

# President's Newsletter

Third Quarter | 2017

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## SPARTANBURG COMMUNITY COLLEGE





Dear friends,

In June, the eyes of the world looked to Spartanburg County when BMW celebrated its 25 anniversary here. National and international media outlets covered the milestone, which included an announcement by the automaker that it plans to invest an additional \$600 million in Plant Spartanburg and create another 1,000 jobs during the next four years.

BMW executives focused their praise on local associates, including SCC students who were featured prominently during the announcement. BMW Chief Executive Officer Harald Kruger said BMW plans to invest another \$200 million over the next five years in training and education at the Spartanburg plant, and the company plans to begin a national training program.

For a quarter of a century, BMW has invested in Spartanburg County, in large part, because it knows the caliber of worker here, and because partnerships between colleges and universities help equip a willing workforce. In the decades since that initial investment, Spartanburg County has become a thriving hub for advanced manufacturing and innovation thanks to the vision of local and state leaders, and, of course, BMW.

In June, 30,000 people in the Spartanburg County area were employed in the manufacturing sector, a 10-year high, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Last year, Spartanburg County added 4,500 jobs, the highest growth rate in South Carolina. During the past four years, the county has attracted more than \$4 billion in new corporate investment.

The Upstate of South Carolina is known internationally for its commitment to craftsmanship and creating the products that fuel the future of manufacturing. For its part, SCC is committed to assisting in economic development and recruiting efforts. Through our facilities, such as the Center for Business and Entrepreneurial Development, and with our programming, SCC will continue educating the workers of tomorrow.

SCC is thankful for the contributions of so many companies that see the value in education, the value in a skilled workforce and the value we create together. Congratulations to BMW on its first 25 years in Spartanburg County, and thank you for your continued investment in our shared future.

Sincerely,

Henry C. Giles, Jr.  
President, Spartanburg Community College

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# SCC: Changing

## Union County Campus sparks female student's love of welding



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**“When I’m welding, I have this calm about me,” she said. “It’s peaceful.”**

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Angelina Aste

When Angelina Aste began examining her education options, her brother jokingly suggested that she look into welding at Spartanburg Community College.

“And I took him seriously,” said Aste, who admittedly had always been interested in working with metal and robotics.

That was in the summer of 2016, and now, Aste is studying full-time, splitting classes between the Union County Campus, Central Campus and the Downtown Campus. She’s succeeding in a male-dominated field and is the only female welding student in her program at the Union County Campus, which conveniently offers classes near her home. Smaller class sizes there also mean students receive one-on-one attention, Aste said, which is good, but she wasn’t always as confident behind a welding mask as she is now.

“I was terrified. I didn’t want to catch myself on fire or burn myself,” Aste, 20, said.

She wanted to quit, but a female instructor convinced her to give welding more time.

“I laid that first bead and loved it,” Aste said.

After taking additional course work in areas such as mechatronics, Aste said she would one-day like to open her own welding shop.

“When I’m welding, I have this calm about me,” she said. “It’s peaceful.”

# Lives & Building

## Campus Highlights

### SCC Central Campus

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Following the death of nationally-renowned baking entrepreneur Caroline Ragsdale Reutter, Spartanburg residents Lea Ann and Dexter Cleveland initiated the creation of the Caroline Ragsdale Reutter Memorial Scholarship for Culinary Arts. The scholarship will award one talented SCC culinary student with tuition support and the opportunity to intern at Caroline's Cakes, Ragsdale Reutter's nationally-acclaimed bakery. Donations are accepted for the Caroline Ragsdale Reutter Memorial Scholarship online.



### SCC Cherokee County Campus

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On July 20, SCC celebrated the 10th anniversary of its Cherokee County Campus. SCC Cherokee County Campus Advisory Committee members, many of whom have served since the campus opened, attended the celebration. The campus has served more than 500 students annually since opening in 2007. Construction of the Institute of Innovation is ongoing, and the vocational center for high school students is expected to open in fall 2018.



### SCC Downtown Campus

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The Downtown Campus is the recipient of an AmeriCorps grant in partnership with the United Way of the Piedmont and will have a Financial Stability Navigator (FSN) on site beginning in October to manage a resource pantry for students. The pantry will provide non-perishable food, personal hygiene items, and household goods to students in need. In addition to managing the pantry, the campus FSN may offer students aid through case management, the Benefit Bank, and VITA tax preparation.



### SCC Tyger River Campus

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This fall, the Tyger River Campus will offer two new hands-on programs. The first prepares students for the Board for Therapeutic Massage and Body Exam or Massage and Bodywork Licensing Examination. Informational sessions about the program were well attended over the summer. The Tyger River Campus also will begin offering welding, as the demand for instruction in the Duncan area is high. All welding classes for fall are currently full.



### SCC Union County Campus

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The Union County Campus sponsored an industry tour for Union County guidance counselors on Aug. 8. Aimed to educate elementary through high school guidance counselors on available jobs and industries in the community, SCC hopes the tours will help them develop individualized graduation plans for students and to help them understand the skills needed for students to enter the workforce. The tour included professional speakers, testimonials from SCC students and staff, and tours of local industries Timken Co., Haemonetics Corp., Santuc Precision and Ellen Sagar Nursing Center.



# Futures Since 1963

## Leaders In Our Community:

### Michael Davis paves way for nine employees to attend SCC apprenticeship program

Michael Davis understands the value of education. An SCC graduate, he started Davis Services Inc. in 1972, and in the years since, the business has grown to include 72 employees who work in homes and businesses within a 100-mile radius of its headquarters near Bryant Road in Spartanburg County.



Michael Davis, front center, celebrates the graduation of nine of his employees from an HVAC apprenticeship program.

Since October 2015, Davis has also worked closely with SCC, SC Works and Apprenticeship Carolina to provide a customized training and national apprenticeship program for nine of his company's employees.

“Working with our partners at SC Works and Apprenticeship Carolina, we developed a custom program for Davis Services that included specific courses in HVAC, soft skills, business writing and math,” said Nannette Bongiovi, SCC’s director of Corporate Training & Career Development. “It was important to Mr. Davis that his employees attend his alma mater, SCC, to gain additional knowledge in technical HVAC subjects as well as training in communications, ethics, business etiquette, customer service since they interact with customers in their homes on many different issues.”

SCC provided the classroom training associated with the program, and SC Works funded a portion of the training costs through an incumbent worker training grant. In total, the nine graduates completed 364 hours of HVAC and soft skills training, covering 30 different modules (or topics), valued at \$103,128.

Davis’s son, Nick Davis, who also completed the course, said employees worked a full day and then attended classes at night, logging 88 sessions in 44 weeks. In the end, the workers earned certificates from SCC and the U.S. Department of Labor.

“It’s hard work, and to be able to have this, it just gives them a sense of pride,” Nick Davis said. “It’s been a real learning experience for everybody.”

Nick Davis and three other employees have since earned an instructor’s classification, enabling them to teach in the apprenticeship program, which the company plans to continue.

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## Dominion Energy donation funds Renewable Agriculture Program

A \$5,000 grant from Dominion Energy of Richmond, Va., will fund the startup costs of SCC's new Sustainable Agriculture certificate program. The program will begin in the upcoming fall 2017 semester, introducing students to sustainable agriculture, agribusiness and the environmental and economic impact of growing fruits and vegetables. Credits may also be transferred to the horticulture associate's degree. The program hopes to include gardens, beehives and greenhouses, some of which the students will help to construct and develop when the semester begins this fall.



From left, Jason Bagwell, director of SCC horticulture programs; Kristen Beckham of the Dominion Foundation; Gwen Murtha, SCC grants coordinator; Jay Moore, SCC horticulture faculty.

“We are so appreciative of the generous donation from Dominion Energy to our new Sustainable Agriculture program and what it will mean to students interested in this thriving profession,” said Jason Bagwell, SCC’s department chair of horticulture. “This grant will allow us to begin work on developing the agriculture production facilities and gardens. Our new sustainable agricultural area will have a variety of gardens, bee hives and greenhouses used for teaching hydroponics and aquaponics – all which will be awesome additions to our arboretum and outdoor classroom for our students and community.”