

THE RIVER IS RISING REPORT



PEARL RIVER
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



JANUARY 2023



THE RIVER IS RISING | JANUARY 2023

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Champions

IN & OUT OF THE CLASSROOM



Kari Eve Valence, Director
Marketing & Recruitment

We are so excited to start this Spring by celebrating yet another milestone in our institution's legacy, 18 semesters of outpacing state averages in enrollment is quite a way to ring in the New Year! This record-breaking enrollment growth is a direct reflection of the dedication, trust, tenacity, and total buy-in of every member of our Wildcat Family.

Designated as the state's fastest-growing community college, Pearl River sits as Mississippi's 4th largest and continues to climb in rankings nationwide landing as the 18th top community college in the country. This is an enormous honor and accomplishment which could not have been achieved without the commitment to our mantra of living our lives the Wildcat Way; with Pride, Respect, Class, and Character.

We're blessed to boast several champions from a variety of different aspects throughout The River. From National Championships in Cheer and Baseball to the 947 students honored for their academic excellence, to Allied Health and CTE programs ranking #1 in enrollment to a 32%

Enrollment growth is a direct reflection of the dedication, trust, tenacity, and total buy-in of every member of our Wildcat Family.

—Kari Eve Valence

increase in IHL transfer rates, the quality and caliber of our student body is evident in and out of the classroom. We're able to recruit these amazing achievers by continuing our commitment to providing a high-quality education that is affordable, accessible, and efficient. By working together across all areas of our institution to provide scholarship opportunities, flexible scheduling, online options, and our commitment to providing an inclusive and supportive culture for our Wildcat Family, we are all working towards continuing this legacy of success.

This issue of The River is Rising Report is filled with stories of success, triumph, and champions. We hope that by sharing these stories we will inspire the continued success of our students, faculty, and staff so that the next generation of champions will heed the call to join the Wildcat Family and #ROARwiththeBEST.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kari Eve Valence".



PEARL RIVER RECOGNIZED AS 18th TOP COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN THE NATION

Countless graduates have said Pearl River Community College is a fabulous place to launch a new career or complete initial work before transferring to a four-year institution. Now the Wildcat family is celebrating the wonderful news of Intelligent ranking The River as the 18th top community college in the nation along with naming it Best for Human Services Programs.

Intelligent evaluated several benchmarks including affordability, program selection, reputation, faculty, and course delivery methods such as online, in-person, and hybrid classes. For the ranking, they evaluated 1,187 community colleges and 2,268 programs.

“This ranking is a testament to the hard work and dedication that our faculty, staff, and administration have put forth to ensure our students receive an affordable and accessible education,” said Vice President for Enrollment Management

and Business Services Candace Harper. “PRCC is student centered, and their feedback and needs are our number one priority. We have found that when we listen to our students, we make adjustments to fit their needs, and we continue to be efficient while providing exceptional service, great things happen.

“Our President and Board of Trustees have made sure that we have the resources needed to provide our students a quality education as one of the top community colleges in the country.”

CONTINUED GROWTH

At a time when many schools have lost students, The River has experienced enrollment growth for the past nine consecutive semesters making it the fastest growing community college in Mississippi. In the last six years, the school has maintained a tuition freeze while adding new programs and providing pay increases to faculty and staff.

Fall of 2022 had record enrollment while maintaining its position as the 4th largest community college in Mississippi for the third consecutive semester. The continued growth at The River can be tied to the college administration’s goal of making higher education affordable, accessible, and efficient. Affordability is achieved through the combination of the frozen base tuition, a transition to digital textbooks, scholarship opportunities for students, and payment plans for any remaining balance.

ABOUT INTELLIGENT

The company seeks to offer unbiased guides to assist prospective students in finding a school and making the transition to college and then the workforce. They have ranked colleges and programs across the country using aggregated publicly available data. **RRR**

PEARL RIVER SEES 18th SEMESTER OF OUTPERFORMING STATE AVERAGES RANKING NUMBER ONE WITH HIGHEST ENROLLMENT GROWTH

Pearl River hits a historic record, seeing 18 consecutive semesters of outpacing averages statewide. The River continues to blaze trails for growth while working toward the goal of making higher education affordable, accessible, and efficient.

According to the 10th day enrollment report published by the Mississippi Community College Board, PRCC once again outpaces the state ranking number one with the highest numerical growth in enrollment. Since 2017, PRCC has seen an increase in enrollment growth for the spring semester of 17.2% while the state community college average has decreased by 15%. Pearl River has continued to grow and maintain its position as the 4th largest community college in Mississippi for the fourth consecutive semester.

“We are thrilled and humbled by this report,” said PRCC President Adam Breerwood.

“This record-breaking enrollment growth is a direct result of the vision instilled by our Board of Trustees to remain affordable, efficient and accessible for our students.

“Our local universities have served as great allies in providing clear pathways for our transfer students. We have embraced our State Leadership’s charge to

build a skilled workforce, especially in the fields of Allied Health and Nursing. Our enrollment is exploding in these areas. With over 500 students on the waiting list for college housing this spring, and hundreds more on waiting list for our Allied Health, Nursing and Career / Technical programs, I believe our best days are still ahead of us.”

Many components can be attributed to the college’s success including focusing on high-demand programs that lead to high-paying careers, freezing tuition rates, retaining the best faculty and staff, continued growth in online course offerings, and increasing scholarship opportunities for all. **RRR**



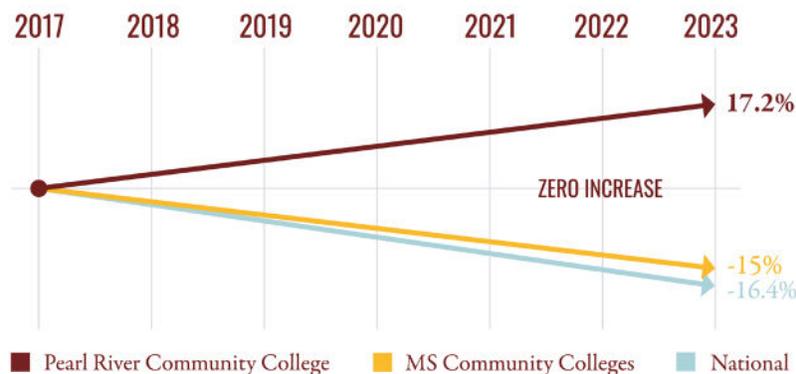
Dr. Adam Breerwood, President
Pearl River Community College

ENROLLMENT 2017–2023

PRCC Increased 17.2%

State Average: -15%

National Average: -16.4%



Congratulations

2022

FALL SEMESTER

President's & Dean's List Recipients



The Dean's and President's lists for the Fall 2022 semester have been released by Pearl River Community College. A total of 947 students are being honored for their academic excellence with 316 students on the President's List and 631 students that made the Dean's List. To be recognized, students must have taken at least 15 credit hours for the semester. Those who earned a 3.4-3.99 GPA were named to the Dean's List. Students who earned a 4.0 GPA were honored on the President's List. Below is a complete list of last semester's honorees grouped by hometown. **RRR**

For full list of recipients,
SCAN HERE



NEW HOUSING PORTAL

Pearl River Community College has transitioned to a new housing portal where students can apply, upload their immunization form, indicate roommate preferences, apply to be a resident assistant application, and more.

Beginning with Fall 2023, housing applications require a \$50 application fee.

The portal is available via **RiverGuide**. Housing questions can be directed to housing@prcc.edu.

PTK STUDENTS AT PRCC RECOGNIZED FOR HALLMARK AWARDS

 <p>Benjamin Hartley Beta Tau Gamma Chapter Forrest County Campus</p>	 <p>Tobias Adams Beta Tau Gamma Chapter Forrest County Campus</p>	 <p>Carlo Catlett Beta Tau Gamma Chapter Forrest County Campus</p>
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To learn more,
SCAN HERE



Pearl River Community College's Beta Tau Gamma Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa on the Forrest County Campus recently nominated two chapter officers and one chapter member for Hallmark Awards – Phi Theta Kappa's prestigious, highly competitive awards program recognizing individuals for excellence in PTK programming, priorities, and membership development. **RRR**

PRCC ALUMNI AWARDS

NOMINATIONS OPEN



Pearl River Community College
**Alumni Association &
Development Foundation**

The Pearl River Community College Alumni Association and Development Foundation annually recognizes individuals, groups, and organizations that have earned both personal and professional achievement while also displaying the values of PRCC, culminating in the Alumni Awards banquet.

Categories include Lifetime Achievement Award, Alumnus of the Year, Distinguished Service Award, Young Alumnus of the Year and Outstanding Partnership.

Nominations are being accepted through the online form at: [PRCC.edu /alumni/foundation-and-alumni-awards/](https://prcc.edu/alumni/foundation-and-alumni-awards/). This simple form must be completed by the deadline of February 14, 2023. Those selected will be notified after March 3 with the banquet scheduled for the evening of May 11 at the Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg.

Categories include:

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

- Must have attended PRCC for at least one semester
- Nominee is distinguished in his/her chosen profession
- Has achieved great merit both professionally and personally
- Displays high levels of integrity
- Must not be a current PRCC employee

ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

- Must have attended PRCC for at least one semester
- Has achieved great merit both professionally and personally
- Displays high levels of integrity
- Displayed a strong connection to PRCC (attending events, financial support, vocal support, children/family that attend PRCC)

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

- The nominee can be a non-alumnus
- Makes a significant contribution to their community through service, support and/or volunteering
- Displays high levels of integrity
- Displayed a strong connection to PRCC (attending events, financial support, vocal support, children/family that attend PRCC)

YOUNG ALUMNUS AWARD

- Must have attended PRCC for at least one semester
- Must be under 40 years old at the time of the nomination
- Displays high levels of integrity
- Has made a mark of distinction in his/her profession and community
- Is a rising star in their industry and/or profession

OUTSTANDING PARTNERSHIP

- A company or organization that provides support to PRCC through funding, training, employment of graduates, vocal support, etc.
- Displays high levels of integrity **RRR**

2022 HONOREES

Hannah Davis Aucoin, *Young Alumnus of the Year*

Keven Hedgepeth, *Alumnus of the Year*

Bryan Maxie, *Distinguished Service Award*

Mississippi Power Company, *Outstanding Partnership*

Dr. James Sones, *Lifetime Achievement Award*

GRIFFING FAMILY PAYS IT FORWARD WITH THREE NEW PRCC CAREER TECH SCHOLARSHIPS



Alumni Association Delana Harris. “Their commitment to our college and students helps ensure that PRCC remains one of the best community colleges not only in the state but in the nation.

“All scholarship support is appreciated for our students but CTE scholarships provide aid for those that are looking for training opportunities that will immediately lead to employment. This helps our local economies and communities through workforce development and growth.”

Pearl River Community College students in various Career and Technical Education programs have new scholarship opportunities thanks to the Griffing family’s generous \$30,000 donation.

The three new Griffing Family Tech Scholarships will have designated programs that qualify for the scholarship. The student needs to demonstrate financial need, be a Mississippi resident, have a high school diploma/equivalency, and maintain a 2.0 average while taking at least nine credit hours per semester.

Craig Griffing attended The River in the mid-1970s before continuing his education at The University of Southern Mississippi and Tulane University. His brother and one of his nieces have also attended PRCC.

“I consider PRCC the biggest asset that Pearl River County has,” said Griffing. “With the branch campuses they have, I think PRCC is the biggest asset in South Mississippi.”

“A lot of people never have even the inkling of the thought to go to a four-year university, but they still need some kind of job training and a lot of them are in technical fields like trades, blue collar labor. The college didn’t have

technical scholarships when I attended in the mid-1970s. This is my way of giving back to future generations; funding education to help society and help future generations.”

The Griffing family has already funded two scholarships at The River, the Craig Griffing Nursing Scholarship and the Zoe McGovern Griffing Teachers Scholarship. They have also supported the PRCC Foundation and The Market through financial donations as well as donated several works of art to The Brownstone Center for the Arts.

“We are grateful for the support that Mr. Craig Griffing and his family have provided to PRCC,” said Executive Director of Development Foundation/

The programs included in the scholarships are Griffing Family Tech Scholarship 1 (Associate Degree Nursing, Dental Assisting, Massage Therapy, Medical Laboratory Technology, Surgical Technology, and Occupational therapy Assistant Technology), Griffing Family Tech Scholarship 2 (Biomedical Equipment Repair Technology, Computer Networking Technology, Industrial Electronics Technology, Unmanned Aerial Systems Technology, and Coding Technology), and Griffing Family Tech Scholarship 3 (Electronics Technology, Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation, and Refrigeration Technology, Instrumentation Technology, Precision Manufacturing and Machining Technology, Utility Lineman Technology, and Welding Technology.)

RRR





PRCC LAUNCHING NEW OPTIONS WITH A FOOD TRUCK

Pearl River Community College students and staff will soon have another exciting option for food during the day as the PRCC Food Truck arrives. Beginning in late January, the food truck will be found on the Forrest County Campus three days per week from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Eventually, the food truck will make the rounds between all three campuses.

Aladdin Foods is the food provider on the Poplarville Campus for the cafeteria and bistro space in Crosby Hall. They also provide catering for different campus events. The PRCC Food Truck is largely a product of Aladdin Food's creation and will be run by them for lunch options and be used for special events.

"We want to thank Aladdin Foods for working with us to provide our students with new food options through the state-of-the-art PRCC Food Truck," said Vice President for Poplarville Campus and Student Services Jeff Long. "We look forward to enhancing our students' experience and dining options on our campuses.

"Beginning this semester, we will provide lunch options on our Forrest County Campus three days a week, while also offering up meals at special events on our Poplarville Campus. We are excited to add this unique experience for our students and community."

Students will be able to purchase food items with cash and use "Wildcat Bucks" through their student accounts at the food truck. Menu items will be based on street food found around the world at food truck locations. The Big River Burger, a customer favorite in Poplarville, will be a staple on the menu with the other main entrée option changing daily.

The administration of Forrest County Campus is thrilled to have a new option coming for students and staff to use. Currently, students have The Market space with vending machines providing food options. Previously, there was a small coffee shop area in the Allied Health building run by Jody's Bakery that was closed in 2020. The space is now utilized for the Simulation Lab

where students get more hands-on training for clinical situations.

"I am excited that we will be providing a hot food option for our students," said Vice President for Forrest County Center, Allied Health, and Nursing Programs Jana Causey. "They often work long hours in class and studying on campus. They deserve a place to grab a nice meal that is quick and convenient. Thank you to Aladdin for working with us to make this possible."

RRR





PEARL RIVER
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PRCC.EDU

Building a better workforce.



PRCC UNVEILS NEW WILDCAT MOBILE MAINTENANCE TRAINING UNIT

Pearl River Community College's new Wildcat Mobile Maintenance Training Unit is now fully operational.

PRCC officially unveiled the training unit with a kick off and open house at the Lowery Woodall Advanced Technology Center in the Hattiesburg Industrial Park.

The unit is fully self-contained including a generator for running computers and related training equipment. Training will be done at the college's different locations and directly on-site with local companies. After the launch, it will be used immediately for on-site training at Idaho Forest Group in Lumberton.

"This mobile training unit is a perfect example of our state's workforce system working like it should to support growth in technical skilled jobs that pay sustainable wages," said Rebecca Brown, Dean of Workforce, Economic Development and Adult Education.

Funds for the training unit came from a grant from AccelerateMS, utilizing Mississippi Workforce Enhancement Training (WET) resources. State leaders including Gov. Reeves and Ryan Miller, Executive Director of AccelerateMS (the MS office of

workforce development), visited PRCC in July to announce the award.

Since that time, while PRCC awaited the delivery of the mobile training unit, the school was able to utilize the new related mechanical maintenance training equipment to deliver 11 maintenance training bootcamp sessions and skill-up 286 employees at local manufacturers. An additional 28 bootcamp sessions are already scheduled through June 2023 for more than 500 area manufacturing employees.

"We started receiving the equipment a few months ago and began running some of the non-credit maintenance courses right here at the Woodall Center," said Brown. "Now that we have received the trailer, we are able to deliver those very same courses on-site wherever the needs are. Businesses and individuals will be able to access skills training that is delivered on-the-ground where it's most needed. This is a game changer for us and them. We celebrate today and then tomorrow it rolls out of the parking lot to get to work."

PRCC's maintenance skills bootcamps support the growth and development of skilled technical jobs with wages ranging from \$34,000-\$70,000.

Several local companies are partnering to receive maintenance training. They include Berry Global, Green Bay Converting, Hood Industries, Johnson Controls, Kohler Engines, Resinall, Sofidel, SuperStud, Western Container, Wis-Pak and Zeon Chemicals.

The Wildcat Mobile Maintenance Training Unit will also be used in support of credit classes at all campuses and for special training to be made available at Port Bienville and Stennis Space Center in Hancock County.

For more information about the training unit, businesses can contact **PRCC Workforce Education at (601) 554-4646 or email workforce@prcc.edu** to learn more and schedule maintenance training.

Individuals looking for pathways into maintenance careers can learn more about PRCC's Career Technical programs in Hattiesburg and Poplarville at prcc.edu. Unsure if a career in manufacturing is for you? Take the very first step and learn more with the three-week Pine Belt Works Manufacturing Skills program at prcc.edu/PineBeltWorks. **RRR**



The Brownstone was filled with vibrant music featuring only voices on January 13, 2023. The concert ended a day of workshops for a capella groups from around the region. The annual Mississippi American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) event is hosted at PRCC. The day included individual group coaching and breakout sessions led by Rob Dietz.

Schools participating included Brandon High School, Poplarville Middle School, Poplarville High School, Pearl River Central High School, Oak Grove High School, Sumrall High School, Forrest County AHS, and PRCC's The Voices.

RRR



PEARL RIVER CHEER CLAIMS BACK-TO-BACK UCA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



After making history a season ago with its first UCA National Championship, the Pearl River cheer team showed it hadn't lost a step Sunday at the ESPN Wide World of Sports as it took home the National Championship for the second consecutive year.

"I am so proud of this team," Pearl River coach Sarah Smith said. "To hit zero in front of the castle on the final day of College Nationals is a dream, and

these girls made it a reality. Grit and drive. They had it when it counted, and now they're going home back-to-back UCA Open All-Girl College National Champions."

The Wildcats earned a fourth-place finish in Saturday's semi-finals but took it up a notch on Sunday as they surged to the top in the finals.

"We knew that trying to take home a back-to-back National Championship

would make for a unique and intense weekend of competition," Pearl River coach Sarah Smith said. "We felt the pressure going in and unfortunately it showed in our semi finals performance. Thankfully, we did enough to advance to finals, but none of us liked hearing that three teams scored higher than us in semis.

"Although scores are wiped clean for the final round, it can be difficult to overcome a shaky performance. Saturday night we had a talk and I asked the girls to fight. I asked them to fight to the finish, and that's exactly what they did."

In the finals, Pearl River scored an 88.9 to beat out seven other colleges in the Open All-Girl Championship, taking first place over Widener University, Rowan University, Webber International University, The College of New Jersey, University of Pikeville, Wallace State Community College and Nassau Community College. **RRR**

PEARL RIVER FOOTBALL ADDS 27 ON NATIONAL SIGNING DAY

Fresh off one of the best seasons in recent history, the Pearl River football team has announced the addition of 27 new Wildcats for the 2023 campaign.

"The goal was to bring guys in that can help us build on the successes of last year's sophomore class," Pearl River coach Seth Smith said. "We were fortunate to have a great year last year, so recruiting has been great. We've

made sure to bring kids in that fit just like those that we had previously. We've done our due diligence and feel like every kid we are bringing in fills a need."

Smith talked about the work of his assistants throughout the recruiting process. His coaching staff includes defensive coordinator Ty Trahan, offensive coordinator David Chatham, running backs coach A.J. Davis, defensive backs coach Ta'Ron

Sims, receivers coach Walker Mosby, defensive line coach Lorenzo Breland and defensive assistant Chase Cooley. **RRR**

For the full article, **SCAN HERE**



FOCUSING ON RESILIENCE: 16th ANNUAL WOMEN'S HEALTH SYMPOSIUM



Women from around the area gathered eagerly on Saturday, January 28, 2023, for the 16th annual Women's Health Symposium. Attendees listened to three speakers (Janie Walters, Keri Falk, and Col. Marilyn Wills, retired United States Army) on the topic of resiliency. They also had the opportunity to peruse handmade items at the Art Walk, access health screenings, and visit vendors for more information on ways to live healthier.

The event was made possible through the generosity of Lower Pearl River Valley Foundation, Gold Sponsor; Aladdin Campus Dining, Hancock Whitney, Highland Community Hospital, Mississippi Power, and Pearl River County Hospital & Nursing Home, Silver Sponsors; and BankPlus, First National Bank of Picayune, Pearl River County Economic Development District, and Southern Bone & Joint Specialists, P.A., Bronze Sponsors.

RRR





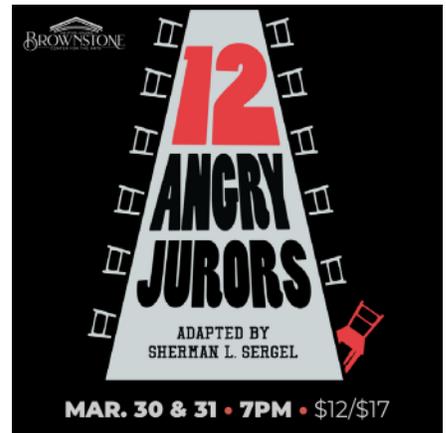
THE ETHEL HOLDEN
BROWNSTONE
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

2023 SPRING EVENTS

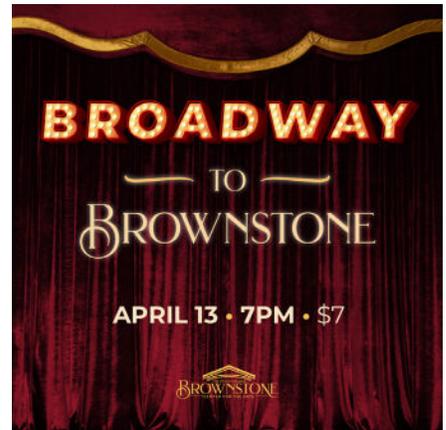


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The Voices**

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Outstanding

PRCC EMPLOYEE



DECEMBER 2022
Michelle Campbell

Congratulations to Michelle Campbell, Senior Administrative Assistant to Vice President for Forrest County Operations at Pearl River Community College, on being selected as the Outstanding PRCC Employee for December 2022. She was surprised by administrators and co-workers. We appreciate all Michelle does for PRCC.

DECEMBER NOMINEES FOR THE OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE AWARD

James Bryant
Michelle Campbell
Avery Dearman
Jennifer Hanna



Madison Lawler
Sophomore, Poplarville Campus

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Madison is from Purvis where she graduated from Purvis High School. She currently serves as a captain on the PRCC Cheer Team. She was involved with the Student Government Association her freshman year and enjoyed helping with student activities, especially s'mores nights. After completing the Court Reporting Technology program in July, Madison plans to take the national boards to become a certified court reporter and begin her career.

"I chose PRCC because of the environment. Everyone here is always working to help you achieve everything that you want. They also make it a very easy transition from high school, which can be scary. And of course, because of the cheer team. I didn't know if I wanted to continue cheering in college until I came to a clinic here. I loved the program, the people, and the coach!"



Poplarville Campus

101 Highway 11 North
Poplarville, Miss. 39470

Forrest County Campus

5448 Highway 49 South
Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401

Hancock Campus

454 Highway 90, Suite D
Waveland, Miss. 39576

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