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Three Rivers Celebrates Record Class at Commencement Ceremony

MAY 29TH 2013 BY BETH FARRAH

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*Submitted by
Beth Farrah, SMT Writer*

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Three Rivers College packed the Black River Coliseum to celebrate a record-breaking graduating class on Sunday, May 19. The college's Class of 2013 was awarded over 700 degrees and certificates this year, the largest graduating class in the institution's history.

National children's advocate Mark Kennedy Shriver headlined the event, which was the largest commencement ceremony since Three Rivers' inception. Shriver exhorted the graduates to pursue not only career success, but to live out the principles of love, kindness, and generosity in their everyday lives.

"Being good is more important than being great," said Shriver, speaking about the lessons his father, Sargent Shriver, had taught him. "Your families, and the people you know, are more important than money or your career...do the best with what God has given you, to pursue goodness with acts of hope and love."

Local musician Maggie Thorn served as guest musician and performed her song "I Don't Know." Other speakers included Darren Garrison, Chair of the Board of Trustees for Three Rivers and a Three Rivers alum; Christopher Masingill, Federal Co-Chairman of the Delta Regional Authority; Dr. Marianne Inman, President of Central Methodist

University; and Dr. Devin Stephenson, President of Three Rivers College.

“Each candidate today is part of an historic year at Three Rivers, and we say thank you for helping us reach this milestone,” said Stephenson, during the ceremony’s opening remarks. “The experiences that you have had at Three Rivers have enabled you to learn new things, to hone your skills and to enter a job market with great qualities and qualifications.”

Distinguished graduates from the class of 2013 included Adrienne Burfield of Poplar Bluff, who was one of the first four students to graduate with both her associate degree and her high school diploma through the college’s new “College Now” program. Burfield will be starting Pre-Medicine studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, in preparation for a career as a pediatric physician. Also graduating this year was Ibrahim Djambo of Bamako, Mali, who recently signed to play NCAA basketball with Clemson in the fall of 2013.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the college’s first commencement ceremony since its founding in 1966. Since then, Three Rivers has served over 100,000 students from its degree, transfer, and career development programs. Registration is currently open for Summer and Fall classes at Three Rivers. To learn more about taking classes, or to schedule a registration day, call 573-840-9605.

Three Rivers College is committed to contributing to the quality of life in Southeast Missouri with quality, affordable higher education opportunities and community services that support and encourage the economic, civic, and cultural vitality of the region. For more information about college and workforce programs and upcoming events, visit trcc.edu.

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