Focus On Forsyth Tech

A Winter’s Day. Student Government Association President Marysue Antonucci (Who Goes Here, page 27) was given a photo of an Arkansas barn by a friend. She liked the image so much that she wanted to make an oil painting of it, but she didn’t yet know a technique for creating the effect of rusted tin. To be able to capture the look of the barn’s roof, she bought a book on palette knife painting and followed the instructions. This beautiful piece of art is the result.
Never in its half century history has Forsyth Tech had a more crucial role to play in the lives of our citizens and the vitality of our local economy. And never have the college’s resources been as stretched as they are in this recession. Your contribution, in any amount, will enable Forsyth Tech to continue to never have the college’s resources been as stretched as they are in this recession. in the lives of our citizens and the vitality of our local economy. And that’s just the tip of an enormous iceberg. Your community college deserves your support because it is the catalyst, every year and every day, for individuals becoming the best that they can be.

And as more people in all stages and walks of life see for themselves what it’s like to be a student here, there’s a heightened understanding of what Forsyth Tech has to offer year in and year out. Just a few examples:

- Personal attention and support. Find out why Teresa Ketner loves teaching evening courses at Forsyth Tech as much as she loves her day job as a member of the Greensboro Police Department’s Forensic Team, in A Case of Passionate Conviction.
- Top-notch training for in-demand skills. Learn how community support contributes to our ability to get programs up and running in the story of how Dr. Kenneth Sadler provided training facilities for dental hygienists, in A Generous Partner Puts the Teeth into a New Program.
- A chance to make a dream come true. Read Who Goes Here, a profile of artist, grandmother and student government president Marysue Antonucci, in A Fairway to Share Golf Tournament.

We welcome the spotlight, even as we are challenged by the major surge in enrollment we’re seeing, in both credit and continuing education programs. All this attention broadens public understanding of how Forsyth Tech is uniquely able to serve our community in an economic downturn as a cost-efficient and reliable way to embark on a bachelor’s degree, as the means for those who have lost their jobs to gain the skills to find new employment, and as a way for people to create job security for themselves by adding to their knowledge and value.

Forsyth Tech is proud to be part of the North Carolina Community College System, with 58 institutions serving more than 800,000 students annually. North Carolina Community Colleges are creating success in our state by:

- Offering hope for a better future through vocational training and education
- Providing opportunity by making higher education available to all citizens
- Generating jobs by creating a skilled workforce for business and industry

Where Hope Springs Eternal

If you think of Forsyth Tech as a place where people learn to repair cars, clean teeth, program computers, install air conditioning and put out fires — you’re right. But look just a little deeper and what you will see is a truly transformative institution.

Tech Quarterly gives us the opportunity to tell the stories of people for whom Forsyth Tech has provided life-changing encounters and experiences. In this issue alone, you’ll learn about how the chance to become a Crime Scene Investigator helped Teresa Ketner overcome a deadly cancer and go on to excel in her new career. You’ll read about how instructors in the GED program gave high school dropout Terah Bevill the confidence she needed not only to go to college, but to be chosen for a highly selective doctoral program at an Ivy League university. You’ll be surprised at how a simple screening test and an even simpler treatment enables hundreds of students every year to succeed academically and in their work, after years of failure and disappointment caused by a common, undiagnosed perception problem.

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If Forsyth Tech had prepared a program that detailed all the options available to students and told them exactly what to do to get the classes they needed. There were a few frantic days in the office of Dr. Susan Phelps, Dean of Educational Partnerships at Forsyth Tech, but ultimately the students were able to take the courses they had requested.

The Constitution Takes a Bow

Constitution Day was celebrated on the Main Campus of Forsyth Tech on Sept. 17 with a reenactment of a continental soldier encampment, live music and a reading from the United States Constitution by a town crier. Retired teachers Wayne and Ricky Woosley, who participated in 18th century reenactments, were featured, and Dean of Learning Resources Randy Candelaria performed fiddle music of the era.

Early College x2

Early College of Forsyth, a program that allows high school students to earn an associate’s degree tuition free, is entering its second year on the campus of Forsyth Tech with a sophomore class of 60 students and a freshman class of 63 students. Because all students must enter as freshmen, classes are entered one at a time, so next year there will be three classes and the following year all four will be attending.

Meanwhile, a second Early College, under the auspices of Forsyth Tech, began this year. Stokes Early College High School is meeting at the Northwest Forsyth Center and has a freshman class of 48 students (shown above).

Honor Roll

More Than You Know

Local Agencies REACT to Unemployment Woes

A rise in unemployment has increased the need for worker training, and Forsyth Tech is meeting that need. Last August, Vice President of Continuing Education Sue Marston, along with other school officials, participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for REACT, the Regional Employment and Advancement Career Training Center, located above the Employment Security Commission at 450 W. Hanes Mill Road in Winston-Salem. The nearly 30,000-square-foot center will offer advice and resources to unemployed, underemployed and downgraded workers in the area. Funded by federal stimulus money and operated locally by the Northwest Piedmont Workforce Development Board, REACT is a collaboration of several Forsyth County agencies including Forsyth Tech, the Employment Security Commission, Vocational Rehab, Job Corps, Department of Social Services, Faith Based Community, Experiment in Self Reliance, Urban League, Consumer Credit Counseling and Goodwill. Forsyth Tech will offer classes at the new facility under the state’s “12 in 6” jobs training program, which offers skills courses that can be completed in six months or less in a variety of trades, construction and healthcare categories.

Constitution in the Den

Yet another Forsyth Tech faculty member has become a published author. Terrence Lillard, an instructor in the Thomas H. Davis ITEC Center, spent the summer co-authoring the CompTIA Linux+ Certification Study Guide, which was published this past October. The study guide covers everything the student needs to pass the Linux+ Certification exam as well as maintain, troubleshoot and install Linux on workstations and servers. Mr. Lillard developed three chapters of the study guide and produced all the Linux How-To Exercise Videos and Linux+ Exam Study Questions.

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“That gave me another reason to win this battle,” Teresa remembers.

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**A Case of Passionate Conviction**

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**Not As Seen on TV**

Thousands of young people dream of a career as a Crime Scene Investigator. When Teresa Ketner applied for a job with the Greensboro Police Department seven years ago, there were approximately 200 applicants for the position.

“Of course I was bald and my immune system was weak, and I had two more chemotherapy treatments to go, but I wanted to start forensics right away,” Teresa said. “Bald, weak and frail, I went over and talked to Kristie Baity, who was the program director. She encouraged and supported me. I just couldn’t wait to get started.”

Against her doctor’s advice, she went to classes, sitting in the back so she would be less likely to pick up any colds or viruses from her classmates. Most of them were recent high school graduates, and they were enormously supportive of her.

“They called me Mama T. They threw me a big party when I got the chemo port removed from my arm,” Teresa remembers.

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Alumni Spotlight

“Teresa Ketner is no stranger to hard work. Growing up on a tobacco farm, she had little time for extracurricular activities or hanging out with friends. She and her brother spent long, hot days getting the crop in. At 14, she got her first paid job, working in a drugstore. She used her wages to save for her first car, a 1974 yellow Vega.

Teresa still doesn’t have much leisure time. A day at the beach is her favorite getaway, but it doesn’t happen often enough. She makes do with a beach room that she and her husband built onto their house, where she displays the seashells she collects.

She also enjoys scrapbooking, target shooting and quilt making.

And then there are the kids. Laci and Lucy, twin Nigerian dwarf goats, are so nice to come home to.

“They love to snuggle in your lap,” Teresa said. “I can sit and watch them play for hours.”

— More Than You Know —

The decisions criminals make not only change their life forever but will change their own family’s lives, the victim’s life and the victim’s family’s lives. Sometimes, these cases change the lives of the dispatcher, police, CSI, firefighters and EMS workers who respond to these calls. It can bring down the strongest person,” Teresa said.

“I want my victims to always know that I put my heart and soul into every case. I leave no stone unturned. I want my victims’ families to know that I will be the voice for their loved one. I want the innocent and guilty to know that I speak for truth and justice. It doesn’t matter to me who they are, what they do for a living, where they live or what they believe in.

“I have often been asked, ‘how do you handle the things you see and deal with?’ For me, I know I couldn’t prevent what has happened, I can’t give them their loved one back. If I allow myself to start thinking this is someone’s mom, dad, child, brother or sister; I would be an emotional wreck. What makes a person who they are is the twinkle in their eyes, the smile on their face and the love in their heart. Once they take that last breath, I have to look at it as a body, not someone’s family member. Don’t get me wrong, I know this is a person who is loved and will be missed. But if I let my thoughts go in that direction, I just can’t do the job. I always try to investigate my cases and respect the victim in the way I would want someone to investigate a case if that was my loved one.

“I am very fortunate to work with some of the best investigators I know,” Teresa said. “The citizens of Greensboro are in good hands!”

— Alumni Spotlight —

Being chosen, she said, was “truly a dream come true.” Nevertheless, it’s not what you see on TV, as Teresa often explains to jurors.

“We can’t solve a crime in 30 minutes. We don’t wear high heels and drive Hummers. Often, it’s long hours and very stressful,” she said.

For the past five years, Teresa has been a member of the Forensic Team. They are responsible for processing homicides and other complex death investigations. They must maintain advance training and discipline in crime scene investigation analysis, chemical processing, documentation, crime scene reconstruction and laboratory evidence processing techniques. Needless to say, it’s not a 9-5 job. She’s on call 24/7 every few weeks, and getting called to a crime scene in the middle of the night is not an uncommon occurrence.

“Nothing can prepare you for the sights and smells of a homicide scene,” she said. “This is not a career for everybody. It’s got to be a passion deep in your soul. After seven years, I still cannot believe what human beings can do to other human beings. I will never be able to wrap my brain around this. Most crimes revolve around drugs, gangs or emotions. It is always so sad to work a case that involves children. Children are a blessing from God, and we are here to protect them, not harm them. I often ask myself how someone could harm an innocent child or an elderly person who isn’t hurting anyone.”

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Growing Through the Recession

Forsyth Tech’s Big Growth Spurt Started in the Last Recession

It’s hard to remember now, but eight years ago the United States was in a recession. The event everyone remembers from the fall of 2001 was the terrorist attacks. But also in the first year of the new century the economy was dipping, after a solid decade of expansion.

That fall, Dr. Gary M. Green was serving his first months as president of Forsyth Technical Community College. Here in our area, the effects of the recession were easy enough to see: factory closings, layoffs and outsourcing of jobs to other countries, particularly in the historically strong textile and furniture industries.

“We asked, where will the jobs be now,” Dr. Green remembers. The answer was in health care, in biotechnology, in nanotechnology, which would be embedded in a wide range of projects. Information technology was also becoming more important, and more specialized, in every industry. And logistics was taking on a dominant role, as moving and storing materials and finished products became a prime area in which American companies could cut costs to become more competitive globally.

Forsyth Tech set about creating new degree programs in all those disciplines, some of them on a fast track. And the programs thrived, as people who had been displaced in the recession enrolled and learned the skills that would help them find new jobs.

So, at the opening convocation of the 2009-10 school year, when Dr. Green talked to Forsyth Tech’s faculty and staff about growing through recession, he was thinking of a longer timeline, a larger horizon than the current economy.

Forsyth Tech’s extended growth spurt started in the last recession. It began with educational programs. As the programs thrived, more facilities were needed, and growth has taken the form of added classrooms, labs and shops, and major new buildings.

As a result of the current recession, the worst and most prolonged economic downturn since the Great Depression, virtually all community colleges have seen double-digit enrollment increases. Forsyth Tech’s enrollment in degree programs grew 16 percent this fall over last fall, and enrollment in adult literacy classes and other continuing education courses is on the rise too.
But unlike many other community colleges, Forsyth Tech has grown dramatically over the past eight years, and has been building up its facilities over those years to meet ongoing and projected growth.

"We continued to grow where others declined," Dr. Green said. "The growth in this recession has been dramatic. We've done a better job in the last few years of getting the message out and marketing."

Today, much of the focus of people enrolling at Forsyth Tech is on jobs that can’t be outsourced to Asia, and work that will always be essential, recession or not. Some of those program areas are nursing and allied health occupations, and business applications pertaining to health careers, such as project management. Others are welding, plumbing, automobile technology and skilled construction trades.

In this economy, as in previous downturns, people turn to community colleges when they have been laid off, when they are attempting to hang on to their employment by upgrading their skills, and when they aspire to a bachelor’s degree and need to start their higher education in an affordable way. And there’s an even more fundamental shift going on, which becomes amplified in a recession.

"We have two issues," Dr. Green said. "There’s a labor surplus, with people losing their jobs. And there’s a labor shortage in highly skilled areas. The role of the community college is to provide the bridge between those two."

"We are committed to serving all the additional people we are seeing, both traditional and older students. We are committed to providing what they need,” Dr. Green said. “If the community college isn’t there for them, they have nowhere else to turn.”

"taking it to the limit"

While most organizations today are struggling with the challenges of contraction, Forsyth Tech is mastering its ingenuity to serve a much larger student population with limited space, staff and budget.

"We are challenged in our budget," said President Gary M. Green. "We are having to shift resources to manage the growth in enrollment."

Some of the steps taken to handle the heavy enrollment are these:

- Class size limits have been increased, and more sections of classes have been added. Faculty members now have more students to get to know and to encourage, more tests, papers and projects to grade.
- Additional counselors and advisors could not be hired, and those people, whose roles are critical in a community college, are overloaded.
- Classroom space is filled. More classes are now being offered at off-campus locations throughout Forsyth and Stokes counties.
- More online courses have been added to the hundreds already offered, and most of these classes are at capacity.
- Parking, always a constraint, has had to go off campus. A shuttle service from nearby Hanes Mall eased the overload on the Main Campus in the first weeks of the school year, but is having to give way to heavy Christmas shopping traffic at the Mall.
- The solutions aren’t perfect, Dr. Green acknowledges.
  "We are stretched thin in our support services. Students may have to wait longer for services like counseling and financial aid,” he said. “We are focusing on our core mission.”
  "What’s encouraging he said, is that people across the college have stepped up to the plate, taking on heavier workloads and putting in more time to make sure that students get the personal attention that is a hallmark of Forsyth Tech.

bricks and mortar

In the 21st century, Forsyth Tech’s buildings and grounds have expanded steadily to meet the needs of new programs and much larger enrollment. A glance, here’s where the growth in facilities stands:

1. Bob Greene Hall, home of the Nursing and Allied Health programs on the Main Campus, began this academic year with 20,000 more square feet of space, a much needed expansion for these in-demand programs.

2. Northwest Forsyth Center in King opened in 2008, providing state-of-the-art training facilities for the Criminal Justice, Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Science programs. Additionally, this center gives students in Stokes County and the northwest part of Forsyth a convenient location for curriculum and continuing education courses. The Fire Training Center, which is currently under construction, will be complete in January 2010, and will feature a burn building, fire tower and burn pits to support the training needs of area firefighters.

3. West Campus has been upfitted with air conditioning to offer students, faculty and staff a more comfortable environment in which to work and study. New windows, which are currently being installed, will contribute to this campus’ energy efficiency.

4. Hanz C. Howard Center in eastern Winston-Salem, home to Early Childhood Education, Human Services Technology and Continuing Education programs, is in the middle of an 11,000-square-foot expansion project that will be complete in time for the 2010 summer semester.

5. Grady P. Swisher Center in Kernersville is also undergoing an 11,000-square-foot expansion that will be complete by the summer of 2010. The expansion will help accommodate overcrowding in the College Transfer, Therapeutic Massage, Global Logistics and Certified Nursing Assistant programs.

6. The Technology Building put a handsome, contemporary face on the Main Campus when it opened in 2006. It houses the Thomas H. Davis /TEC Center, the bookstore and student activities spaces, as well as classrooms, labs, and offices.

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- Put a handsome, contemporary face on the Main Campus when it opened in 2006. It houses the Thomas H. Davis /TEC Center, the bookstore and student activities spaces, as well as classrooms, labs, and offices.
other locations

Forysth Tech’s Corporate and Continuing Education (CCE) division keeps its finger on the pulse of the workforce and job training needs of the local community. CCE’s flexibility and responsiveness is unmatched, thanks to the many partnerships it has formed with organizations throughout Forsyth and Stokes counties that enable needed training programs to be offered where and when they are needed. Partnerships with the following organizations help extend Forsyth Tech’s reach throughout our community:

- **Santona 4-H Center**, located in Westfield in Stokes County, opened its doors in the summer of 2009 to Forsyth Tech job training programs, including carpentry and welding.
- **Regional Employment and Advancement Career Training (REACT)** Center opened in the summer of 2009 in the same facility that houses the state Employment Security Commission in Winston-Salem. REACT will provide another level of employment assistance and job training to area workers, including the JobsNOW initiative that is being administered by Forsyth Tech.
- **Goodwill Industries** on University Parkway in Winston-Salem provides another satellite training site for Forsyth Tech, where individuals can receive job training to become a data entry specialist, banquet server, HVAC service technician or pharmacy assistant.
- **Small Business Center**, located at the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce Building, provides free one-on-one confidential business counseling services for new and existing businesses to support small-business development in our area.
- **International Center** at the 5th Street Library in downtown Winston-Salem supports the unique needs of the local international community and Forsyth Tech students through education, guidance and mediation.

From High School Drop-Out to Ivy League Doctoral Student

Terah Bevill found the encouragement she needed at Forsyth Tech.

That’s what happened to Terah Bevill. Like many teenagers, she found high school a struggle, even though her aptitude for academics was excellent. Her life felt even more chaotic after her family moved to Winston-Salem from Pennsylvania, and she dropped out of high school at age 17. Now, 10 years later, Terah is a student in a Ph.D. program at Brown University. She plans to become a college professor.

“Forsyth Tech gave me a reason to believe, a reason to hope,” she said. “People there told me I was worth something and could have to be on the streets. Now I have found my security, and my life is about bigger stuff than money,” Terah said.

“Forsyth Tech gave me a reason to believe, a reason to hope,” she said. “They have to earn too many into those few evening hours. I really wanted to go to UNC-Chapel Hill. I decided to apply to just that one school, and if they didn’t accept me, I would stay at High Point.”

“I took a year off and did a lot of work in the community. Along the way, I met a lot of people and together we encouraged me,” she said. “I want to do that for other people.”

During that year, she loaded up her credit cards to apply to 10 highly competitive graduate programs. At Brown University, she is studying United States history, with a focus on the social and political upheavals in the South from the 1950s through the Reagan presidency.

It’s an investment of about $300,000 on Brown’s part, she noted, including annual tuition of approximately $50,000 plus living expenses. Learning that graduate school is often free to the student was a revelation for Terah. She had assumed it would be beyond her means.

“As a high school dropout, I always felt the strong possibility of bad things happening, and all I wanted was the security of knowing I wouldn’t have to be on the streets. Now I have found my security, and my life is about bigger stuff than money,” Terah said.

Shrinking before heading for Rhode Island and the next chapter in her life, she took time to express her gratitude to the people who helped her in and helped her become the first person in her family to go to college.

“Forsyth Tech gave me a reason to believe, a reason to hope,” she said. “People there told me I was worth something, and I could accomplish something. That planted a seed. That laid a foundation in my mind about what I could become.”

Cover Story

Alumni Success
One foot in the future is where Forsyth Tech always likes to be positioned, and the past year abundantly showed this inclination to be forward looking, forward thinking, prepared to leap to the next level.

A college that puts the emphasis on know-how should be using state-of-the-art technology in its own Internet presence, and that was achieved this past year. We launched a brand-new, user-friendly website, which includes a searchable course catalog. Adhering to a “best practice,” we tested this site with people of all ages and many walks of life—the diversity of individuals who would be interested in Forsyth Tech’s offerings—before it went live. At the same time, we launched an intranet, whereby students, faculty and staff can easily communicate with each other. Keep up with the news at www.forsythtech.edu.

ENROLLMENT GROWTH was the biggest trend, and a challenge to prepare for. Since Forsyth Tech is entirely a commuter college, the challenge was not just to accommodate students in seats, but cars on campus. Before the 2009 fall semester started, the college was prepared to handle the overflow. All the details had been worked out to shuttle students to the Main Campus from a parking lot at nearby Hanes Mall.
Our Division of Corporate and Continuing Education responded to the increased demand for short-term skills training courses with several initiatives at a range of locations. One was “12 in 6,” a group of workforce development programs in 12 different career paths, designed to be completed in six months or less. Courses are offered in Auto Body Repair, Carpentry, Electrician Helper, Electrician Lineman, HVAC Service Tech, Masonry, Plumbing Helper, Welding, Medical Billing, Medical Terminology and Coding, Medical Unit Secretary, Nursing Assistant, Phlebotomy and Pharmacy Assistant. New certification programs in Administrative Assistant, Culinary Arts and Advance Manufacturing were also added.

And once again Forsyth Tech’s recruiting materials caught the notice of people well beyond the college’s two-county footprint. Our 2008 recruitment campaign, including billboards, radio and TV spots, viewbook, and KaleidoScope, which was mailed to all households in Forsyth and Stokes counties, all came in for national honors. They made the cut at both the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations and The Communicator Awards program. All of these communications were developed in collaboration with The Bloom Agency of Winston-Salem.

From President Obama to Forsyth Tech graduation speaker State Senator Linda Garrou, the enormous need for post-secondary education was sounded throughout the land. Sen. Garrou praised the North Carolina Community College System as one of the best work-training programs in America and said she regarded Forsyth Tech as the finest school in the system. At the commencement exercises on May 7, she said, “Now, more than ever, our economy relies on the specialized programs our community colleges offer.” And once again, about 1,000 students received associate’s degrees, diplomas and certificates in May.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT OF FORSYTH TECH’S NEED TO GROW – EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD ENTAIL A SMALL TAX INCREASE – WAS AMPLY CONFIRMED IN THE NOVEMBER 2008 ELECTION. THE EDUCATIONAL BOND REFERENDUM THAT WILL ENABLE THE COLLEGE TO TAKE OVER THE PROPERTY THAT NOW HOUSES THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS’ ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES AND CAREER CENTER PASSED BY A MARGIN OF CLOSE TO 2:1. ALMOST 100,000 VOTERS SAID YES TO THE BONDS.
something new for Forsyth Tech this year

has been the naming of programs of study for heroes associated with those particular specialties. So now we have the Richard Childress Race Car Technology program, the Paul M. Wiles School of Nursing and the Len B. Preslar, Jr. School of Allied Health. These are three of our most distinguished programs, as well as being among the degree programs that are always in high demand among students. It’s a pleasure to have the names of three individuals who have long been recognized for their outstanding contributions to their respective fields associated with three flagship programs: Richard Childress for his legendary performance in NASCAR, Paul Wiles for his leadership at Novant Health and Len Preslar for his visionary guidance of the growth of Baptist Hospital.

As we go to press, we’re looking ahead to the next school year, when Forsyth Tech will celebrate a half century of service to the community. As much as anything, our history is the story of the changing economy of this region, and an ever-evolving vision of the future. And we’re positioned to make that a grand yearlong series of observances with a task force that is already at work, and a special 50th anniversary logo already designed and adopted.
Professional development grants for faculty and staff
Technology for classrooms, labs and shops
Scholarships for deserving students

Forsyth Technical Community College serves more than 50,000 students of the College. Your gift to Forsyth Tech through the Foundation will support:

The Foundation of Forsyth Tech, a nonprofit organization, is the fundraising arm of the College. Your gift to Forsyth Tech through the Foundation will support:

- Contributions from people like you.
- The needs of the four-year colleges, as well as the needs of the two-year colleges.
- The needs of the students.

“I just don’t think the general public is as aware of the needs of the community colleges as they are of the needs of the four-year colleges,” Dan Barrow said.

Brad Barrow graduated from West Forsyth High School, where he was senior class president, and he always loved music, tennis and the outdoors. He enrolled at Guilford College but after two years realized a life spent indoors with books was not for him. He studied carpentry and plumbing at Forsyth Tech, and now owns Brad Barrow Plumbing and General Contracting in Lewisville.

His parents think Brad inherited a gift for building and design from his grandfather, a noted landscape architect. Forsyth Tech nurtured that talent in his son, and they hope their gift nurtures others.

Your Gift Creates a Strong College and a Strong Community

Choose your level of support:

- President’s Club: $10,000 and up
- Pinnacle Club: $5,000 - $9,999
- Presidents Club: $1,000 - $4,999
- Directors: $500 - $999
- Leaders: $250 - $499
- Champions: $100 - $249
- Friends: Up to $99

Give online: Use your credit card to make a secure donation at www.forsythtech.edu/support/giving-to-forsyth-tech.

Send a check: Make your check payable to Forsyth Tech Foundation. Mail to The Foundation of Forsyth Tech, 2100 Hills Creek Parkway, Winston-Salem, NC 27103-5197.

Get more information: Learn about gifts you can make in honor of or in memory of individuals, matching gifts, charitable trusts and bequests, and gifts of stocks and property. Call Dr. Sharon B. Covitz, Executive Director, The Foundation of Forsyth Tech, 336.734.7520 or email scovitz@forsythtech.edu.

A generous partner puts the Teeth into a new program

So, when Forsyth Technical Community College decided to start a program to train dental hygienists and dental assistants, it looked outside its campus, as it often does, for a partner.

The school needed a dental practice with space for more than 40 students, chairs for patients, X-ray machines and equipment for sterilizing instruments. In other words, the school needed a partner larger than the average dental practice, and, as importantly, it needed a partner interested in helping the community college and its students. It found that partner on its board of trustees in Dr. Ken Sadler, a board member since 1992 and the managing partner at Winston-Salem Dental Care.

“Someone asked if we would be willing to host the program in its early years,” Dr. Sadler said recently.

And the answer was easy. “We’ve got a big place.”

Forsyth Tech recruited dental faculty who could oversee the students’ work. The school also recruited patients, mostly those without insurance who appreciated the sliding scale rate and didn’t mind having students clean their teeth.

Winston- Salem Dental Care provided the rest — exams rooms, X-ray equipment and equipment for sterilizing instruments.

“We called them partners,” Dr. Sadler said.

The program opened in the fall of 2002 with 29 dental assistant students. In 2003, 12 Dental Hygiene students were added. “We would not have been able to start our programs when we did if Dr. Sadler and his practice had not loaned us the space,” said Dr. Jannette Whisenhunt, the Department Chair of Dental Education.

Dr. Sadler moved to Winston-Salem in 1978 after three years as an Army dentist to take a job at Winston-Salem Dental Care just as the practice was getting started. In those days, the RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co. owned the practice as part of its R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. purchased the practice in 2000.

Community Support
Greene Hall Expansion

Bob Greene Hall with the names of its two schools unveiled. Jeffrey McFadden, Chair of the Forsyth Tech Board of Trustees, gave credit to Len Preslar and Paul Wiles for the exceptional growth of the Allied Health and Nursing programs. “Because of their leadership and vision,” he said, “we have one of the largest health technology programs among all the community colleges in this state, and we can be proud of that.”

Who better to honor than two community leaders who guided the support for the building and the expansion of Bob Greene Hall?

The Paul M. Wiles School of Nursing was named for Mr. Wiles (left), CEO of Novant Health since 1997, and former CEO of Carolina Medcorp and Forsyth Memorial Hospital. The Len B. Preslar, Jr. School of Allied Health recognizes Mr. Preslar (right), the recently retired chief executive of N.C. Baptist Hospital, where he served for 38 years. He is now executive director of the Health Management Program at Wake Forest University Schools of Business.

A big pair of scissors for the ribbon-cutting that marked a major expansion— the addition of 20,000 square feet to Bob Greene Hall, home of the Nursing and Allied Health programs on the Main Campus. The official opening on Sept. 24 included a naming ceremony.

Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines said, “This expansion is welcome news to us here in the city of Winston-Salem as we are rebuilding our economy.” Noting the importance of the medical, biomedical and biotech industries to the local economy he said, “Forsyth Tech plays an extraordinary role in the rebuilding of our community. I tout it every day when we’re talking to potential clients or existing clients.”

Healthcare students will prepare for their careers in state-of-the-art classrooms and labs in the new addition. Paul Wiles paid tribute to nurses at the ceremony. “I believe nurses go each day and represent the finest of the human spirit,” he said. “Lives have been saved because of the excellent training at Forsyth Tech,” said Len Preslar.
D r. Lucas D. Shallua isn’t just an instructor in and Chairman of the Biotechnology Department at Forsyth Tech, he’s also the person who brought it to life. Originally hired in the Life Sciences Department in 2002, Dr. Shallua soon found himself in a different role. “When there was a need to establish and develop a biotechnology curriculum, I was asked to take that task,” he recalls. “What made me move from teaching general life sciences to biotechnology-related courses.”

Since that time, he’s seen the program grow through some major growth spurts. “We started with 16, then 35, then 70, and then it went up to 164 students,” he says, “spread between first and second year, so that once they graduate they will be able to be absorbed locally.”

To Dr. Shallua, being able to provide jobs for his graduates is important, and so is producing graduates who can do those jobs. “We are very proud that employers tell us our students are both mature and easily trainable,” he says. He adds that employers often use the term “plug and play” to describe Forsyth Tech graduates, meaning they come onto the workforce with the skills they need.

“It takes six months to train a four-year college student, it will take two to three weeks to train our student,” he says. “We’ve heard from many, many biotech companies that we have placed our students that they understand that the program is demand-driven, and says it’s a chicken-or-the-egg scenario.”

For Dr. Lucas Shallua the Biotechnology Department, the research is a little more personal. “Seeing students go from being in textiles or manufacturing to getting a highly skilled job in science, that is my forte,” he says. “Somebody comes in and tells you, ‘I’m an English major’ Then after two years, he’s talking, thinking in terms of the ‘big picture.’”

Of course, that’s Dr. Lucas Shallua the Chairman of the Biotechnology Department telling, thinking in terms of the “big picture.”

Another thing a mature student can bring to the position. “I always help people. It’s my destiny,” he said. “I gave up everything to do this, even my car! I love very frugally. The talent I have is God-given, and I realized I can do this.”

Marysue Antonucci is President of the Student Government Association at Forsyth Tech.

What inspired a grandmother of six with a busy life and a commute from Pilot Mountain to take on this added responsibility? “I never would have dreamed that this would be my destiny,” she said. “I gave up everything to do this, even my car! I love very frugally. The talent I have is God-given, and I realized I can do this.”
Lifelong Compensatory Education has long been available for those with learning difficulties, offering a chance to develop reading, oral communication, employability and life skills. But Paul thought the program could do more. "The curriculum was very fixed," he recalls. "We'd bring them into the classroom and every day we'd talk about, 'Is the shirt this size? Is the iron turned on or turned off?' And after years and years of that, it's still meaningful, but it wasn't fresh. That's what got us to step out of bounds a little bit and start looking at ways to expand the arts-based education." He saw it as a way to expand their sense of accomplishment, their sense of pride and their sense of fitting into the mainstream, he says.

He asked the Forsyth Tech Foundation for a grant and was given $1,000. That got them off to a good start. He then had the idea of having some of the students perform the song "I Believe I Can Fly" at the Stokes Stomp, an annual music festival held in Stokes County. He asked Kris if she thought they could do it, and Kris said yes. Then she made it happen. "I give Kris a huge amount of credit," Paul says, adding that her enthusiasm and effort are what really drive the program.

The students performed for the first time at the Stokes Stomp in 2006 as The Stokes Opportunity Singers. And that was just the beginning. Thanks to two $10,000 grants from the Lemma M. Apple & Ben R. Apple Foundation, and the Foundation’s director, Ben Vernon, Paul and Kris have been able to greatly expand the program since that time. There are now three areas of focus: the performing arts, the visual arts and arts-based educational trips.

In the performing arts area, The Stokes Opportunity Singers – or The Star Catchers, as the students recently renamed themselves – perform a variety of songs and forays. In addition to the Stokes Opportunity Singers, the program also has a drumming ensemble and a handbell choir. But the students do more than make music. A performing arts ensemble, The SCAMPS, puts on a theater show featuring classic songs and folk tales. These groups have performed across the state at schools, senior centers, patriotic celebrations and festivals of all kinds, including one show for over 900 people at the Adult Basic Skills Conference in Raleigh, where, as Paul says, "They brought the house down."

"In the area of the visual arts, the program has used the Apple Foundation grants to buy supplies and bring in professional artists for lessons in painting, pottery, jewelry making and so on. The students have had their work shown at the Stokes County Arts Council gallery, and Paul is currently talking with the city of Walnut Cove about doing a mural on the side of a building in the town.

"The students have also been able to go on many educational trips. In some cases, they have gone as performers, while in other cases they have gone to see performances, such as their annual trip to the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival in High Point. But their trips haven’t
It's wonderful. It's wonderful."

A video about the program called "The Star Catchers" is now on YouTube. To see it, simply go to www.youtube.com and search for "star catchers stokes county." It only takes about six minutes to watch, but it's something you'll never forget. And when you see what these dedicated Forsyth Tech folks have accomplished, we think you'll agree with Kelly's mother, Gail, who simply said, "It's wonderful. It's wonderful."

Yes, there are amazing things happening in that out-of-the-way building in Walnut Cove. Songs are being sung. Smiles are being created. And every day, in very real ways, lives are being changed.
In 2000, Ronnie Valenti, the coordinator of adult literacy at Forsyth Technical Community College, began testing students for a little-known perceptual disability that makes words dance on the page. Now, nearly 10 years later, she believes that diagnosis and treatment for Irlen Syndrome has helped thousands of students pass their GED and go on to pursue college work and successful careers. The syndrome, often unchecked until students find their way to Ronnie’s literacy program, interferes with the way the brain interprets black print against a white page. The treatment is simple—a colorful $3 plastic sheet placed over the printed page corrects the messages received by the brain. Suddenly the blurred and bouncing letters are still, and the student can read against a white page. The treatment is simple—an overlay, or tint, to stabilize the words on the page.

Ronnie, what is the Irlen Syndrome?

The light reflecting off of white paper is a combination of all colors of the spectrum. When your brain is interpreting, some of the colors travel at the wrong speed. That causes the words to move, to rise off the page and look blurred.

How do the overlays work? It seems so simple.

It is. That’s why it amazes me that it’s not more widespread. When you put color over the page, everything is getting to the brain at the same time.

What are the symptoms?
The light reflecting off of white paper is a combination of all colors of the spectrum. When your brain is interpreting, some of the colors travel at the wrong speed. That causes words to move, to rise off the page and look blurred. This syndrome is often unchecked until students find their way to Ronnie’s literacy program, interferes with the way the brain interprets black print against a white page.

Sudden the blurred and bouncing of letters are still, and the student can read.

Johnny Peak, 34, uses a turquoise overlay as he works toward his GED so that he can start coursework in auto mechanics and body work in January. “All it takes is a simple color to ease the pain. I figure if they had this back in high school, everything would have been better.”

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Can Irlen be diagnosed and treated in school-age children?

Yes, Irlen Syndrome can be diagnosed at any age. We were the first community college to do this. Every community college across the state by speaking at workshops and conferences. Now it’s 50 out of 58 colleges that have someone screening. It’s wonderful.

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Forsyth Tech Partners With a NASCAR Legend

On October 27, a ceremony was held to officially name the Richard Childress Race Car Technology Program at Forsyth Tech. Mr. Childress, who grew up in Winston-Salem, is one of the most successful owners in NASCAR history, having won six Sprint Cup Series championships with driver Dale Earnhardt, as well as five championships in the Nationwide Series and one in the Truck Series. Over the years, Richard Childress Racing has accumulated nearly 200 victories in NASCAR competition.

City and county officials, members of the Forsyth Tech Board of Trustees, and well over 100 students and faculty attended the ceremony. The speakers included Board of Trustees member Joyce Glass, who called the occasion “a milestone in Forsyth Tech history.” Dave Plyler, chairman of the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, also spoke, and praised Mr. Childress’ generosity. “Richard Childress doesn’t just take and keep for himself,” Mr. Plyler said. “He shares with the community. That’s why we’re here today.”

In his remarks, Mr. Childress said that he was honored to be associated with Forsyth Tech. “The instructors, many of whom I have known for years, bring real-world knowledge and experience to the program, which only makes the students’ experience that much better.”

In closing, Mr. Childress advised the students in attendance, “Hard work and a dream will get you where you want to be, so keep up with your dreams.”

Through the Richard Childress Race Car Technology Program, Forsyth Tech currently offers the only Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Race Car Technology available in the North Carolina Community College system.