

## DR. TOMMY BICE SPEAKS TO EDUCATORS

Dr. Tommy Bice, Alabama State Superintendent of Education, spoke Tuesday, October 30, at JSU for two addresses, the first to education majors, potential teachers, and local school administrators, and the second to CEPS faculty, additional local administrators, and members of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Bice was Alabama's deputy state superintendent of education for instructional services; superintendent of the Alexander City School System, high school principal, career tech director, alternative school teacher/director, special education/residential school director, early childhood teacher/parent trainer; and began his career as a teacher at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind. In both addresses at JSU he alluded to his experiences in the education profession—he can share experiences from a bus driver to state superintendent—as helping him to develop a unique perspective on education. Dr. Bice said, “I learned from my past experiences and I will build on those to shape the future of education in Alabama. I am open to any change in the current system that can answer one question adequately. What value does your request bring to the children of Alabama?”

He credited his willingness to listen to a three-year experience working at an alternative school in Birmingham. There he listened to students that had no security in basic care (food, shelter, and clothing), students that were denied social services because of bureaucracy, and students who had no voice in their education. This experience helps him keep his perspective of the diversity of student



needs. He said he hoped that each school year teachers would take the time necessary to get to know the challenges that their students faced before they began to focus on a student's academic growth. Dr. Bice indicated that he travels to an Alabama school every week to see the approaches and successes of Alabama schools.

Dr. Bice said that this was an exciting time as the teaching profession was experiencing a retirement bubble. To future educators this increased their employment opportunities and to the profession this was an opportunity to shift the way things are done. His goal is for the educational system to unlock the potential of Alabama children through these change agents. He said that testing and graduation rates did not necessarily mean that every child was prepared to the best

of his/her intellectual capacity for their next step. Whether it was trade school, vocational school, two-year or four-year college, he wants Alabama students to possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to succeed in a credit bearing curriculum without the need for remediation. Students should also be able to apply core academic skills learned, to collaborate, and to problem solve—with precision, punctuality, and the desire to learn.

The legislative move last year to approve charter schools in Alabama, he felt was a learning experience with some very valuable takeaways. He said that there was no reason that the current Alabama schools cannot be as flexible and as innovative as any charter school, if we are willing to create a policy and budget environment that promotes such an approach. He said that if there was any current rule or regulation that stands

**(CONTINUED ON PAGE EIGHT)**

# JSU E-THOLOGY

By Ms. Gena E. Christopher  
Instructor in the Department of English

The E-thology of Early American Literature, a multi-modal, electronic repository of early American literary authors and works developed by the JSU English Department in collaboration with Mathematics and Computer Information Systems, the College of Education and Professional Studies, Distance Learning, Institutional Technology, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the CORE Group, and countless others. This stand-alone website will be accessible through the Internet on any device, as it has been designed to read well from iOS to Windows. Using this E-thology, students may freely read

about the lives of American authors, read primary works by these authors, look at photographs and watch videos related to the works, take virtual tours, follow maps, access related Internet links, and read literary commentary provided by experts in the field. More important, the students may also highlight important sections of text, take notes, and share their notes with other classmates. Teachers may create individual courses within the framework of the E-thology and direct their students to specific information, commentary and criticism. The E-thology will contain over twenty-five authors and their works when it is piloted in the Spring

2013 semester; however, the number of authors and works which will be included is only limited by the English teachers and students who wish to contribute.

Instructors who wish to become Author/Administrators (those responsible for a particular author's inclusion in the repository) are encouraged to contact Jennifer Foster ([jferrell@jsu.edu](mailto:jferrell@jsu.edu)) or Gena Christopher ([genac@jsu.edu](mailto:genac@jsu.edu)) at the JSU English Department. Also, anyone who wishes to know more about the E-thology and its possible uses is invited to contact us for guest access to the E-thology website.

## CORE

Dr. William A. Meehan, president of Jacksonville State University, welcomed the participants to the CORE Partnership Building Workshop on November 1, 2012. He said that the goal of creating a seamless partnership of P-20 schools to educate students will be a change that can only benefit students.

Dr. Rebecca O. Turner, JSU provost and vice president for academic affairs, then spoke about how partnerships like this one fit directly into the Red Balloon strategic plan outcomes of JSU. The Red Balloon project asked that JSU faculty and staff think about what JSU can do differently, do more of with less, and do better to meet the needs of today's students. The CORE project she felt was a logical part of JSU's strategic plan.

Dr. Alicia Simmons, executive director of Institutional planning and research, shared how Mr. Matt Akin, superintendent of Piedmont City Schools, came to her asking for JSU's help in transitioning to a different teaching paradigm gave birth to the CORE project. Since then, Dr. Simmons has worked to

fund through grants the project and structure the first year activities. The CORE Partnership Building Workshop is the first CORE event this year. Three more workshops are planned as well as a statewide CORE Academy conference for teachers and administrators. She said that currently seventeen school systems are involved along with JSU, Alabama State Department of Education, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Council for Aid to Education, The School Superintendents of Alabama, St. Cloud State University, Blackboard, Pivot Point, and Apple Computers.

The first speakers at the CORE Partnership Building Workshop were Dr. Billie McConnell and Mr. George Saltsman from Abilene Christian University (ACU). They spoke from experience and helping other implementations of iOS in schools. They had data from the restructuring at ACU that occurred when ACU became an iOS university four years ago and have used iPads since 2010. The restructuring affected the formal learning on campus as

instructors took on a facilitator role. The technology allowed students to learn all the time and everywhere. The informal learning occurred through communication to and by the students through visual and written media. Students expressed that technology was not the focus, learning is, and that technology is just the current tool to facilitate learning.

Mr. Matt Akin explained to the audience CORE meant Collaborate Regional Education. His goal was for CORE to hold four workshops a year, where local systems get support for their one to one technology initiatives as well as a forum to discuss solutions and challenges that the schools faced.

Dr. John Hammett, dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies stated, "CORE is an exciting way that JSU through its resources and grantsmanship, can effect a positive change in the education of many students from preschool through graduate studies. The CEPS is proud to be a partner and a facilitator incorporating new agreed upon teaching methodologies and strategies into the preparation of teachers."

# FIRST PLACE

## IN THE NATION:

## JSU'S ROBOT TEAM

## WINS AT THE ATMAE

## CONFERENCE



At the 2012 conference of the Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (ATMAE) in Nashville, Tennessee, the JSU ATMAE Robotics Team won first place in the nation with a perfect score during the robot competition. The team members were Mr. Sam Thompson, Ms. Jessica Civitello, Ms. Tina Civitello, Mr. Jonathan Thompson, Mr. Benjamin Ledbetter, Ms. Aimee Montgomery, Mr. Morgan McDonald, and Mr. Slayton Acker. The faculty sponsors are Mr. Phillip Dean and Mr. Earl Bonds.

The team was made up of students from different academic majors. Students majoring in design and applied manufacturing engineering and applied electronics engineering took care of the robot building and programming, while there was an art student who made the poster. The students presented their posters to the judges, and also had to provide a detailed write-up documenting their project.

The task for the ATMAE competition was to remotely drive to a ten foot circle in the conference hotel ballroom, then autonomously (without human control) go to a table and pick-up thirty-six Ping-Pong balls (red, green, blue, and yellow) and back out of the circle. The contestant received one point per ball. Then the

robot backed-out of the circle, while sorting the balls by color. The student controller reestablishes remote control and drives to four different drop off points. The team received two points for each ball correctly dropped off in the designated color area. Blue balls dropped off correctly were worth four points.

This was the third year JSU's team had entered the robotics contest. The first year the robot did not work. Last year the team was second. This year's winning robot was appropriately named "Anita Wynn."

At the conference the students had the opportunity to participate in professional development workshops for students and sit in on several of the breakout sessions where they learned about current trends in applied engineering education.

The software used to program the robot is MPLAB IDE v8.76. Programs were written in notepad with assembly language, and converted to binary code using the MPLAB IDE software to upload the program to the PIC16F690 microcontroller.

The JSU Robotics Team won for best electronic controls, best fabrication, and had a perfect score during the competition phase.

To see the competition phase go to <http://youtu.be/TX4dX9hc6Ag> or <http://youtu.be/cDQ8Xb59bOs>.

“ I'M PROUD OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF OUR ROBOTICS TEAMS. WE FIELDED OUR FIRST TEAM IN 2010 AND HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE TO HAVE SOME EXTREMELY TALENTED AND MOTIVATED STUDENTS INVOLVED EACH YEAR SINCE. THE EXCITEMENT GENERATED BY THOSE FIRST TEAMS LAID THE FOUNDATION FOR THE SUCCESS WE HAD THIS YEAR IN WINNING THE CHAMPIONSHIP.

ONE THING I AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED WITH IS THAT THE JUDGES CONSISTENTLY POINT OUT THE FEATURES IN OUR ROBOTS THAT INCORPORATE INDUSTRIAL STANDARDS. IT'S JUST ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR EFFORTS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS IN OUR PROGRAMS WITH THE SKILLS NEEDED BY INDUSTRY. ”

MR. TERRY MARBUT, HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING.

## TWO CEPS FACULTY RECOGNIZED AS EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

On November 8, 2012, two members of the CEPS faculty were recognized as Educators of the Year by the Arc of Calhoun and Cleburne Counties at their annual dinner in Anniston. Ms. Lynetta Owens and Ms. Valerie Gamble, instructors in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction were named as Educators of the Year. The Arc of Alabama, Inc. is an organization made up of individuals with intellectual, developmental and other disabilities, their families, friends, interested citizens, and professionals in the disability field.

Mrs. Lynetta Owens has served people with disabilities her entire career. She spent the early years of her career teaching at the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind, but has spent the last eighteen years as an instructor at Jacksonville State University. She prepares pre-service teachers with the skillsets that they need to be effective special education teachers in the schools.

Ms. Owens and Dr. Cynthia Connor recently wrote a grant and were awarded funding for the creation of Transition University that is housed on the campus of Jacksonville State University. Transition University is designed to couple young adults



PRESENTER MR. JOE HOLDER, RADIO AND TV NEWSCASTER AND MS. LYNETTA OWENS, INSTRUCTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

with their non-disabled peers for community experiences. Participants go on various field trips around Jacksonville to help with building skills for post-secondary transition into the community. Transition University, now in its second year, has been a great success and will continue to help prepare students with disabilities for transition in the future.

Ms. Owens also continues her

commitment to serve outside of her professional field. She mentors and works with adults with intellectual disabilities through her church, as well as on her own personal time. The Arc presented the Educator of the Year award to Mrs. Owens for her lifetime work in advocating and serving people with disabilities in our community.

Ms. Valerie Gamble contributes to our community by her support of the intellectual disability and developmental disability population. Ms. Gamble serves on the Arc board. Ms. Gamble was also recognized for her enormous support at this year's Autism Walk fundraiser. The Arc appreciates that Ms. Gamble at Jacksonville State University, brings the personal and professional experiences needed to help mentor and educate tomorrow's professionals that will be serving this population. The Arc commended her passion for teaching this next generation of educators. Ms. Valerie Gamble was recognized by Arc as an exceptional example of how to bring forth a personal passion and see it developed professionally.



PRESENTER MR. JOE HOLDER, RADIO AND TV NEWSCASTER MS. VALERIE GAMBLE, INSTRUCTOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

## FALL 2012 SUPERINTENDENTS CONSORTIUM

The fall 2012 Superintendents' Consortium meeting was held on October 26th at Houston Cole Library. The meeting opened with a welcome from JSU president William A. Meehan. Dr. Meehan took this opportunity to thank the superintendents for their willingness to partner with JSU in the Collaborative Regional Education (CORE) initiative. He also expressed his support for the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission's Clear Plan 2030 initiative. Both initiatives were part of the agenda for the meeting.

Ms. Ashley Myers, regional planner from EARPDC, informed the superintendents about the objectives of Clear Plan 2030. She stated the consortium seeks the development of a regional plan for sustainable development of the region that is consistent with six livability principles. These principles include: provide more transportation choices; promote equitable, affordable housing; enhance economic competitiveness; support existing communities; coordinate and leverage federal policies and investments; and value communities and neighborhoods. To address the principles, the consortium identified five objectives:

- The development of targeted strategies designed to address or eliminate identified barriers to livability.
- Significant public involvement in the planning process, with particular emphasis placed on including members of the region's traditionally underrepresented populations.
- Greater regional knowledge of livability principles and local government adoption of sustainable policies.
- The creation of a series of highly aligned plan elements that will inform the Clear Plan and provide more holistic planning for the region.



- The development of the Clear Plan 2030, a regional plan for sustainable development.

In order to meet the objectives, six Livability Resource Teams (LRTs) were formed. The teams included

- Transportation,
- Housing,
- Economic Competiveness,
- Community Support, Policy and Investment, and Civic Engagement,
- Health,
- Education.

Ms. Myers asked for the superintendents' support and involvement in developing the strategies for the Education Livability Resource team. She invited them to attend the quarterly meetings whenever possible. It should be noted that Dr. Meehan serves as the cochair for the Education LRT and Dean Hammett is a member of the team.

Dr. Alicia Simmons, executive director of JSU's office of Institutional Planning and Assessment, spoke on the Collaborative Regional Education (CORE) model. CORE originated as a partnership between Piedmont City School System and JSU. It has since expanded to fifteen school systems in the JSU service area. The purpose of the CORE model is to foster a collaborative relationship between JSU and P-12 schools to enhance 21st century learning starting in pre-kindergarten through graduate school (PK-20).

Dr. Lou Reinisch, professor of physics and JSU department head for physical and Earth sciences, presented his Collaborative Classroom design. The innovative classroom incorporates the use of educational technologies to engage the students in a learning-center environment. A web-based presentation of the Collaborative Classroom can be seen by logging on to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecN9jfqmbA&feature=plcp>.

Ms. Gena Christopher, instructor in the Department of English, informed the superintendents of the newly created E-thology of Early American Literature. The E-thology is a project developed by members of the English department with the help of other departments on campus. For an in-depth explanation of the project please see the article "JSU E-thology" on page 2 of this newsletter.

Dr. Nina King, associate professor in the department of Curriculum and Instruction, spoke on the power of using iPads in instruction. During the spring 2012 semester, Dr. King was given twenty iPads for students in one of two sections of the course ECE 305. The other section used whatever electronic device the students had at their disposal. Anecdotal response of the difference in instruction and student learning was skewed in favor of students using the same electronic device, i.e., iPads. She found students who used the iPads made higher grades and experienced greater satisfaction on their course evaluation. This pilot project has encouraged Dr. King to create video lessons that she uses in a "flipped" classroom teaching strategy. In her videos she provides the background and the research for the activities.

Dr. Mary Montgomery, professor in instructional leadership, informed the group that all the Teacher Leader coursework from the Department of Educational Resources is available online. She invited the superintendents to encourage

their teachers that are interested in advancing in the profession to take this path for personal growth. That will ultimately help them become a more valuable resource for their school system.

Mr. Terry Marbut, head of the Department of Technology and Engineering, described a plan for a new robotics certification intended to provide expertise in both math and engineering. The program of study would equip graduates with the knowledge and skills to teach both subject areas. With the emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education, Mr. Marbut believes it is time to propose the dual certification. Background research into curriculum development is currently underway. Mr. Marbut hopes to provide the superintendents with the results of the curriculum study at the spring 2013 meeting to get their feedback.

Dr. Jordan Barkley, associate dean of the College of Education & Professional Studies, reported that the NCATE reaffirmation is in 2013. The Institutional Report is due to NCATE March 1, 2013, with the site visit scheduled for early November 2013. Dr. Barkley explained that the on-site visit is shorter than in years past, but informed the superintendents the evaluation team will be visiting some of their schools to talk with administrators, teachers, and students.

Ms. Ronda Ray, the director of the Department of Clinical Experiences reported on the yearlong internship pilot program. According to Ms. Ray, the initiative is largely a success, and that JSU plans to utilize the yearlong for all students as soon as possible. Ms. Ray also reported on the co-teaching initiative. She told the superintendents the pilot was moving along in a positive manner. She believes we will know more about the effectiveness of the program at the end of spring semester when the students complete their internships.

Ms. Janet Bavonese, instructor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and a co-director of the co-teaching pilot, reported on the different training sessions that served to prepare cooperating teachers and students for the pilot. She also thanked the superintendents for their help in making the training sessions possible. Dr. Hammett recognized the following faculty for their work in developing and facilitating the co-teaching pilot. Those faculty included Ms. Janet Bavonese, Dr. Celia Hilber, Dr. Joseph Akpan, Dr. Linda Mitchell, Ms. Kim Townsel, Dr. Cynthia Connor, Ms. Jennifer Strain, Dr. Jennifer Troncale, Dr. Emily Sims, and Dr. Nina King. Dr. Hammett announced that Dr. Tommy Bice, Alabama Superintendent of Education would be on campus October 30 to speak to students and faculty about the Alabama College and Career Readiness initiative. Dr. Hammett invited the superintendents to attend the presentations and to have lunch with Dr. Bice.

The meeting was opened up to the superintendents to inform JSU of the issues impacting the P-12 setting. Mr. Dale Edwards, superintendent of Guntersville City Schools posed the question, “what can we do to raise the prestige of being a teacher and attract the best and the brightest into

the profession?” The assembled agreed that providing college scholarships to candidates with a stipulation of teaching after college would help. Dr. Jeff Goodwin, superintendent of Oxford City Schools, commented that the preparation for elementary teachers should include more rigorous mathematics coursework. He said the new Common Core State Standards being implemented were requiring that concepts once taught in the middle and secondary schools are now being introduced in elementary. The superintendents also discussed the increase in the number of children as young as kindergarten with true mental health issues. They were concerned with the costs associated with providing one on one aids and the lack of funding to support these accommodations.

Dr. Hammett concluded the fall meeting by thanking the superintendents for their partnership with JSU. He stated this is an exciting time in education, and that he was optimistic about the future of education in the state PK-20 students. He also encouraged the superintendents to be a part in both the CORE and the Clear Plan 2030 initiatives.





## A CHALLENGE OPPORTUNITY FROM HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND RECREATION

By Ms. Abby Fleetwood

Instructor in the Department of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation

Up for a Challenge? Looking to build team camaraderie? Then check out the JSU Challenge Course located on campus between the Stone Center and Rowe Hall. The challenge course is an experientially-based outdoor program focused on developing greater leadership, communication, trust, and initiative in teams. Through intentional games and group discussions, the challenge course is a great way for groups to grow together as a team and as individuals, in a fun and challenging facilitated environment. The Low Ropes Challenge Course has been a part of JSU for the past four years and has been very popular among various groups on campus. Mr. Allen Gilbert is the challenge course coordinator and has done an excellent job with the design and upkeep of the challenge course as well as with promoting it

to on and off-campus groups. Mr. Gilbert and his team work with group leaders beforehand to identify the desired goals and objectives for their groups and create a series of activities that enable participants to succeed in meeting them.

Mr. Gilbert says often times members get frustrated with each other when working to complete a challenge. In his opinion this is the most important emotion, because once frustrated they have two choices; "Give Up or Work Harder." That is why groups come he says, "To learn how to work together by coming up with strategies that ultimately help them to complete the challenges they face as a team whether it be athletic teams, Greek organizations, or businesses in the community." Before becoming a HPER faculty member and challenge course coordinator, Mr.

Gilbert spent the previous nine years in the JSU Recreation Department as the recreational sports director. During that time he had the opportunity to develop a strong relationship with the JSU student body through the intramural programs as well as other recreational activities on campus. Mr. Gilbert's ability to help team members with very different personalities come together and be successful, makes him an ideal coordinator for the JSU Challenge Course. If you would like to learn more or how your office, department, or group organization can take part in the challenge course, please contact Mr. Allen Gilbert at (256) 782-8012 or [agilbert@jsu.edu](mailto:agilbert@jsu.edu). You can also find some great video of the JSU Challenge Course on YouTube by clicking the video link under Challenge Course on the HPER homepage.

# iPad Apps, Tech Tips and Tools

By Dr. Nina King

Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Funny how names change. In early computer use, we used to call computer applications software. Currently software for smart devices is called apps. There are many iPad apps that facilitate studying or research. Here are just a few:

- *Evernote Peek*- Create notebooks of question/answer sets. Then, using either an iPad Smart Cover (magnetic tri-fold lid) or the virtual one that the application provides, lift or slide the first third of the cover to reveal the question, and the next third to display the answer.
- *Flashboard*- Build virtual decks of study cards. When launched, the flashcards are laid out in a concentration-style format, front sides up. Tap to select a specific card to zoom in, tap the card again to “flip” to the back.
- *Study Blue*- Create flashcards for oneself and/or to share with others. Add a picture from your photo well, take one right from the app, or even record audio for each card. Browse or search by materials, classes, or classmates to view sets made by other *Study Blue* members.
- *ChoiceBoard Creator*- Set up a simple multiple-choice type of activity. For each item create a question, then select the number of answer boxes needed and whether a reward sound (from your audio library) is desired when the correct choice is made. Answer boxes can include text or images.
- *Index Card*- Just as the name states, this app allows the user to create virtual index cards (front and back). It is excellent for keeping up with or organizing research. Other features make this a great app for students and teachers. It can also be linked to *Drop Box*.
- *Drop Box*- If you are not on Google Cloud or Apple’s iCloud, you may have a use for Digital Dropbox. Dropbox is an app for your desktop computer, laptop computer, smartphone, iPad, or other mobile device. It is also a website. The app creates a folder that updates to keep your files in the dropbox folder current on all your devices. It also stores a copy on the web. You may choose to share your digital dropbox folders with others. Download the dropbox at <http://dropbox.com>.

## DR. BICE SPEAKS TO STUDENTS CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

between a student and his or her success then he wants to know about it so it can be addressed. The current state school board and legislative leadership are keenly interested in creating such an environment. The only rule he held was the 6.5 hour school day and 180 days or equivalent to the school year. The time of day, the meeting place, and the days of the week can all be adapted to meet student needs.

The vision that Dr. Bice has for the State Department of Education is for every Alabama child to graduate and every child to be prepared. As superintendent, he has reduced the SDE staff sections from twenty-

four to four. He is forming teams with customized support to handle challenges. He expressed that the schools were here to serve the children not a system. He said that when he spoke with business leaders they were looking for employees that can work collaboratively, be responsible, be problem-solvers, and critical thinkers; and that these expectations were in line with his goals.

Dr. Bice wants to provide teachers with resources, support, and effective professional development. He would like to see four-year college scholarships provided to the brightest

students, who are willing to commit four years to the teaching profession. He would like for each of the 134 Alabama school districts to provide mentoring to first and second year teachers. He is also looking at creating professional pathways for current teachers to continue their life-long learning.



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