

# Connection

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## Tri-County, Columbia College Presidents Sign Associate's to Bachelor's Degree Program Agreement

Officials from Tri-County and Columbia College officially signed a formal agreement November 18 that will enable Tri-County graduates to complete their bachelor's degree through Columbia College in the evenings on our Pendleton Campus at a significantly discounted tuition rate.

Dr. Booth and Columbia College President Elizabeth A. (Beth) Dinndorf signed an Associate's to Bachelor's Degree Program Agreement allowing Tri-County graduates to earn a bachelor's degree in Health Communications in two years on Tri-County's Pendleton Campus.

This is the first time Tri-County has signed a partnership agreement of this type with a private college. This agreement creates pathways that will allow associate degree graduates to go on to earn a bachelor's degree without loss of time, credits, or money.

"The time is right. It's important to offer bachelor's degrees on our campus and to bring options to our students," said Dr. Booth. "At Tri-County, we are committed to increasing access to higher education for the citizens of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties, including access to a bachelor's degree by way of applied associate degrees in our career programs. Many of our students complete a two-year applied associate degree in a career program so they are prepared for immediate entry into the workforce. We have made a concerted effort to create pathways that will allow them to go on to earn a bachelor's degree, should they choose to do so, without loss of time, credits, or money," he said.

Individuals accepted into the program would pay just over half the cost of tuition paid by traditional day students attending part time at the campus in Columbia. Tri-County graduates would pay \$385 per credit hour instead of Columbia's \$725 per credit hour.

"With this agreement signed, a Columbia College bachelor's degree

*(continued on page 14)*



Officials from Tri-County Technical College and Columbia College officially signed a formal agreement November 18 that will enable Tri-County graduates to complete their bachelor's degree through Columbia College in the evenings on Tri-County's campus at a significantly discounted tuition rate.

Here, Tri-County President **Ronnie L. Booth** and Columbia College President **Elizabeth A. (Beth) Dinndorf** sign an Associate's to Bachelor's Degree Program Agreement allowing Tri-County graduates to earn a bachelor's degree in Health Communications in two years on Tri-County's Pendleton Campus.

# Connection

is published ten times each year by the  
Office of the President and the Public  
Relations Department.

## Mailing Address (All Campuses)

P. O. Box 587, Pendleton, SC 29670

### Pendleton Campus

7900 Highway 76, Pendleton, SC

### Anderson Campus

511 Michelin Blvd., Anderson, SC

### Easley Campus

1774 Powdersville Rd., Easley, SC

### Oconee Campus

### Hamilton Career Center

100 Vocational Dr., Seneca, SC

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1-866-269-5677

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1-800-735-2905

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[www.tctc.edu](http://www.tctc.edu)



Tri-County Technical College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award the associate degree. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Tri-County Technical College.

Tri-County Technical College does not discriminate in admission or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, qualifying disability, veteran's status, or national origin.

# Connecting

## Funding Opens Doors for Unemployed, Underemployed



Dr. Ronnie L. Booth  
President

In nearly every conversation I have with local industry leaders and elected officials, we talk about the "skills gap" between what employees and prospective employees can do and what industry requires of them. We also share concerns about not having enough skilled workers in the pipeline to meet the current and future needs of local manufacturers.

In-demand skilled jobs run the gamut from welders and CNC operators to industrial electricians and machinists. These positions are at the technician level, often called "middle skills" jobs, and require more education than a high school diploma and less than a four-year degree.

This is exactly the level of education we offer here at Tri-County Technical College. Yet the problem still persists.

Fifty-four percent of unfilled jobs fall into this category, but less than 28 percent of South Carolinians meet those qualifications.

How do we increase the pipeline of technically-skilled workers to meet the needs of today's manufacturers?

Our task is doable, but requires attacking the problem from every angle, from educating and training the chronically-unemployed and underemployed to changing the long-standing belief among many high school students, teachers, and parents that a two-year technical degree is less valuable and provides fewer opportunities than a four-year degree.

Our latest effort is just getting underway.

Earlier this year, the S.C. General Assembly allocated additional funds to support technical skills training to address workforce shortages. Tri-County will use these funds to provide what we call "QuickJobs" training for unemployed and underemployed adult workers through our Corporate and Community Education Division.

QuickJobs training ranges from several weeks to six months, depending on the job type. The training focuses on putting the unemployed to work quickly, and enabling the underemployed to train and qualify for higher-level employment.

The funding will allow us to offer up to \$2,000 per student for non-credit training through the South Carolina Manufacturing Certification (SCMC) program. This short-term, yet comprehensive training program allows individuals to earn a nationally-recognized credential and work as operators in manufacturing. This basic skills set is also a great first step to becoming a technician.

Training also will be available in other areas of manufacturing, as well as health care, transportation and logistics, computers, and business. QuickJobs programs offer continuing education credit, and some programs qualify for academic credit, should the student decide to pursue a certificate or degree in one of Tri-County's credit programs of study.

This new opportunity to enroll in short-term training at little

*"This new opportunity to enroll in short-term training at little or no cost to the student is yet one more way to close the skills gap and increase the pipeline of technically-skilled, work-ready employees."*

*~Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D.*

*(continued on page 14)*



# Spotlight on Student Loans

Educating our students about borrowing money responsibly when they enroll in college, arming them with knowledge about loans and repayment options, and providing follow up to make sure they are in contact and repayment with their lenders has resulted in lowering our college student Cohort Default Rate (CDR).

“We have a reason to celebrate,” said Michelle Jacobson, student financial planner in the Financial Aid Office. “Over the last year, we have lowered the CDR by 32 percent. We’ve gone from a 30.9 percent rate in 2011 to 20.8 percent in 2012, which represents a 32.3 percent reduction in the College’s CDR. We are trending in the right direction. Next year is projected to be lower than last year. We’re excited by this high reduction,” she said.

In 2011, the Department of Education released a report tracking three-year student federal direct loan default rates. It included borrowers who entered loan repayment between 2010 and 2013.

These federal loans, also known as Stafford loans, are used by students for their education and related expenses, which the government defines as living expenses, meals, day care, tuition, books, and anything else needed to attend college.

Defaulting on a loan is defined as failing to make a payment for 270 days.

“Our default rate for that period was higher than the mandated rate, which is anything above 30 percent. We knew we needed to address this so the College partnered with Inceptia to help lower our CDRs and avoid losing our ability to award federal aid,” she said.

“At Tri-County Technical College, we value our students and want to ensure they are successful in the classroom and beyond. By partnering with Inceptia, we know our students are getting superior customer service, as well as the help and knowledge they need to get their loans back into good standing. The representatives at Inceptia are enjoyable to work with, and they go above and beyond to ensure our requests are heard and resolved in a timely fashion.”

## The History

Tri-County Technical College began administering Direct Loans in 2007 without a default management process in place. The idea was to help students who otherwise would not have been able to afford college. When the recession hit, the College experienced a dramatic increase in enrollment, largely because displaced workers eligible for financial assistance enrolled at the College to gain additional skills to become more competitive in the marketplace.

Inceptia tailored a default prevention program that included contacting every borrower with loans in default from 60 to 350



**Michelle Jacobson**, student financial planner in the Financial Aid Office, standing, created and teaches a class, *College Skills 105*, with a theme of *Financial Fitness*. This semester 23 students are enrolled. “The activities in the course focus on several personal finance topics, such as creating a budget, being smart with credit cards, loans and identity theft, and many others,” said Michelle. Here she discusses end-of-the-semester projects with students, from left, **Ravi Patel**, of Seneca; **Taneisa Fant**, of Seneca; **Nick Lujan**, of Clemson; and **Caitlin Griffin**, of Westminster; all associate in Science majors.

days—delinquencies affecting the 2010, 2011, and 2012 CDR.

Inceptia counselors make every attempt to connect the borrower by phone with the loan servicer—and the counselor stays on the call while the two parties agree on a solution. The program includes an unlimited number of contacts: Inceptia continues to call until the borrower resolves the delinquency or reaches default.

In the Spring of 2014, Inceptia also started making calls to Tri-County borrowers who were entering their grace period. Proactively contacting borrowers gives them a solid understanding of the expectations around student loan repayment and how to remain in good standing.

As of the summer of 2015, Inceptia had successfully resolved 5,272 loans and resolved \$14,673,192 in delinquent loans.

When Michelle joined the College in 2014, she defined strategies and worked on financial literacy and default management programs and workshops for our students. She created and has been teaching a class, *College Skills 105*, with a theme of *Financial Fitness*. This semester 23 students are enrolled. “The activities in the course focus on several personal finance topics, such as creating a budget, being smart with credit cards, loans and identity theft, and many others,” said Michelle.

“The past year has been a team effort. Each person who comes in contact with a student is helping to provide service to help him or her graduate, which, in turn, makes them less likely to default on a loan. Students who graduate are less likely to default because they have a degree and a job,” she said. “We are creating in-depth exit counseling for students

*(continued on page 14)*



# Tri-County Chorus Packs Auditorium with Holiday Concert



The Tri-County Chorus: from left, **Cory Dodgens**, accompanist, seated at piano; **Kennon Merriett**, bass; **Taylor Turner**, soprano; **Kayla Kinder**, soprano; **Xavier Minor**, tenor; **Olivia Laroche**, alto; **Samuel Hill**, baritone; **Katelyn Metcalf**, alto; and **Julia West**, conductor and music instructor.



Conductor and music instructor **Julia West** directs the chorus, from left, **Samuel Hill**, **Taylor Turner**, **Kayla Kinder**, **Katelyn Metcalf** and **Olivia Laroche**.

The Tri-County Technical College Chorus presented its holiday concert Friday, November 20, at 7 p.m. in the Marshall Parker Auditorium on the Pendleton Campus. It included a performance by the jazz band. The concert was free and open to the public.

Under the direction of Conductor and Music instructor Julia West, the concert featured a performance of holiday favorites by the choir, along with jazz versions of holiday pieces arranged by accompanist Cory Dodgens. Songs by the chorus included Carol of the Bells, Sleigh Ride, Deck the Halls, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, and Sing We All Noel, from Schram's African Noel. They also performed The 12 Days After Christmas.

"It's my first semester at Tri-County," said Julia, "and it has been my pleasure to work with this talented group and discover what they are capable of." She said the seven-member chorus is a small, but tight, group whose voices blend well. "They are good at relying on each other and make a nice cohesive sound. They are very musical and intuitive and are easy to lead."

The jazz band is small as well, she said, with three saxophonists, one bass guitarist, and one drummer.

"No one in the chorus is a Music major, but they have quite the level of talent. They exceed my expectations every time," she said.

Donations to the College Music Scholarship Fund are welcome. The goal is to raise money for an endowed scholarship that will benefit students who want to enroll in the Chorus class but cannot afford it. Contact the Tri-County Technical College Foundation at Ext. 1348 if you wish to contribute.



The Tri-County Jazz Band: from left, **Cory Dodgens**, accompanist, at piano; **Shannon Cox**, guest guitarist; **Austin Childress**, bass; **Jason Poole**, Industrial Electronics Technology instructor, on drums; **Sean McDonough**, alto sax; **Ethan Ekback**, alto sax; and **Patrick Smith**, tenor sax. Pictured with them is **Julia West**, conductor and music instructor.

# First Group Graduates from Leadership Development Class

This semester 14 faculty and staff participated in the first Leadership Development class associated with the new Talent Management program. Talent Management is one of the initiatives aligned with our strategic direction to drive organizational change through our people as published in the Tri-County Technical College Strategic Plan.

“At the heart of talent management lies our ability as leaders to engage and empower employees at all levels,” said Dr. Booth. “Moving from a culture of compliance to a culture of empowerment and engagement requires a new and different type of leadership and is essential to achieving our vision to transform students’ lives and the communities we serve. Our goal is to develop and nurture these skills in our current and future supervisors and managers to help us realize that vision.”

Over the last few months, this group met each Friday for ninety minutes for a total of 12 sessions. The majority of the program instructors were members of the Executive Staff. Presentations were designed to help participants gain new perspectives on their leadership at the College.



From left are (back row) **Lee Perkins, Matt Edwards, Cathy Cole, and Kristal Doherty**, (middle row) **Tom Lawrence, Tim Jared, Courtney White, Lou Moritz, and Jonathan Finch**, and (front row) **Mary Corley, Kristen Karasek, Croslena Johnson, and Cindy Mobley**. Not pictured is **Gayle Arries**.

# Hellenga and Smith Honored by SCCPA

Director of Career Services Glenn Hellenga and Career Services Career Counselor Lynn Smith were honored at the South Carolina College Personnel Association’s fall meeting held October 31–November 2 in Greenville. SCCPA is a partner with the Southern Association for College Student Affairs.

Glenn won the Clarice W. Johnson Outstanding Professional Award, which recognizes and encourages outstanding

contributions to the field of student affairs by a “seasoned” professional.

Nominees must have been employed as a student affairs professional for more than five years and provided outstanding contributions to the field of student affairs, preferably in South Carolina.

Lynn won the Art Hartzog Award for Programming at a Two-Year Institution or Technical College, which

recognizes outstanding programming and program development by student development professionals in South Carolina.

Nominated programs must have taken place within the past year. Programs are judged on creativity, achievement, and overall program design and merit.



Lynn Smith and Glenn Hellenga

# Easley Chamber Luncheon



Tri-County sponsored a recent Easley Chamber luncheon where the featured speaker was SC Secretary of Commerce, **Bobby Hitt**. Pictured with Secretary Hitt are two Easley Campus students, **Noah Porter**, a University Transfer major from Pickens, left, and **Caleb Nelson**, an Industrial Electronics Technology major and BMW Scholar, from Easley.



# STEM Projects Stimulate Student Interest

General Engineering Technology (GET) students participated in New Prospect Elementary School's STEM Day by conducting workshops and presenting demonstrations of STEM projects designed to stimulate students' interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

Students demonstrated their class projects, such as building an LED flashlight, creating an Operation game, and creating an electric air propelled car, to third, fourth, and fifth graders. After a group presentation by GET Program Coordinator Dorian McIntire, students taught a STEM lesson to small groups. "It's so exciting to collaborate with Tri-County," said New Prospect Elementary School Principal Layne Putnam. "It's a great way to get young students interested in technical careers at an early age," she said. "At New Prospect, a STEM-focused school, our focus is on the design process for engineering and building critical thinkers and problem solvers. We make sure these are embedded into the curriculum. This kind of event engages our students. That's when learning sticks—when students are hands on and engaged."



*Dr. Jerry Marshall, mathematics instructor, observes the children play with a plasma globe.*



*GET major **Christine Colombo** shows a student how to make a homemade variation of the board game Operation.*



*Students learn about the relationship between sound and movement from GET major **Matt Varney**.*



*GET Program Coordinator **Dorian McIntire** demonstrates levitating a piece of illuminated mylar to students at New Prospect Elementary during STEM Day.*



*A student touches the Van de Graaff generator that produces static electricity.*





## A View from The Top

*Dr. Booth* talked about the boundless opportunities available to students and graduates of Tri-County during his “A View from the Top” session held as part of the Leading Edge workshop series during fall semester. Leading EDGE helps students gain new skills in a variety of areas and earn prizes for attending one or more workshops on topics such as career and employability skills, personal growth and development, and leadership.

## Ten High School Students Enroll in Welding at ITC



*Crescent High School student Chase Singleton*

For the first time, students from four high schools in Anderson and Oconee County School Districts were enrolled in a basic Welding class taught this fall at our state-of-the-art Industrial Technology Center (ITC) in Sandy Springs.

Ten students—seven seniors and three juniors from Belton-Honea Path, Crescent, T.L. Hanna, and Seneca high schools—were enrolled in Welding 111 through the Technical Career Pathways (TCP) program, which allows

participants to graduate with a college certificate as high school seniors and transition directly into the associate degree program at the College or enter the workforce.

All 10 students are signed up for Arc Welding 1 this spring and have the goal of entering the Welding program at Tri-County, said Program Coordinator Paul Phelps, who taught the students this fall with instructor Scott Brabham.

“It’s so important to make an impact on students and their career goals early on,” said Paul. “This semester, they learned precision, consistency, and attention to detail, skills that are important to all the various industries that employ welders.” For most students, this was the first Welding class they had ever taken.

Students also saved time and money and gained a semester of college credits, said Paul. Last year, the S.C. General Assembly

funded a proviso making it possible for high school students to take college courses in career pathways with little or no out-of-pocket costs.

“Teaching the class at the ITC is valuable because it helps teach independence, as well as responsibility, because they are treated as college students,” said Paul. “They know that attendance is mandatory. They performed well. They set the bar high for the next students to follow. There is little difference in them and our traditional students. They are serious about their studies, and they earned my respect,” he said.

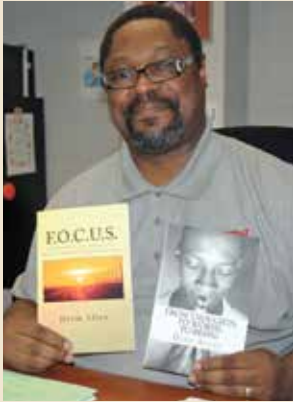
In addition to the 10 TCP Welding students at the ITC, there were 18 TCP Welding students at the Anderson 1 and 2 Career and Technology Center in Williamston for a total of 28 TCP Welding students this fall.



Welding Program Coordinator **Paul Phelps**, seated, inspects work by **Thomas Harvey**, a Crescent High School student, while **Brian Adame Rodriguez** observes.

# Our College Family

excellence through service



Herm Allen

Educational Talent Search Program Coordinator **Herm Allen** released two new books. From Thoughts, to Words, to Being, along with a new adaptation of F.O.C.U.S., previously written in 2008, were released November 1. “They were written for anyone and everyone, to inspire, motivate, and encourage,” said Herm. “In order to reach our goals, we should leave evidence that we

lived a life of significance. These writings are for students of life and learning.”

From Thoughts, to Words, to Being is a book of self-penned statements by Herm. His message is, “Our journey has obstacles, but we can overcome them with the right tools. Personal growth makes you better.”

Both books, which are self-published, are available on amazon.com. He is also Owner/President of Herm Allen Coaching in Clemson. You can find his blogs posted on his website, hermallencoaching.com.

Congratulations to **Lisa Garrett**, public relations associate, who received a MarCom Platinum Award in the writing category for the 2013-14 Tri-County Technical College Annual Report titled *Redesigning the Educational Experience*. The MarCom Awards competition recognizes outstanding achievement by communication and marketing professionals across the country and internationally. Entries come from public relations firms, corporate marketing and communications departments, ad agencies, production companies, and freelancers. MarCom awards are administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals. This year the competition received about 6,500 entries from throughout the United States, Canada, and more than a dozen other countries.

**Linda Jameison**, assistant vice president for Student Support and Engagement, above right, and **Dr. Brian Swords**, Easley Campus director and interim dean of Student Development, third from left, were presenters at the Southern Association for College Student Affairs/National Association for Student Personnel Administrators Conference in Greenville October 31-November 2. Their presentation was entitled



“Community Colleges Students—Engaging Them to Make it Matter.” Pictured with them are, from left, **Tim Jared**, **Scott Jaeschke**, and **Glenn Hellenga**.

Congratulations to **Scott Harvey**, our Registrar, who has been elected to serve as president of the Carolinas Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (CACRAO). CACRAO is dedicated to the advancement of higher education; the promotion of professional development of its members; the fostering of a spirit of unity, cooperation, and exchange of ideas through annual meetings, committee activities, and workshops. He assumes his new responsibilities in January, 2016.

Congratulations to the following faculty and staff who were chosen to be presenters at the South Carolina Technical Educators Conference February 18–20, 2016.

**Dorian McIntire**, program coordinator, General Engineering Technology: Educational and Life Lessons Learned by Reaching out through YouTube.

**Timeko McFadden**, Spanish instructor and coordinator of instructional activities in the Humanities Department; **Allison Earley**, English instructor and coordinator of instructional activities in the English Department; and **Stacey Frank**, psychology instructor: Don’t Write Us Off – An Interdisciplinary Approach to Improving Students’ Motivation and Writing Skills in Modern Languages.

**Brenda Mattison**, Accounting instructor: Creating Independent Learners Through Self-Directed Learning.

**Phil Smith**, Computer and Information Technology instructor: Synchronous Online Learning Classes – Best Practices.





*Libbey Cates*

## *in transition*

### **COLLEGE TRANSITIONS**

**Elizabeth (Libbey) Cates** is the Coordinator of Student Support for Dual Enrollment and Career Pathways. Libbey recently moved to the area from Roy, New Mexico, where she was Program Coordinator for Harding County. Prior to that, she was a Career Specialist at New

Mexico Highlands University. Her other work experience includes serving as Academic Advisor and adjunct Sociology instructor for Gillette College in Gillette, Wyoming for four years, and from 2007-09, she was College Access Advisor for Colorado State University–Pueblo College.

Libbey graduated magna cum laude from the University of Colorado with a degree in Sociology. She also holds a B.A. in Philosophy from Ripon College in Wisconsin. She also holds an associate in Arts in Ethnic Studies from the University of Wisconsin where she was the graduation salutatorian.

She earned a Global Career Development Facilitator Certification from the Center for Credentialing and Education and received a NISOD outstanding teacher award in 2011. She was awarded a Breuning Prize in Philosophy while at Ripon. She lives in Anderson.

### **CAMPUS SAFETY**

Two officers joined our Campus Safety team. **Daphney Miller** is the Security Specialist at the Industrial Technology Center. **Joshua Sample** is an officer at the Pendleton Campus.

Daphney is a 2011 graduate of our Criminal Justice program and holds a diploma in computers from Norcross Georgia Institute. She is a retired veteran of the Army National Guard (1991 – 2012) where she served as Sergeant E5. While in the service, she received the Iraqi Freedom Award, ARCOM Award, Best Behavior Award, and the Equal Opportunity Leader award.

She is a steward leader at her church, Brown O. AME in Calhoun Falls. She has one daughter, Kayshawna Matia Miller, a 2015 Business Technology graduate of Tri-County, and a granddaughter, Jaliana, 2. Daphney lives in Anderson.

Joshua comes to us from the Walhalla Police Department, where he served as an officer for 10 years. He and his wife, Bethany, have three children, Makenzie, 14, Makayla, 12, and Greyson, 7. They live in Westminster.



*Joshua Sample*



*Daphney Miller*

### **BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

**Josh Wrightson** is the new Campus Store Manager. He comes to us from Books A Million, where spent the last 13 years as General Manager. He began his career as a Latin teacher at Spring Valley High School in Columbia. Josh holds a B.A. in Classical Latin and Ancient Greek from Furman University. He and his wife, Lara, a Social Sciences instructor in our Arts and Sciences Division, live in Anderson.



*Josh Wrightson*



*Kenny Fletcher*

### **ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY**

**Kenny Fletcher** joined the Division as its Academic Advisor. He served in the United States Marine Corps from 2011 until this year. He received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and a Certificate of Commendation. Kenny earned a B.A. in

Psychology from National University in La Jolla, CA. He and his wife, Katee, live in Liberty.

**Tiffanie DeVarso** is a Management instructor in our Business Technology program. She holds a B.A. in Music from Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, and an M.B.A. from Southern Wesleyan University. She comes to us from Freedom Asset Services in Greenville, where she was Operations Manager. Prior to that, she served six years in the U.S. Army, specializing in supply logistics.



*Tiffanie DeVarso*



*Lance Merck*

**Lance Merck** is the new HVAC and Plumbing Specialist in our Physical Plant. He is a graduate of our HVAC program, and he worked at McGee Heating and Air Conditioning for three years. Lance lives in Easley.

# Getting To Know You

## Dan Cooper

Director of Economic Development and Government Relations



Dan Cooper

### 1. What is the best part of your job?

The best part of my job is helping to make things better for students of TCTC—sometimes that's finding funds for campus improvements, sometimes it's locating a dump truck to train CDL drivers, other times it's cutting through red tape from some government agency. But I enjoy many facets of my job.

### 2. What do you wish you had known 20 years ago?

Twenty years ago, that's not far enough back in time. I wish I had known how popular cell phones would be. My first cell phone was in a bag and weighed about five pounds with the battery.

### 3. Have you ever entered a talent contest?

Ha ha. In my former life as a legislator, I was a contestant in a womanless beauty pageant, which was a fundraiser for a senior singing group called "Saints Alive." They needed money to purchase a new engine for the bus they used to travel, and since they had entertained at a few of my campaign events, I couldn't tell them no. (I won 3rd place with my hula dance.)

### 4. What makes you laugh?

It doesn't take much to make me laugh. I try to find humor in everything I do and that I am a part of. I have found that a little humor can disarm some very tense situations.

### 5. What would people be surprised to learn about you?

I doubt there's much that would come as a surprise, but some might shake their heads to know that I made All-State Chorus in high school. I also played the Sousaphone (Tuba) in the Wren High Marching Band, and even more might be surprised to know I was a Choir Director at my former church for a couple of years. They asked me to 'fill in' until one was hired, and the search took two years or so. But, I get a lot of blank stares when people find out I have five Honorary Ph.D.s, from MUSC, Clemson, The Citadel, Coastal Carolina, and Anderson Universities. Clemson even had me as the commencement speaker, and based on my academic career, there's a whole lot of former teachers and professors who would be shocked.

## Ashley Isreal

Student Development Generalist, Easley Campus



Ashley Isreal

### 1. What is the best part of your job?

Seeing students' eyes light up is a primary goal. I love seeing them reach a solution. It can pertain to either a personal or academic matter.

### 2. What are your three favorite websites?

Proverbs 31 Ministries, Graphic Design Software Program, and Clemson University.

### 3. What is the best way for you to spend a Saturday?

Currently, in the library being productive. I have to know that I have accomplished enough work in order to relax later on.

### 4. What do you love most about the place where you grew up?

I love the 4-H program there. For 11 years, I learned the key concepts of leadership and community service from this impactful program in my hometown. These qualities were ingrained in me. However, most importantly, I learned how to be open to receive other people's thoughts and opinions. I first learned the importance of diversity from this program.

### 5. What makes you laugh?

My son! He is so enjoyable to be around and can make me laugh about anything. I do want to include my sister in on this answer, as well. She is the comedienne of the family. ☺

## Donna Palmer

Department Head for Allied Health/Expanded Duty Dental



Donna Palmer

### 1. What is the best part of your job?

I enjoy teaching students in the dental labs. The hands-on experience is fun and exciting, and the students love the experience. It also helps me keep up with new technology and dental materials, which enables me to continue learning. I also love the people I work with. They are my family away from home.

### 2. What was your first job?

My first job was a gift wrapper for Coker Department store in Florence, S.C. It was during Christmas and I was sixteen years old. I enjoyed every minute and learned a lot about people! I was then offered a job in various departments after Christmas and continued working there until I graduated from high school.

### 3. Are you an introvert or an extrovert?

I'm probably a little of both. I like being around people, enjoying conversation and being engaged in social activities, but I am perfectly happy at home, going to dinner alone, or taking a trip by myself. I think I have a good balance that helps me with life.

### 4. What is your favorite holiday?

I love Thanksgiving! My family typically gets together at my grandfather's farm in North Carolina, and it's a day of good food, laughter, and riding 4-wheelers. A time to relax and enjoy the holiday before the Christmas rush!

### 5. What makes you laugh?

I love to watch "Big Bang Theory." I think it is so funny. I also enjoy the old Johnny Carson shows, Red Skelton (showing my age), and today's comedians, Jimmy Fallon and Stephen Colbert.





For the second year in a row a Media Arts Production student won the statewide Logo Contest for the South Carolina Technical Education Association (SCTEA) Winter Convention. **Trinity Elizabeth**

**Madden** created

a logo for the contest using skills she learned in ARV 110. Trinity will be presented with a \$100 check at the SCTEA conference in February.



Winning logo

**Dr. Gwen Owens**, retired Dean of Arts and Sciences who has continued to teach in the Comprehensive Studies Department, is retiring again at the end of Fall Semester. She



Dr. Gwen Owens

not understanding reading comprehension. So thank you very much for teaching me!"

received this note from **Julie Shiflette**, a student in her Reading 100 class:

"I just wanted to tell you that I had to do my "Work Keys" test today, and I made two golds and I made a platinum in Reading! I wouldn't have if I didn't use the knowledge I was taught in your class. I felt the need to tell you about it because I have secretly struggled throughout life

not understanding reading comprehension. So thank you very much for teaching me!"

Congratulations to Comprehensive Studies Department Head **Jenn Hulehan** who was elected to the Simpsonville City Council for Ward 3.



Jenn Hulehan

**Graeme Moon**, a former COL 105 student, contacted instructor **Sue Andrus**. He writes:

"I don't know if you remember me, but I took a hybrid Freshman Seminar class with you and Psychology with Penny Edwards in the fall of 2012. I remember your class, and you as a teacher very well. Even to this day, I see how helpful it was to me and my college career. And now that I have moved several times, I think I have misplaced my book, and I would love to know what it was called so I can buy it again. (Editor's Note: The book was On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life, by Skip Downing.) It was helpful, and I've needed to use it a few times now. Thank you so much for your help."

**Penny S. Edwards**, department head for Social Sciences and Psychology instructor, writes:

"**Stacey Frank**, psychology instructor, received two requests from former students regarding research opportunities for her current students. One student, now at Clemson, is pursuing a psychology major thanks to Stacey's inspiration in the classroom. We are proud to have Stacey among our faculty ranks!"

## SNA Sponsors College Fair, Supports Angel Tree

The College's recently revitalized **Student Nurses Association (SNA)** sponsored a college fair November 19 when representatives from Anderson University, Clemson University, and USC-Upstate were on hand to talk to students about pathways to their BSN programs.

In addition, as part of a community service project, they sponsored four angel trees that will benefit the Angel Tree Drives.

**Croslena Johnson** sent this note thanking SNA members and advisor **Stacy Smith**, associate degree nursing instructor, for their generosity. She wrote:

"Thanks to you and your students (all that participated)!!! The Nursing students really came through on this project. Although the students chose only four angels initially, based on what was in the huge box... the gifts actually covered about 20+ angels. I just wanted to let you know how much we appreciate the generous hearts of your students. They definitely contributed to the success of this project by going above and beyond to help those less fortunate in our community."



SNA officers are pictured from left (standing) **Stephanie Stephenson**, treasurer; **Stacy Smith**, associate degree Nursing instructor and faculty advisor; **Megan Moore**, vice president; and **Morgan Lynch**, secretary; and (seated) **Ande Johnson**, director of community health; **Stephanie Glenn**, second-year representative; **Ashley Towe**, director of breakthrough-to-nursing; **Katie McGuire**, vice president; and **Connie Johnson**, director of communications. Not pictured are **Bonnie Kay**, president; **Kara Oglesby**, pinning director; and **Elizabeth Gregory**, second-year representative.

# Foundation News

## AFCO Celebrates 25 Years with Donation to STEM Programs

In celebration and honor of Associated Fuel Pump Systems Corporation's (AFCO) 25th anniversary, parent companies DENSO International America, Inc. and Robert Bosch each donated \$25,000 to Tri-County Technical College. This \$50,000 grant will provide local students with scholarships for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-related programs, such as industrial electronics, technology, and mechatronics. Beginning in 2016, scholarships in the amount of \$2,000 will be awarded to 25 students over a five-year period.

"Bosch has been a strong partner and generous supporter of the College for many years," said Dr. Booth. "This grant will enable us to award scholarships to students enrolled in STEM-related fields, such as mechatronics and industrial electronics. Graduates of these programs are in high demand by local industry, and we appreciate Bosch and DENSO for stepping forward to support these students as they train to become skilled technicians."

"With the establishment of AFCO, DENSO has been part of the Anderson community for the last 25 years," said Yukio Asano, Executive Vice President at DIAM. "There's no better way to commemorate this milestone than donating \$25,000 to help local community students pursue STEM-related careers."

"This scholarship program further underscores the importance



Pictured from left to right are **Michio Adachi**, AFCO board member, senior executive director, Powertrain Control Systems Business Group, DENSO Corporation; **Dr. Booth**; **Mike Mansuetti**, AFCO board member, president of Robert Bosch LLC; and **Andreas Abbing**, AFCO executive vice president.

of STEM education and the career opportunities it provides," said Robert Bosch LLC President Mike Mansuetti. "Bosch and the Bosch Community Fund are committed to our mission of preparing the workforce of the future for careers in STEM-related fields."

AFCO, a joint venture between Bosch and DENSO, makes fuel pumps and modules for cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles, motorcycles, personal watercraft, and all-terrain vehicles.



## Dr. Booth Matches Scholarship Gifts

Each year, **Dr. Booth** agrees to match all gifts made to the Hazel Strickland Booth Memorial Scholarship, which honors his mother. Here **Grayson Kelly**, executive director of the Foundation, and **Tammy Fiske**, director of annual giving, watch Dr. Booth write a check for \$1,200 to match those gifts. A total of more than \$2,400 has been raised for the scholarship, and gifts are still coming in to the Foundation.



## Faculty/Staff Make Impact with Give an Edge Donations

The Foundation closed Give an Edge, its 2015 employee giving campaign, this month with faculty and staff making a huge impact in the areas of professional development and scholarships, among others.

The Foundation staff thanked employees for their generosity to the Give an Edge campaign by inviting everyone to stop by for a sweet treat in the café November 18.

“On behalf of the Foundation, we simply can’t thank you enough for being an important part of the TCTC giving team. Folks made contributions to their monthly giving while others made first-time gifts to an area of special interest, such as Veterinary Technology,” said Tammy Fiske, director of annual giving.

Many chose to contribute to the Hazel Strickland Booth Memorial Scholarship Fund, which honors Dr. Booth’s mother. Hazel’s Helpers made the rounds collecting gifts and signatures on the holiday card. Dr. Booth again agreed to match all gifts made to this scholarship.

*The Foundation staff thanked employees for their generosity to the Give an Edge campaign by inviting everyone to stop by for a sweet treat in the café November 18. Here, **John Woodson**, Media Technology and Arts program coordinator, talks with **Tammy Fiske**, director of annual giving.*



## Anderson County Woman’s Club Continues Scholarship Support

*Caroline Cain*, front, and *Tinna Kluge*, standing behind her, both of Anderson, are the two 2015–16 recipients of the Anderson County Woman’s Club endowed scholarship at Tri-County Technical College. They are both University Transfer majors. They are pictured with *Erin Speed*, Anderson University’s scholarship recipient, back row, left. Pictured with them are (back row, from left) *David Larson*, dean of the S.C. School of the Arts and a professor of theater at Anderson University; *Wayne Landrith*, vice president for development, Anderson University; and *Courtney White*, director of development at Tri-County; and (middle row) *Tammy Fiske*, director of annual giving at Tri-County; and *Sallie Moreland*, of the Anderson County Woman’s Club.

*The Anderson County Woman’s Club was one of the first to establish an endowment at Tri-County and has contributed annually to the scholarship since 1989.*

## Greta Gets New Home

**Eric Griffith**, maintenance technician, and his daughter, **Erica**, welcomed Greta, an orange tabby, as a new member of the family November 19 following the Veterinary Technology Adoption Day.



## Funding Open Doors

*(continued from page 2)*

or no cost to the student is yet one more way to close the skills gap and increase the pipeline of technically-skilled, work-ready employees. It also positions us to attract new manufacturing companies and new jobs to strengthen the economy in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Booth".

Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D., President

## Spotlight on...

*(continued from page 3)*

during their last semester to emphasize the importance of paying back loans. It's rewarding to see the rates drop and to see that our efforts are truly paying off. It takes us all, not just Financial Aid. It falls on everyone to help students to be the best they can be," she said.

"This is at the forefront of Financial Aid's goals. It's also part of the College's strategic initiative. We're just getting started. Our ultimate goal is to have our CDR below 15 percent. It's doable with time, effort, patience, and persistence," she said.

"We entered the year with the goal of getting our CDR under the 30 percent mark, and we've been successful. We're excited. It helps the students to be more responsible and that, in turn, helps our community," said Michelle.

## Program Agreement...

*(continued from page 1)*

will be accessible and available to our graduates, right here in Pendleton," he said. "It's imminently affordable and doable," he added.

The program will initially provide for Tri-County graduates of health-related associate degrees, such as Pre-Pharmacy, Pre-Veterinary, Veterinary Technology, and Associate Degree Nursing, to earn a Columbia College bachelor's degree in Health Communications. The degree will be valuable for those already working in the health care field. Additional bachelor's degree programs may be added at a later date.

"I am very excited about this partnership with Tri-County Technical College to offer an Associate's to Bachelor's Degree Program," said President Dinndorf. "Since 1980, working adults have been coming to Columbia College in the evening or on weekends to attend classes and earn their degrees. But we realized there was a need beyond our campus. We know our State's technical colleges provide a valuable educational experience, and we wanted to provide a convenient opportunity for those students to continue their education and earn a bachelor's degree," she said.

"You will find that one of the hallmarks of Columbia College is our faculty, who are genuinely committed to the success of every student...an experience I'm sure students have at Tri-County Technical College," she added.

Both presidents agree it is important for working professionals to have this opportunity in their communities.

"They can achieve their dream in just two years," she said.

"Partnership is the key," Dr. Booth said.

Financial aid and tuition will be handled through Columbia College, who will have a faculty member and program coordinator on the Pendleton Campus on evenings when classes will be held (Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6-9 p.m.).

"The Columbia College Associate's to Bachelor's Degree Program at Tri-County Technical College meets students where they are - physically and educationally. It is a great partnership that allows students to further their education in their local community within an educational environment they are already comfortable in," said Kristen Karasek, director of the Bridge Programs and Educational Partnerships at Tri-County.

Applications are being accepted now for the program that will begin in January 2016.



# CCE Student Awarded Veterans Scholarships Forever Funds

Ashlee Wedge, of Pickens, a veteran of the 14th Gulf Air Defense and currently serving in the Army National Guard, received a \$2,000 scholarship from Ron Demonet, managing director of the scholarship program Veterans Scholarships Forever (VSF).

After researching health care career options, she enrolled in the EKG program through our Corporate and Community Education Division (CCE). She is completing an externship at Greenville Hospital and plans to graduate December 20.

Ashlee, who works part-time at Academy Sports and Outdoors, discovered that the GI Bill can't be used toward obtaining a certification so she applied for the VSF scholarship. "I'm thankful to receive the scholarship which helped me to earn this EKG certification. After this two-month training, I will be ready to enter the workforce," she said.

"Ashlee is an industrious young woman who will be successful in the health care field. She has goals, and she is driven. She is working hard to make the transition to civilian life."

Demonet said through contributions from individuals and organizations, scholarship funds (endowments) have been established at Tri-County and Greenville Technical Colleges and Spartanburg Community College through the CCE Divisions to benefit veterans training. The goal is to put veterans to work quickly, said Demonet. Each college manages its VSF endowment, which will enable them to provide scholarships to veterans with the most need. As the endowments grow, more scholarships will be awarded to veterans for training to enter the workforce.



**Ron Demonet**, managing director of VSF, and **Ashlee Wedge**

# Student Veterans Read to Elementary School Kids



Our student veterans continue to do good work and give back to their communities. Four Student Veterans Association (SVA) members spent time on Veterans Day reading to a class at East End Elementary School. Dr. Brian Swords said, "I received a call from a couple of Pickens County School District administrators who were at East End when our student veterans were there. They were in awe that our veterans would want to give back to the school on a day when we are supposed to be honoring them. Speaks volumes about our great student veterans."

*Several of our student veterans chose to spend Veterans Day in the service of others. They shared the joy of reading with area elementary school children at East End Elementary School in Easley. Pictured from left to right are **Julio Salazar**, **Thomas Golden**, **Jeremy Max**, and **Dakota Davis**.*



*Student Veterans **Thomas Golden** and **Jeremy Max** pose with students in class.*

## Congratulations Pamela Anderson



*Pamela Anderson with Lynn Addis, C.N.A. training coordinator*

Congratulations to Pamela Anderson, right, who received the 2015 James E. Jones Healthcare Excellence Award at the Goodwin Champions Tribute held October 22. She overcame many challenges and successfully earned her Certified Nurse Aide (C.N.A.) designation in April 2015 through Goodwill and the Corporate and Community Education Division.

This was a career change for Pamela, who taught special education for 19 years in Oconee and Pickens counties. She opted for a career change to take care of her autistic daughter, who is 27, and now lives in a group

home. Pamela works at Lovinghealth Care in a home care setting. She is pictured with Lynn Addis, C.N.A. training coordinator.

## Nursing Major Featured in Video

Danielle Hicks, a graduate of our Certified Nurse Aide program and now a full-time Associate Degree Nursing major, is featured in an instructional video being used by Tri-County students. Danielle, of Clemson, can be seen demonstrating the 22 skills that are required to pass the skills section of the Nurse Aide certification exam. CCE Nurse Aide students currently are using the video to practice skills at home, and the AHS 117 (Nursing) class will use it via Blackboard next semester.



## Executive Staff Summary

- **COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE:** Approved a project to design a College-wide continuous process improvement program based on best practices for Lean Higher Education. The program will be aligned with Tri-County's Commitment to Excellence value and includes communication, training, and support components.
- **GRANTS UPDATE:** To date for FY 16, we have been awarded more than \$1.3 million in State, federal, and other grant funding. We have applied for an additional \$1.6 million, which has not yet been awarded. Several additional grant opportunities will be pursued during the remainder of the fiscal year from NSF, AARP, ARC, and the U.S. Department of Education.
- **TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS (TSS):** Approved the Technical Skills for Success project, which is designed to enhance the development of programs and services aimed at meeting specific goals that impact under-resourced students, in-school youth enrolled in Technical Career Pathways programs, and out-of-school youth and adults who have not earned a high school credential.
- **OCONEE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER:** A memorandum of understanding with all parties has been drafted for a pre-design study during 2016. The Oconee Workforce Development Center will co-locate a new Oconee Campus of Tri-County Technical College, a Career Center for the School District of Oconee County, and Oconee County Economic Development offices.
- **CAMPUS SAFETY AND PREPAREDNESS IMPROVEMENT PLAN:** Campus Safety Director Jonathan Finch shared an update to the College's continuous improvement plan to address safety, security, and emergency preparedness on all Tri-County campuses.
- **SPRING SEMESTER ENROLLMENT:** Discussed enrollment to date for Spring Semester and additional efforts to meet enrollment targets.
- **OTHER:** SACSCOC preparation; strategic planning for 2016-17; policy and procedure reviews.