Chipola studies the impact of Bachelor’s Degrees

Chipola officials are evaluating the impact of the decision a decade ago to offer Bachelor’s degrees. Findings are published in an issue of Chipola Facts: A Decade Later—College Studies the Impact of the Decision to Offer Bachelor’s Degrees. In that decade, total bachelor’s degree enrollment has grown from only 13 students in 2003-04 to a high of 275 in 2011-12. Last year’s enrollment was 221 in all BS degree programs.

“Those first 13 students in 2003-04 were all Secondary Education majors who wanted to become high school math or science teachers,” recalls Vice President of Instruction Dr. Sarah Clemmons. “That’s the same year Chipola Junior College dropped the word Junior from its name and became a Level II institution with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).” Five years later in 2008 Chipola was made a State College as part of the new Florida College System which consists of community colleges where both 2-year and 4-year degrees are granted.

“The decision to initiate Bachelor’s degrees has clearly proven to be one of the most important decisions in Chipola’s history,” said Clemmons. “Many of our students cannot move away to a state university for two or more years. Many have families and full-time jobs. The decision further confirms that, after over 65 years, Chipola continues to respond to the postsecondary educational needs of citizens in its five-county district.”

Chipola’s first four-year degree was a BS in Secondary Education with concentrations in math or science. This degree is designed to prepare math and science teachers for secondary schools in the college district. The secondary education degree was later expanded to include English.

“We’ve come a long way in the last 10 years,” said Clemmons. “Our Teacher Education Program now offers seven upper-division degrees, including BS degrees in Middle School Science and Mathematics, Elementary Education and Exceptional Student Education.” Over the last decade, annual enrollment of students seeking BS in Education degrees has grown from 12 in 2004-05 to 98 in 2012-13. In all, Teacher Education programs have trained over 200 graduates who are now certified to teach in Florida.

In addition, 10 students have completed the Teacher Preparation Institute (EPI), which helps persons who already hold Bachelor’s degrees to become certified as teachers. Annual enrollment in the EPI has ranged from 10 to 38 over the last ten years. The college was approved to offer a Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Management (BAS) in 2007. In 2011, a BS in Business Administration (BSBA) with concentrations in Accounting and Management was approved. So far, 81 graduates have earned Bachelor’s degrees in business at Chipola.

In 2008, a BS in Nursing (BSN) degree was added. To be admitted to the program, a student must be a Registered Nurse (RN). Much of the upper-division coursework is offered online to accommodate BSN students who work full-time as practicing RN’s. This program has been granted Candidacy Status for national accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). So far, Chipola has awarded 72 BSN degrees.

Chipola Facts is a monthly accountability and institutional effectiveness factsheet published jointly by the Chipola Planning Office and Information Systems/Technology. The purpose is to facilitate good decision-making by publishing college-related data at regular intervals throughout the school year. For more information, contact Gail Hartzog at (850)718-2342 or email hartzog@chipola.edu.
Chipola Alumni graduate from FSU med school

Four Chipola alumni graduated from the Florida State College of Medicine on May 17. They include Dr. Mitchell E. Whitehead, Dr. Tommy (Glen) Thompson, II, Dr. Richard (Rick) Sims and Dr. John (J.D.) Byrd.

This was the FSU College of Medicine’s 10th graduating class. Commencement speaker Lynn Romrell, associate dean for medical education, offered the graduates three numbers to ponder: 1,443 — the number of days they were in medical school; 133 — the number of exams, quizzes and other tests they endured; and 1,003 — the average number of patient encounters.

Dr. Whitehead will specialize in Family Medicine. His residency will be at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare. Dr. Thompson will specialize in Family Medicine. His residency will be in Orlando at Florida Hospital. Dr. Sims will specialize in Anesthesiology. His residency will be in Gainesville at UF-Shands Hospital. He was inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society. Dr. Byrd will specialize in Internal Medicine. His residency will be at the University of South Alabama Health System in Mobile. He received the Mission Award, Internal Medicine Award and also was inducted into the Gold Humanism Honor Society.

Bonnie Smith, faculty adviser to the Honors program and Pre-Med Society says, “We are so proud of these four young doctors. Chipola has an excellent record of preparing students to gain acceptance to limited-access programs at universities across the Southeast, including medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and engineering.

Harrison is NJCAA All-American

Chipola softball player Katie Harrison has been named a First Team All-American by the NJCAA.

Harrison was one of five players from Florida named among the 16 First Team All-Americans. Harrison, a sophomore infielder from Noblesville, Indiana, led the Lady Indians in nearly every offensive category with a .431 batting average, an .892 slugging percentage and a .464 on-base percentage. She was fifth in the nation in homeruns with 21, and ninth in the country in RBI with 82 in 52 games. She struck out only 5 times in 167 at bats. Harrison has committed to play at Purdue University next season.

The Lady Indians finished third in the Gulf District bracket of the 2014 FCSAA State tournament where Harrison also was named to the All-Tournament team. Chipola finished the season with a record of 34-22.

CHIPOLA THEATRE STUDENTS VISIT NEW YORK

Chipola Theatre students recently visited New York City with Educational Travel Adventures and group leaders Charles Sirmon, Director of Theatre and Connie Smith, Theatre Technical Director at Chipola.

Students attended Broadway shows, including Tony award-winners “Matilda” and “Pippen.” Students also attended the new Tony hit “Kinky Boots” and participated in an after-performance talk back with the cast and Tony award-winning director and choreographer, Jerry Mitchell.

Students also participated in an after-performance talk back with the entire cast of the off-Broadway hit “STOMP”, including actor and percussionist Brad Holland, a former student of Sirmon’s at Dothan High School. Students were invited to ask questions and receive feedback from actors and musicians about training, auditions, and the day-to-day work of the Broadway theatre. STOMP uses matchboxes, brooms, garbage cans, Zippo lighters and more to create an inventive and invigorating stage show that blends dance, music and theatrical performance together in one electrifying rhythm.

The Chipola theatre department travels to the Big Apple every other year. Chipola director Charles Sirmon says, “It is great to share the city and its rich theatrical culture with my students. It’s a trip of a lifetime!” For more information regarding Chipola Theatre, contact Charles Sirmon at sirmonc@chipola.edu