

## ANC symposium draws hundreds

By Chris Pinkard | Courier News

Arkansas Northeastern College hosted a Student Success Symposium on Wednesday, and with nearly 425 participants in attendance, organizers called the symposium a tremendous success.

“The success of such a large scale event relies upon the collective efforts of numerous college departments and personnel who are committed to building partnerships,” said conference organizer Sherri Bennett. “This was a unique opportunity for Mississippi County schools.”

The symposium brought in guest speakers from across the country to train and inspire educators to work together to see a greater success rate in the number of students who attend college.

Speakers present at the symposium, a first for the area, were praised for delivering relevant and engaging sessions on building stronger partnerships between secondary

and post-secondary educators.

“It was a remarkable day in terms of participation, content and quality,” said June Walters, ANC executive vice president.

A key speaker in attendance was Paul Vitale, who spoke to several groups about the leadership and determination required to achieve excellence. He stressed the significance of optimism and a strong work ethic in achieving the goals set forth by those organizing the conference. Vitale speaks all over the country to a wide variety of clients including ESPN, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and many others.

Local speakers included Deanita Hicks, coordinator of communications and humanities at ANC, who spoke to a large group of local high school teachers on the importance of collaboration, coordination and cooperation in making sure that each student is equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to succeed in each level of their education.

“We’re excited to have the opportunity to work with all of the school districts in the county and have all of our combined faculties work together to try to provide a better, more seamless educational path for all of our



Paul Vitale with Dr. Robin Myers after speaking to a large group of local educators on teamwork and leadership at Wednesday's symposium

students,” said ANC President Dr. Robin Myers about the symposium, in response to the overall atmosphere of Wednesday's collaborations.

The prompting behind the conference was the idea of building a better partnership between secondary and post-secondary educators in the area, according to Sherri Bennett. Local educators were given the tools to provide a more seamless transition for students from high school to college.

The symposium is expected to yield long-term results that would give students a better chance to succeed at a collegiate level, while also exposing high school teachers to new ways of encouraging their students to pursue higher education.



Leslie Wells with speaker Paul Vitale