

ThisMonth

May2007

Johnson County Community College

Graduates Stir Success



Cover: Jacqueline Bopp said “You can never give up.”

The Pursuit of Happiness

In May, Jacqueline Bopp, Kansas City, Mo., is due to graduate with an associate’s degree in food and beverage management.

“For me and what I’ve through, just to be in college has been a challenge,” Bopp said. “I’ve seen the bottom of the bottom.”

Born to an unwed 18-year-old mother, Bopp spent her first year with a diagnosis of “failure to thrive.” She didn’t walk or talk until after age 2. Just shy of her fourth birthday, she was adopted into a biracial family with five other adopted siblings. In school, she was told she had learning disabilities and a speech impediment. She didn’t read fluently until the fifth grade.

Bopp, now 28, goes to JCCC classes 8 a.m.-5 p.m. three days a week, works at the McGee Street Cafeteria at the Hyatt Regency Crown

Center two days a week and volunteers at Operation Breakthrough St. Vincent’s Child Care Center as a way of giving back for her children’s care. But it hasn’t been easy.

dropped out in 1998, married, had two children, and then, as she says, “went through a life-altering situation.” That is a nice way of saying that Bopp left an abusive husband and fled with her two children, a diaper bag and the clothes on her back. Bopp spent the next 10 months in three shelters until she was accepted for transitional housing. During this time, she worked and volunteered at soup kitchens and clothes closets.

Just under the 24-year age limit for Job Corps, she was accepted to the program and earned a business certificate. Two Job Corps instructors encouraged her to continue with college.

“I doubted I could do it. I had been told I was not college material because I have learning disabilities,” Bopp said.

Nevertheless, Job Corps set her up with a Pell Grant to start at Penn Valley, MCC, to pursue a career as a chef apprentice. She took general education classes at Penn Valley, and, with the help of “Ways to Work” loan program, was able to purchase a car to drive to JCCC, a cooperative program with MCC for hospitality management. Lindy Robinson, assistant dean, design and hospitality management, steered Bopp toward the food and beverage management program because of the time demands Bopp faced from the chef apprenticeship program and being a single mother.

Bopp is grateful for three JCCC scholarships – one from the Restaurant Association and two from the Office Professionals League. Her goal is to open a bed and breakfast on the outskirts of Kansas City, Mo. But her work has to be a good fit – one that allows her to spend time with her children and give back to the community.

“It’s not the situation that determines who you are; it’s how you respond and handle the situation,” Bopp said. “You can never give up because you never know where life will take you. I’m living proof of beating the odds. I never thought I would accomplish as much as I have and receive the many blessings I have from God, my parents, community and children.”



Center two days a week and volunteers at Operation Breakthrough St. Vincent’s Child Care Center as a way of giving back for her children’s care. But it hasn’t been easy.

After high school, Bopp attended Longview, a Metropolitan Community College, planning on a major in child psychology. She took 1 1/2 semesters of developmental English and math classes.

“You have to understand what takes most people two hours to learn takes me double or triple the amount of time,” she said.

Eventually Bopp

Jacqueline Bopp prepares food in the JCCC kitchen as part of her *Food Management* class.

Heart Throws Pitcher a Curveball

A year ago JCCC pitcher Emily Dye, 20, was at the top of her game. Through grit and will power, Dye is determined to control a

newly diagnosed life-threatening heart condition and stay on the mound.

"Pitching has been my life since I was 8 years old," Dye said. "I don't want to pitch forever, but I want to be the one to make the decision as to when I quit. I don't want it decided for me."

Recruited by Frank Barnes, softball coach, Dye signed on to play at JCCC in the fall 2006 semester. Her freshman year, she received the Dutton Brookfield Award at the University of Missouri-Kansas City for the female athlete showing "great potential" and, earlier at Raymore-Peculiar High School, she was named first team all-conference and all-district 2004 and 2005 and first team all-regional and all-sectional in 2005.

Dye's first day of fall practice at JCCC in August 2006 is a blur. She's been told that she had a normal practice and conditioning workout, but when she started the $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile cool-down walk, she collapsed. Her left arm cramped, and she experience extreme pain in the left side of her neck. Taken by ambulance to Overland Park Regional Medical Center, her heart rate was normal so doctors told her she was probably dehydrated and recommended a cardiologist consult.

Then began a battery of tests with the cardiologist, like echocardiograms and EKGs that were normal, and a neurologist to look for seizures.

"I was terrified," Dye said. "Nobody could give me answers and I knew something wasn't right."

A stress test showed that Dye's heart rate was erratic. A conditioned athlete, Dye couldn't last 10 minutes on the treadmill. More tests followed: a three-part blood pressure test, 64-slice CT scan of the heart and a tilt-table test, which exacerbated her symptoms. The definitive test was a catheter threaded from Dye's groin to her heart to measure the heart's electrical activity. The diagnosis was "vasovagal response," meaning with exercise, Dye's heart slows, blood vessels over expand and blood pressure drops, causing her to pass out. Tests also revealed that

her heart is abnormally situated inside the body.

"I've had to completely change my lifestyle," Dye said.

Dye has changed her diet, limits workouts, rests more, takes five pills a day and makes monthly visits to the cardiologist, who gave her the okay to play ball. When she does experience heart symptoms, she lays down and clenches her fist to constrict her blood vessels.

"I'm going to beat this problem. I'm in control of this. It's not in control of me," Dye said referring to her rare heart condition.

Dye admits that the stop-and-go activity of pitching is harder now. She can tell when she's having heart symptoms and so can her coach. Dye's face turns white and her lips turn blue.

"I'm going to meet difficulties in my season, but they'll be stepping stones to better things," she said.

Even early in the season, assistant coach Kelly Gartner said she had no doubt Dye would go on to become a Division-I pitcher. After May graduation from JCCC, Dye plans to complete her four-year softball eligibility and bachelor's and master's degrees, hoping to work in special education with autistic and Down's Syndrome students. And she wants to coach softball; she already teaches open pitching for girls 8-15.

"I've appreciate things a lot more since my heart diagnosis," Dye said. "I've grown more sympathetic toward other people."



Student

Tren Qu is seen here in his formal portrait for the cover of the April 16 USA Today.



Qu Knows No Limitations

Zichuan “Tren” Qu, 22, Overland Park, has spent three of his four years in the United States attending classes at JCCC. In May, Qu,

will receive an associate of art degree with 108 credit hours and, as of this writing, a grade point of 4.0.

Qu was named to the All-USA Academic First Team Community and Junior Colleges in a national competition sponsored by USA Today, the American Association of Community Colleges and Phi Theta Kappa. The JCCC student will be presented with a medallion and \$2,500 check at the AACC’s convention April 16 in Tampa and featured in a full-page article of the April 16 USA Today.

Qu is also a New Century Scholar, the top scholar in Kansas in a state-level competition, earning him \$2,000 from the Coca-Cola Foundation, and a 2006 Congressional Award Gold Medalist.

At JCCC, Qu is Student Senate president, Phi Theta Kappa vice president and a Civic Honors graduate. He has earned an Emergency Medical Technician certificate, and is one of the first JCCC students to matriculate from JCCC’s honors program to the University of Kansas honors program as part of a new agreement. Qu’s plans are to earn a bachelor of arts degree in biology and bachelor of science degree in chemistry/pre-med and then continue to medical school.

While Qu is a stellar scholar, his spirit of volunteerism is equally impressive. He has volunteered at Shawnee Mission Medical Center and KU Medical Center. Wanting to hone his hands-on medical skills, Qu volunteers for the American Red Cross Greater Kansas City Chapter as a disaster responder and first aid care

provider. He has responded to 16 fires to date and helped Katrina victims during spring break 2006. As vice president of Phi Theta Kappa, he helped raise \$1,200 and collect nonperishable foods for Katrina victims. As part of sociology class honors contract, Qu lived incognito five days in the City Union Mission’s men shelter and completed a 7,000-word paper on his field research presented at the Kansas Sociological Society annual meeting in October 2006.

“This community has given me a second chance in life,” Qu said. “This community has taught me how to smile, and I want to put a smile again on other people by helping to relieve their suffering.”

Because of his interest in teaching first aid, Qu became an assistant Scout master for Boy Scout Troop 186, Lenexa. Then in January 2006, he started volunteering as a Dream Manager for the Dream Factory of Greater Kansas City and has helped three children with life-altering illnesses to complete their dreams.

“Whether I’m paid or not, people count on me as a professional,” Qu said of his volunteer activities.

The Student Senate president has taken a leadership role in engaging other students in philanthropic endeavors. But Qu believes the Senate is more than philanthropic; it’s also governmental. The Senate is leading an effort to present a comprehensive smoking policy on campus.

While a JCCC 2006 Men’s Athletic Academic Champion, Qu has a self-deprecating assessment of his athletic prowess in cross country and track: “In practice, I always finished last; however, I always aimed to finish.” He has applied the same model to academic and volunteer work.

“After increasing my running distance from 20 miles per week in high school to 60-70 miles per week on JCCC Cross Country Team in less than four months, I’ve learned that people’s real limitations are not as great as their perceived ones,” he said. “When I have so much on my plate, perseverance gets me through.”

Qu was the JCCC 2006 Men's Athletic Academic Champion.





McIntosh Designs with Class

Student

6.

Like Forrest Gump, JCCC student Carnise “Sha.Doe” McIntosh, 24, Overland Park, discovered “Life is like a box of chocolates ... You never know what you’re gonna get.”

McIntosh has turned a *Drawing and Media Methods III* class assignment into a real potential product – an upscale package for Christopher Elbow’s Artisanal Chocolates, Kansas City, Mo.

The class assignment was to design or redesign a retail bag for a retail store. The retail bag was supposed to be fictitious but, depending on production costs, McIntosh’s project may become a reality.

McIntosh went to Artisanal Chocolate and explained her assignment to Elbow and his staff.

“I could tell he was a bit skeptical of my work in the beginning since I was just a student,” McIntosh said.

Instead of one bag, McIntosh designed three prototypes using Elbow’s hand-painted chocolates as inspiration for the bag’s color palette and texture.

“Chris’ chocolates are the most beautiful chocolate I’ve ever seen,” she said.

“Chris and his staff were all surprised by the design of the bags,” McIntosh said. “Keeping Chris and his staff involved throughout the developing process was key in making sure that

the bag represented and complemented their product.”

“We love the design and will show it to some of our box manufacturing companies to get costs. Cost will be the determining factor,” Elbow said.

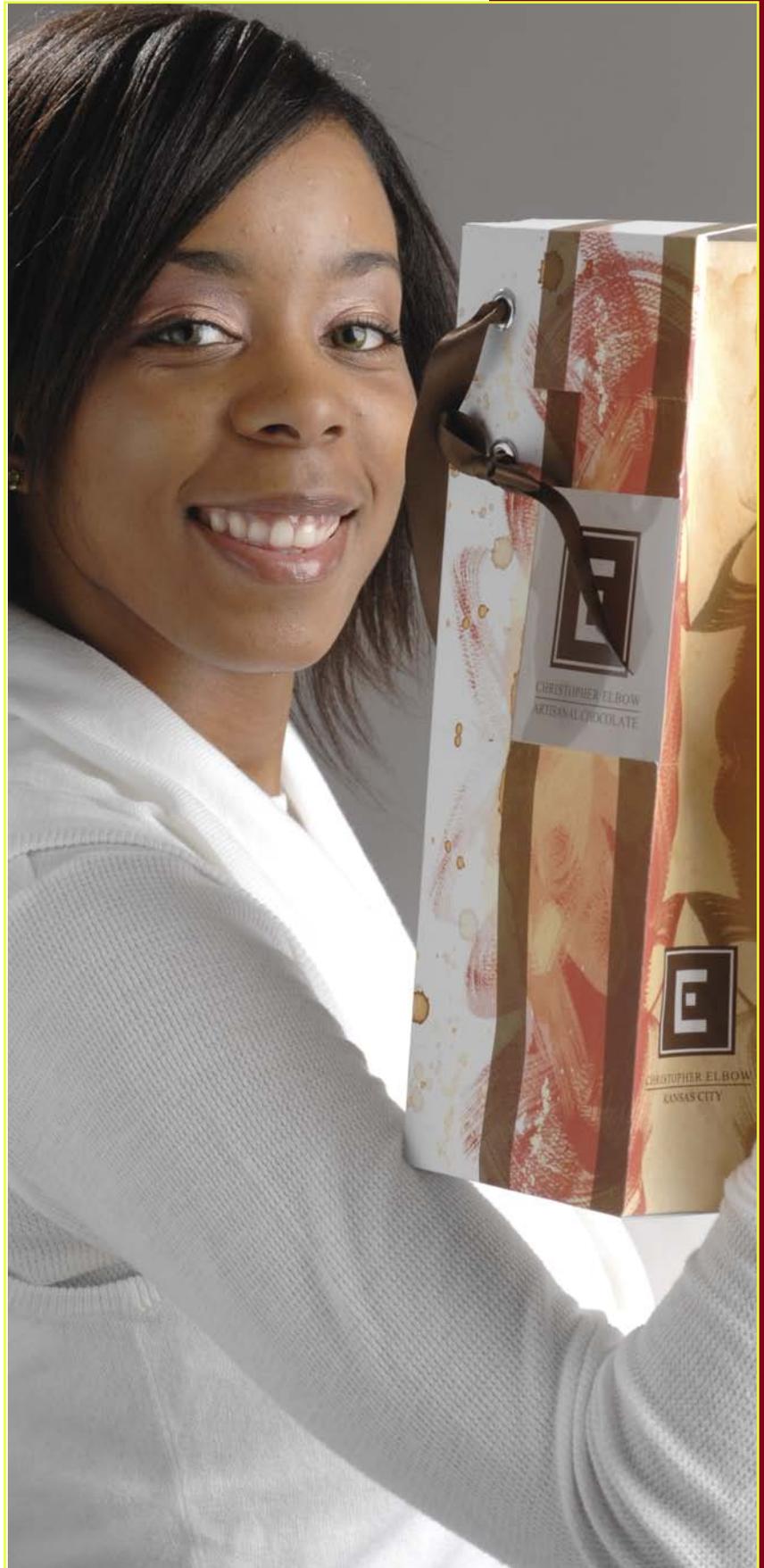
The bag Elbow is considering for production is coined “Tall Elbow,” designed to hold Elbow’s popular 21-piece chocolate set. On the outside, McIntosh created a watercolor wash to represent the artistic identity associated with Elbow’s chocolates. The bags are geared for high-end retail venues like Halls Crown Center.

“We love the design,” Elbow said. “We are currently in production on a new shop at 1819 McGee, and it would go perfectly with the design for our new boutique.”

McIntosh’s designs have met with other successes – two of her designs, Tall Elbow and a magazine spread on Richard Avedon, were award winners in the American Institute of Graphic Arts Kansas City Chapter A3 competition. Fashion design has always been McIntosh’s first passion, but after starting the graphic design program in fall 2005, graphic design has consumed her life.

After May graduation, McIntosh is moving to New York City to continue her graphic design career. She credits JCCC’s graphic design program for being a career-based program – one that has prepared her for immediate employment with full knowledge of research, design and production.

“This program is no joke. It’s demanding,” McIntosh said. “It is definitely a force to be reckoned with. The professors here are professionals, who know what it takes to succeed in the graphic design industry and any industry related to it. It’s impressive to learn from people who are still passionate about what they do.”



Carnise McIntosh shows off the bag she designed for Christopher Elbow, Artisanal Chocolate.



Caboose Gets New Design



Kelly Specht displays the binder showing fabric and finish selections for the caboose interior.

BNSF's caboose has reached the end of the line as far as rail service, but it is getting new life as a conference center thanks, in

part, to JCCC's commercial design students. The retired 1963 caboose was moved to the east side of the National Academy of Railroad Sciences, housed in the Industrial Training Center in June 2006.

"BNSF wants the caboose to serve as a small, intimate place for lunch or a business meeting and also a landmark for the BNSF Technical Training Center and NARS," said Geri Christian, director, administration, BNSF TCC.

Students in Darla Green's *Commercial Design* class took on the project during the spring semester. Their assignment was to transform the 30-foot by 9-foot caboose into a state-of-the-art BNSF conference center with seating for eight to 10 people.

"Because of the size limitations and ADA requirements, this project was a challenge," said Green, assistant professor, interior design. "Students will be able to include this project in their portfolios and have the accolade of saying it was submitted for actual design implementation."

The project required seating in a casual conference style, a writing surface for all persons, dry bar, audio/visual equipment such as a flat-screen television, white board, lighting, layout for electrical outlets and telephones, and an exterior platform and door widths to meet ADA requirements.

Each of the six students put together a professional binder for BNSF consideration including the above details; floor plan for furniture and equipment; and sample fabric and finish selections for carpets, paint, countertops, wall coverings, cabinetry, window treatments, light fixtures and hardware.

"We went to the caboose and took field measurements before starting the project," said student Tahira Baig. "It was a good experience, especially learning to stay within codes."

"The caboose is a very small space. A lot of times we'll be going into design jobs with space constraints so this was a good learning opportunity," Elizabeth Starcke said. "It was good to design for a real client."

Students added distinctive details above and beyond the basics – plants, ceiling fans, train photographs for wall art and outdoor wooden benches. Lynn Van Mol said she went for "color, color, color."

"It was a fun project because we know it could actually happen," Kelly Specht said.

"I think the students' designs are very imaginative," Christian said. "We may use a combination of several of the ideas."

Christian says the exterior of the caboose is scheduled to be painted by the end of May and the interior completed by the end of summer.



Commercial design students (left to right) Meryl Mayer, Elizabeth Starcke, Tahira Baig, Lynn Van Mol and Kelly Specht submitted interior designs for the BNSF caboose.

IEP Adds Diversity to JCCC

At age 18, Rocio Castaneda enrolled in JCCC's Intensive English Program because she says, "I wanted to improve my English skills."

A native of Guatemala City, Castaneda already speaks her native Spanish and fluent German. Smart and ambitious, Castaneda is thinking about engineering or architecture or a combination of the two as careers. She takes a five-hour JCCC credit calculus class along with her Level 3 IEP classes.

"I have a friend who lives here, and she told me JCCC has a very good Intensive English Program," Castaneda said. "I checked it out on the Internet and decided to come."

Castaneda is a typical IEP student.

"Our students are highly educated and highly intelligent," said Jeffrey Couch, IEP program coordinator. "Education is their primary focus in life because they understand the value of an education. For them, education is a privilege not an entitlement."

Castaneda is typical in another way. Word-of-mouth and affordable tuition are two of the main reasons students enroll in JCCC's IEP. IEP charges the same tuition rates as JCCC credit classes, making it a value compared to four-year colleges or universities.

This the tenth year for JCCC's IEP, which began in spring semester 1997. The numbers have increased from 380 students taking 30 classes the first year to 747 students taking 73 classes in 2007. The IEP has served 9,354 students from 68 countries through 917 classes during 10 years.

Couch measures the success of the program in additional ways – the revenue the program brings to the college; the revenue international students bring to the local and state economy; the amount of exposure the program gives the college locally and internationally; and the impact that IEP has on the lives of students when they return to their home countries and gain positions of influence.

According to Couch, students enroll in IEP to improve their English proficiency and cultural understanding for three main reasons – to prepare for degree study at a U.S. college or university, professional development reasons or

personal reasons. At JCCC, students who complete Level 4 IEP classes automatically matriculate to credit classes.

"IEP brings diversity to JCCC," Couch said. "We live it. We teach it. We believe in it."

Couch says one of the biggest challenges to international students is the stigma that they need remedial classes because they don't speak English, while just the opposite is true.

"IEP students are among the brightest and best. They return to their home countries to roles of leadership and decision making," Couch said.

Couch, who has bachelor's and master's degrees from Central Missouri State University, has been the director of JCCC's IEP since its inception. He is currently serving two-year terms as both Kansas representative to Kansas International Educators and to Region II of NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Several receptions are planned throughout 2007 to celebrate the 10th anniversary year of IEP, a program of Continuing Education and Community Services.

Rocio Castaneda takes part in an IEP Level 3 "Structure" class taught by Christine Reinhard.



Masako Khomsi from Japan.

Graduation Schedule

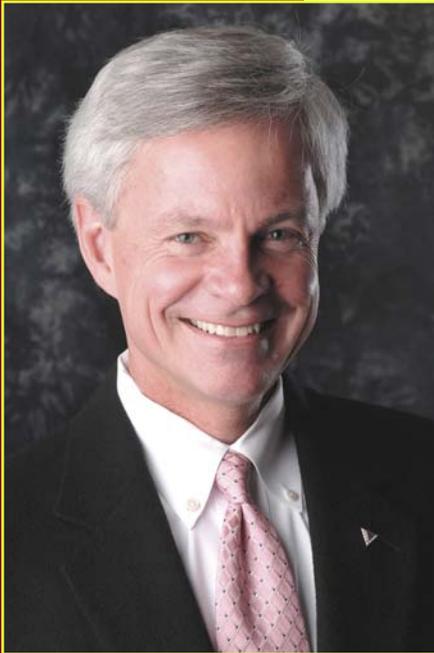
Johnson County Community College will have its commencement exercises at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 18, in the Gymnasium.

Rod Risley, executive director, Phi Theta Kappa, will be the speaker.

The GED graduation is at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 15, in the Gymnasium. Staff Sgt. Dale McKee, U.S. Army, will be the keynote speaker.

Other graduations:

- Respiratory Care, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 16, Polsky Theatre
- Nursing Pinning, 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 16, Yardley Hall
- Honors Graduation, 7 p.m. Thursday, May 17, room 211 of the Carlsen Center
- Dental Hygiene, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 17, Polsky Theatre
- Cosmetology, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 22, Polsky Theatre
- LPN Pinning, 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 23, Polsky Theatre



Rod Risley

Risley Speaks at JCCC Commencement

Executive director of Phi Theta Kappa Rod Risley will be the speaker for JCCC's commencement at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 18, in the Gymnasium. A reception follows in the Commons Plaza.

Risley was PTK's national president in 1974-75 while a student at San Jacinto College, Texas, where he earned his bachelor's degree. He joined PTK's headquarters staff in 1977 as director of alumni affairs and became associate director in 1982. In 1985, he was named the second-ever executive director for the society.

Under his leadership PTK, the international honor society of the two-year college, has experienced unparalleled growth expanding from 550 chapters to more than 1,200. Chapters have been chartered in all 50 states, U.S. Territories, Canada, Germany, the British Virgin Islands,

Republics of Palau, Micronesia and Marshall Islands, and United Arab Emirate. The society inducts nearly 100,000 students annually and is the largest honor society in higher education in terms of chapters and number of members.

Risley helped conceive and launch PTK's nationally acclaimed Leadership Development Studies Program, All-USA Academic Team for Community Colleges, All-State Academic Team program and Guistwhite Scholarship program.

Under Risley, procurement of scholarship funds for PTK members has been a top priority. Today, more than 600 four-year colleges and universities offer \$36 million in scholarships exclusively for PTK members.

Central to the recent growth of PTK is Risley's

leadership on new collaborations with the National Honor Society, National Collegiate Honors Council, National Science Foundation, Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, Coca-Cola Foundation, Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, Better World Books, Ford Motor Company and MBNA.

While serving as executive director, Risley earned a master's of business administration degree from Millsaps College, Jackson, Miss., and is currently completing his doctoral dissertation in the Community College Leadership Program at Mississippi State University, Starkville.

In 2007, Risley was elected chair of the Mississippi Humanities Council and will serve as the

council's representative to the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Risley has served as a grant reviewer for the National Science Foundation and AACC, and a national judge for the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship Foundation and Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation. In 2001, he was named a Fellow in the Mid-South Community College Fellowship Program. Risley was presented Distinguished Alumni Awards by the American Association of Community Colleges and San Jacinto College. He was recently elected to serve on the board for the Mississippi Center for Non-Profits.

Risley leads a staff of 70 at the PTK headquarters located in Jackson, Miss.

Speaker Knows GED Firsthand

Staff Sgt. Dale McKee will be the speaker for the GED graduation at 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 15, in the Gymnasium. A reception follows in the Common Plaza.

"I am not talking about the benefits of the Army at the GED graduation," McKee said. "I am talking about the accomplishments I've had as a result of earning my GED. I am going to congratulate the graduates and tell them they should be proud of their achievement. A GED is not something to take lightly."

McKee has a close association with Project Finish, sponsored by JCCC and the Johnson County Library. In his job as an Army recruiter in Olathe, McKee sees to it that recruits have the necessary qualifications – including a GED – to go on to active service. If lacking the prerequisites, "future soldiers," as McKee prefers to call recruits, are directed to the Olathe Center's Project Finish to complete their GED preparation and tests.

"I can't say enough good things about the teachers and staff at Project Finish," McKee said. "They are not judgmental. They are very respectful and supportive of everybody."

A native of Baxter Springs, he was 20 before he completed a GED while working as a car mechanic in Chicago. When McKee decided to pursue a career in law enforcement, he earned an

associate's degree in criminal justice from Labette Community College, Parsons. An investigator for the city of Parsons encouraged McKee to join the military police. So at age 26, McKee enlisted in the Army to help with his career and pay off student loans. That was 10 years ago, and McKee has served at U.S. bases and been deployed twice – to Bosnia in 1998 and to Qatar in 2003. He will serve 36 months as a recruiter and is in the process of applying to be an agent in the Army Criminal Investigation Division.

"I am honored to be the speaker at JCCC's GED graduation," he said.



JCCC Ethics Report Line



This spring, JCCC will initiate a service that allows confidential reporting of ethical issues through a "JCCC Ethics Report Line." The system will allow faculty and staff to report fraud, unethical activities or violations of JCCC's policies and provide continued two-way confidential communication.

The new phone and Internet-based reporting system is managed by a company called EthicsPoint, headquartered in Portland, Ore. The system, which is used by more than 25 colleges and universities across the country, does not replace or supercede existing channels of communication at JCCC; faculty and staff are still encouraged to report concerns directly through normal lines of communication. EthicsPoint simply provides an alternative form of communication while ensuring that reports entered in the system are completely confidential.

The EthicsPoint system is not designed to handle complaints, such as "I don't agree with my personnel evaluation" or "I couldn't get time off when I wanted it." Rather, the EthicsPoint system is for reporting ethical concerns having to do with accounting and financial matters; human resources; athletics compliance; health, risk and safety matters; and data security and information technology. EthicsPoint concerns have to do with embezzlement, theft, harassment, fraud, abuse or misconduct, such as "I feel I'm being discriminated against because of my religion" or "My working conditions are unsafe." Reports will be reviewed and responded to appropriately and confidentially, which means that although anonymous reports may be taken, if the facts cannot be substantiated and investigated, then the matter may very likely be considered inactionable.

Additional information – especially the responses to questions that have arisen during information sessions conducted this spring – is available online at <http://www.jccc.edu/home/depts/6205/site/EthicsReportLine>

Story by Julie Haas

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ThisMonth

This Month at JCCC is published nine times a year by Johnson County Community College, 12345 College Blvd., Overland Park, KS 66210-1299; 913-469-8500, fax 913-469-2559, www.jccc.edu

This Month at JCCC is produced by College Information and Publications and the Office of Document Services.

Editor: Peggy Graham

Photographer: Bret Gustafson

Designer: Randy Breeden

When planning your estate, remember Johnson County Community College. For more information, call Emily Fowler, JCCC Foundation, 913-469-3835.