ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE

Criterion Five: As called for by its mission, Arkansas Tech University identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

As noted in its mission statement, Arkansas Tech University “…is dedicated to nurturing scholastic development, integrity and professionalism. The University offers a wide range of traditional and innovative programs which provide a solid educational foundation for life-long learning to a diverse community of learners.” The accomplishment of these goals involves both internal and external constituencies. The primary internal constituencies of Arkansas Tech University are the students, faculty and staff. As a university whose mission focuses on teaching students, much attention is given to student needs, retention, and providing the means for student success in a growing institution. The primary external constituencies of Arkansas Tech University are alumni, actual and potential employers, pre-college students, and the community at large. The colleges and departments of Arkansas Tech have multiple procedures in place to learn from these constituencies and to analyze the capacity of the University to serve the constituencies’ needs and expectations.

The most important constituency of Arkansas Tech University is its students, whom it serves primarily through academic programming and co-curricular offerings. Previous sections of this document include information regarding academic programming, co-curricular offerings, and university environment, as well as information related to the ways in which the University supports another important constituency, its employees. Examples offered in this section will reference these core constituencies, but will also highlight additional engagement and service efforts on behalf of external constituents.

This chapter offers evidence indicating that Arkansas Tech University meets the requirements of Criterion Five. Institutional strengths and recommendations for improvement related to Criterion Five are included at the end of the chapter.
CORE COMPONENT 5A

Arkansas Tech University learns from the constituencies that it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

Arkansas Tech University maintains a strong commitment to shared governance, student participation, and community involvement. In this regard, the University has programs in place to serve its constituencies in ways they value.

One of the programs established to support students is “Bridge to Excellence,” a retention program under the direction of the Vice President for Student Services. In this program, an incoming freshman first completes an online College Student Inventory questionnaire to determine personal strengths and weaknesses that may affect college success. The student is then assigned to a faculty or staff mentor who provides both formal and informal guidance concerning campus activities, organizations, and other services available. Students are also supported by the Academic Advising Center, which provides advice for those students who have not declared a major or who have questions and concerns about their coursework and the university in general. During the course of the academic year students are given the chance to evaluate courses by responding to a questionnaire that asks them to rate their courses and instructors on a variety of topics, including instructional preparedness and the value of the course materials.

Arkansas Tech University takes steps to obtain input from various constituents. As examples, the University has utilized the Student Satisfaction Inventory, the National Survey of Student Satisfaction, the Institutional Priorities Inventory, and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement as means of obtaining input during the past decade. In addition to nationally standardized instruments, Arkansas Tech has taken advantage of exit interviews conducted by several departments with graduating seniors, including Accounting and History.

As discussed in previous Criteria, Arkansas Tech University has a standing University Assessment Committee that meets monthly. An Ozark Campus Assessment Committee and various college- and department-wide assessment committees supplement the university-wide Committee. Each department in the university prepares a program or departmental assessment report annually for submission to the University Assessment Committee, which provides guidance for assessment criteria, data collection, and data sources.

University administrators are evaluated annually by the faculty. Deans, department heads and other administrators are rated on issues such as accessibility to faculty, responsiveness to faculty concerns, and faculty inclusion in the decision-making process.

The development and structure of the academic programs at Arkansas Tech University are driven by governmental and program accreditation standards, as well as on-going assessment of student learning. As discussed in Criterion Four, many programs use advisory groups to provide input to program development, curriculum, current practices in industry, economic trends and drivers, and equipment needs directly from the constituencies served. As of Fall 2010, the University has 27 advisory committees/boards providing constituent feedback, including the following examples:
The College of Business relies on feedback and advisory support from members of its Executive Advisory Board in order to better meet the needs of its stakeholders. Through biannual meetings, the board members address current and evolving trends in the business world that can be expected to influence the information needs of the business majors.

The Recreation and Parks Administration Program has an Advisory Committee made up of 20 Recreation and Park professionals and 2 students. The members of this committee represent diversity in terms of areas of leisure services and populations served. Within the larger Recreation and Parks Program Advisory Committee are two sub-committees, one for the therapeutic recreation emphasis and another for the turf management emphasis.

The Hospitality Administration Program (HA) has an Advisory Committee composed of 12-15 members from the hospitality industry, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Arkansas Hospitality Administration, alumni, faculty, and administration. The Committee meets annually to review curriculum and program issues, as well as to discuss internship opportunities. The advisory committee members are asked to provide comments about curricular items. Many of the committee members have supervised interns and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the academic preparation of the HA students. The HA Advisory Committee members represent a relatively diverse mix of professional interests, agencies, geographic locations, ages, and gender.

All Technical programs on the Ozark Campus maintain advisory committees. These committees are composed of a 5 to 9 member panel of industry and community representatives. The committees meet a minimum of two times annually and serve to review/enhance curriculum, scheduling, facilities, equipment, and accreditation requirements for continued program improvement.

The Board of Advisors served the Arkansas Valley Technical Institute in the same role as the current Arkansas Tech University Board of Trustees after the merger of the two institutions in 2003. Since then, the Ozark Campus Board of Advisors has transitioned into a board that functions solely in an advisory and advocacy capacity. Members provide feedback about the business communities and economic climate in western Arkansas as well as assisting in development activities and strategic planning for the campus. The board comprises members from the business and education community who keep the Ozark Campus in touch with community needs and business trends. The Ozark Campus also relies heavily on advisory panel input for its technical/vocational programs.

Many Arkansas Tech University departments and programs use focus groups to gain knowledge about the needs of their constituents. For example, the Department of Nursing conducts both graduate and employer surveys at one-year and five-year intervals to assess the preparedness of its graduates and to explore possible needs for program adjustment. Most academic programs conduct exit surveys of their graduates that are followed up at three-year to five-year intervals to gain feedback on the level of professional preparedness provided by their curriculum.

The College of Professional Studies and Community Outreach provides major community outreach through its continuing education and professional development offerings. The College conducts evaluations at the conclusion of its programs in order to determine if the
course has met the needs of the participants. These evaluations form part of the internal review and continuous quality improvement process of the College.

Student Government Associations on both the Russellville and Ozark campuses also provide important input to the administration and faculty. These groups are the primary formal interface between current students and the administration/faculty and as such, are an integral part of the process to determine both the academic and life-quality needs of the student body.

**Outreach Programs**

The outreach programs at Arkansas Tech University have been developed through contact with external constituents via advisory boards and committees, focus groups, and other more individualized forms of social networking. The University offers and participates in a variety of public lectures, symposiums, educational fairs, and other events that are open to and often aimed at the community. The following paragraphs provide examples of the ability of the University to meet the identified needs of its external constituents.

The College of Professional Studies and Community Outreach is a particularly important component of the institutional outreach efforts. As noted previously, the purpose of the College is to serve the community at-large, and it holds classes and programs throughout the year that provide educational opportunities designed specifically for community outreach. The Professional Development Institute develops its training course offerings based upon the needs of business, industry, and non-profit organizations. Unless a program is contracted by - or designed for - a specific entity, the courses are open to the public. The faculty and staff of both Continuing Education and the Professional Development Institute take the opportunity to be involved in community outreach efforts.

The Office of Business and Community Outreach on the Ozark Campus is also an important part of the efforts of engagement and service by the University. The Business and Community Outreach programs strive to meet the needs of the service community by providing instruction appropriate to the needs of area businesses. The various training programs are customized to the requests of the specific businesses; and individuals as well as groups are provided with assistance in securing training grant funds. Other specific outreach programs offered by the Ozark Campus include Career Pathways Initiative, a program designed to help parents overcome the barriers that prevent them from receiving the training and education needed to succeed in the modern workforce. The Ozark Campus also offers extensive adult education programs.
CORE COMPONENT 5B

Arkansas Tech University has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

Arkansas Tech University is committed to engaging with its constituencies and communities, as highlighted in its Strategic Plans. During the past decade, the university has made several strategic commitments in support of improved engagement and connectedness. These efforts include expansion of the physical infrastructure; recognition of service activities by students, faculty, and staff; sponsorship of programs that reflect the University Mission of life-long learning; and enhanced alumni relations.

Physical Infrastructure

Major investments in physical infrastructure have been made in the past decade to increase the capacity of the University to engage with its constituents and the areas communities.

In 2006, Arkansas Tech University purchased property that subsequently became the Lake Point Conference Center at Arkansas Tech University. Nestled on Lake Dardanelle, the Lake Point Conference Center can accommodate a wide variety of meeting needs, including conference and meeting rooms; professional event planners and conference coordinators; registration services; full range of technology for presentations; facilities for distance delivery of programs; lodging accommodations; support from specialists in program development, marketing, technology and training needs assessment; full-service business center; and wireless high-speed internet access. As discussed above the Lake Point Conference Center houses the Professional Development Institute and the Office of Continuing Education.

In 2006, construction of Norman Hall was completed on the Russellville Campus. Housing the Department of Art, this 25,000-square-foot building features the Norman Art Gallery for the display of art that surpasses anything Arkansas Tech or the surrounding area has experienced before. The facility also includes studios for drawing, painting, graphic design, art education, sculpture, ceramics, and printmaking, as well as a darkroom and studios for advanced students. Many of the events conducted in Norman Hall, such as art exhibits and lectures, are part of the outreach effort by the University.

In 2008, Arkansas Tech University purchased a building across from the Lake Point Conference Center to house the Center for Leadership and Learning. The Center was officially dedicated in Fall 2010, with the mission to equip teachers and administrators with the tools necessary to educate and provide...
opportunities for students to excel in the classroom. The Center offers post-graduate degrees that allow teachers to pursue careers as principals, curriculum leaders, superintendents, and other positions within school administration. In addition, the Center also houses the Arkansas Tech University Center for Executive Leadership and the Arkansas Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

In 2009, the Ozark Campus opened its Student Services and Conference Center. The Student Services and Conference Center houses the offices of Student Services and Fiscal Affairs, and provides open space for student, campus, and community use. The building provides a single location for students to receive information and services for admissions, advising, financial aid, enrollment, and student accounts. Also located in the facility are Recruitment, Career Pathways Initiative and Fiscal Affairs. The conference facilities provide meeting space for campus and community use and offer the option of a large meeting room for seating of 150-300 people.

In conjunction with the Campus mission, the Student Services and Conference Center reflects sensitivity to the needs of the students, the campus, and the community. The Center blends with existing design and architecture, and brings a fresh look to the campus. The building incorporates modern design concepts, improves the campus flow and function, and provides a new community service facility for large events. The Student Services and Conference Center is considered a front door for the Ozark Campus.

The Ozark Campus is currently remodeling the Alvin F. Vest Student Center to become the Alvin F. Vest Student Union. The renovated space will house the Library, an academic classroom/computer lab, the Bookstore, a food service operation, a study room and two large lounge areas. This renovation will update the existing facility to better utilize space, expand square footage for bookstore and library operations, and enhance campus life by providing food service and informal gathering space for students. The project is scheduled to be completed by May of 2011.

Student Engagement and Service

Arkansas Tech University faculty and staff encourage students to become actively involved in service projects, and the University recognizes those efforts whenever possible. The University offers a full range of student leadership opportunities, including student government; social, political, professional, and service organizations; intramural and intercollegiate athletics; and mentoring and tutoring programs. As previously discussed, the primary vehicle for publicizing the activities of the University community (since August 2008) is the online Arkansas Tech University News and Information site, ArkansasTechNews.com. A search of the stories on the site will demonstrate that during the past few years students on both campuses have participated in numerous activities, with the following serving as selected highlights.

During the 2010 Homecoming Blood Drive, students, faculty and staff successfully donated approximately 200 units of blood. The Student Government Association (SGA) secretary of community outreach coordinated the 2010 Homecoming Blood Drive, with assistance from student senators. The Russellville Campus SGA sponsors community-wide blood drives each year, usually in cooperation with the Volunteer Action Council and the American Red Cross. Blood drives are also sponsored during Greek Week and Battle of the Halls activities.
The Ozark Campus Student Government Association has partnered with the local Department of Human Services food bank to provide funds and food items to help families in need from Franklin County.

The Arkansas Tech University Presidential Leadership Cabinet (formerly known as Tech Ambassadors, 1997-2006) on the Russellville Campus serves as representatives of the President’s Office and the Alumni Office. Working with the University administration, the Presidential Leadership Cabinet (PLC) enhances the University Mission through outreach to prospective and current students, alumni, and friends.

On the Ozark Campus is the Chancellor’s Leadership Cabinet, established in 2009. Working with the Ozark Campus administration, the Chancellor’s Leadership Cabinet advances the University Mission through outreach and support of the communities that the Ozark Campus serves as part of the Arkansas Tech family. Similar to the Presidential Leadership Cabinet on the Russellville Campus, the Chancellor’s Leadership Cabinet assists with outreach to prospective and current students, alumni, and friends.

In February 2008, a tornado destroyed dozens of homes and killed four people in the neighboring community of Atkins. In response to this disaster, Arkansas Tech students mobilized a variety of service-related efforts. The day following the tornado, over 30 Emergency Administration and Management (EAM) students (and supervising faculty) reported to the site of the storm as part of the Pope County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in order to help local authorities conduct preliminary damage assessments. In the days that followed, Arkansas Tech students continued to contribute to the community relief effort, through events such as the Office of Residential Life’s Helping Halls coin drive and the joint Athletics-EAM collections at a basketball doubleheader on the Russellville Campus in which fans were asked to bring a variety of items such as personal hygiene products, paper products, flashlights, pet food and many other similar needs for the storm victims.

University athletes and residential students are also involved in other community projects, such as the collection of non-perishable food items to donate to local service organizations for distribution to the needy. In 2009, the Helping Hands campaign collected sufficient Thanksgiving items to supply the local Salvation Army with 150 food sets of items, covering almost two-thirds of the Thanksgiving Day meals that were given to families in the local service area. The November 2010 campaign exceeded expectations and collected 400 food sets to donate.

The Arkansas Tech University Pre-Vet Club has started an annual food drive for the canine residents under the care of the Humane Society of the Greater River Valley. In 2009, the drive resulted in the donation of 700 pounds of dog food and collected cash to the Society to assist in the needs of the 100 animals.

Students involved with the various social and service fraternities and sororities at Arkansas Tech University are also engaged in a variety of community service projects, including the State of Arkansas’ Adopt-A-Highway program, the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life and Up ‘Til Dawn, St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, and the Building Young Readers in Russellville project where 50 pre-school children are given handcrafted wooden bookcases with starter sets of books of their own.
In addition to the above mentioned examples of volunteerism by students at Arkansas Tech University, students also contribute significantly to the area communities through service learning courses and programs that provide thousands of hours of service per year. These contributions include clinical service provided by students in the nursing programs, as well as service provided by students enrolled in internships and practica.

**Faculty and Staff Engagement and Service**

Arkansas Tech University faculty and staff regularly engage in projects that serve their professions, their local communities, and the Institution. This engagement includes not only volunteerism, but also philanthropic contributions.

Each year, Arkansas Tech University faculty and staff participate in the annual United Way campaign by the respective campus’ local chapter, United Way of Fort Smith or River Valley United Way. Over the past several years, university employees have collectively contributed over $14,000 per year through workplace campaigns. In addition, Arkansas Tech employees have provided service to the organization through membership on the Board of Directors and as Senior Volunteers.

Table 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calendar Year</th>
<th>Total Contributions (Through the University)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$14,373.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$19,507.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$17,934.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$15,454.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: United Way Fort Smith and ATU Development Office*

Arkansas Tech University faculty, staff, and administrators engage in a broad spectrum of service activities to business, health care, government, and non-governmental organizations throughout the service regions. In addition, faculty and staff are active participants and leaders in state, regional, national, and international organizations related to their professions. See the Professional Organizations and Community Engagement reports in the Resource Room. As noted above, Arkansas Tech University publishes an annual *Faculty Accomplishments* that lists the activities of its full-time faculty. As would be expected, many of the accomplishments in the area of Professional Awards and Recognition are for service-related matters. In the past few years, Russellville Campus faculty have been recognized for their past service or appointed to boards to future service. Among the activities of the faculty noted in the publication are the following examples:

- Appointment by the Governor of Arkansas to the Advisory Council for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children.
• Appointment to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, National Legislative Committee.
• Appointment to the Arkansas State Board of Nursing, Education Committee.
• Appointment to the State of Arkansas Board of Examiners in Counseling.
• Appointment to the State of Arkansas Board of Examiners, Professional Licensure Advisory Board.
• Appointment by the Governor to the State Board of Registration for Professional Geologists.

Public Programming and Outreach

Arkansas Tech University serves the public through a number of programs, including adult education, continuing education, event-hosting services, cultural and sporting events, economic development and business leadership programs, and recreational facilities and activities. The following selected examples illustrate the outreach efforts of the University.

Arkansas Tech University - Ozark Campus and the Professional Development Institute of Arkansas Tech University have partnered to provide customized training to several area industries through the Arkansas Incumbent Worker Training Program. Under the federal Workforce Investment Act, the Arkansas Incumbent Worker Training Program provides funding for innovative training projects that will benefit business and industry by assisting the skill development of incumbent workers, thereby increasing employee opportunities and company growth and productivity. Training in portable skills results in a more highly skilled and versatile workforce that contributes to Arkansas’ ability to attract new business and creates an environment conducive to expansion. Funding for projects in which Arkansas Tech will participate exceeds $200,000, with over 40 training events scheduled for 2010 and 2011 in the Arkansas River Valley. Training topics include leadership skills, computer skills, electrical skills, safety, National Electric Code, Lean manufacturing, and many other industry specific areas.

Arkansas Tech has worked with the Russellville School District and Atkins School District on the High School Redesign Collaborative Partnership, designed to identify practical ways to make math instruction more meaningful and relevant to students.

The Arkansas Tech Observatory is open to the public the first Tuesday of each month (weather permitting) from September through May, excluding January, with an average annual participation of approximately 200 visitors. In addition, three nights a year the astronomy faculty host a stargazing event at Mt. Nebo State Park (April, September, and November) with average attendance of 75 per night.

The Arkansas Tech University Museum, formerly the Museum of Prehistory and History, provides exhibits for public viewing and educational opportunities for schools in the area. Established in December 1989, the Museum provides a center for collection, conservation, interpretation, and research concerning the history of Arkansas Tech University while making this knowledge and interpretation available to the community.
The Ross Pendergraft Library and Technology Center has a program for community members to access library services including book checkouts, interlibrary loan, and internet access. The Technology Center on the third floor is available for community use as a small convention facility.

The Arkansas Tech University Board of Trustees has been granted a license by the Federal Communications Commission to operate KXRJ, a non-commercial, non-profit, educational radio broadcast facility. The mission of the station is to provide news, educational programming, non-main stream music, and information to the university and surrounding communities. The station is also operated as an instructional facility for the Department of Speech, Theatre, and Journalism. KXRJ operates on frequency 91.9 MHz, and broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. KXRJ is also the official notification station for Arkansas Nuclear One, and plant officials have the capacity to remotely gain control of KXRJ programming in the event of some type of emergency at the nuclear plant.

Arkansas Tech University also operates Tech TV, which provides the Russellville cable-subscribing households with non-commercial information and entertainment programming. In addition, Tech TV endeavors to provide an opportunity for the students of Arkansas Tech University to participate in all aspects of television production, gain experience in the field of broadcasting, develop visual skills, learn news writing skills, and create programming that fosters ideas of creative expression. Tech TV provides nine live newscasts each week regarding on-campus activities and university sports, as well as other noncommercial information and entertainment programming during the academic year. Tech TV also broadcasts the Russellville City Council meetings each month as a service to the community. The Broadcast Journalism program excels in preparing students for work in the television industry. Currently, in a three state area, there are 22 Broadcast Journalism graduates employed at commercial television stations in cities such as Little Rock, Tulsa, Baton Rouge, Springfield, Fort Smith, and Fayetteville.

For the past few years, the College of Art and Humanities has partnered with the Arkansas River Valley Arts Center to co-produce a Broadway style musical. This relationship places faculty from Arkansas Tech in leadership positions to interact with over one hundred community members and area public school professionals in designing and performing highly popular productions that are presented on campus in Witherspoon Auditorium. This same cadre of Tech faculty plus selected students interacts annually with the Russellville, Clarksville, Dardanelle, Dover, Pottsville and further-removed public schools as consultants’ and technical resources for theatre and music theatre productions.

Both Hull Hall and Tucker Coliseum provide numerous recreational opportunities for local residents. Racquetball courts, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, and others features of Hull
Hall are available for use by community residents. The circular hallway that surrounds the interior of Tucker Coliseum, the Campus basketball and multi-purpose facility, serves as a popular indoor walking facility for many residents of the community.

The Health and Physical Education Complex, Hull Building, houses a variety of programs and facilities available to Arkansas Tech University students, faculty, and staff for recreational pursuits. The facility houses four racquetball courts, which are available for recreational play when classes are not in session. The natatorium contains a pool that is seventy-five feet long and fifty feet wide with eight swimming lanes and three diving boards. The pool is available for recreational swimming at the established times for students, faculty, and staff. The public may also purchase pool passes. Arkansas Tech serves the local community by providing facilities for the Russellville High School Swim Team. Two gymnasiums are also available for use with twelve badminton courts, three basketball courts, nine volleyball courts, and three tennis courts marked off on the two gymnasium floors. Outside facilities include an eight-lane 440 yard track, an activity field located next to the Hull Building, and an intramural field located on the northeast corner of campus. The university also operates the Tech Fit Wellness/Fitness Center, which houses two Nautilus Circuits.

Arkansas Tech University offers several camps for young athletes in basketball, football, baseball, and volleyball. Designed as a means of community and sports-fan outreach, the primary objective of the program is to have fun while developing fundamental skills, which enable young athletes to be successful. The coaching staffs involved in the camps provide individuals of different ages, experience levels, and skill levels with appropriate instruction. The Music Department presents over 100 evening concerts and recitals each year in Witherspoon Auditorium that are free and open to the public. The Department also offers three summer band camps that combine a similar effort as the sports camps with an institutionalized alumni focus group. Each of the music camps is designed by age and ability. In addition to the participation of alumni music teachers from around the state as instructors, a number of music majors participate as camp counselors. This cooperative effort between faculty, professional alumni, and pre-professional aspiring alumni provides an intensive interactive environment, both formal and informal. The annual participation of over 2000 students reflects a major arts and service-related outreach activity.

The Ozark Campus Community Resources Fair is an expo designed to support individuals and families in the River Valley. The fair works to strengthen relationships with and increase awareness of services available to under-resourced individuals in the community.

The Revitalize Our Communities Now Program on the Ozark Campus is a result of a pilot program grant from the Arkansas Department of Higher Education Sustainable Communities through Community College Leadership Initiative. The program is an economic development project focused on a mentoring program that bridges impoverished individuals to a better life in order to increase the ability of the community to support sustainable lifestyles for all.

The Ozark Kids Campus is a program provided by the Ozark Campus in collaboration with the Ozark Area Youth Organization, United Way, and the Ozark Public Schools. The program combines fun and learning for children in grades K-4. Kids Campus is designed to support literacy, education, and the area youth through activities such as art, computer safety, literacy, music, and robotics.
The Ozark Campus actively participates in Franklin County Works, a county-wide economic development committee that resulted from the 2008 Arkansas Works Summit, The Governor’s Summit on Education and Economic Development.

Finally, the Student Government Associations on the Russellville and Ozark campuses engage actively in programs designed to better their communities. Examples are community food drives, participation in United Way campaigns, Heart Walks, Red Cross Blood Drives, and participation in Earth Day and other environmental awareness events.

Alumni Relations

Arkansas Tech University has an active alumni association and Office of Alumni Relations. Dedicated to advancing the mission of Arkansas Tech University, the Office of Alumni Relations is guided by the strategic plans. In furtherance of the strategic goals and mission, the Office strives to create, maintain, and enhance relationships among alumni, current and prospective students, faculty, staff, and friends in order to foster loyalty, interest, and support for Arkansas Tech and for one another. The Office of Alumni Relations works to instill in Arkansas Tech alumni and friends the value of a lifelong relationship with the University.

The Office of Alumni Relations at Arkansas Tech University is a branch of the Office of Development, which works to secure private financial support for Arkansas Tech University and for the fulfillment of the University Mission. The Office of Alumni Relations has a major impact on not only the alumni, but also the students. The main goal is to foster relationships with alumni in hopes that they will maintain positive feelings about their university. The Office of Alumni Relations enhances the university through working with alumni to contribute to the institution by volunteerism or financial donations. As the table below illustrates, the majority of donors to the Office of Development have been Arkansas Tech alumni.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of All Donors</th>
<th>Number of Alumni Donors</th>
<th>Alumni as Percentage of All Donors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>1288</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>1209</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>1710</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>977</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>1707</td>
<td>1142</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Throughout the year, the Office of Alumni Relations provides several programs and events. The events range from philanthropic endeavors to family friendly activities. One ongoing activity is the Alumni Board and the Young Alumni Advisory Board. Both boards are made of alumni volunteers who meet semi-annually to discuss alumni programming and act as the voice of their peers. Another volunteer opportunity occurs each semester during finals week, when alumni volunteers serve coffee and donuts, provided by the Office of Alumni Relations, to the students as a good luck wish on their finals. Some of the more popular social events include Tech Day at the Races at Oaklawn Park, Arkansas Tech Night at the Arkansas Naturals and Travelers baseball games, and various dinners around the state.

The Office of Alumni Relations has several means of communication that the alumni utilize to remain connected with each other and Arkansas Tech University. As discussed in Criterion Four, the university created TechTies to serve as an online university community that allows alumni to post news about recent accomplishments. In addition, numerous social communication sites, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter, are used to communicate with alumni. Current participation in the above-mentioned means of communication are as follows:

Table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Registered Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TechTies</td>
<td>2599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>2064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MySpace</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CORE COMPONENT 5C

Arkansas Tech University demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

Arkansas Tech University realizes the importance and vitality of its ability to respond to its multiple constituencies. This responsiveness and collaboration assures the relevance of the programs offered by the University, and guarantees the its sustainability. The colleges and departments of Arkansas Tech employ a variety of methods to involve the constituents of the University, with advisory boards and committees, camps for elementary, middle, and high school students, campus fairs, training seminars, and health clinics being the most common venues.

Arkansas Tech University maintains close ties to its community, which demands a high level of responsiveness on the part of the institution and engenders a sense of responsibility to the community. In response to community needs, Arkansas Tech engages in collaborative ventures with area educational systems, articulation agreements, transfer policies that recognize the mobility of learners, partnerships with area business and economic development organizations, and development of academic programs that address needs of the service areas.

Collaboration with Educational Constituencies

Arkansas Tech University actively participates in a variety of collaborative arrangements and partnerships with other higher learning organizations and education sectors that are designed to increase efficiency, quality, and student success.

As of November 2010, Arkansas Tech University had 14 official partnerships initiatives: Building Sustainable Communities Grant; Viticulture and Enology Science and Technology Alliance; RN to BSN Program; Bachelor of Professional Studies; Emergency Management, and Emergency Management and Homeland Security; Degree Center at Mid-South Community College; BS in Early Childhood Education; AS in Early Childhood Education; Degree Completion for Associate Degrees; Student Exchange with Komazawa University; BS Degree with Certification as Medical Technologist; One-plus-Three Program with Zhongshan Institute; Memorandum of Understanding with Northwestern State University of Louisiana for Two-plus-Two Program in Criminal Justice; and the Area Career and Technical Center. Additional information on these initiatives and partners can be found in the Resource Room. Arkansas Tech University participates in the P-16 Partnership, which works to find common ground and establish partnerships between secondary and post-secondary educational institutions across Arkansas. The P-16 Partnership is an education reform strategy that brings together all three state education agencies, schools and colleges (pre-school through college) to provide the best possible preparation for citizenship and employment. The primary goals of the P-16 Partnership are improved student achievement and improved quality of teaching. The P-16 Partnership activities are funded by a federal grant under the Teacher Quality Enhancement Program administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.
Arkansas Tech University participates in the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS), a postsecondary education resource service that provides comparable course information to facilitate student transfer within Arkansas public colleges and universities. The ACTS database contains faculty-generated comparable course information for a number of courses offered at public institutions in Arkansas. Comparable courses within ACTS are guaranteed to transfer for full credit to any Arkansas public institution. ACTS is beneficial for students, parents, and academic advisors because it provides accurate, up-to-date comparable course information for educational planning and informed decision-making.

Arkansas Tech University also participates in concurrent enrollment of high school students, within the guidelines established by the State of Arkansas and the Arkansas Department of Higher Education. Through concurrent enrollment, Arkansas Tech maintains partnerships with area school districts to offer credit opportunities in general education. High school students concurrently enrolled at Arkansas Tech University receive dual credit for a course. As part of the concurrent enrollment program, local school districts are provided with collegiate advising and professional development for the high school faculty member teaching the coursework.

The Department of Nursing participates in several community activities such as health fairs, Relay for Life, and the March of Dimes. The Department has partnerships with Jefferson Regional Medical Center, National Park Community College, North Arkansas College, Sparks Medical Center, and Baptist Health Education System to provide educational opportunities to those nurses who are either employed there or who have graduated from those institutions. The Department also does academic advising at these sites for the RN to BSN online program.

**Mobility of Learners**

Arkansas Tech University creates an environment supportive of the mobility of learners by utilizing appropriately developed transfer policies. As mentioned above, Arkansas Tech participates in the Arkansas Course Transfer System (ACTS), which provides comparable course information to facilitate student transfer within Arkansas public colleges and universities. In addition to ACTS, Arkansas Tech adopted its current transfer credit policy in 2006, effective January 2, 2007:

Credit from colleges and universities accredited by one of the six U.S. regional accreditation associations will be accepted for transfer credit. Credit from U.S. colleges and universities not accredited by one of the six regional accreditation associations will not be accepted for transfer credit. Credit from colleges or universities outside the U.S. presented for transfer credit will be considered on an individual basis. A maximum of 68 semester hours of
acceptable credit may be transferred from community colleges. Transfer credit, although accepted by the university, is not guaranteed to be applicable toward meeting degree requirements for all programs offered by the university. Applicability of transfer credit to meet degree requirements depends on the major selected by the transfer student.

In response to Arkansas ACT 182 of 2009 of the Arkansas General Assembly, commonly known as the Roger Phillips Transfer Policy Act, faculty and department heads identified 60-64 semester hours in each four-year program that are commonly taught at two-year institutions. Identification of these courses provides potential transfer students with information needed to move seamlessly from the two-year program into the baccalaureate degree program.

**Partnerships Based on Shared Community Goals**

Arkansas Tech University participates in partnerships that focus on the shared educational, economic, and social goals of the community. These partnerships are collectively encouraged, and vary dependent upon the University unit that is active in the particular partnership. Examples include but are not limited to partnerships with the following agencies: Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, Baldor Electric, Mid-South Roller, Greenville Tube, SGL Carbon, Bank of the Ozarks, Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative, Green Bay Packaging, Kimberly-Clarke, and Entergy.

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Hospitality Administration entered into a cooperative agreement with the United States Forest Service whereby Arkansas Tech University students gain basic forest fire fighting certification (i.e., Red Card) and the Forest Service gets additional members for their fire crews. Arkansas Tech supplies an instructor and class room, and the Forest Service provides equipment and educational materials for the course. The Department also has an agreement and Memorandum of Understanding with Arkansas State Parks, through which the state parks become living laboratories for the Parks, Recreation, and Hospitality Administration academic programs. Through this agreement, Arkansas Tech is better able to prepare students for work in state parks, lodges, restaurants, visitor centers, and pools.

The Department of Emergency Management has a service agreement with the Arkansas Department of Health to develop and facilitate their annual Mass Dispensing Exercise Program. Under this partnership both undergraduate and graduate students are involved in developing the exercise planning and training materials, conducting training and presentations, and facilitating the execution of the live exercises. These activities are statewide in scope.

The Department of Emergency Management and the Professional Development Institute partnered with the Arkansas Crisis Response Team to present a basic crisis response training course in April 2010 at the Lake Point Conference Center. The two-day event focused on the treatment of post-traumatic emotional stress experienced by those involved as either victims or responders, with the training concentrating on the fundamentals of crisis and trauma, as well as issues related to culture, ethnicity, children, the elderly, and special populations.

The Department of Emergency Management also coordinates the Arkansas HAZUS User Group, whose purpose is to facilitate the use of the HAZUS-MH models for flooding and
earthquake risk assessment in Arkansas and to form the basis for both pre- and post-disaster decision-making. The Group creates a framework through which professionals, volunteer organizations, and individuals can collaborate to more effectively conduct risk management. The technology and software used by the program currently addresses the risk associated with three natural hazards: flooding, earthquakes, and hurricanes. Key goals of Arkansas HAZUS User Group are to expand the application of and to improve and refine the capability of HAZUS to support the threats specific to Arkansas. The Group receives support from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State of Arkansas State, local governments, academia, non-profits, and the public sector.

The Department of Behavioral Sciences partners with multiple agencies as part of the River Valley Meth Project. Begun in August 2004, the River Valley Meth Project (RVMP) is a collaborative effort between the Pope County Sheriff's Office, the 5th Judicial District Prosecutor, and an Arkansas Tech University professor who was sought out to expand the collaboration to the larger community. The law enforcement initiative and directive came from the Arkansas Drug Director who wanted a demonstration project aimed at eradication of methamphetamine use, production, and distribution in Pope County. By December, 2004, Arkansas Tech had developed an organizational plan which resulted in 59 agencies and organizations becoming actively engaged in the Project. By late 2005, plans were developed by rehabilitation science and sociology professors at Arkansas Tech to engage students and faculty from multiple departments, including Behavioral Sciences, Art, Emergency Management, and Speech, Theater, and Journalism. The first task for these departments was to develop and conduct a community survey and symposium related to the meth problem. In addition to the student research and learning opportunities, the ARVAC/Bob Adkison Addictions Research Scholarship was developed in 2007 and has been awarded to three Behavioral Sciences students. By the Fall of 2010, the Rehabilitation Science program, in collaboration with key members of the RVMP, developed a new emphasis area in ‘addictions’ which was added to the curriculum with one-year ARVAC community agency seed funding. The RVMP has received local, state, and national recognitions. Research related to the project continues.

Arkansas Tech University - Ozark Campus provides technical services for a multitude of individuals and agencies within our service area. Performed by the Ozark programs with which they are most applicable, these services are not used to generate profit for any individual, but rather as hands-on learning and application in the course of the overall educational experience. As a program capstone experience, all career and technical education students are encouraged to serve a three-week internship with a local business that is related to their field of study. These internships not only build a strong university partnership with industry partners, but also often serve as an effective means of job placement for those who complete the program.

The Business and Community Outreach Program on the Ozark Campus addresses the educational and training needs of area businesses. The program partners with individual businesses and consortia in order to design and implement classes and training programs which cater to the incumbent workforce. As noted previously, these classes are open to the public unless customized for a particular business. The Business and Community Outreach Program works closely with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission to access possible grants and other funding sources that may offset training costs for businesses. The Program also assists partners with grant writing for regional economic development opportunities.
Arkansas Tech University responded to the calls by the grape-growing and wine-making industries for assistance in creating a trained local workforce by developing technical certificates in viticulture and enology. These programs are supported by the Viticulture and Enology Science Technology Alliance (funded by a National Science Foundation grant), which partners member colleges in a collaborative effort to maximize resources. This collaboration also allows for the standardization of viticulture and enology instruction among partner institutions. Through the University partnership in the alliance, Arkansas Tech students who enroll in the viticulture and enology programs in Ozark have available to them the local instructional resources as well as electronically delivered courses by industry leaders.

In August 2009, Arkansas Tech University became aware of an opportunity to join with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the University of Arkansas at Little Rock as a partner in the Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC). Shortly thereafter, agreements were finalized and a Director and Training Coordinator of the ASBTDC/Russellville Office were on the job at the beginning of 2010, with offices located in Rothwell Hall. The nine counties served by the ASBTDC office at Arkansas Tech are Conway, Pope, Johnson, Franklin, Crawford, Sebastian, Scott, Logan, and Yell. Services are open to all small business owners, or prospective business owners, without regard to race, color, gender, or any other basis. The consulting services are offered free and the seminars, courses, and other training opportunities are offered at low cost, so business people can obtain important skills and information to make good decisions to support their success goals. The center at Arkansas Tech was the seventh in the State of Arkansas.

Building Bridges Among Diverse Communities

As noted in Criterion One, Arkansas Tech University affirms its commitment to providing a solid educational foundation for life-long learning to a diverse community of learners. As detailed throughout this Self-Study Report, the policies and practices of the University reveal its respect for the dignity of individuals, its concerns for the particular needs of a diverse student body, and its acknowledgment of the leading role the university must play in a multicultural society. For Arkansas Tech University, diversity has a greater meaning and scope than simply race and gender. For the university, diversity is relative to the local perspectives of our historic regional service area and the sharing of different perspectives based on socioeconomic and geographic factors can be as important as the sharing of different perspectives relative to race and gender.

The programs of engagement at Arkansas Tech University strive to build effective bridges among diverse communities. These programs include but are not limited to the following:

The Office of Student Services on both the Russellville and Ozark campuses sponsor numerous programs and activities designed to build bridges among the student population. As noted previously in this Report, Student Services oversees more than 100 student organizations on the Russellville and Ozark campuses that cover such broad themes as special interest, professional, honorary, multicultural, religious, recreational, and social. Through the activities of these various organizations, the university community becomes more aware of other groups and hopefully more appreciative of their positions on issues.
On-campus diversity initiatives and programs – like Hispanic History Month, Black History Month, the Eid-Al-Fitr Informational Event, and the 50-Minute Tour Program – that celebrate diversity and foster a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere.

Arkansas Tech University faculty, staff, and administrators are engaged as consultants, volunteers, and board members in a broad spectrum of activities that enrich the social, cultural, and economic life of the local communities. See the Community Engagement report in the Resource Room.

The [International and Multicultural Student Services Office](#) (IMSSO) is dedicated to providing student support services which enhance the college experience for international and multicultural students. Programs and activities are designed to encourage the intellectual and social development of students by providing opportunities for cross-cultural interaction. The achievement of academic excellence and the development of sensitivity, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity throughout the campus community provide the foundation for support of all its services. IMSSO efforts include the Association for Cultural Interaction, which promotes international cultural understanding and appreciation among students, faculty, staff and the community through social and educational activities supporting the International and Multicultural Student Services Office in its efforts toward globalizing the curriculum, campus, and community.

Facilitated through the Office of Student Services on the Ozark Campus, the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative strives to eliminate educational barriers for qualified participants. Through the program, participants can receive assistance in obtaining a General Educational Development (GED) diploma, obtaining the textbooks needed to complete an education, possibly obtaining funds for childcare vouchers and transportation assistance. The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative enables two-year colleges to offer to those who qualify career training and college classes. Pathways also helps participants through job readiness classes that result in an employer-recognized certificates that include a CPI employability certificate and a Career Readiness Certificate. The Pathways program also develops and promotes lifelong learning by outlining bridges leading to increased educational attainment.
CORE COMPONENT 5D

Internal and external constituencies value the services that Arkansas Tech University provides.

Arkansas Tech University uses a number of well-structured feedback methods to assess the value that internal and external constituents place on the services provided by the institution. These methods include program advisory boards and committees; participant evaluations of workshops and community education courses; focus groups and surveys with alumni, employers, and the community; student course and facility evaluations; collaborative partnership reviews; and continued requests for new and expanded services and support from the community in general. As detailed above and supported by formal and informal inquiries, Arkansas Tech University is valued for the services it provides to faculty, staff, students, and external constituencies. The University is confident that it is achieving its stated vision and mission, as evidenced by advisory committee meetings, participation by employees in community-based organizations and programs, and requests for university collaboration with a wide range of public and private entities.

Arkansas Tech University was one of the first universities in the United States to offer a degree in Emergency Management, and in 2004 the university received a three-year Congressional grant to augment its Emergency Administration and Management Academy with emergency plans and exercises and a state-of-the-art emergency operations center. The grant-funded activities were designed to:

- Establish the first wireless Emergency Operations Center designed as a simulations laboratory where Emergency Management majors would receive training and hands-on experience using current and emerging technologies;
- Improve the effectiveness of emergency personnel at the county, municipal, state, regional, and national levels in planning, mitigation, and response efforts by utilizing the Emergency Operations Center to provide both training and support services;
- Utilize the resources of the Emergency Administration and Management Academy to provide specialized research, training, and public education related to bioterrorism, weapons of mass destruction, and other Homeland Security issues affecting national security and preparedness;
- Develop and implement an Emergency Operations Plan for Arkansas Tech University that utilizes the capabilities of the Emergency Operations Center to prepare for and respond to emergencies on-campus;
- Pursue collaborative projects with government and industry utilizing the Arkansas Tech University campus as an emergency incident command center in the event of a major catastrophe.

Some of the specific examples of community involvement by the Emergency Administration and Management Academy are a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Health to use the technical and personnel resources of the Academy for planning and facilitating its annual National Strategic Stockpile Exercise as required by the Center for Disease Control; and its partnership with the Department of Homeland Security to support its annual Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness exercise program using student personnel trained in the Academy.
Further evidence that the services of Arkansas Tech University are valued include the on-going partnerships with the Emergency Management Department and several major Arkansas state government agencies to supply student interns who provide expertise in the Arkansas Continuity of Operation Program; and its partnerships with other institutions of higher learning (e.g., Oklahoma State University, North Dakota State University, University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, and National Park Community College) to leverage Academy lessons learned and resources for those institutions.

Arkansas Tech University has long believed its constituencies value the services that the Institution provides. Long-time giving to the Institution is one indicator of the value of the service provided by the University, and a review of *Tech Action* indicates a growing number of Loyalty Society donors, individuals who have given consistently for ten years or more.

Information regarding constituent perceptions is also obtained in the variety of formal and informal surveys and data collection methods that help the University learn from these constituencies. Other examples that demonstrate the fact that University constituencies value the services that Arkansas Tech provides include:

- Members of the local communities serve willingly on the Arkansas Tech University Board of Trustees, individual program advisory committees, and as members and officers of the University Alumni Association.

- Public attendance at musical and theatrical productions by the University testifies to the value of the Institution as a community artistic and cultural resource.

- Public use of conference and meeting facilities, especially those at the Lake Point Conference Center and the Student Services and Conference Center, illustrate the value of the University as a community social and economic resource.

Arkansas Tech University has a history of responding to professional development needs in its service area, particularly programs serving the healthcare, criminal justice, fire science, technology, and education sectors. Arkansas Tech is committed to the continued assessment of training needs of its communities and to the education of its constituencies through both Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and credit hours. The university offers workshops and coursework that award CEUs and credit hours to both current students and community professionals as a means of advancing current expertise through training or certification. Constituent participation in the range of offerings by the College of Professional Studies and Community Outreach and the Business and Community Outreach Program document the fact that the University is valued as meeting the education needs of the local communities.
CONCLUSIONS

Overall, Arkansas Tech University is serving its student, community, and faculty constituencies in a wide range of ways. The one obvious challenge is implementing a successful means of obtaining regular useful input from the University staff personnel to improve effectiveness and productivity. Arkansas Tech University lacks formal processes designed specifically to gain useful input from staff personnel. While it does support the sharing of ideas between staff and the administration through normal chain-of-command processes, the cumulative years of experience possessed by the staff at all levels could be better mined to gather greater data on ways in which the university could improve staff productivity, retention, and effectiveness.
Arkansas Tech University Takes Pride In:

- Becoming a university of choice, a reflection of the quality of Enrollment Management and program diversity
- Responding to the needs of its constituencies
- Maintaining an identity as an institution that values teaching and student learning
- Developing effective retention programs, particularly Bridge to Excellence, the Orientation to the University (TECH 1001) and Principles of College Success (CSP 1013)

Arkansas Tech University Is Challenged To:

- Improve communication between the Russellville and Ozark campuses
- Satisfactorily address the effect of the rapid growth of the University, especially in the areas of student-teacher ratio and dependence upon adjunct faculty
- Identify internal and external constituencies who are under-served, and assess the needs of these constituents
- Identify and implement a program that establishes a means of regular input from staff personnel