



## South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

### Commissioners' E-Alert

March 2009

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## Greetings from Chairman Ken Wingate



Hello! It is my honor to have recently been appointed by Governor Sanford as chairman of the Commission on Higher Education.

I have served as a commissioner of CHE since 2006 under the leadership of Dr. Layton McCurdy. Layton chaired the Commission from 2005 through 2008, a tenure marked by new avenues of collegiality and collaboration within higher education in this state. We owe Layton a great debt of gratitude for his valuable service.

The months ahead will bring new challenges and new opportunities. The economic downturn and reduced public funding for our colleges, universities and technical colleges have forced the reduction of programs and personnel. This puts greater pressure on the presidents, trustees and administrators of each institution to maintain the quality, affordability, and accessibility of higher education.

On the positive side, the nine-member Higher Education Study Committee, created by the legislature and chaired by Daniel Ravenel of Charleston, will release its excellent report in the near future. ***Leveraging Higher Education for a Stronger South Carolina*** will provide a long-range plan to make South Carolina one of the most educated states. This twenty-year plan contains bold, innovative, and achievable strategies to advance higher education, create a workforce equipped for the knowledge economy, and enhance quality of life for all South Carolinians.

I look forward to working with our state leaders and with all of you to push the notion that education pays!

## Commission Highlights

***The Commission meets each month on the first Thursday. This E-Alert brings highlights from the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.***

*The next meeting will be held Thursday, April 2, 2009, at 10:30 a.m. in the Commission's main conference room.*

### **COMPTROLLER GENERAL RICHARD ECKSTROM SPEAKS WITH COMMISSION**

The Commission invites special guests to engage conversation about pressing topics facing the state and higher education. This month's invited guest, Comptroller General Richard Eckstrom talked with the Commission about the approval process for capital projects. The topic has been of interest to Commissioners who have been seeking changes to ensure the process is carried out in the most efficient manner possible in order to prevent unnecessary costs due to time delays. The discussion focused on the importance of a statewide master list of prioritized projects and the process by which projects are reviewed by the Joint Bond Review Committee and the Budget and Control Board. Eckstrom also commented on the prospects of a bond bill indicating that it is not likely that the state will move forward with one in the near future.

### **WORKING AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

In his report, Chairman Wingate shared that a successful CHE Commissioner's Retreat was held on February 20-21, 2009, hosted by the SC Higher Education Foundation. Chairman Wingate also commented on his participation later that same weekend in the SC Independent Colleges and Universities Board Retreat. He and Dr. Walters briefed the Commission on recent meetings with college and university presidents and others to discuss collaborative opportunities to engage in projects which may result from monies provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Commissioners were provided with an update on the funds and recent related budget recommendation

***Support for higher education is the lever by which the government can move the entire economy***

~Stanford/Hoover Institution economist Paul Romer

## **SPECIAL AND SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS**

The status of the **SC Course Alignment Project** was reported on by Dr. Gail Morrison. The object of this project is to promote academic success as students leave high school and enroll in colleges and universities. The project involves K-12 and higher education faculty working together to look at the alignment of courses students take near the end of their high school careers and beginning of college careers. A great deal of work has been accomplished to date. Details about this exciting project can be found on the Commission's website at [http://www.che.sc.gov/InfoCntr/PressRelFiles/SCCAP\\_030409.pdf](http://www.che.sc.gov/InfoCntr/PressRelFiles/SCCAP_030409.pdf) and in a recent project newsletter at [http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/EEDA/Files/CA\\_P%20Newsletter\\_Vol1Issue3.pdf](http://www.che.sc.gov/AcademicAffairs/EEDA/Files/CA_P%20Newsletter_Vol1Issue3.pdf).

The **10<sup>th</sup> Annual Linda B. Floyd Campus Safety Conference**, hosted by Coastal Carolina University, was held February 25-27, 2009. The conference was a joint effort of the SC Higher

Education Foundation, the SC Law Enforcement Association, and the SC Student Personnel Association. For details, <http://www.coastal.edu/safety/conference/>

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk shared information on **College Goal Sunday**, which is an event held to help students and their families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). See [http://www.che.sc.gov/InfoCntr/PressRelFiles/College\\_Goal\\_Sunday](http://www.che.sc.gov/InfoCntr/PressRelFiles/College_Goal_Sunday) for information.

The **New Front Door** project lead will be taken by commission staff member, Mr. Michael Brown, Director of Access and Equity. This project focuses on new ways for adult learners to access higher education and continue to move through the process of getting a degree. Further information about this project, see [www.che.sc.gov/ExecutiveDirector/Rep&Presentations/GWalters\\_NewFrontDoor\\_Jul08.pdf](http://www.che.sc.gov/ExecutiveDirector/Rep&Presentations/GWalters_NewFrontDoor_Jul08.pdf).

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## **ANNUAL SERVICE LEARNING AWARDS**

Each year, the Commission is pleased to recognize exemplary **Service Learning** programs of our public and private four-year and two year colleges and universities. Programs are identified based on the following criteria: 1) ability to resolve community concerns or address community issues; 2) degree to which project enhances students' learning; 3) impact on community; and 4) integration into academics.

Chairman Wingate announced the winners

**Advancing Rural Community Health (ARCH) Program**, Francis Marion University, Dr. Paul DeMarco, Project Director

**Lessons of the Heart Program**, Greenville Technical College in partnership with the Medical University of South Carolina, Dr. Dana Rafferty Parker, Project Director

**Student Volunteer Income Tax Program**, Voorhees College, Dr. David Caslan Project Director



From left to right: Dr. John J. Sanders, MUSC; Dr. Dana Rafferty Parker, Greenville Technical College; Dr. Paul DeMarco, Francis Marion; Dr. Bernard Moses and Ms. Teesa Brunson, Voorhees; and Mr. Kenneth Wingate, Commission Chairman

Each project leader was recognized and congratulated for their outstanding efforts to help resolve community problems and concerns with direct hands-on student learning.

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## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Committee reports were presented by the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing and the Committee on Finance and Facilities.

Several new academic programs were approved as was a request for an initial license, the Annual Evaluation of Associate Degree Programs, FY 2006-07, and Revisions to the CHE's *Policy and Procedures for New Academic Program Approval and Termination*. A Report on Awards for Improving Teacher Quality Competitive Grants was also received for information only.

A lease renewal project at the Medical University of SC was approved. The Commission also received for information a List of Capital Projects & Leases processed by staff for February 2009.

Detailed information on these items can be found on the CHE website at: <http://www.che.sc.gov/ExecutiveDirector/Mailouts/CommMailOutMar2009.htm>