Claudia Robinette enters a leadership position for Richmond Community College at an exciting time. This year marks the 50th anniversary of RCC, and the new Board of Trustees chair is ready to prepare the College for its next 50 years.

"Many things have changed over the past five decades. The College needs to be in a position to adapt to the changes of the future, which are occurring more rapidly now than in the past," Robinette said. "We need to stay ahead of the curve and be ready to provide the appropriate programs for the times."

Robinette was elected Board of Trustees chair in September. She was appointed to the board in 1998 by the Richmond County School Board.

One major change to the College during Robinette’s 16 years serving on the board has been the addition of the Robert L. and Elizabeth S. Cole Auditorium, which opened in 1999.

New chair to lead College into new era

Claudia Robinette was elected to serve as the new Board of Trustees chair.

"The Cole Auditorium is undoubtedly one of the most valuable resources from a community perspective. It is a wonderful facility that has been used for a myriad of activities outside of the Dewitt Performing Arts Series, which in itself is a huge cultural asset for our community," she said.

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See MABE, p.5
Investing in our students pays off

As our college celebrates its 50th anniversary this April, we should all remember how the RCC’s progress has mirrored the evolution and development of the RCC Foundation. Since its inception in 1982, the Foundation has enabled RCC to expand and flourish through the resources and partnerships provided from its directors, donors, and friends. Whether it was a construction project, scholarships, or service awards for employees, the Foundation stepped up and helped make RCC what it is today: strong, vibrant and growing.

We are now planning for the next 50 years of service to the citizens of Richmond and Scotland counties, and once again we have partnered with the Foundation to address a real need in our community. While the Foundation’s 106 scholarships and the federal financial aid program help make college accessible and affordable for many of our 3,000 students, we have found a group of current and potential students still struggling to pay for their educations and improve their lives.

Federal financial aid is based on income of either the student or their parents, and too many of our students are caught in the trap of making too much money to qualify for the federal Pell grant, but still not having enough discretionary income to afford the $4,000 per year to attend RCC full time. As a result, they defer their education, remaining in lower paying jobs, or they take one class per semester, making graduation a difficult and lengthy goal to meet. These students, and others who never consider RCC because of their jobs or their parents’ finances, are effectively punished for working and trying to take care of their families.

Like many of you, I worked my way through college with support from my parents, and I appreciate the challenges these folks face. That is why our Board of Trustees and the RCC Foundation Board of Directors authorized a new student aid and giving opportunity: The Working Scholarship program. Through this new scholarship fund, students who meet the personal and academic criteria will receive up to $1,000 per year in matching funds towards their contributions to their tuition, fees, and books. We believe this will provide the encouragement and incentive for current students and their families to remain in college and graduate sooner, and it will motivate new students to come forward and begin the process of transforming their lives at RCC.

When I speak to students and visit classes, I am struck by how many of our students are attending classes before, after, and even during breaks from work. I recognize their faces from our stores, shops, and restaurants, and I often see them still wearing their uniforms. Our communities’ future depends on the skills and talents of our workforce, and these are people who are working hard every day, both in their job and at our college.

I urge you to consider investing in The Working Scholarship program. Invest in people who will pay off with huge dividends for the employers and tax bases of Richmond and Scotland counties. Thomasa and I have signed on board to support these folks, and I know I can count on you to do the same. As always, thank you deeply for helping make RCC’s first 50 years an era in which we can all take pride, and for your continued commitment to our future.

RCC to celebrate 50 years and many more

Do you like The Ledger? So many people have called and written to tell us how happy they are with this quarterly communication from the RCC Foundation. Our response to them, and to you, is that we are just getting started. Let us know what you want to see more of.

I think this second issue of The Ledger illustrates our mission statement very well: “The Richmond Community College Foundation is organized to aid, strengthen, and further the evolution and development of Richmond Community College, and to develop and utilize the ties of interest, sympathy, and affection existing between the College and its alumni and friends throughout the State and the Nation.”

We do good things here at RCC. Our graduates go on to do good things in their communities. If you know this to be true – and I believe you do – be a good friend to the college and tell that story to someone else. The donors and Board members featured on these pages give back to this school in many ways; the most important thing that they do is tell the stories of students like Tiffany and Amanda.

As The Working Scholarship program grows and evolves to help a broad and deserving demographic, our need for your storytelling skills will only increase. We need you to tell people that The RCC Foundation is securing a foothold for students who struggle every day to pay their own way.

At our Anniversary Gala on April 12, we will celebrate 50 years of access to higher education for Richmond and Scotland counties. Thanks to our friends, we are poised and ready for 50 more.
Future nurse honored by scholarship

Amanda Young did not have the opportunity to meet the late Veronica Scholl Newton, but they probably would have been kindred spirits.

Young, a nursing student at Richmond Community College, received the Veronica Scholl Newton Memorial Nursing Scholarship, which was jointly established by the children and grandchild of Mrs. Newton in honor of her caring nature and dedication to helping others.

In deciding criteria for the nursing scholarship, the Newtons reflected on the elements of their mother’s character that the ideal recipient might exemplify: responsibility, empathy, and a willingness to work hard.

A Dedicated Nursing Student

A mother of three small boys, Young of Rockingham quit her job to go back to school to do what she’s always wanted to do, and that is take care of others.

“I’ve always wanted to help people, but I didn’t think I would have the stomach to be a nurse,” Young said. “But after having three children, I realized, I can do this.”

She enrolled in RCC’s Nursing Assistant program in fall 2011 to learn more about a career in healthcare.

“Once I took the CNA class, I fell in love with nursing from day one, and then on the first day of clinicals, I knew this is what I truly want to do,” Young said. “I also realized that once I earned my certification, I could work nights and weekends as a nursing assistant while going to nursing school.”

Young is enrolled in RCC’s Associate Degree of Nursing program and will graduate in 2015. She works for Moore Regional Hospital in the oncology department where she helps care for cancer patients.

Receiving the Veronica Scholl Newton Memorial Nursing Scholarship is truly an honor and a big help financially,” Young said. “I’d like to thank the family of Mrs. Newton for establishing this scholarship and for helping me achieve my goal of becoming a nurse.”

Nursing student Amanda Young received the Veronica Scholl Newton Memorial Nursing Scholarship.

Paying Tribute to ‘Ronnie’

“Ronnie,” as Mrs. Newton was called by friends and family, never had any formal medical training; however, she had always wanted to go to nursing school, according to one of her daughters, Mary Anna, of Hamlet.

“It just came naturally for her,” said Mary Anna. “She would have been a wonderful nurse.”

Ronnie was the mother of seven children, but she always found time to help others.

“During World War II, Daddy worked in the Naval shipyard in Portsmouth, Virginia,” said her son, Harry, also of Hamlet. “All the ladies there called her ‘Doc Newton.’ She was always preparing home remedies for people and stopping by to see them or sending a card when they were sick.”

Ronnie was a hard worker and retired from J.P. Stevens. She passed away on July 19, 2006, at the age of 95.

Her family approached Richmond Community College Foundation to explore the idea of establishing a nursing scholarship in their mother’s name.

“It is wonderful to know that the RCC family can be a part of the Newton family,” said RCC President Dr. Dale McInnis. “A gift like this can help shape the life of a deserving nursing student; we need more gifts like this.”

CHAIR

CONTINUED FROM P.1

John E. Forte Building, home of the Joseph J. Prischak Center for Engineering Technology, has been a major change to RCC’s landscape.

“The Forte Building expansion provides not only much needed classrooms for the industrial tracks, but it also is a symbol of the College’s commitment to providing the necessary education to students so that they can get the tools they need to become successful and productive,” Robinette said.

Robinette said the College also has been a valuable resource to the community by adding new programs and new corporate and educational partnerships that have opened new pathways for students to acquire job-ready skills or to transfer to a four-year university to pursue their chosen field of study.

Robinette works for her family business, Tri-City Inc., a real estate development and management business started by her father. She and her husband, Kenneth, also operate a farm in Marston. They have two children, Neil Robinette and Gabrielle Goodwin, and one granddaughter, Madelyn Goodwin.

“Industry relies on having a skilled workforce. RCC can provide the necessary training to help companies with their staffing and educational needs,” Robinette said. “This access to training is very important to existing and prospective industry.”

As RCC prepares to enter a new era, Robinette said one thing that won’t change about the College is its dedication to the people it serves.

“The College should always remember that it is the People’s College,’ to use a term often stated by Hugh Lee,” Robinette said. “The education and preparation of our students for success should always be the goal as the college changes and grows.”
Citizens of the Year: McInnis, Lampley, Dunbar

RCC President earns Chamber title

Richmond Community College President Dr. Dale McInnis was honored by the Richmond County Chamber of Commerce in January when he was named Citizen of the Year.

The Citizen of the Year award is presented annually by the Chamber to a resident who has devoted significant time and effort throughout their lifetime as a member of the community.

“I am very appreciative and humbled to receive this honor and to be among the many deserving citizens who have held this title,” McInnis said.

Son Ryan McInnis introduced his father at the Chamber banquet where the award was presented. He shared with the audience the many important principles he learned from his father, including to never give up.

“It’s that approach that has helped the elder McInnis to lead one of the fastest growing two-year colleges in the state. RCC reported a record student enrollment in fall 2013, and the College’s Workforce and Economic Development division has also experienced a significant jump in enrollment for noncredit courses. This spring semester, the newly renovated John E. Forte Building opened for classes, and two new academic programs, Mechatronics and Dialysis Technician, will be offered this fall semester.

“I look forward to helping make RCC continue to grow and meet the needs of this community. Our goal is to prepare people for jobs of the future, not of the past,” McInnis said.

McInnis grew up on a farm.

Instructor honored by Civitan Club

Richmond Community College faculty member Steve Lampley was named Rockingham Civitan Club’s Citizen of the Year in December.

Lampley received the award for his work to establish and grow the Electric Utility Substation and Relay Technology program at the College. Now, in its third year, the program has experienced tremendous growth in student enrollment.

“I worked for 42 years in a part of the electric utility industry that was invisible and where recognition usually came only after something major went wrong, so this award comes as a total surprise. It is very appreciated,” Lampley said.

In 2010, Lampley of Ellerbe had a real concern for the electric utility industry. As the Senior Engineering Technical Support Specialist for Progress Energy, he saw a growing number of technicians reaching retirement age, thus creating an expanding need for highly skilled personnel who can maintain and repair substations and the relay equipment associated with them. He approached RCC President Dr. Dale McInnis about his concerns.

RCC was quick to jump on board to create a program that would meet a demand and offer students an opportunity for high skill, high wage jobs.

Lampley retired from a 42-year career in the utility industry and became RCC’s lead instructor for the EUSRT program. He has been instrumental in developing partnerships with numerous utility companies, including Duke

Long-time Foundation director presented award for service to college

Wade S. Dunbar III of Laurinburg was named the Richmond Community College Foundation Citizen of the Year in October.

The words of Dunbar’s daughter Elizabeth and friend Hew Fulton painted a picture of a man whose service to his community is only rivaled by his commitment to his family.

In her introduction of her father, Elizabeth Dunbar praised her father for providing her with a role model for the type of adult she wants to be.

“You can see what a good man my dad is through the values he has instilled in me,” she said. “My dad has always taught you must work to get what you want. And sometimes you do not always get what you want. He is dedicated and puts his all in everything that he does. He tries not to spoil me so I do not get use to everything being handed to me. His work ethic is 100 percent and I hope to be as hard working as he is.

For Fulton, Dunbar’s commitment to the Scotland and Richmond County community is unparalleled.

“As his business grew to include offices in many states, you would have expected him to move to a more urban area,” Fulton said, “but that’s not Wade. He has deep roots here and is committed to being a part of the community.

“(Wade’s) business is a reflection of his values and the values of our community. This award is not only for his actions to better Richmond and Scotland counties, but also for his commitment to their continued economic viability.”

RCC President Dr. Dale McInnis also praised Dunbar for his many civic endeavors.

“When the time came to meet on the nominations for this year’s citizen of the year award, one name was offered and the nominations were immediately closed, because everyone knew they had the right person identified,” said McInnis. “If Wade never helped RCC, his other civic service to his community would earn him recognition and praise. Whether it has been through Rotary, the Boy Scouts, or all the charities and groups that call on him for support, Wade always comes through.”

“Tobe recognized by such a prestigious group of people is an honor,” said Dunbar. “It is a humbling experience. But this is more about what we can do together instead of me. This college has been such a positive to the people of Scotland and Richmond counties and together we can help it touch the lives of more people.”

Dunbar has served on the RCC Foundation Board of Directors for nearly a decade and has served on the executive committee as secretary, vice president, president and past president.
Elliott advocate for second chances

Nine years ago when Tiffany Elliott of Laurinburg dropped out of high school she assumed she was done with school. Going to college never even entered her mind.

Today, Elliott is not only going to college, but she is also serving as a Student Ambassador for Richmond Community College.

“I signed up to be an ambassador because I wanted to be able to tell my story and be an advocate for positive change and second chances,” Elliott said. “I never thought I’d go back to school and would always just work.”

Elliott worked a number of jobs over the years before she started thinking longer term and about developing a career. She decided to enroll in the GED program at RCC. She was able to enter the accelerated program and graduated within a few months. She was selected to speak at the graduation for RCC’s Adult Secondary Education programs and provide a message of inspiration to her fellow classmates.

Elliott is working full-time as an office assistant for the N.C. Department of Social Services while going to college. She will graduate in May with an Associate in Human Services Technology degree.

Tiffany Elliott is working full-time as an office assistant for the N.C. Department of Social Services while going to college. She will graduate in May with an Associate in Human Services Technology degree. She plans to continue her education and eventually earn a bachelor’s and a master’s in social work.

“I really enjoy grant writing, and I would really like to one day have my own facility to help at-risk youth,” Elliott said.

Attending RCC has been a very positive experience for Elliott and has helped set her on a path to success.

“I’ve really enjoyed getting to know all the other ambassadors because we all come from different backgrounds. I’ve developed relationships with all of them and found that we all have something in common,” Elliott said. “Everyone I’ve come in contact with at RCC, from teachers to counselors, has encouraged me to want to do more and be better. I couldn’t have picked a better school than RCC.”

MABE

CONTINUED FROM P.1

earned college transfer credits from RCC and is an athletic director.

Mabe began serving on the Richmond Community College Foundation in 1995. He has filled an executive officer role every year of his service – from secretary to president. He is currently the treasurer for the foundation.

There was no Richmond Community College, or even Richmond Technical Institute, when Mabe was growing up in the ’50s and ’60s on a tobacco farm in Ellerbe, the same farm where his father grew up working the fields, rather than going to school. The third of four children, Mabe’s goal was to get an education and become a teacher.

“When I was in high school, there was no affordable or close-by two year-school, or junior college. You had to leave the area to go to school for technical training, to pursue a bachelor’s degree or get job training,” Mabe said.

Mabe made good enough grades in high school to qualify for scholarships that helped him go to North Carolina State University. In 1971, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural education and returned to his alma mater, Ellerbe High School, to teach agricultural education. After a year there, he spent a year teaching at Richmond Senior High School before landing his “dream job” at Southern Wayne Senior High School, which had a large agricultural education department with forestry classes, a greenhouse and adult and young farmer programs that competed at state and national levels.

While Mabe enjoyed teaching (he was named Teacher of the Year at Southern Wayne in 1978) and had earned a Master of Education from N.C. State, he made a career switch in 1979. He became a loan officer for the Federal Land Bank of Clinton. After two years, he became branch manager for the Federal Land Bank of Lumberton in Whiteville. In 1983, he was hired by United Carolina Bank in Whiteville to be branch manager. He also went back to college to get a degree in banking. He graduated from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s North Carolina School of Banking in 1986.

Today, Mabe is area supervisor of Fidelity Bank in Rockingham. While he is still the “country boy from Ellerbe,” he has immersed himself in the people and community of Rockingham. An abbreviated list of his community activities includes Rockingham Rotarian and Civitan, volunteer firefighter, Boy Scout leader, chairman of the Richmond County Board of Education – and a member of the Maberry Boys, an award winning barbecue cook-off team.

“This is home for me. I really like this community and the people,” he said.

Mabe enjoys helping others better themselves, which for him, always boils down to education.

“I’d like to see Richmond Community College continue to embrace the technical programs and two-year degree programs. The substation program, the associate degrees in engineering, electronics, computer science and nursing, these are degrees people can use to move into the world of work,” Mabe said. “It’s critical that we support – as hard as we can – a fine institution like Richmond Community College.”
Baylesses don’t miss a show at the Cole

Newly elected Mayor of Hamlet Bill Bayless stays busy tending to the town’s affairs, but according to his wife, Linda, “We don’t miss our Cole performances.”

The Baylesses are members of Richmond Community College Foundation’s Director Circle, which affords them special privileges during the DeWitt Performing Arts Series at the Cole Auditorium.

Members of the Director’s Circle get priority seating, reserved parking, admission to a private, pre-show reception, opportunities to meet the performers and an end-of-the-season performance and gourmet dinner on stage at the Cole. All revenue from the Director’s Circle membership goes to support the work of the RCC Foundation.

“We joined the Director’s Circle the first year it was established,” Linda said. “As part of the community, we want to make sure we are giving back as much as we can for the future of our community, and this is one way we can do that.”

Linda and Bill enjoy all the shows that Cole Auditorium Director Joey Bennett lines up for the season. From the big Broadway shows such as “Cats” to the stand-up routine of comedian Jeanie Robertson, Linda said these are quality performances that are fun and entertaining.

“The Director’s Circle is a really good thing for the community and a great way to support the college and its students,” Linda said.

Season membership is $600 for an individual and $1,000 per couple. To join “The Circle,” please call Joey Bennett at (910) 410-1690.

Now Showing!
The 2013-2014 DeWitt Performing Arts Season at the Cole Auditorium is underway! This is the 14th season of the series that features professional touring productions. Here are the remaining shows of the season:

• Thursday, March 27: 101 Years of Broadway - Five Broadway veterans perform the music they have sung in classic and current musicals.

• Monday, April 28: David Cassidy - “The Partridge Family” star performs favorites such as “I Think I Love You.”

For more information, call the Cole Box Office, (910) 410-1691.
More than 100 people attended the dedication ceremony and open house for the newly renovated John E. Forte Building on Richmond Community College’s main campus in Hamlet.

“Fourteen months ago, we gathered here to break ground on this project and today we dedicate the finished building to all who made it possible,” said G.R. Kindly, co-chair of the Forte Expansion Capital Campaign and past president of the RCC Foundation. “Looking at the partnerships we built to accomplish this project proves what we can do when we have team work and a common goal.”

The groundbreaking ceremony for the Forte Building was held Dec. 13, 2012, marking the completion of a capital campaign that locally raised more than $366,000 and putting the wheels in motion on a nearly $3.5 million project.

“This is something I’ve longed to see at Richmond Community College, and that’s a modern, technical facility that can train skilled workers for the 21st Century as we bring in new industry,” said Thad Ussery, RCC Foundation director and co-chair of the Forte Expansion Capital Campaign.

Home of the Joseph J. Prischak Center for Engineering Technology, the expanded and renovated Forte Building provides much-needed classroom and lab space for the College’s engineering, energy and technical programs.

The Forte Building expansion project was funded on grants and local donations. The Cole Foundation and the Richmond Community College Foundation provided competitive grant awards totaling $90,000; the U.S Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration provided $2,038,000; and the Golden Leaf Foundation provided $500,000 that served as a product of team work, support

The Golden Leaf Foundation has invested nearly $1 million in the renovation and expansion of the John E. Forte Building. The most recent check from the foundation will help equip the new facility with the latest in advanced manufacturing equipment.

The renovation of the Forte Building, home of the Joseph J. Prischak Center for Engineering Technology, was made possible by these generous donors.
Foundation welcomes new leader, members

“Newness” surrounds the RCC Foundation this year, from new members to new leadership.

Patrick Chappell was recently named president of the RCC Foundation. He has been a member of the Foundation for three years and has served as vice president and secretary. Chappell of Rockingham is vice president of the Corporate Lending Division for Carolina Farm Credit.

"RCC has such positive energy as students desire to equip themselves with the knowledge and tools that will set them up for future success," Chappell said. "Being a part of this team, along with the energy from the students and staff, has been very rewarding to me."

Chappell said new programs and new partnerships with four-year colleges and universities have contributed to the RCC's growth, and the College will need to accommodate by increasing classroom and office space and parking.

As the fundraising arm of the College, the RCC Foundation has played a vital role in supporting the College's growth by investing in expansion and renovation projects, including the Cole Auditorium and most recently the John E. Forte Building.

"The success of RCC is very evident with a quick tour of the campus during normal hours of operation," Chappell said. "There is an immediate need for the College to expand so it can continue to offer new opportunities to the surrounding communities it serves."

The RCC Foundation also welcomes new board members Frank Jenkins of Ellerbe, Roger Staley of Rockingham, Shirley Fuller of Rockingham, JC Lamm of Rockingham, Joyce McDow of Laurinburg and Ron Riggin of Laurinburg.

Richmond Community College and the Richmond Community College Foundation

Invite you to

A 50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Saturday, April 12
6:30 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.

At the Robert L. and Elizabeth S. Cole Auditorium

Drinks, heavy hors d’oeuvres and entertainment by The Black and Blue Experience

Semi-Formal Attire

Admission
$50 per person

Corporate Sponsorships beginning at $1000

All proceeds go to the RCC Working Scholarship

The Working Scholarship
Twenty percent of Richmond Community College students are trying to make school work. They jugggle class, family and - most importantly - job schedules throughout the year in an effort to stay in college. Because these students are working their way through school, they are not eligible for Financial Aid. For many, this disadvantage will prolong their time in school or even cause them to drop out. These students should be prioritized, not punished. These students are the target beneficiaries of the RCC Foundation Working Scholarship.

Contact RCC Foundation Executive Director Olivia Webb at 910.410.1807 for tickets.

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foundation for the entire campaign.

The Golden Leaf Foundation recently presented an additional $474,000 to the College to fund equipment for the training facility.

RCC Foundation President Patrick Chappell spoke on behalf of the Foundation Board of Directors in thanking the many supporters who invested in the expansion project and asked for continued support of the College.

Dr. Dale McInnis, president of RCC, remarked on the success of the project in a relatively short time frame due to the team work and collaboration of a number key players.

"This is the start of more things that we can achieve together, and we will build on this success," McInnis said. After the dedication ceremony, people toured the building to see the start-of-the-art training equipment, classrooms and labs housed in the new facility.

MCINNIS CONTINUED FROM P.4

near Ellerbe and graduated from Richmond Senior High School in 1984. His family has lived in this community for 220 years.

"I promise to spend the rest of my career proving what this county can become, a destination for people to come to learn, to work, to play, to live and to raise a family," McInnis said.

LAMPLEY CONTINUED FROM P.4

Energy, and getting the program started on the right foot.

"Steve’s work in establishing the Electric Utility Substation and Relay Technology program has helped to bring greater opportunities to RCC’s students," McInnis said. "His experience, expertise, and passion have made him a great addition to the RCC team, and we are proud that the Rockingham Civitan Club honored him with this well-deserved title of Citizen of the Year."