NOVA Board Elects New Chair

On May 26, the NOVA Board elected Todd Rowley as its incoming board chair to replace Dr. Michael Wooten whose term ends this spring. Rowley is senior vice president and commercial market executive at Cardinal Bank in McLean, Virginia. He also serves on several important local boards, including serving as chair of the Northern Virginia Workforce Development Board (NVWDB). This gives Rowley a different perspective as the College seeks to build its workforce presence in the region.

“Todd Rowley is a very active and engaged business leader in our region,” said President Scott Ralls. “We are fortunate to have him as our new chair. His role in regional workforce development — particularly as board chairman of the Northern Virginia Workforce Development Board, gives him a unique perspective and offers great synergy for our college as we are aggressively pursuing new workforce development program strategies.”

One great distinction is that Rowley, who holds a bachelor’s degree in business administration and two master’s degrees in banking finance and a M.B.A., is also a NOVA student. Several years ago, as he watched the banking industry begin to slide, Rowley had friends who were in danger of losing their jobs. He decided to take some information technology classes at NOVA to see how easy it would be to learn a new skill in your fifties as opposed to in your twenties. Well, it can be done. While he does not plan to make a career in IT, it felt good to know he could learn a new skill and “burn new neurons,” as he put it.

“Todd is a very grounded and personable leader who brings to this new leadership role a knowledge of the College as a current student, board member and former chair of our foundation board,” Ralls added. “Very few college board leaders in the nation bring the breadth of perspective to their roles that Todd offers as he becomes chair of the NOVA Board.”

Rowley has been in banking in Northern Virginia for more than 35 years. In addition to his role on NOVA’s Board, Rowley volunteers his time with several other organizations including Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce (executive committee and board member); Northern Virginia Workforce Development Board (board chair); SkillSource Group, the nonprofit arm of the NVWDB (board member); Pamplin Advisory Council at Virginia Tech (advisory board member); Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness
(advisory board); Leadership Fairfax (board member); and Northern Virginia Business Political Action Committee (trustee).

He is also committed to economic empowerment, education, politics, poverty alleviation and social services.

He has also been the recipient of the 2014 Fairfax County Chamber Chairman Award (2014), Executive Leader of the Year at the 2013 Outstanding Corporate Citizenship Award (2013) and the Virginia Tech and the Pamplin College of Business MBA Alumni Distinguished Service Award (2013).

Rowley is married, has two grown sons and lives in Fairfax, Virginia.

Adult Career Pathways Celebrates Graduates With Student Social

2016 NOVA graduate Carolina Cadena talks about her experience with the Adult Career Pathways program during the department’s spring student social May 19 at the Ernst Center.

After a successful academic year, NOVA’s Adult Career Pathways (ACP) celebrated their recent graduates during a student social May 19 at the Annandale Campus’ Ernst Center. ACP invited graduates and those who completed their programs in spring 2016 to bring their families for food, music and various kid-friendly activities. ACP also took the time to recognize their 2016 graduates and students in ACP who had recently completed NOVA certification programs.

The student social gave ACP the opportunity to recognize and celebrate their graduates and encourage them in their next endeavors. It also gave ACP the opportunity to provide a fun time for ACP students and their families. Food sponsors for the event were Chick-fil-A and Flippin’ Pizza.

“We have two social events each year – one in the spring and another in the fall. This gives us the chance to congratulate our students and celebrate their success because they all work really hard during the semester,” said ACP Grants Project Manager Jennifer Pocai. “These events are also an opportunity to build community, share information about ACP and have some fun.”

Adult Career Pathways Celebrates Graduates with Student Social

Staff members of the Adult Career Pathways program celebrate the department’s fifth birthday during their spring student social May 19 at the Ernst Center.

Recent graduates and those who completed NOVA certification programs attended the event with their families and friends where ACP staff members organized a number of “adventure”
rooms for the students’ children and younger family members. Kid activities were provided by volunteers from Archaeology in the Community and Hidden Oaks Nature Center.

The student social also allowed for student testimonials where students shared their experiences at NOVA and how ACP staff members helped them every step of the way to achieve their goals.

“I have to thank God, my family and friends and ACP. Without them, I wouldn’t be here. As an adult with children and working, I know people feel like they don’t have the time. I felt that way, but ACP helped me and little by little I took all the classes I needed,” said Carolina Cadena, a 2016 graduate.

“As an adult learner, we have unique challenges that younger students don’t have. But ACP has always been there for me for these past three years,” said Michelle Plaisted who recently completed NOVA’s Nursing Program.

Vice President of Workforce Development Steven Partridge and ACP Director Kerin Hilker-Balkissoon were also in attendance in support of the students’ achievements. Representatives of George Mason University’s Bachelor of Individualized Study (BIS), where many ACP students attend after graduating NOVA, also stopped by the student social.

During the event, ACP also recognized its fifth year at NOVA. “We’re very excited about this and the success of all of our students,” said ACP Program and Data Manager Jolene Virgo.

The ACP program is designed to serve adult students with demonstrated barriers to college access and success, including veterans, single parents, lower-wage workers, work-eligible immigrants and unemployed and underemployed individuals. Throughout the program, participants receive ongoing support and guidance through every step of their college experience. For more information about ACP, go online.

10 Years of Podcasts for Calliope

10 Years of Podcasts for Calliope Calliope features sound and sight for the 10th consecutive year. At the 2016 awards ceremony on April 27, eight students read from their works and were recorded for podcasts; two were multiple awardees. Shirley Nuhn, who teaches English as a Second Language at the Annandale Campus, has coordinated podcasting the presentations since 2007. She arranges recording, writes the script and does narration. Robert Brown of NOVA’s Web Services and Digital Media has served as technical director of Calliope’s audio productions for 10 years.

Bryan Peters and Jay Steere, who teach English at the Annandale Campus, served as co-chairs of the journal’s 2016 edition. The Calliope is published through a collaboration of the departments of English and Liberal Arts, under sponsorship of the Division of Languages and Literature.
Editions of the journal and the podcasts are available on the Calliope web page. You can also listen to Calliope podcasts in the literature section of NOVA’s iTunes U.

Special Thanks to the 50th Year Commencement Volunteers

This year’s commencement, celebrating 7,662 NOVA graduates and 50 years of history, was held on May 14 at Jiffy Lube Live arena. It was a huge success with the help of more than 30 faculty and staff, from all of NOVA’s campuses, who volunteered to work behind the scenes.

Commencement involves a host of moving pieces, and this year was no exception. Volunteers helped to make the day truly memorable for the graduates and their guests. Their tasks covered all aspects of the ceremony to include check-in stations, special needs, hospitality rooms and other tasks. The teamwork, energy and smiles were truly appreciated by Claudia Chirinos, who served as volunteer team lead, and by all who attended.

Whitmire to Serve as Conductor-in-Residence at Worcester Cathedral

Dr. Mark Whitmire, professor of music at the Alexandria Campus, will be conductor-in-residence at Worcester Cathedral in the United Kingdom from July 11 to July 17. There, he will direct evensong each day and mass on Sunday. Repertoire will include settings of the Preces and Responses, settings of the evening service (Magnificat and Nunc dimittis), 13 Anglican chant psalms and anthems by composers ranging from the Renaissance to the present.

Worcester is a city of about 100,000 people located in the West Midlands of England, about 17 miles southwest of Birmingham and only 23 miles north of Gloucester. A city rich in history, Worcester is the site of the final battle of the English Civil War, when Oliver Cromwell’s army defeated the Cavaliers of King Charles II. Worcester is also the site of the Lea & Perrins factory where Worcestershire sauce is made.

The Worcester Cathedral seen from the east.

Worcester is certainly among the more interesting of all England’s cathedrals. Located on the banks of the Severn River, it has been a place of Christian worship since 680, and the eclectic architecture of the cathedral reflects the many centuries it has stood. Patron Saint Oswald built a cathedral in 983, and established a monastery. Saint Wulfstan (the only English-born bishop to retain his diocese after the Norman Conquest) rebuilt the cathedral in 1084 and began construction of the present edifice.
During Anglo-Saxon times, Worcester was a center of learning and one of the most important monastic cathedrals in England. It was a center of learning throughout the Middle Ages. Medieval textbooks in theology, medicine, law, history, mathematics, physics and astronomy still survive in the cathedral library today. The monastery continued until it was dissolved in 1540 by Henry VIII.

Some of the last monks became the first deans and priests of the new protestant diocese. The cathedral was badly damaged in the English Civil Wars (1642-1651), and as a consequence a major rebuilding program was required after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. Since the 18th century, the cathedral has been famous for its part in the annual Three Choirs Festival, the oldest choral festival in existence.

Whitmire was conductor-in-residence at Gloucester Cathedral (United Kingdom) in 2003 and returned to England in 2006 to direct the choir at Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral. In summer 2010 his choir toured France, singing services and concerts at the American Cathedral (Paris), La Madeleine (Paris), Chartres Cathedral, Rouen Cathedral and concluding with High Mass at Notre Dame, Paris. In summer 2013, his choir toured Italy, singing services and concerts at the St. Mark’s Basilica in Venice, Il Duomo in Florence and St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

New Emeriti Series Video: Dr. Charles Poland

The Emeriti Reading Series celebrates retired NOVA faculty who have continued to make NOVA proud in the publishing world. Dr. Charles Poland, professor emeritus, taught for NOVA for over 45 years, and in 2012, he won the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia’s Outstanding Faculty Award, which is the highest honor in Virginia for college and university teaching faculty.

Recently, Poland took time out of his busy schedule to discuss several of his books including “The Glories of War,” “From Frontier to Suburbia,” “A Forgotten Way Of Life” and others with Languages and Literature Division Associate Dean Jen Daniels at the NOVA Video Services TV Studio.

The video is available online.

Thornett Publishes Article in “Earth Island Journal”

Geography Professor Robert C. Thornett published an article in the May 19 online edition of “Earth Island Journal.” The article focuses on the unique potential for Bolivia and Paraguay together to become a global center of electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing, due to their unique combination of natural resources: lithium and renewable energy.

Bolivia’s Uyuni Salt Flats are home to the world’s largest deposits of lithium, the critical component of lithium ion (Li-ion) batteries, which are used in EVs as well as laptops and cell
phones. Meanwhile, Paraguay enjoys a 400 percent surplus of renewable electricity, drawing on its 50 percent share of the world’s most productive renewable energy generator, Itaipu Dam, split with neighboring Brazil. The article is based on the findings of a 2015 study published in “Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews” by Brazilian energy experts led by Dr. Ildo Sauer.

In addition, the article discusses how Bolivia and Paraguay are currently at a crossroads, deciding whether to pursue new fossil fuel exploration in the Bolivian Amazon, Paraguayan Gran Chaco and other vast, pristine ecosystems rich in biodiversity, or instead to invest in more sustainable energy sources with lower environmental impacts.

The article is one result of a research trip by Thornett to South America in summer 2015, funded by a Paul Lee Grant from the Virginia Community College System.

The article “Electric Vehicle Manufacturing Holds Unique Potential for Bolivia and Paraguay” is available online.

For any questions about the article, please contact Thornett at rthornett@nvcc.edu.

**AFS-USA Members Visit NOVA**

Stephen Bennett (at the head of the table) with Karen Murph and Darlene Branges (both, in the seats near the window) with AFS-USA visitors at the Annandale Campus.

On May 23, members of AFS-USA (formerly the American Field Service), an international student exchange program, came to visit two of NOVA campuses and meet with staff. Since 2012, NOVA has hosted about 20 AFS students who usually come on a year-long exchange program and take both academic classes and English language classes in the Intensive English Program.

Jenny Davis, AFS program manager, and AFS representatives from Indonesia, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Switzerland, Turkey, Argentina and Denmark came to see NOVA’s campuses and talk about options for their students. Since they came from countries where the concept of a community college is relatively unknown, it was an opportunity to discuss the quality and value offered by a community college and how it fits into the higher education model.

NOVA staff was represented by Office of International Students Associate Director Stephen Bennett, Transfer Counselor Jennifer Nelson (AN), English as a Second Language Assistant Dean Karen Murph (AN) and American Culture and Language Institute (ACLI) Coordinator Antonina Rodgers (AN).

AFS visitors were glad to find out how many different transfer options exist for NOVA students and spent a lot of time asking questions on various degrees offered at NOVA and estimated
time of study. Though AFS students normally come to the U.S. upon becoming fairly proficient in English, language study was still an essential component of the conversation to clarify NOVA’s expectations.

At the end of the meeting, Annandale Acting Provost Charlotte Calobrisi (AN) shared some inspiring stories about NOVA graduates and provided an important historical perspective on the College’s development as an institution. Two ACLI students from Turkey accompanied the AFS group on a tour of the Annandale Campus. It was the first sunny day after a month of rain in Northern Virginia, so the visitors were able to see the Campus in all its luscious green beauty.

The group visited the Alexandria Campus in the afternoon, where the discussion focused on Student Life and extracurricular activities. Jackie Coker (AL), Student Activities, explained many choices available to students studying at any campus at NOVA. American Culture and Language Institute Coordinator Cyn Hatch (AL), having hosted exchange students before, provided valuable insights into their academic life and some recommendations for future students.

AFS visitors were also fortunate to meet current AFS students from Belgium and Colombia and three international student ambassadors to discuss their experience at the College. A tour of the Alexandria Campus concluded what was a very productive day for both NOVA and AFS. Both are looking forward to a continued collaboration.

Hybrid Plan Auto-Escalation Coming in January

To help members save for retirement, the Hybrid Retirement Plan was designed so that voluntary contributions automatically increase by 0.5 percent every three years. If you are a hybrid plan member, your first automatic increase, called auto-escalation, will take place January 1, 2017. The automatic increases will continue every three years until you reach the maximum voluntary contribution of 4 percent.

You will have the opportunity to opt-out of auto-escalation this fall. VRS will send you information on the automatic increase and the steps you need to take if you want to opt-out of participation.

For more information on your VRS Hybrid Retirement plan and the advantages of saving through voluntary contributions visit http://www.varetirement.org/hybrid.html.

NOTE: You may review your VRS plan status by registering for account access through MyVRS at www.varetire.org. Click on the MyVRS Access tab in the top left corner of the screen.

Announcements

1. Summer Workshops
Faculty and Staff
For more email TechnologyTrainingCenter@nvcc.edu