

## What's to Come

### BLACKBOARD

Everyone has access to the QEP Blackboard organization. Please take a minute to check this out as we will utilize this site to communicate with the campus community. We know that everyone has A LOT going on and meetings are hard to schedule, so we are hoping that through this open forum we will be able to have many conversations and share ideas.

If you have not signed up for a Focus Group to discuss the research that has been done associated with Experiential Learning, please be sure to sign up and provide your comments.

### I TRIPLE DOG DARE YOU...

During the month of March we will be developing the definition of what Experiential Learning means for Athens State University. Once we have this clear view, I challenge all professors to find a creative way to get their students involved in this QEP process.

The first challenge is to answer the question of how to get your students involved in the process of coming up with a "catch phrase" for Experiential Learning. The second challenge is to encourage your students to submit a logo for Experiential Learning.

Watch your email for more information.

Katia Maxwell, QEP Director



## From a Color Run to the Governor's Office How Experiential Learning Projects Make a Difference

*"Experiential learning is like dropping a pebble in water and watching the ripple effect as it moves further and further outward accomplishing more and more and impacting more and more lives."— Prof. Laura Lynn Kerner*

**The story starts** when a former Athens State student, Mariyanna Castleberry, who had done some experiential learning projects, contacted her Instructor to ask for help to bring a speaker on dyslexia to Athens State. Mariyanna's son, Aiden, had dyslexia and had to be withdrawn from public schools because of the lack of resources. Her mission was to help other children with dyslexia by giving administrators, teachers, education students, parents and grandparents information about the signs of dyslexia and how to help them.

Mariyanna contacted her former teacher right before Spring Break. She needed to raise \$5,000 for the speaker and publicity for the seminar. Being late in the semester Ms. Kerner had only one class she could use, a Marketing Principles class, an introductory course. Mariyanna presented the project to the students and they jumped on board. The students brainstormed and came up with the idea of a color run to raise money. It wouldn't bring in all the money needed so they decided to solicit money from sponsors and create a Gofundme and Facebook page. They needed a location, publicity, emergency service support, supplies for the color run, T-shirts and banners, and a plan to manage the run from start to finish, a major project management initiative. Students also realized that the class would be over and grades given before the date of the color run, but they pressed on.

**BUT then.....** on the date of the color run, they were successful. Fifty people came. Even with a snake scare they came out unscathed. The \$5,000 goal was met with the color run event, sponsorships and a contribution solicited from the Livingston Concert/Lecture Series.

**Publicity for the seminar** came next. Since the seminar by Nelson Luvor would be in mid-October the project had to start immediately after the Fall semester began. Since it was an online class, planning would start with a kickoff face-to-face meeting in the middle of August. After that, coordination would be virtual with only two months to accomplish everything. E-mail addresses of every administrator and teacher in grades K – 12 in 5 counties were obtained. Promotional e-mails were created and sent out. A student created a professional video to promote the event and provide knowledge about dyslexia. Flyers were created to send to Colleges of Education and distributed to their students. A STI-PD number and certificates were created to give teachers credit for professional development. Wallet cards with the "signs of dyslexia" on them were created. Students persevered until they got WHNTV-Channel 19 to agree to do an interview with Mariyanna and her son Aiden.

**It was a cold, rainy night.....** AND 100 people showed up to a perfectly orchestrated seminar, with registration desk, table decorations, food, a perfect sound system setup, an after speech discussion panel and a goody bag on every seat with the wallet cards and material about Athens State. Some came from as far away as Birmingham.

**The Impact –** The publicity generated by the color run, the TV interviews, and the seminar led to Mariyanna Castleberry being contacted by Representative Easterbook who asked if her son, Aiden, could come to Montgomery to speak to a group of representatives. Rep. Easterbook supported a bill to fund resources for dyslexic students in public schools and had previously used the "color run" T-shirt to make an emotional appeal for the bill to other representatives. The T-shirts stated that 1 in 5 students had dyslexia. The bill subsequently passed the House and Senate and was signed into law in July 2019 by Governor Kay Ivey.

That's how the story went from a color run to the Governor's office. A success story about how experiential learning projects make a difference in the lives of students and the recipients of their efforts.



Congratulations to the winners of the Panera Bread Gift Cards!

Student: Ms. Allison Wright  
 Staff: Ms. Shelia Davis  
 Faculty: Dr. Mary Beth Johns

## The Results Are Still Coming In.....

Thanks to each of you who participated in the recent QEP Survey. As of last Friday, this is what the response rate looked like.

Responses	Total
Students	227
Staff	36
Faculty	48
Board of Visitors & Trustees	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>325</b>

## Your Voice Matters!



The QEP Leadership Team will be leading small group discussions about Experiential Learning and questions such as:

- What has been successful?
- What has not worked?
- How do we assess Experiential Learning?
- How will WE know if it is working for OUR students?

This is where you come in. In the “New QEP” Blackboard organization, you can review the 10 different categories and find an area that interests you and join that particular Focus Group. Here are the Categories:

**Assessment**

**Behavioral, Social & Lab Sciences**

**Business**

**Communication**

**Design**

**Education**

**E-Learning**

**Field Experience**

**Multidisciplinary**

**Workforce**

If there is a category or topic that you would like to explore that is not on the above list please email Prof. Katia Maxwell so that she can locate the appropriate literature and add the category to the current ones.

## Highlight YOUR Students' Experience

**Have you done something outside of the normal in your classroom to provide your students with a unique experience?**

Let us highlight your project, research, or unique activity in the April issue of the Quality Enhancement Plan newsletter. All you have to do is write up a summary so we can get the word out about “your way of providing a unique experience to your students”. Summaries can be submitted to [katia.maxwell@athens.edu](mailto:katia.maxwell@athens.edu)