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# THE BRUNSWICK BEACON

## BCC hosts 'PR Speed Dating' session

By Sam Hickman

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**SUPPLY** — During a busy fall semester, Brunswick Community College officials decided to host a public relations “speed dating” session at the Virginia Williamson Event Center inside the Odell Williamson Auditorium on Wednesday, Oct. 29, for members of the local media.



*Photo contributed by London Schmidt*

Renee Sloan, staff writer for The State Port Pilot, and The Brunswick Beacon's Sam Hickman (back) attended a public relations “speed dating” session on the campus of Brunswick Community College on Wednesday, Oct. 29. The goal of the event was to introduce regional media outlets to different programs and services offered by BCC, marketing and public relations director London Schmidt said.

Representatives from The Brunswick Beacon, The State Port Pilot and The StarNews in Wilmington attended the event that included information sessions, an address from college president Dr. Susanne Adams and lunch.

Adams shared a brief history of the college and noted demographics and other statistical information that make up the college.

“We’re excited about the opportunities that we offer here,” she said. “We think today is a great opportunity for you, as members of the media, to learn about the things we have going on here. We’re really proud of our college.”

Eight-minute information sessions were held at six different tables inside the event center. Members of the local media rotated around the different tables until they visited each station.

At one table, Sharon Thompson, senior vice president and vice president of academic and student affairs, talked about the academic opportunities at the college, including courses offered through the summer and holiday seasons.

Thompson said the holiday courses were popular for students who are looking to earn extra credits if they didn’t do well at their four-year university or wanted to get a head start on spring semester.

After Thompson, Greg Bland, dean of continuing education and workforce development, spoke about the numerous opportunities BCC offers, including classes to help community members already in the workforce attain additional certifications.

Media members also spent time with the director of the Dinah E. Gore Fitness & Aquatics Center, Ashleigh Terry.

Terry said the center has developed into a community hub, which she and college leaders had envisioned for the fitness center before its creation. Terry talked about the center’s amenities and courses that are offered, including spin classes, swimming lessons for individuals and groups, basketball court time, a walking track and classes that are covered by healthcare packages including Silver Sneakers, among other programs.

Other BCC representatives in attendance were Elina DiCostanzo and Julia Steffen, coordinator for donor and community relations, who briefly spoke about the college foundation and other scholarships available to local students, Gina Robinson and Dean Bennett, who outlined professional and technical programs at the college, including the school’s renowned turfgrass management and horticulture programs. Jerry Smith also spoke about courses that were offered to high school students at BCC, both on and off campus. Smith said several high school students were earning college credits before they graduated high school through programs facilitated by the college.

This is the first time BCC has hosted such an event, which public relations and marketing director London Schmidt called a “huge success” when she addressed those in attendance following the event.

“At Brunswick Community College, there is so much going on and we want everyone to know about it,” Schmidt said in a follow-up interview. “So the idea of PR Speed Dating was created to encourage our local media outlets to visit the college and to preview potential stories. The eight minutes of one-on-one discussion was designed to pique interest in our programs and campus happenings. Through causal conversations we provided just enough information to leave reporters wanting to learn more and then wanting to share with their readers.”

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