

# PERSPECTIVE



*A Publication of Wallace Community College-Dothan*



## **WCCD awarded \$2,197,844 grant from the US Dept. of Education to fund new student Advising Center**

Wallace Community College–Dothan was selected to receive funding under the Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) Title III grant from the U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$2,197,884 to be distributed over the next five years. The grant will be used to fund Wallace's new self-contained student Advising Centers on both the Wallace Campus in Dothan and the Sparks Campus in Eufaula.

The grant amount for the initial year is \$441,000 and is designed to help eligible institutions of higher education to become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions.

The new student Advising Center model was launched in the fall of 2021 as a part of WCCD's Quality Enhancement Plan. The Advising Center benefits Wallace students by providing a centralized location on both campuses for students to receive one-on-one support from professional advising staff. The Title III funding will help accelerate the timeline for the Advising Center to serve all Wallace students, as well as allow WCCD to enhance advising processes and functions to address barriers to student success, provide training and resources to increase capacity among advising staff to support students in reaching their goals, and implement an academic support program to enhance student success.

"Title III grants are truly institution-changing grants, and we are very excited to have the opportunity to offer enhanced advising services to our students through this funding. Our guiding mission is student success, and we believe this grant better positions us to assist our students achieve their education and training goals."

**– Dr. Linda C. Young,  
WCCD President**

# WCCD receives highest possible marks following on-site reaffirmation of accreditation visit



**WCCD's official 10-year reaffirmation of its accreditation will be voted on by the SACSCOC Board of Trustees at its June 2022 meeting**

Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) was found to be in complete compliance, with no recommendations, at the conclusion of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) on-site reaffirmation of accreditation visit.

SACSCOC is the body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states. The College received the best review possible, with the committee finding WCCD in compliance with all standards and offering no recommendations for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Advising, Next Steps for Success.

The SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation is an important process that gives the College an opportunity to carefully examine all of its policies, practices, and procedures," said Dr. Denise Stanford-Bowers, WCCD Reaffirmation Director and Associate Dean, General Academics. "A review which ends with no recommendations is a vote of confidence to all of our stakeholders that the Wallace Community College-Dothan faculty and staff are committed daily to providing quality educational services to our students."

SACSCOC accreditation ensures that the College's quality of education, finances, support services, faculty credentials, and facilities are deemed in compliance with accreditation standards and allows WCCD to participate in federal (Title IV) and state financial aid programs. "This achievement is the result of the incredible work of our faculty and staff, and the outstanding job they do. We believe that every day is a SACSCOC day, and the finding of no recommendations validates our commitment to excellence," said WCCD President Dr. Linda Young.

As part of the reaffirmation process, in March 2021, WCCD submitted a Compliance Certification to demonstrate how the institution meets all SACSCOC Principles of Accreditation. Following the off-site review of the compliance document in April, 13 standards were identified as needing additional information for review. The College then provided a Focused Report, to clarify compliance with those standards, and submitted its QEP. The QEP identifies an area of the institution to enhance overall quality and effectiveness and focuses on an issue that is important to improve student learning and/or success at WCCD. The College selected advising as the focus of its QEP.

"The College could not be more pleased with the outcome of our reaffirmation of accreditation visit. Each day we strive to provide the best education experience and support services so that our students can not only achieve their academic goals but also achieve their career goals. We succeed when our students succeed," relayed Dr. Ashli Wilkins, WCCD Vice President, ISCD Dean, and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison.

## WCCD, Troy University sign documents establishing Alabama's first Early Childhood Educators apprenticeship



### WCCD students become the state's first Early Childhood Educator apprentices

Secretary Barbara Cooper of the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) joined leaders from Troy University, Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD), and the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship to sign documents officially establishing Alabama's first apprenticeship for Early Childhood Educators. Immediately after the documents were signed, WCCD students Labrea Potter and A'nya Godwin (seated l to r) signed their paperwork, making them the first two apprentices.

In full alignment with the goals of the Success Plus plan and Governor Kay Ivey's *Strong Start, Strong Finish* initiative, this Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship will increase the quality of care in the early childhood setting, create opportunities to upskill incumbent workers, and articulate coursework seamlessly between the community college and university by increasing the number of highly qualified early childhood educators in the workforce. The apprenticeship allows apprentices to complete stackable credentials, a Child Development Associate certification, an associate's degree, and a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education, all while employed with a child care provider.

## WCCD awarded \$75,000 grant from Lumina Foundation to increase adult student enrollment



**The Lumina Foundation grant will enhance the Wallace on Wheels program**

Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) was awarded a \$75,000 grant from Lumina Foundation to further its efforts to increase adult student enrollment in credit and non-credit programs. WCCD was one of only 20 community colleges in the nation and one of two community colleges in Alabama chosen to receive funding.

Lumina is providing grants to 20 community colleges in eight states with efforts to increase adult student enrollment. The *Prioritizing Adult Community College Enrollment* initiative identifies and supports promising strategies for increasing adult participation—particularly among Black, Hispanic and Latino, and Native American students—in quality credit-bearing and non-credit programs.





Left to Right: WCCD Head Baseball Coach Mackey Sasser; Dr. Linda Young, WCCD President; Coach Johnny Oppert; and David Russo, WCCD Head Softball Coach.

# Oppert Athletic Development Facility opens at Wallace

**The facility is the first of its kind within the Alabama Community College Conference**

Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) took the first steps in July 2020 to build the future of Wallace athletics – the Coach Johnny Oppert Athletic Development Facility. On June 29, 2021, it became a reality. The facility is the first of its kind within the Alabama Community College Conference, making it a premier recruiting tool for the baseball and softball programs to utilize. The facility reinforces a strong commitment from WCCD to prepare its students for success at the College. Named for Johnny Oppert, who started Wallace’s athletic program in 1965, it is a reminder that positive influence can even develop in a batting cage. A Wiregrass sports legend, Oppert led the very first baseball team at Wallace.

Perhaps his greatest accomplishment was the guidance he provided to students. Over the years, Coach Oppert’s influence on his players grew well beyond baseball. Oppert worked hard for his own success before becoming a coach. After college and a four-year stint playing for the Los Angeles Dodgers organization, he returned home to coach at Wicksburg High School, eventually signing on as athletic director and head basketball coach at Wallace.

The facility is a tribute to his dedicated support of his players, many of whom attended the grand opening so they could once again shake Coach Oppert’s hand. The 9,900 square-foot multi-purpose facility houses three separate batting cages with retractable netting that can be converted to six cages. It also has two pitching mounds. The facility is designed to be shared by both baseball and softball programs.

## WCCD awards the inaugural Coach Johnny Oppert Scholarship to Gov baseball player Don Williams

**Williams, a Dothan native, is pictured here (r) with Coach Oppert**



## **WCCD, SpectraCare Health Systems partner to provide free mental health services to students**

WCCD and SpectraCare Health Systems have partnered to place licensed mental health therapists on both the Wallace Campus in Dothan and the Sparks Campus in Eufaula. Designed to meet the mental health needs of Wallace students, this is the first local partnership between a community college and a community mental health system to provide on-campus counseling free of charge.

"We want to be champions of mental health and wellness. COVID uncovered a lot of things—depression, anxiety, plus the stress of just being a college student," says Daymesha Reed, Student Life Coordinator at WCCD. "It's important to be able to talk to someone, and the mental health therapist can address those issues." Susie Kingry, SpectraCare Health Systems Chief Operations Officer states that this additional support is necessary and much needed. "We recognize the commitment that Wallace has to students' mental health," said Kingry. "The fact that it's on campus is what makes it so important. Students will be able to fit these sessions into their school schedule rather than having to leave campus and come back."

### **Wallace Science Building Renamed after Watson Family**



The two-story, state-of-the-art 39,500 square foot Science Building on the Wallace Campus in Dothan has a new name—the Watson Family Science Building. The building was renamed in honor of the service and support the Watson family has given to the College over many years. John and Gail Watson's generosity has allowed many deserving students to receive scholarship assistance. In addition to the generous monetary support, the Watsons invest in Wallace students following graduation. The family's company, Smith's Inc., has been a key employer of career and technical program graduates. Ron Watson also serves on the Wallace Community College Foundation Board.

### **Writing Center Renamed after Dr. Imogene Mathison Mixson**



Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) recognized the contributions of former Wallace administrator Dr. Imogene Mathison Mixson by officially naming the Writing Center on the Wallace Campus in Dothan in her honor.

"The College is proud to honor Dr. Imogene Mathison Mixson for the tremendous imprint she has made on this institution, as well as on the entire Alabama Community College System during her tenure of service," said Dr. Linda Young, WCCD President. "Dr. Mixson spent her professional career encouraging others to work hard at every task and to achieve their dreams no matter what obstacles appeared before them."



## WCCD Adult Education Director Barbara Steger Receives Champion Award

Wallace Community College-Dothan (WCCD) Director of Adult Education and The Next Step Youth Program Barbara Steger was awarded the Champion Award from the Alabama Adult Education Director's Association (AEDA). The AEDA Champion Award recognizes the adult education director selected by his/her peers for speaking or acting on behalf of the Adult Education program.

"I am deeply humbled to be this year's recipient of the Champion award," said Steger. "The Adult Education mission field is so vast and it needs people to be diligent in sharing the message that we are here to serve and empower our communities through education and job opportunities. I am passionate about what we do and the people that we serve!" Steger was recognized as both a defender and an advocate for adult education who works behind the scenes and in the forefront to enthusiastically support the Adult Education cause, other Adult Education directors, and Adult Education students.

### ADULT EDUCATION 2020-21 STATS

**# of Students  
Served: 733**

**GEDs earned: 54**

**High School  
Diplomas earned: 3**

**Grant \$ received:**  
\$3,000, Christian  
Brothers Network;  
\$178,531.17, (WIOA)  
The Next Step Youth  
Program; Finalist,  
Rethink Adult  
Education Challenge

**Alabama Certified  
Worker Credential  
(Ready to Work): 55**

**Adult Ed  
Certifications: 282**

**Career Pathways: 55**



## WCCD Adult Education Instructor Linda McCoy Receives State Honor

Linda McCoy was named Adult Education Instructor of the Year by the Alabama Association for Public Continuing Education and Adult Education. McCoy, an education veteran with 52 years of classroom experience, says her 14 years in adult education have been her most rewarding assignment. "I enjoy getting to know my students," she says. "Each one has a story. They come from all kinds of backgrounds."

Through adult education, McCoy says she can still mentor teens while also assisting adults of all ages. "Right now, I have students from 18 to 71," she says. Despite their age differences, McCoy notes her students share one common goal: to improve their lives. "Adult education is a place where people can come for a second chance," she says, "but I get more out of it than they do. It's life-changing!"



## US Congressman Barry Moore visits Wallace Campus in Dothan



**US Congressman Barry Moore tours the Simulation Center in the Heersink Health Science Building**

Based on the 2020 Census data, Alabama lawmakers were tasked with drawing new lines for seven Congressional districts, eight State Board of Education districts, 35 Alabama Senate districts, and 105 Alabama House districts.

In September, the Alabama Legislative Committee on Reapportionment held a meeting on the Wallace Campus in Dothan in Cherry Hall at which citizens could voice their opinions about the new lines in person or online. U.S. Congressman Barry Moore attended the meeting and afterward met with Wallace staff and toured the Wallace Campus in Dothan.

## Shoo Cosmetics CEO and Wallace Alum Shawanda Vickers speaks to Salon Management, Esthetics students

In partnership with the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, Wallace Community College-Dothan hosted Ms. Shawanda Vickers, CEO of Shoo Cosmetics, as a special guest speaker to students in the Wallace Community College-Dothan Salon and Spa Management and Esthetics Technology programs.

Ms. Vickers, a Dothan native and Wallace alum, is a former educator turned entrepreneur and businesswoman who in 2016 began her own cosmetics company that focuses on clean ingredients. Identifying and then meeting the need for hand sanitizer as COVID surfaced in 2020, Ms. Vickers successfully navigated her business through the pandemic and will now see her American-made hand sanitizer featured as a pandemic collector's item in the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C.

In her remarks to students, Vickers said she was excited for what's to come because it gives her more opportunities to give back to the community. "I do

have Wallace on my list because this institution was so good to me. It's a blessing to come back home to share my story. I hope I have inspired you to start your own business and to put your community at the front and center of your business."

"Shawanda Vickers' story of hard work, dedication, and ingenuity is reflective of her life story and commitment to community and business," says Dean Mitchell, Executive Director of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. "The opportunity for her to speak with WCC students was inspiring and encouraging. We look forward to seeing much success from them in their future work."



**Shoo Cosmetics CEO and Wallace alum Shawanda Vickers tours the Salon and Spa Management facilities**



## Wallace Welds

In 2021, Wallace Community College-Dothan provided state-of-the-art training off-campus in the heart of downtown Dothan when the College's mobile welding unit was relocated to Alfred Saliba Family Services Center. Positioning the WCCD mobile welding unit downtown removes transportation obstacles students may have to attend classes at the main campus.

The welding lab is an enclosed tractor-trailer bed equipped with welding stations and simulators. The lab was moved to the Alfred Saliba Family Services Center at no charge by Coleman Worldwide Moving. The City of Dothan has picked up the cost of utilities to operate the lab. The Saliba Center will connect potential students to the Alabama Career Center, where they can qualify for scholarships based on income. A grant initially covered costs for students. Upon successful completion of the course, students will get to keep their welding equipment and a full tool kit.

**WCCD Director of Workforce Development Joe Johnson receives the Wiregrass RC&D Project of the Year award for the College's Women in Welding program**



## WCCD'S WOMEN IN WELDING PROGRAM RECOGNIZED

WCCD's Women in Welding program was recently awarded Project of the Year by the Wiregrass Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council. The program was a collaboration between WCCD Workforce Development, Wiregrass RC&D, and Lincoln Electric, and provided workshops on the Wallace Campus in Dothan and the Sparks Campus in Eufaula in early 2021 for females ages 16 and up who were interested in welding.

"Our hope was that the workshops would empower women to see the earning potential they have in our community's welding industry," says Joe Johnson, Director of Workforce Development at WCCD. "We were grateful to partner with Wiregrass RC&D to offer the welding workshops in Houston and Barbour Counties. We are excited to know that many of the workshop participants enrolled in additional WCC welding courses to further their knowledge and skills. Some participants even transitioned into the workforce with full-time welding jobs with local employers. The Workforce Development division is committed to being the region's premier workforce training provider."



# Local power companies collaborate with Wallace to make life better in the Wiregrass

Rural life in the 1930s and 1940s was hard for many families. Just look at old family photos, or ask anyone who experienced the hardscrabble chores that were necessary to put food on the table, clean clothes, pump water, or cook.

Then came the light bulb moment – literally. The great equalizer between rural America and cities was electricity, and today both are dependant on the power that local power companies deliver to our homes and workplaces. Wallace Community College's lineworker program keeps our local power companies and cooperatives supplied with the workforce they need – so that they can keep all our lights on.

One of WCCD's local industry partners in this program is Wiregrass Electric Cooperative (WEC). Since its inception in 1939, "WEC filled the gap for many rural areas," said Brad Kimbro, Chief Operating Officer. Today, WEC provides power to over 22,000 consumer-members in Southeast Alabama – that is 4,000 miles of line.



**WCCD students in the lineworker program showcase their skills**

Building on its roots to make life better for consumers, WEC is involved in giving back to achieve this goal. Wallace Community College - Dothan (WCCD) is a recipient of WEC's generosity through the Pre-Apprentice Lineworker program. "I cannot begin to express the gratitude Wallace has for WEC's commitment to the success of our students," said Dr. Linda Young, WCCD president. "Students who complete this program have many choices of employers after completion. WEC's commitment trains good lineworkers and employees for the entire area, and we all benefit." WEC also contributes to WCCD through Operation Round Up, a voluntary program where members 'round up' their power bills. The fund provides scholarships, emergency assistance, and training for first responders, and other local causes.

WEC isn't the only local industry partner that helps make the lineworker program a success. Alabama Power Company and The City of Dothan – Dothan Utilities have donated heavy equipment as well as expertise, guidance, and tools to train WCCD students.



## WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

was recognized as a Top 10 Feeder School  
for Auburn University's Samuel Ginn College of Engineering  
in 2021

# WCCD receives a \$245,297 grant award for Applied Engineering program enhancements



**Applied Engineering students on the Sparks Campus in Eufaula at work in the classroom**

WCCD was awarded a grant from the Alabama Community College System's Workforce Development Division in the amount of \$245,297.60 for the College's Applied Engineering Technology Program. The grant will provide funding for new lab equipment and simulation software to be incorporated into the existing Applied Engineering Technology program on both the Wallace Campus in Dothan and the Sparks Campus in Eufaula.

"The award will provide equipment to address the growing need for training of Industrial Automation technicians, with a focus on mechanical knowledge and soft skills training using flexible delivery modes," said Martha Compton, WCCD Associate Dean, Career Tech. "WCCD collaborates with business and industry to make sure that we offer in-demand training and industry-recognized credentials, through short- and long-term credit and non-credit programs."

Several local businesses added their industry endorsement to the grant proposal, including Allied Motion, Automated Control Systems, Cook's Saw Manufacturing, Hyundai Polytech America, Johnson Outdoors Marine Electronics, Michelin, Pilgrim's Pride Corp, and the Alabama Career Center System-Dothan Career Center.

## WCCD graduates first Surgical Technology cohort in 2021

**The Surgical Technology program is the only one of its kind in the surrounding area**

The first cohort of Wallace Community College's Surgical Technology program graduated in May 2021, trading in their student headcovers for cloth ones in the traditional rite of passage for surgical technologists. The only program of its kind within 100 miles, the first graduating class saw employers lining up interviews with the students even before graduation day.

Surgical Technologists are significant participants on the health care team and play a major role in the operating room arena. The Surgical Technology program at Wallace Community College aims to provide classroom, laboratory, and clinical instruction to enable individuals to perform as competent, entry-level Surgical Technologists following graduation. The role of a surgical technologist varies among hospitals and surgery centers, but typically entails preparation of the operating room with sterile instruments, equipment, and supplies, maintaining sterility, as well as assisting the surgeon and other team members during procedures in the operating room suite.

The program received its official Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) accreditation in May 2021.



# Wallace Foundations raise a record-setting amount for scholarships

Foundations raise over \$100k during their fall fundraising events

For the first time in its history, Wallace Community College Foundations' 2021 fall fundraising events have raised over \$110,000 for student scholarships. The proceeds from the fundraising events will allow the Wallace and Sparks Foundations to award an additional 135 scholarships totaling \$102,000 to deserving students in 2022.

Both events, as well as annual spring golf tournaments, allow the community to support Wallace students with financial assistance through the Wallace Community College Foundations' scholarship programs.



"A donor's gift is not just a donation to a cause but a gift that is making a difference in the lives of our students," said Dr. Tracy Brooks, WCCD's Director of Institutional Advancement. "You are sharing in a journey to empower change, one student at a time."

*"Receiving this scholarship helped me financially because I work multiple jobs to pay for my school. I am very thankful I do not have to stress over the expenses of finishing my degree." – Foundation Scholarship Recipient*

## HELP SUPPORT STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

You can help provide scholarship opportunities for students on the Wallace Campus in Dothan or the Sparks Campus in Eufaula year round!

**VISIT [GIVE.WALLACE.EDU](https://give.wallace.edu) TO DONATE TODAY!**







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*Perspective* is a publication of Wallace Community College in Dothan and Eufaula. Comments may be directed to Public Relations & Marketing: [pr@wallace.edu](mailto:pr@wallace.edu)



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THIS SPRING, GO BEHIND THE CURTAIN...

THE  
WIZARD  
of  
OZ

APRIL 7 - 10, 2022  
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