working towards becoming a Certified Clinical Supervisor. She plans to return to school in the near future to obtain her doctorate, which will allow her to achieve her goal of becoming a psychologist.

From April 2003 through August 2006, Gearing worked for the Mary Frances Center for Women in Tarboro. While there, she created and implemented a specialized reality program for clients who struggled in

their recovery efforts. In 2007, she was selected to co-facilitate two conferences—the American Association for Adult Continuing Education 2007 Conference where she presented, "Taking Learning on the Road: Helping Adult Students to discover Reality in Introductory Classes" and a second conference that catered to students in North Carolina and Virginia where she presented "Integrating Instruction: Making the Adult Educational Experience Seamless."

Gearing now works as a psychotherapist with both adolescents and adults in an outpatient clinic in Greenville, N.C. She is also an adjunct instructor at Mount Olive College, where she teaches psychology and criminal justice classes. In addition, she is a North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles Evaluator. She has also been invited to teach for the spring semester at Pitt Community College.

## Child Care Center Earns Five Star Rating



The HCC Child Care Center staff are, from left, Cynthia Walker, Pauletta Smallwood, Vicki Brown, Catherine Robinson, Rhonda Johnston, and Beatrice Patillo.

The North Carolina Division of Child Development, part of the Department of Health & Human Services, recently notified Halifax Community College that the Child Care Center on campus has earned a five star rating, which is the highest rated license in the state's licensing system. The Child Care Center serves children ages 2-5.

In 2000, the Division of Child Development started issuing star rated licenses to all eligible child care centers and family child care homes.

Facilities could receive between one and five stars, with one star meaning that the program met the state's minimum licensing standards for child care. The rating system was comprised of three quality components including staff education, program standards and compliance history. Since 2005, programs have been phased into the revised two component license system including ratings on staff education and program standards to provide parents the best indication of quality.

Each component of the revised two component licensing system has a range of one to seven points. Centers can earn an additional point through voluntarily meeting enhanced standards in staff education and program standards.

"My staff and I were delighted upon receiving notification that the center had earned a five star rating. The N.C. Division of Child Development has once again recognized the Halifax Community College Child Care Center for the high quality of care provided to the children and families it serves," said Vicki Brown, center director.



HCC Celebrates  
Black History Month 2008

- Feb. 5: **Charles Chesnutt Stamp Dedication**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre
- Feb. 6: **"Are You Raising One of the Next Generation of Hoodlums?"**  
6:00 p.m., The Centre
- Feb. 7: **"Journey from Africa to North Carolina"**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre
- Feb. 12: **"We Shall Not Be Moved: A History of the Tillery Settlement Farm"**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre
- Feb. 14: **International Day & Food Tasting**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre
- Feb. 16 **"My God Your God"**  
8:00 p.m., The Centre
- Feb. 19: **Saluting Our Local African American Heroes**  
6:00 p.m., The Centre
- Feb. 21: **"One Noble Journey"**  
9:00 a.m., The Centre  
"DAR HE"  
7:30 p.m., The Centre
- Feb. 26: **Black Images Memorabilia**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre
- Feb. 28: **Althea Riddick, Motivational Speaker**  
11:30 a.m., The Centre

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