



ON
CAMPUS:

Northwest Mississippi Community College

www.northwestms.edu

PUBLIC 2 YEAR

While the nation is experiencing an almost unprecedented economic downturn, Northwest Mississippi Community College is seeing how the institution is making a difference in the lives of its students. North Mississippi students just finishing high school are turning to Northwest to begin their educational journey. Those who have lost jobs are returning to Northwest for training and a chance at a second career.



For Next Magazine

Northwest Mississippi Community College's School of Nursing has become one of the more popular programs on campus.

Two days into Northwest Mississippi Community College's late registration period, on Aug. 18, college officials celebrated when enrollment soared past last year's record of 7,172, hitting 8,000. At the end of the week, final figures showed 8,364 students enrolled for the fall semester — a 16.6 percent increase over last year's record-setting figure.

When Anne Elizabeth Shepard of Batesville, a general college major taking four classes online, completed the process, she was surprised to learn that she was the 8,000th student. Shepard and her mother were greeted in the President's Office the following day and presented with a gift certificate to the Ranger Bookstore and a gift bag.

A home-schooled student, Shepard says she chose Northwest for online classes because it was close to home and affordable. Those factors may have helped in the decisions of the other 8,000-plus students who are enrolled this semester.

According to figures released by the college's Office of Institutional Research and Planning, there were 3,163 students registered on the Senatobia campus, up 322 over fall '08 figures. At DeSoto Center, now the largest campus by head count, there are 3,248, up 460 over last fall. On the Lafayette-Yalobusha Technical Center campus, 1,395 students registered, up 291

from the same period a year ago.

Now counted as its own "campus," Northwest virtual classes are setting records. Northwest's eLearning enrollment is up 29 percent with 2,401 students taking at least one online class, according to Phyllis Johnson, director of eLearning. There are 558 students taking only virtual classes. According to Johnson, Northwest now has a virtual faculty of 90 instructors teaching 265 courses.

"I think this trend toward growth in virtual college is here to stay," said Johnson. "It fits well with the non-traditional student who can't get off work to attend classes during the day, and it also fits into the schedule of the traditional student who may just need one class to complete his or her schedule."

Northwest president Dr. Gary Lee Spears is thrilled with the college enrollment. "After all these years, I still get excited about the beginning of school," he told faculty at a system-wide gathering Aug. 10 in Senatobia. "I'm especially excited about this year which is shaping up to be one of the best years in Northwest history."

Spears' excitement comes from the newly-announced record enrollment and the opening of two new educational facilities on the Senatobia campus — the three-story addition to the Physical Science Building and the Early Childhood

Northwest Mississippi Community College, 1927

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Undergraduate Enrollment: 8,364

Annual Tuition and Fees: \$850.00 per in-state student per semester; \$1,000 additional fee for out-of-state students

Annual on-campus room and board: Room—\$425-\$725; Meal Plans—\$225-\$925 per semester

Application Deadline: Scholarship deadline April 1

Average ACT: 18

Financial Aid: Loans, grants, work-study
Percentage of Students with Financial Aid: 85 percent

Faculty-to-Student Ratio: 22:1

Popular Majors: Cosmetology, tool and die technology, associate degree nursing, criminal justice

Satellite/Annex Locations: Main Campus — Senatobia; Southaven: Oxford (limited classes in Olive Branch and Ashland)

President: Dr. Gary Lee Spears

Director of Admissions: Larry Simpson, dean of enrollment management and registrar

Education Technology Building. Renovation to the college's historical James P. McCormick Administration Building is nearing completion, and construction of the new nursing facility is progressing on schedule. At Oxford, a new annex to house the center's cosmetology department and faculty offices is getting final touches before it is ready for occupancy.

"I'm so glad that we are able to provide those services, whether it is to the student right out of high school or to the worker who has lost his or her job and needs to return to college for retraining. Educating and putting people back to work—that's our calling," said Spears.