New mission statement reflects student-first focus

A new mission statement has been adopted by Three Rivers College that reflects the current culture, aspirations, and purpose of the institution.

The Three Rivers Board of Trustees approved the mission statement at its November meeting following a presentation by four members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The committee, made up of people from across the college, crafted the new mission statement as part of its efforts in drafting the college’s 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

The new mission statement is:

Three Rivers College inspires, prepares, and empowers students to succeed through open access to high-quality learning opportunities that meet the needs of the communities we serve.

As part of its work, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee has been reviewing the status of the institution,” Dr. Maribeth Payne, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, told board members. “With the tremendous changes that have occurred at our college in the last five years, committee members decided to rewrite the mission statement to reflect Three Rivers’ current culture and purpose.”

The proposed mission statement was sent to all full-time employees for adoption, with over 93 percent approving the new mission statement.

“The entire institution has been part of the creation of the new mission statement,” said Three Rivers President Dr. Wesley Payne. “It speaks to thoughtfulness of committee members in crafting the mission statement and the work done with keeping everyone involved.”

Speaking in support of the new mission statement at the board meeting were Strategic Planning Steering Committee members Jonathan Atwood, Coordinator of Media Services; Bridgett Barnhill, Accounts Payable Clerk; Chris Adams, Director of Enrollment Services; and Kristina McDaniel, Director of Human Resources.

“What stands out most to me is the portion about the communities we serve,” Atwood said. “I feel this clearly reflects that the college is a group of many who are serving the diverse needs of our region.”

“The new mission statement aligns with Three Rivers’ student-first focus and states that we are here to serve students and help them succeed,” Barnhill said.

“I was blown away by your passion. You put a lot of thought into the mission statement,” said Three Rivers board member Ben Ressel.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee is now refining the draft of the Strategic Plan to be presented to trustees for approval at the board’s Dec. 10 meeting.
 Audit shows  
Three Rivers is financially strong  

The annual audit report accepted by the Board of Trustees in November shows that the financial position of Three Rivers College remains strong and that we continue to provide quality services to the region and to our students.

Kraft, Miles & Tatum conducted the audit and issued an unmodified opinion, the best an audit can be, finding no material weaknesses in internal control and no noncompliance issues with federal reporting programs.

For the sixth consecutive year, Three Rivers was designated a low-risk auditee. This continuum of good financial management at our college is important, and Three Rivers is fortunate to have employees committed to operating as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Total assets increased by approximately $10.4 million, while total liabilities increased by about $10.1 million. Assets increased primarily due to investment in new classroom buildings in Poplar Bluff and Sikeston. Liabilities increased due to the issuance of additional lease participation certificates to complete the building projects.

Other items in the audit report:
Operating revenues were down $426,000 due to a decline in student enrollment. An enrollment decline is not unusual during an economy shift when people are going back to work, said Three Rivers President Dr. Wesley Payne. He noted that Three Rivers’ percentage of reduction is less than the national average for community colleges.

Federal awards for FY14 totaled $24.4 million and included $21,675,909 from the U.S. Department of Education; $894,943 from the U.S. Department of Labor; $1,315,493 from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; $221,653 from the U.S. Department of Commerce; and $331,748 from the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

Evening Advantage designed for working students  

Three Rivers College’s Evening Advantage program offers evening classes designed to make it convenient for working students to complete a college degree.

“Evening Advantage offers scheduling options specifically geared to students trying to balance work and family while pursuing their dream of attaining a college degree,” said Dr. Mary Lou Brown, Dean of Academic Instruction at Three Rivers.

Evening Advantage courses are offered in eight-week sessions, with two sessions offered each semester. Students can choose to take a class on Monday night or Thursday night or, to more quickly progress toward graduation, both nights. Students taking classes on both Monday and Thursday nights for the full semester are considered full-time students and can qualify for full financial aid.

“A challenge for non-traditional students is working around jobs and family schedules,” said Dr. Brenda Russell, Dean of Career Education and Workforce Development. Evening Advantage’s set schedule allows students to plan their lives to balance work, family, and college.

The Associate Degree in General Education earned through Evening Advantage will transfer seamlessly into a bachelor’s degree completion program, including those offered at Three Rivers College by Hannibal-LaGrange University, Central Methodist University, and Southeast Missouri State University.

For more information on Evening Advantage, call 573-772-7104 or send an email to eveningadvantage@trcc.edu. A schedule of Evening Advantage classes can be found at trcc.edu/eveningadvantage.

Registration for the Spring semester continues through January 9.

Ripley County Trustees  

All four people who have represented Ripley County on the Three Rivers Board of Trustees attended a meet and greet for college President Dr. Wesley Payne (center). They are, from left, Steve Cookson, Ben Pulliam, Phil Davis, and Richard Brummitt.
New Sikeston facility to open in January

In November, Three Rivers College took possession of the approximately $7 million Academic Building in Sikeston, with classes scheduled to begin in January.

The three-story, 36,000-square-foot building will replace the 8,000-square-foot converted racquetball court that has served as Three Rivers' location in Sikeston since 2005.

Three Rivers-Sikeston serves about 500 students currently. With the larger facility Three Rivers expects that enrollment will at least double over time.

In addition, the new facility will allow Three Rivers to provide more career education programs in Sikeston and expand customized training programs, which presently serve 300 to 500 individuals annually.

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee stands outside the Three Rivers Academic Building in Sikeston that will open in January.

The new building has five computer labs, with one devoted to the LPN-to-RN Bridge program, and a total of more than 120 computers. The current location has been operating with less than 50 computers.

"We have a number of students who do not have regular access to a computer, or to appropriate bandwidth," said Missy Marshall, Director of Three Rivers-Sikeston. "Our curriculum is being more and more computer-supported and the (current) computer labs are tied up all day long."

There will be 18 rooms, including computer and science labs, three ITV classrooms, and regular classrooms. There are eight labs and classrooms in the current facility. The entire third floor of the new building will be devoted to the nursing program.

"We are going to more than double our abilities in the new buildings, as far as classroom space," Marshall said.

Administrative space also will expand. There are five individual offices, a storage area, reception area, and workspace for adjunct instructors.

The building has the only community storm shelter within the city of Sikeston, Marshall said. It can hold more than 770 people and withstand the force of 250 mile an hour winds, or an F-5 tornado. The shelter was paid for with a federal grant that covered 75 percent of costs. The space can also be used for community events.

"The larger facility will increase the opportunities for Three Rivers to further serve the community," said Marshall.

Chinese Acrobats at Tinnin Center expected to be sell-out

The National Acrobats of the People’s Republic of China return to the Tinnin Fine Arts Center at 7 p.m. Friday, December 12, in what is expected to be a sell-out show.

Sponsored by the Patrons of the Arts Society, tickets are $10. A limited number may be available at the door.

Other upcoming Patrons of the Arts shows at the Tinnin Center include the children’s shows “Robin Hood” at 2 p.m. February 1 and “The Emperor’s New Clothes” at 2 p.m. March 1; Russian National Ballet at 7 p.m. March 19; and “An Evening with Mark Russell at 7 p.m. April 23. For more information or to buy tickets for upcoming shows, visit trcc.edu/tinnin.
Three Rivers honors 6 at MCCA convention

A Three Rivers student, two staff members, and three area legislators received awards during the 50th annual Missouri Community College Association Convention held in November.

**Arisa Coffer**, who is the Student Government director of student activities, received MCCA’s Student Leadership Award. Coffer was selected for the award because of her eagerness to be involved and her ability to engage other students to be involved. She is a great leader and role model.

Coffer is a business administration major from East Prairie. After graduating, she plans to complete a bachelor’s degree in organizational management.

Agriculture Instructor **Joyce Rehkop** received MCCA’s Senior Service Award. Rehkop is a 22-year employee of the college who oversees our agriculture and forestry programs.

Rehkop is an excellent teacher who creates a learning environment to maximize student potential. She uses multiple delivery systems, including ITV, web, web-enhanced, and multiple instructional techniques, such as hands-on activities. She is known for bringing live animals to class as teaching aids. She even took a miniature horse up an elevator to get to an ITV classroom for the benefit of her off-campus students.

The **Three Rivers Technology Department** received MCCA’s Technology Innovation Award for a voice over internet (VoIP) protocol project. Steve Atwood, director of Technology and Computer Services, accepted the award on behalf of the team that completed the project in-house at a fraction of the cost for an out-sourced system.

Using open-source products, the team developed the college’s VoIP system for less than $40,000; purchasing such a system from an outside vendor would have cost up to half a million dollars.

The switch to VoIP made possible advanced telephone system features, including an intercom system that can be used to broadcast emergency messages over every phone.

**Sen. Doug Libla** (R-Poplar Bluff) and **Rep. Todd Richardson** (R-Poplar Bluff) (not pictured) were honored with the MCCA’s Legislative Award of Distinction in recognition of their strong and focused advocacy on behalf of Missouri’s community colleges and the students they serve.

**Rep. Kathy Swan** (R-Cape Girardeau) received the Distinguished Legislator Award for her strong support of Three Rivers College and of community colleges around the state.

## Employee spotlight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sandra Batten</th>
<th>Brad Piercy</th>
<th>Michael Willcut</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Assistant to Dean of Academic Instruction</td>
<td>Spirit Coordinator/ Athletic Promotions</td>
<td>Technology &amp; Computer Services Specialist</td>
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<td><strong>Years at Three Rivers</strong>: 6.</td>
<td><strong>Years at Three Rivers</strong>: 4.</td>
<td><strong>Years at Three Rivers</strong>: 6.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Favorite thing about working here</strong>: Having the feeling of a family and team environment.</td>
<td><strong>Favorite thing about working here</strong>: The opportunity to work with students on health and wellness.</td>
<td><strong>Favorite thing about working here</strong>: The teamwork toward accomplishing goals.</td>
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<td><strong>Most proud of</strong>: Coordinating creation of HLC resource room for visit.</td>
<td><strong>Most proud of</strong>: Reviving the spirit program and cultivating its talent.</td>
<td><strong>Most proud of</strong>: Achievements of the Technology team.</td>
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<td>Sandra Batten approaches her work with positive attitude and is always working to resolve issues for faculty members and students.</td>
<td>Brad Piercy spreads the visibility of Three Rivers by taking the Spirit Team to events throughout the service area, and he takes care of one of Three Rivers’ best assets: Rocky Raider.</td>
<td>Michael Willcut supervises the Technology work tickets, which can range from 25 to 400 tickets per day. He prioritizes the work, resolves issues, and does follow up.</td>
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