



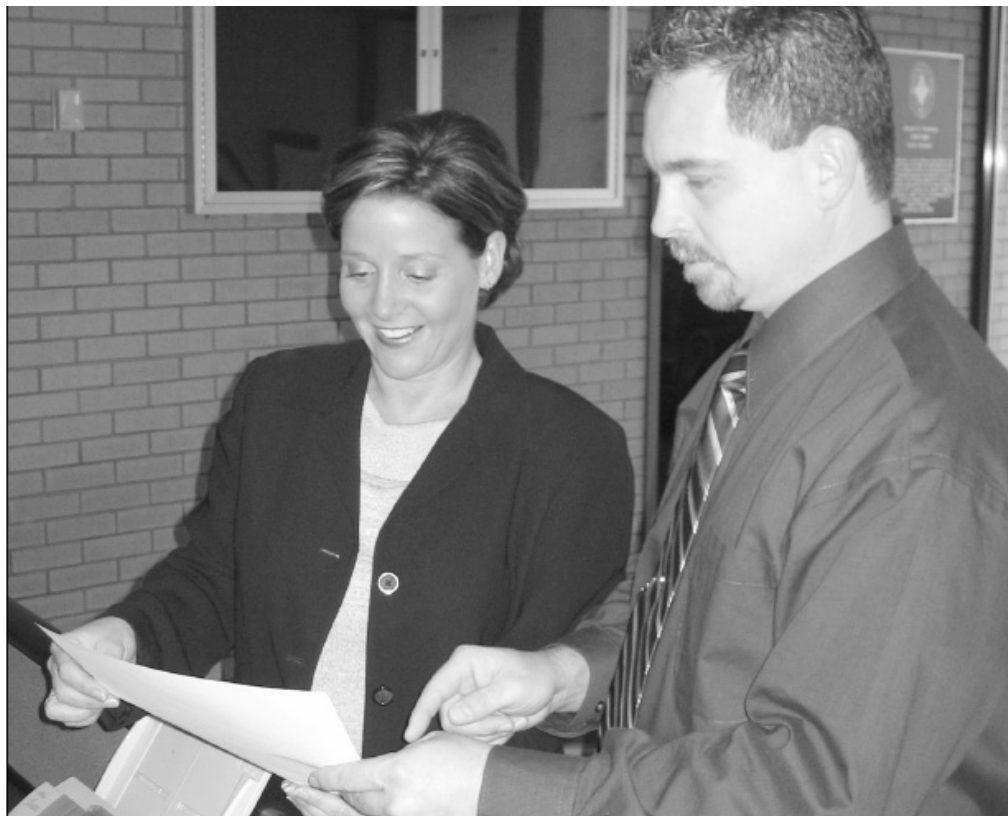
New OTC president Dawn Cartee has busy first month

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LUKE MARTIN/staff

New Ogeechee Technical College President Dawn Cartee, left, speaks with Russell Brannen, systems support specialist for the school, Wednesday morning.

Familiar face takes helm at OTC

See video of the Dawn Cartee

Go to statesboroherald.com and click on the video link.

By **LUKE MARTIN**
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Dawn Cartee wasted no time getting started as the new president of Ogeechee Technical College, scheduling a meeting at 7:15 a.m. on her first day.

In the three weeks since, Cartee said it's been a "whirlwind" of activity around her. In fact, this is the first week she'll spend all five days on campus.

"I didn't realize there was this much travel involved," she said.

Despite the travel, Cartee is trying to find time to meet with each full-time faculty and staff member at OTC and assessing her team to help reach the goals she has for the institution.

"Our focus, first and foremost, is strengthening the relationship with the community," she said. "But at the same time, we are going to initiate process-

es that will make us fine tune a lot of our procedures. Our focus is going to be on quality."

Cartee returns as president to the school she started her career as several years ago. She worked at OTC from 1991 to 1999 serving as a marketing instructor and public relations officer. She also worked as the school's admission's director, registrar and vice president of student services.

For the past seven years, Cartee has served as the vice president of academic affairs at Southeastern Technical College in Vidalia. However, she was living in Statesboro and commuting, which resulted in her passing OTC every day.

"It's undescrivable to be back," she said. "You don't realize how much you miss something until you're gone."

She said walking through the doors brought back a wave of emotions and flashbacks of her time there.

"To know this is where I started my career and now I

have the opportunity to come back and take it to the next level. Ogeechee Technical College has always had a special place in my heart."

Cartee replaced Gene Waters, who retired in July, 2006, due to health concerns.

One of her goals is to expand the school's involvement in the economic development in the area, something she says has been lacking.

"We've got some fences to mend and some relationships to build and a lot of work to do in terms of economic development in our community."

Cartee hopes to take Statesboro, Claxton and Sylvania "by storm" when it comes to economic development, saying that when there's a work force need, she wants people to think of Ogeechee Technical College first.

She also wants to focus on retaining and graduating students so that they are able to pass their national boards and state certifications.

"Our focus isn't just on quantity, it's on quality," she said.

In addition to expanding the school's impact on the business and industry in the community, Cartee wants to bring back some of the traditions done by the school when she was there previously, including buying turkeys for needy families at Thanksgiving, decorating Christmas trees and people's homes at Christmas and collecting fans for the elderly for the summer to keep them cool.

"It was fun," Cartee said of the traditions. "It brought a lot of camaraderie between the faculty and staff and we were doing good things for the community."

Cartee said she's anxious to continue getting to know the employees of the school and working with the students.

"I can not describe how wonderful the faculty and staff are. I've never seen a more energetic and motivated group of individuals."