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Special to the Leader & Times

The Seward County Community College/Area Technical School Board of Trustees met Monday, March 3, to hear an overview of the agriculture program, establish tuition, fees, and student housing costs, and approve purchases.

Trustee John Engel provided the board with a review of the SCCC/ATS Foundation Annual Board of Governors meeting. He indicated that over \$660,000 in scholarships were awarded through the Foundation in 2013, and that the net worth of Foundation has increased. Officers of the Foundation board will be Duane Bozarth, chair; Stephanie Ormiston, vice-chair; and Al Shank, treasurer.

Teddi Winslow, agriculture instructor, reviewed the academic program review for agriculture. The SCCC/ATS agriculture program has degree emphasis areas in agronomy, horticulture, livestock, sustainable agriculture resource, and food science and safety. Action projects for the department have focused on promotion and recruitment activities to increase awareness of the many options within the program. Additionally, they have initiated activities to changing the perception many people have that a farm production background is required to enroll in the agriculture program. The department has initiated a crop and soils team along with the livestock judging team and have expanded instruction in horticulture to include a variety of plants in the greenhouses. The students have expanded their business opportunities through selling potted plants at Valentine's Day, are planning for Mother's Day plants, and will also hold their annual Show Pig sale later this spring.

Student internship opportunities have expanded with several area agriculture businesses. These internships include options for summer internships, as well as short term employment "shadow" opportunities with industries which have a variety of agriculture related systems.

The board approved the Agriculture Program Review for the agriculture program and requested an annual status report in FY2015.

The board approved an increase in student housing rates for the 2014-15 school year. The rate for Student Living Center/Mansions will increase from \$2,510 to \$2,790 for a single and \$2,240 to \$2,290 for a double. The rate for Hale Court will increase from \$2,410 to \$2,690 for a single and \$2,140 to \$2,190 for a double. The annual housing contract includes the room and a 19-meal per week plan. The SCCC/ATS housing rates remain less than peer colleges in our region.

The board approved a \$5 per credit hour increase in tuition for the 2014-15 academic year. The universal student fees will remain at \$32. Tuition and fees beginning with the fall 2014 semester will be Seward County residents, \$79; In-state (non-Seward County resident), \$83; border state, \$102; out-of-state and international, \$117; Seward Online in-state and out-of-state, \$127. SCCC/ATS tuition and fee amounts are lower than peer colleges in the region.

The board supported a Kansas Association of Community College Trustees initiative to fund a Leadership Academy that will help increase the effectiveness of trustees and provide leadership and operational training for community college employees who seek dean and president positions. The training would include both face-to-face and webinar sessions with assistance from the Kansas Leadership Center.

Dr. Duane Dunn, SCCC/ATS president, gave an overview of the legislative session and status of several bills which have been addressed. The Kansas Legislature completed “turn around” which requires bills from the House to move to the Senate and vice versa. The House appropriations committee has supported the continuance of the current funding for higher education and supported increased funding for career and technical education programs. Dunn explained that select bills and actions may have an impact on the assessed valuation of Seward County and that the community colleges are in contact with legislators to explain the impact those actions would have on operating budgets.

Dunn provided the Board with information regarding the decline in high school enrollments throughout the entire mid-west region of the nation. That decline has resulted in greater competition among colleges and universities which are dependent on increased enrollments.

Cynthia Rapp, dean of academic affairs, informed the Board that the Technical Education Authority has approved SCCC/ATS's request to provide associate degrees in Food Science and

Safety. That proposal will be on the March agenda for Kansas Board of Regents.

Dean Rapp also announced that Amandria Hartnett has been named Outstanding Adult Learner by the Kansas Adult Education Association. Hartnett completed her GED at the Colvin Adult Learning center and is currently pursuing her degree in allied health.

Dr. Janese Thatcher, dean of career and technical education, informed the Board that Dave Ratzlaff and Bree Downs, automotive repair instructors, have completed training in the use, repair, and modification of composite materials. Those materials are becoming an industry standard in many automobiles.

Dr. Thatcher also explained that the cosmetology department has introduced a new line of natural product cosmetics, Honey Bee Gardens, and will have a product launch event later this spring.

SCCC/ATS is featured as a best practice institution with Starlink Training, a national organization which provides faculty development for higher education. Celeste Donovan, dean of students, showed a clip from the video which is now available on the Starlinktraing.org website.

Mark Merrihew, director of information technology, explained that the SCCC/ATS will soon have a cell phone app which will enable students access to their enrollment status, academic progress, and financial standing with the college. The app will also provide information currently hosted on the college's website.

In other action, the board

- Approved the employment of Thais Baziquetto-Allen, assistant volleyball coach;
- Authorized Marvin Chance Jr. to notify the KACCT of support for the leadership academy

initiative;

- Authorized the purchase from Sterling Computers Corporation, Norfolk, Neb., for 94 Thin Clients in the amount of \$73,696; 40 mini-tower computers, \$46,479.60; 14 workstations, \$23,589.86; 14 laptops, \$21,952; two higher-end laptops, \$5,694; and one tablet, \$490. These computers are included in the rotation schedule for instructional labs and department operations; and,

- Approved the purchase of a Portable Small Arms Trainer—Law Enforcement Simulator from Laser Shot, Inc. of Stafford, Texas, in the amount of \$14,489 to replace the

FATS program purchased in 2000. The simulator will reduce costs for supplies in the college's firearms classes. Also, it is portable so it can be used for training at various locations.

Upcoming events include the Region VI NJCAA basketball tournament in Wichita March 5 – 8; and spring break March 16-23. The next board meeting will be Monday, April 7.

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