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State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education

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PREPARING SOUTH CAROLINA'S WORKFORCE

The State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education operates the SC Technical College System. The System consists of three major components that work together to lead workforce development and economic development efforts in South Carolina: our 16 technical colleges, our readySC™ program, and our Apprenticeship Carolina™ program.

All components of the System work collaboratively to build South Carolina's workforce. As the state's primary mechanism for workforce and economic development, the System plays a critical role in shaping South Carolina's economic landscape. Working diligently to ensure that tomorrow's workforce is armed with the right knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the ever-changing demands of business and industry, the System is enhancing employability of the state's citizens and preparing a work-ready South Carolina.

OUR COLLEGES

South Carolina's technical colleges are driven by their mission to be affordable, accessible, and relevant to South Carolinians.

Affordability

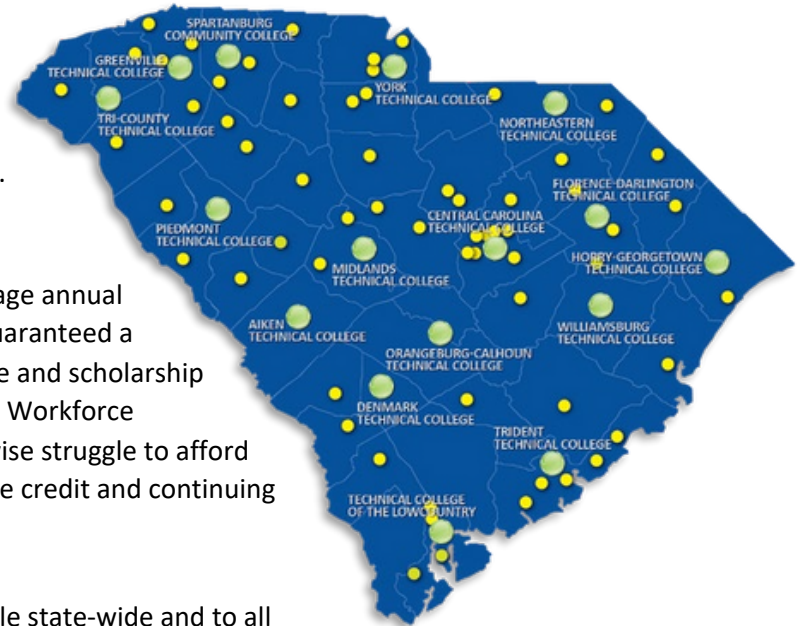
With a SC technical college education costing 37% of the average annual tuition of a four-year institution, our 134,000+ students are guaranteed a quality education at a fraction of the price. Financial assistance and scholarship programs, such as Lottery Tuition Assistance, SC WINS, and SC Workforce Scholarships for the Future, benefit students who may otherwise struggle to afford higher education. With these funds, our students can complete credit and continuing education programs with little to no debt.

Accessibility

Geographically and demographically, our colleges are accessible state-wide and to all populations. With 16 main campuses and 64 satellite campuses strategically located across the state, all South Carolinians are within a 30-minute drive of their local technical college. Enrollment statistics accurately reflect our communities, with 36% male, 64% female, and 46% minority representation. And with all 16 colleges offering dual enrollment, high school-aged students can earn college credit and even an associate degree before joining the workforce, continuing their education at one of our colleges, or matriculating to a four-year institution.

Relevance

Our 93% job placement rate is a testament to the breadth and depth of our programs, including 78 degrees, 28 diplomas, and nearly 1,000 certificate programs in high-demand, competitive fields. Steady innovation -- including top-notch training utilizing cutting-edge technology and equipment -- ensures our students know what to expect on the job, especially in high-demand STEM, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors. Our colleges are committed to recruiting and retaining highly skilled, technically advanced instructional faculty and staff. And by providing flexible learning options, counseling support, resources, and technology outreach, our colleges have proven their ability to adapt to a post-pandemic learning environment.



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READYSC™

Our readySC™ program was established as an economic development training incentive. Designed to guarantee that South Carolina could remain competitive through changing economic circumstances, readySC remains a key component of South Carolina's economic development engine and has been recognized for more than 60 years as one of the nation's premier programs of its kind. readySC focuses on the recruiting and initial training needs of new and expanding organizations in South Carolina by providing recruiting, assessment, training development, management, and implementation services to qualifying organizations that create new, permanent, full-time jobs for the state and offer competitive wages and benefits.

APPRENTICESHIP CAROLINA™

Established in 2007, Apprenticeship Carolina™ serves as the state's registered apprenticeship intermediary for South Carolina. Apprenticeship Carolina works with employers and the technical colleges to create demand-driven youth and adult registered apprenticeship programs and certified pre-apprenticeship programs across the state. Apprenticeship consultants and implementation specialists are a no-cost resource for employers to help build, maintain, and maximize the use of their program. The process ensures that companies obtain full recognition in the national Registered Apprenticeship system.

Through innovation, partnerships, and its reputation for excellence, Apprenticeship Carolina catalyzes the promotion of registered youth, adult, and pre-apprenticeships. Apprenticeship Carolina is committed to creating and strengthening career pathways that enrich and enhance South Carolina's existing and future workforce.

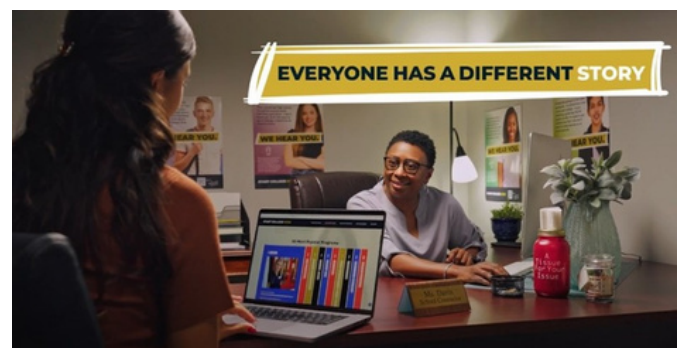
MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Leadership and Advocacy Initiatives

The System has always been and continues to be South Carolina's workforce development engine, offering organizations -- large, small, and all those in between -- a wide variety of programs and services designed to enhance the skill level of our state's workforce.

The impact is far-reaching. As the state's largest higher education sector, the System educates more of South Carolina's undergraduates than all other public colleges and universities combined, with student success considered an essential driver for the System. An impressive 93% of our graduates are employed in a job related to their education or are continuing their education at another higher education institution.

To maintain this standard of excellence, our largest and most impactful System-wide focus continues to be our statewide marketing initiative, Start College Here. In fall of 2023, we launched our We Hear You campaign, promoting the value of a technical college education to Gen Z students and their influencers. Through an innovative partnership with the SC High School League, our messages reached nearly 30,000 in-person attendees at the state high school football, basketball, and soccer championships, plus an additional 480,000 via television and digital streaming. Not only did our PA announcements, social media engagement, and 6-video series position a technical college education as the preferred alternative to other postsecondary options, but our in-person activations also opened dialogue between us and students, ensuring that our mission remains authentic and student-centered.



A still shot from one of six Start College Here promotional videos

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To leverage the influence that school counselors have on students as they make post-secondary decisions, we delivered an 8-poster series promoting the benefits of a technical college education to every public, private, and charter high school in South Carolina, along with a personalized letter connecting them to our team for future collaboration efforts. Additionally, we attended the Palmetto State School Counselor Association Conference in January, where we served as sponsor, exhibitor, and presenter.



A Start College Here poster on display in a public high school

As we move into the 2024-25 school year, we look forward to expanding our We Hear You campaign. We plan to partner with middle school counselors to learn how to best communicate with Gen Alpha students, widen our digital media reach through Snapchat ads and gas station tv, and craft thoughtful promotions geared towards educating students about the benefits of dual enrollment.

Academic and Educational Initiatives

Student success, retention, professional development, and partnerships remain an emphasis for the Division of Academics, Student Affairs and Research, which is always seeking new and innovative ways to engage faculty, staff, and students.

Initiatives designed to alleviate student access concerns due to financial need and to promote the System’s mission of workforce development and quality of life continued to be a hallmark of efforts. Over \$94 million was made available through the SC Workforce Industry Needs Scholarship (SC WINS) program. Additionally, federal funding available through the Governor’s Office to fund the Workforce Scholarships for the Future program continued to expand student aid for the colleges. Efforts to engage GED and high school diploma graduates through adult education providers resulted in expanded access to higher education and more targeted financial support for certain academic and personal barriers to accessing education. Additional funding was provided to support dual enrollment students and activities.



Clinical Nursing Faculty Academy completers

Previously established partnerships with state educational agencies and business and industry have enhanced existing initiatives. The System continued collaboration with the South Carolina Hospital Association to host four Clinical Nursing Faculty Academies. These workshops were designed to equip current practicing nurses with the knowledge and skills necessary to become clinical instructors for nursing students completing clinical rotations. The four sessions resulted in 127 completers with plans for additional sessions in FY2024-25.

In 2023-24, the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG-SC) program implemented seven new sites for a grand total of 33 school affiliates. The JAG program served 1,228 students and achieved national awards for exceeding the JAG National performance metrics.

The Division also celebrated student excellence and engagement through the annual Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) All-State Academic Team ceremony, JAG Career Development Conference, and Emerging Leaders Student Conference. Fifty exceptional PTK award recipients demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and an impressive record of service to their college. Nearly 400 JAG students and career specialists participated in the Career Development Conference, resulting in many student awards in competitions such as public speaking, poetry, financial literacy, and employability skills. At the Emerging Leaders Student Conference, student leaders from across the state participated in sessions on wellness, academic success, career development, and leadership skills.

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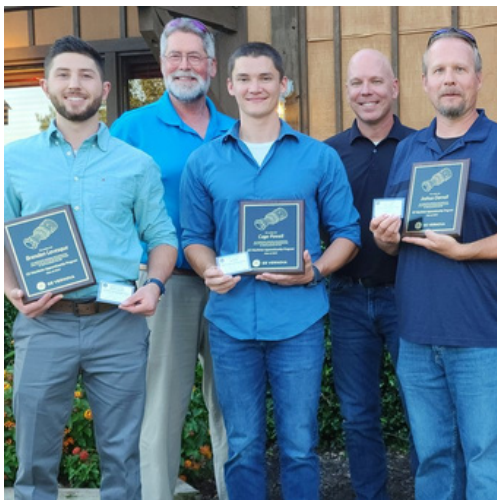
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Professional development opportunities also remain a key focus for the System. Specific trainings this year included Title IX Coordinator, supporting pregnant and parenting students, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). There were 264 college and System employees who participated in these trainings. Thirty-one faculty and staff completed the Leadership Academy, designed to promote leadership skills in individuals seeking advancement within the System. System staff also attended and presented at national, regional, and local conferences and served on educational organization boards this past year. The Division's monthly Teaching and Learning Tuesday (TLT) webinar series resulted in 1,025 live attendees for the year.



2023-24 Leadership Academy graduates

Workforce Development Initiatives



Completers of GE Vernova's Gas Turbine Machinist Apprenticeship Program

Registered Apprenticeship. Apprenticeship Carolina guides companies located in South Carolina through the apprenticeship development and registration process so that companies receive full recognition in the national Registered Apprenticeship system with the US Department of Labor (USDOL). With a team of twenty staff members across the state, Apprenticeship Carolina leads the state's apprenticeship expansion efforts.

Youth Apprenticeship. Youth Apprenticeship is a forward-focused component of Apprenticeship Carolina that demonstrates growth statewide. The program allows companies to train and mentor potential future full-time employees, creating a crucial recruitment pipeline of young, skilled workers. Youth apprentices can earn a wage while they finish high school and earn college credits. High school completion is also a requirement. Through this program, youth enhance their employability by obtaining critical work and academic skills.

Pre-Apprenticeship Programs and Process. Apprenticeship Carolina's pre-apprenticeship programs are designed to prepare individuals, including high school students, to enter a registered apprenticeship program. To date, Apprenticeship Carolina has certified over 30 pre-apprenticeships with K-12, community-based organizations, and the technical colleges. Richland One was the first school district to certify a pre-apprenticeship with Apprenticeship Carolina, and the Urban League of Columbia was the first community-based organization to do so. More than 60 high school students are participating in these two apprenticeships alone.

Continued Growth. Since its inception, Apprenticeship Carolina has assisted- over 1,200 South Carolina companies across all industries to register apprenticeship programs. The number of assisted companies has increased tenfold from 90 in 2007 to nearly 1,200 in the last fiscal year. To date, over 51,000 South Carolinians have been registered as apprentices -- an overwhelming increase from 777 in 2007. Apprenticeship Carolina continues to lead the nation in the number of new apprenticeship programs registered, apprenticeship activity, and notoriety. Apprenticeship programs continue to provide companies with the benefits of a sustainable, highly trained workforce pipeline and award apprentices a nationally-recognized credential in their occupation.

Grant Opportunities. Since 2015, Apprenticeship Carolina has received over \$34 million in grants from the USDOL's Employment and Training Administration to increase the number of apprenticeships throughout the state.

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In 2019, Apprenticeship Carolina was awarded a USDOL State Expansion Grant (ASE) of \$1,186,725, which the team successfully closed out on June 30, 2022. Apprenticeship Carolina provided over \$570,000 in tuition assistance funding and exceeded its goal of supporting over 800 registered apprentices with these funds.

On July 1, 2020, Apprenticeship Carolina received nearly \$11.5 million in apprenticeship funds from two grants. Both of these grants ended on June 30, 2024, and the resulting outcomes were significant. The USDOL Youth Apprenticeship Readiness (YARI) grant was a \$4,449,999 award aimed at significantly increasing the number of youth apprenticeships. During the four-year period of performance, the YARI grant supported 747 youth apprentices and 257 pre-apprentices by offsetting the cost of educational degrees and certifications. The \$6,991,000 State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) 2020 award focused on expanding registered apprenticeships across the state. In its four-year period of performance, the SAE 2020 grant supported 1,554 apprentices and 206 pre-apprentices by offsetting the cost of educational degrees and certifications and providing stipends to support continued participation. Jointly, these two grants made a substantial difference in the lives of 2,301 registered apprentices and 463 pre-apprentices.

To continue registered apprenticeship program expansion, Apprenticeship Carolina was awarded a \$7.7 million USDOL State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation grant on July 1, 2021. This grant focuses on supporting underrepresented populations, ensuring that all citizens have equitable access to registered apprenticeship opportunities. In addition to program expansion, marketing and outreach efforts have focused on increasing awareness of the Registered Apprenticeship model within the Hispanic community. Through these and other efforts, the SAEI grant has supported 836 apprentices by offsetting the cost of educational degrees and certifications and providing stipends to support continued participation.

In July 2023, the United States Department of Labor made the decision to award states annual funding from the newly announced State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant. Through that award, Apprenticeship Carolina received an additional \$641,423 to expend during a one-year period from July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024. In that one-year period, the SAEF grant supported 112 registered apprentices and 39 pre-apprentices by offsetting the cost of educational degrees and certifications and providing stipends to support continued participation.

In July 2023, the South Carolina State Legislature allocated \$3,500,000 in State Lottery funds to increase financial support for apprenticeships in two key areas: youth apprentices and small business. Under the guidance of the legislation, Apprenticeship Carolina has made over \$2,000,000 in awards to 11 technical colleges around the state to support eligible apprentices. All told, since 2020, 3,249 registered apprentices and 502 pre-apprentices have been supported by United States Department of Labor grants.



Industry Outreach. During the fiscal year, Apprenticeship Carolina, through grant opportunities and partnerships with several organizations, has been able to host local, regional, and statewide events to promote apprenticeship as a workforce development tool for employers, industry associations, and education stakeholders. Virtual and in-person mentor trainings also continued for companies who have registered apprenticeship programs.

Enterprise Zone Retraining Tax Credit Program. EZone helps keep industry in South Carolina competitive by providing manufacturing, processing and technology intensive companies located in South Carolina the opportunity to receive a rebate for "retraining" certain employees. By participating in the EZone program, qualified companies may be reimbursed up to \$1,000 per eligible employee per year by the Department of Revenue.

Attendees at an in-person mentor training

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The amount is not to exceed \$5,000 over the 5-year life of the application and is filed against withholding taxes for eligible retraining.

Economic Development Initiatives

The System's readySC™ program plays a key role in the state's economic development efforts and is recognized nationally as the premier program of its kind. readySC focuses on the recruiting and initial training needs of new and expanding companies and continues to be a top incentive for the state. The majority of relocating or expanding companies rank readySC's services as playing a significant role in their decision to move or grow here.

On any given day, readySC works with between 75 and 115 projects across South Carolina. These projects cover our state's most-developed to least-developed counties and include both large organizations and smaller companies. Last year, readySC provided nearly 550,000 hours of training to nearly 6,500 individuals (of which 5,493 were new) and worked with 97 different companies. Since its inception, readySC has trained over 323,587 people.

The Boeing project has conducted 6,752 training events and has trained 7,808 people. Additionally, the Boeing project has conducted 20,033 recertifications for 7,639 individuals. readySC staff are certified to teach 220 Boeing-certified courses and conduct 116 different recertifications.

Significant Project Updates

readySC continues to work closely with Volvo Cars. To date, readySC has trained nearly 4,000 employees for Volvo.

Development for the Scout motors project is significantly underway. readySC has taken two discovery trips, one to Wolfsburg and one to Mexico to learn more about Scout training needs. Additionally, significant activity has been underway for the design and construction of the Scout training center. Recruitment for some positions begins fall 2024.



A brainstorming session during a discovery trip to Wolfsburg, Germany

Development for the AESC project is significantly under way. readySC has taken two discovery trips, one to Tennessee and one to Sunderland, England, to learn more about AESC training needs. Additionally, significant activity has been underway for the design and construction of the AESC training center. Recruitment for some positions begins fall 2024.

Examples of other notable readySC recruitment and training projects for 2023-24 include the following:

Company Name
Volvo Cars North America
Arthrex Manufacturing, Inc.
Lockheed Martin Logistics Services - Greenville Operations
MycoWorks
EA Sween
Ingram Micro Inc.
Prestage Foods of South Carolina, LLC
Oshkosh Defense
Keurig Green Mountain Inc.

County
Berkeley
Anderson
Greenville
Union
Greenwood
Spartanburg
Kershaw
Spartanburg
Spartanburg

Total Trained
2,894
525
218
177
128
120
116
110
104

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Cybersecurity. Cybersecurity continues to be a priority for all of our institutions and the System, especially considering how much has changed in the past couple of years about how we meet, instruct, and access information systems and data. We continue to strengthen and update our security posture towards information security compliance based on a nationally recognized and state-approved methodology. Improvements are primarily in the areas of people (training), processes (policies and procedures), and technology toolsets, which are based on state and federal security and privacy requirements and best practices. Our compliance plan leverages cost-effective approaches via collaboration and shared procurements when possible, and this initiative continues to engage our colleges and stakeholders. The SCTCS has also chartered the formation of an Incident Response Team that is made up of security personnel from the technical colleges and the System Office.



Enterprise Systems. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and other student services and educational delivery systems and related processes continue to represent significant resources and mission-critical activities at the 16 technical colleges. Online capabilities, effectiveness and security of these systems have been of greater significance since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to work together to explore related opportunities for collaborative services, training, and planning towards future needs. These efforts have helped colleges save on operating costs, focus on improving services, and increase efficiencies.

Data Management and Reporting. To ensure compliance with statutory educational accountability requirements and financial accountability requirements, the colleges within the SCTCS are required to report specific data elements to the System Office throughout the year. We are in a state of continuous improvement of our data systems in order to improve decision support, transparency, and accountability-related processes. We are also updating our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for apprenticeships and workforce development to a new Salesforce platform, which will help improve data quality as well as streamline processes in these areas.

Shared Services and Collaboration. The System's leadership and peer groups encourage, explore, and charter collaborative projects and procurement activities. These activities engage key stakeholders from the colleges and address common needs for security, infrastructure, upgrades, and future needs. When possible, we leverage shared services for common system enhancements, maintenance, and/or training. This collaborative approach provides colleges with a more cost-effective and sustainable model for management of their systems and infrastructure. These activities have proven to be more critical since the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, where sharing ideas and solutions have helped us continue to operate smoothly and serve our students and communities effectively.

Flexibility and Readiness. In response to the pandemic, all System Office staff are now equipped with laptops and related equipment. With this equipment upgrade and its necessary applications software and security adjustments, the agency's staff is now fully able to allow for maximum flexibility when needed.

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Fiscal and Budget Initiatives

Legislative Budget. The System continues to be recognized by the General Assembly as a priority and was funded as follows for FY2023-24:

The General Fund Base Funding for the System was \$215.6 million, of which \$196.1 million was distributed to the colleges using various funding models.

The Lottery Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP) was funded \$51.1 million, and the per semester award for both Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 was \$80 per credit hour. In addition, the South Carolina Workforce Industry Needs Scholarship (SC WINS) program was funded \$93.7 million and was used to provide financial aid to students enrolled in workforce-related programs. Other Lottery funding included High Demand Job Skill Training Equipment funding of \$12 million and Lottery Technology Equipment funding of \$3.2 million.

The legislature also provided \$2 million for the readySC program to support direct training projects. This funding was in addition to recurring appropriations used for program administration and training costs.

The colleges also received significant funding -- \$224 million -- for capital projects on the various college campuses, primarily for projects related to maintenance, renovation, and replacement.