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# Three Rivers College Honors Holden Morse at Student Excellence Awards

JULY 07TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Three Rivers College Honors Holden Morse at Student Excellence Awards

Holden Morse is from Qulin, Missouri and earned his Excellence Award in Welding Engineering Technology.

Three Rivers College recognized more than 40 of its highest performing students at its Annual Student Excellence Awards ceremony. Winners were chosen to represent each academic department and career education program, the Three Rivers external locations, honor societies, and major student organizations.

“The Student Excellence Awards are a celebration not only of academic success but of the hard work and commitment of our student body,” said Dr. Wesley Payne, President of Three Rivers College. “The success these students have achieved is not only an indication of natural ability and talent, but also their dedication to putting in the time and doing the work that makes them the standouts of Three Rivers.”

Winners from academic and career programs are chosen by that program’s leadership based on recommendations from faculty members. The leadership of each organization selects student organization, external location, and honor society award recipients.

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.

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## PBHS Teacher Earns Statewide Biology Award

JULY 07TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

### PBHS Teacher Earns Statewide Biology Award

Poplar Bluff educator Gretchen Pendley has won the 2019 outstanding biology teacher award for the state of Missouri through the National Association of Biology Teachers.

State director of the OBTA program, Ryan Lacson, traveled from the greater Springfield area to hand-deliver the prestigious award during a surprise recognition ceremony featuring family, school administrators and faculty colleagues on Wednesday, June 5, at the High School.

A selection committee carefully reviewed all statewide nominees, according to Lacson, who noted that Pendley would receive a special gift package, including customized micropipettes.

“Gretchen’s extensive knowledge of science curriculum, her advanced skills in pedagogy and classroom management, and her mindset of esprit de corps made the transition a very easy one,” Gail Karlish stated in a peer nomination letter. Karlish, the PBHS Science Department chairwoman, was referring to Pendley succeeded herself as leader of the departmental professional learning community per personal recommendation.

Pendley began teaching biology at PBHS in 2014, and was named Secondary Grade-Span Teacher of the Year within just two years. In addition, she has served as an adjunct biology instructor at Three Rivers College, where she was named the 2014 Adjunct Teacher of the Year.

“She brings new and innovative teaching techniques to her students through using a great variety of computer software and programs like Pear Deck and Eduweblabs; by being an innovator such as in piloting the use of Chromebooks for our school, and writing grants like the one for which she was recently awarded a new type of microscope projector,” continued Karlish, “and by teaching students how to navigate through different delivery platforms such as Schoology and Blackboard.”

The OBTA program annually recognizes a single outstanding biology educator, grades 7-12, in every participating state. Last year’s Missouri winner hailed from Maplewood Richmond Heights High School in St. Louis.

The mission of the National Association of Biology Teachers is to empower educators to provide the best possible biology and life science education for all students, according to its website.

Pictured: PBHS biology teacher Gretchen Pendley is presented a statewide award from the National Association of Biology Teachers by Missouri program director Ryan Lacson during a surprise celebration.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Baldwin Supports PBHS Driver's Ed Program

JULY 02ND 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Baldwin Supports PBHS Driver's Ed Program

Baldwin Automotive Group has loaned a pair of 2018 Ford Escapes for students to use in the Driver's Education program available at Poplar Bluff High School.

The SUVs will serve to replace an older model Dodge Caravan and Ford Taurus owned by the R-I district, and repurposed in previous years to operate the summer school program. Baldwin Automotive even purchased and installed passenger-side brake kits for the sport utility vehicles, according to instructor Charley Harper.

"It's a great program for kids, no question about it," commented Baldwin General Manager Bruce Hutson, who helped facilitate the partnership. Hutson has known Harper since the two lived in Ironton in the late 1980s, and both wound up moving to Poplar Bluff to advance their careers.

Driver's Ed, which runs through June, serves around 70 high schoolers beginning at age 15. After participating in a series of classroom lectures, the student drivers spend four days behind the wheel with one of the instructors in order to complete the road safety course.

Harper, a PBHS Spanish teacher, leads the program with Mike Sowatzke and Mitch Davis, who both teach in the Social Studies Department. The faculty members have received certification through Missouri State University, one of three colleges approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Co-owner of Baldwin Automotive Group, Jeff Baldwin, said he could remember benefiting from Driver's Ed back when he was a student. A graduate of the PBHS Class of 1978, Baldwin is happy the first driving experience for many of the participants will now be in a top-selling vehicle, he noted. The local car dealership has supported the program in the past.

Pictured: With several participating students in the background, Jeff Baldwin (green shirt), co-owner of Baldwin Automotive Group, hands two sets of Ford Escape keys to PBHS educators (front row, from left) Mitch Davis, Charley Harper and Mike Sowatzke on Friday, June 7.

Photo and article Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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# O'Neal Receives \$2K Ronald McDonald Grant

JUNE 20TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

## O'Neal Receives \$2K Ronald McDonald Grant

O'Neal was recently awarded a \$2,190 grant from Ronald McDonald House Charities to increase technology at the elementary school.

Ten Chromebooks were purchased with the funding last week so the computers can be added to laptop carts in advance of MAP testing.

Intervention teacher Amber Foster applied for the grant with assistance from Krista Sells, reading instructor. They received notification of the award from the organization's grant committee in December.

"We were elated," Foster said. "The Chromebooks will permanently be added to existing carts throughout the grade levels as well as offer the SWIN/TRUST/FUN [classes] access to technology."

RMHC supports nonprofit children's programs in the areas of education, health and social well-being, and the cultural arts.

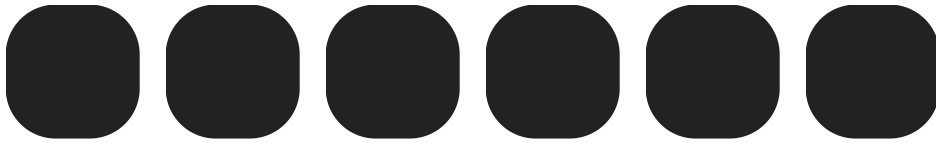
Pictured: Cheryl Farrow, McDonald's representative, awards O'Neal teachers Amber Foster and Krista Sells a technology grant in December.

Submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## TCC Students Qualify Nationally for SkillsUSA

JUNE 20TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

[TCC Students Qualify Nationally for SkillsUSA](#)

### **TCC students qualify nationally for SkillsUSA**

Four Technical Career Center students have qualified to compete in the National SkillsUSA competition this summer.

Placing first and earning scholarships among 19 students who competed in the state competition held last month at the State Technical College of Missouri in Linn were: Isaac Branson in collision repair, Natasha Duelley in nail care, Sheila Wallace in barbering and Amber Whitworth in cosmetology.

"For them to be capable of competing on the national level, on that scale, after you prepare all the instruction and put in the time, means a lot to us," said building trades instructor Jody Cochran, the lead SkillsUSA adviser. "Big corporations and top-notch companies are gonna be on hand signing kids to go to work, conducting live interviews."

The 55th annual National Leadership and Skills Conference is slated to take place Monday through Friday, June 24-28, in Louisville, Ky. The Poplar Bluff SkillsUSA

chapter has been fundraising, including raffling a four-wheeler, in order to participate.

SkillsUSA is a national membership association serving high school, college and middle school students who are preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations, including health occupations, and for further education.

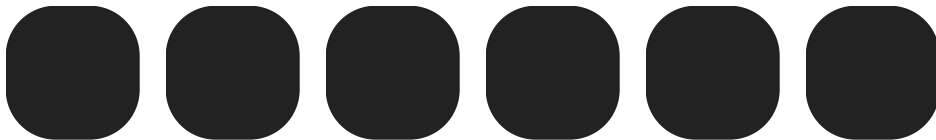
Competing at SkillsUSA Missouri were (in alphabetical order) Isaac Branson, Millie Cato, Jacob Clifford, Natasha Duellley, Cole Emmons, Jalen Hicks, Mariah Mitchell, Austin Pullum, Alicia Reed, Michael Simpson, Elizabeth Snyder, Glen Thurman, Kayce Towner, Hannah Tutor, Sheila Wallace, Dale Wert, Amber Whitworth and Kayla Zachary. Not pictured was Britney Howery. Chaperone teachers included Susan Chronister, Jody Cochran and Alex Nicolini.

Submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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