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Baconton Joins ABAC’s ‘Move on When Ready’ Program

TIFTON – Baconton Community Charter School in Mitchell County is the newest location for one of the “Move on When Ready” (MOWR) classes from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College.

MOWR is a dual-enrollment program designed to allow high school students in grades 10-12 a chance to earn college credits while completing their high school diplomas. One goal of the new MOWR program is to offer students in rural Georgia the same higher education opportunities as their urban counterparts. ABAC’s MOWR at Baconton Community Charter School is doing just that.

“We are fortunate to be able to offer a college level science lab course on our campus,” said Dr. Mary Sullivan, guidance counselor at Baconton Community Charter School. “This is a giant step for our school, as we have struggled for years to offer more rigorous science classes.”

Dr. Cyndy Hall, ABAC’s Director of MOWR, Kitty Davis, ABAC’s lab manager, and Dr. Johnny Evans, Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics, made this state-of-the-art lab and class a possibility for students in rural Baconton.
From May through December in 2015, the high school transformed its old science lab into a brand new college-level lab.

“Ms. Davis and I went out a number of times to evaluate the space,” said Hall. “At one point we weren’t sure if the school would be ready. There was a closet in the lab that needed a great deal of attention. When we came back in December, the school had cleaned out the closet and disposed of all unnecessary items. The lab space was also updated to meet the strict requirements of a college laboratory set by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). That was the biggest point to get across – the OSHA guidelines.”

Requirements for laboratories by OSHA include chemical, biological, physical, and safety hazards. An example of each hazard is air contaminant standards (chemical), the use of animals/cadavers (biological), noise (physical), and fire and electrical issues (safety). These and many other guidelines had to be met before ABAC could use the facility for the MOWR program.

Baconton passed the OSHA-approved checklist and has been offering a biology class at the college level since January. The Biology 1107 class taught by former Valdosta State University science teacher Kameron Farrow now offers Baconton students an advantage in education that is equal to their more urban counterparts.

With the addition of Baconton Community Charter School, ABAC has four locations for its MOWR program. Other locations include Colquitt County High School, Tiftarea Academy, and the main campus of ABAC.

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