



Arkansas State University Mid-South Kicks Off Year-Long 25th Anniversary Celebration
by Dr. Debra West, Chancellor ASU Mid-South



FORWARD. THINKING.

Benjamin Franklin once said that an investment in knowledge pays the best interest. We at ASU Mid-South certainly believe that to be true and we hope our constituencies agree. In 1992, the taxpayers of Crittenden County invested in higher education by passing a local millage to support the development of a comprehensive community college. That critical vote solidified a noble vision of providing local citizens access to high quality and affordable postsecondary education and training. That vision, put forth by community leaders, sought more opportunity and a better quality of life for all the people of Crittenden County. Now, twenty-five years later, ASU Mid-South's Board of Visitors, its Foundation Board, and its faculty, staff, and students still reflect with gratitude on that financial investment made by local taxpayers. Because of that investment in us, we consider it a moral obligation and, indeed, a privilege to provide exceptional programs and services to meet the education and training needs of the students and the communities we serve.

Over the course of the next year, we will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of your community's college. We will chronicle the major events over the past twenty-five years which transformed Mid-South Vocational/Technical School, an institution targeted for closure by the State, with three buildings and approximately 120 students, into Mid-South Community College and, finally, Arkansas State University Mid-South. ASU Mid-South is known as one of the State's most aesthetically pleasing campuses, with state-of-the art equipment and facilities, and an extraordinarily talented and dedicated faculty and staff. We offer a continuum of educational opportunities right here in Crittenden County that includes Literacy and Adult Education (GED) programming, Industry-Recognized Credentials, Certificates and Associate Degrees, and even Bachelors' and Master's degrees made possible through

partnerships with universities, such as Arkansas State, the University of Central Arkansas, and the University of Arkansas Fort Smith.

Taxpayers should be proud that their investment continues to pay dividends in many ways. Over the past twenty-five years, external funding brought to the region by the college has exceeded \$100 million. The college also provides an annual infusion of an estimated \$32.8 million to the local economy, including approximately \$10.7 million in net added income to Crittenden County each year due to payroll and operational spending by the college. Additionally, according to a 2011 report prepared by Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI), the College adds more than \$22 million in added regional income attributable to higher earnings by students and increased output and efficiencies for area businesses. But, by far the greatest impact from our work can be seen in the thousands of lives that have been changed for the better because of this institution. The EMSI report shows that, on average, for every dollar a student invests in ASU Mid-South, that student receives an additional \$8.10 in future income over the course of their careers.

Finally, Mid-South has amassed numerous regional and national recognitions over the last two and a half decades, establishing its reputation as a leader in education and workforce development. These include a visit from then President of the United States, Bill Clinton, in 1999, as a part of a regional Workforce Summit; recognition in 2008 of the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC), led by Mid-South, as a premiere workforce training model in the nation; and more recently, recognition by the Southern Business and Development magazine as one of the top ten workforce colleges in the South. From now through October of 2018, we will celebrate these and many other Mid-South Milestones. You will read about them in this newspaper and see them unfold on our campus. We will celebrate a history involving individuals, businesses, and organizations whose forward thinking and tenacity have helped to build a world class institution with impressive success.

We can't wait to celebrate this year with you, as we collectively look to the next twenty-five years of forward thinking that will continue to shape the educational and economic landscape of Crittenden County and the Delta.

Mid-South the early days



ASU Mid-South today

