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South Carolina  
Commission on Higher Education

Commissioners' E-Alert

September 2009

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Dr. Garrison Walters, Executive Director

**Commission Highlights - This E-Alert brings highlights from the September meeting.**

The Commission meets each month on the first Thursday. This E-Alert contains highlights from the September 3 meeting. **The Commission's October meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday, September 30. Please note the change in date.** An agenda and materials are typically posted online approximately one week in advance of the meeting. For copies, [CLICK HERE](#).

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

**ACHIEVING THE DREAM: COMMUNITY COLLEGES COUNT**

One hundred and two colleges in the United States are participating in the national *Achieving the Dream* initiative focused on helping community college students succeed in postsecondary education. The initiative is aimed at assisting individuals who face the most significant barriers in attending college including, for example, first generation college students, students from underrepresented populations, students of lower socio-economic backgrounds, and students with mediocre academic records. A key component of the initiative is addressing the achievement gaps that exist with students who are not prepared for college.

Special guests attended the September meeting to talk about the participation of the State's technical colleges in *Achieving the Dream*. Ms. Hope Rivers from the South Carolina Technical College System introduced speakers from the following technical colleges: Mr. Steve Varland, Vice President for Education, Greenville Technical College; Dr. Alice Frye, Dean of Health Sciences, Aiken Technical College; Mr. Warren Yarbrough, Dean of Arts and Humanities, and Ms. Katherine Haigler, Biology Instructor, Orangeburg Calhoun Technical College; Dr. Gina Mounfield, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Technical College of the Lowcountry; and Dr. Darren Felty, Department Head for English, Trident Technical College. They described the program and shared how they were working to improve success of technical college students.

Copies of the presentations to the Commission are available at [CLICK HERE](#). For information about the national *Achieving the Dream* project, go to: [www.achievingthedream.org](http://www.achievingthedream.org).

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Report of the Executive Committee:** Chairman Wingate noted that the Executive Committee continues to meet a week prior to Commission meetings and shared a copy of the most recent meeting minutes.

**Report of the Committee on Finance & Facilities:** Commissioner Jim Sanders, chair of the Finance and Facilities Committee, brought forward recommendations to approve a lease relating to computing and information technology at Clemson University and a Master Land Acquisition Plan (MLAP) for York Technical College. The Commission approved these projects. The monthly information report for August on capital projects and leases, approved at the staff level, was also provided.

**Report of the Committee on Student Services and Access and Equity:** Commissioner Cyndi Mosteller, chair of the Access and Equity and

Student Services Committee, asked members of the CHE staff whose work focuses on college access to provide brief updates on activities including the upcoming College Application Week events to be held in South Carolina in October/November to assist students and parents in learning more about the process and procedures involved in applying to college.

The Commission's third standing committee, **Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing**, chaired by Commissioner Bettie Rose Horne, had no report.

For details on the items in this section, [CLICK HERE](#)

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

~Stanford/Hoover Institution Economist Dr. Paul Romer

**Chairman's Report:** Chairman Wingate provided a reminder regarding the upcoming SC Conference for Public and Independent Trustees to be held on Tuesday, September 29, 2009, from 9:00 am till 2:00 pm at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. A very informative program has been planned with key legislators, business leaders, and special keynote speaker, Dr. Deno Curris. For additional information, contact CHE staff member, Julie Carullo, at 803.737.2292. He also noted the change in date of the next Commission meeting to September 30 in order to follow the conference and minimize travel time.

Chairman Wingate also reported on the **Higher Education Action Plan Ad Hoc Committee** that has been established to focus on implementation of the recently released *Action Plan* for higher education. The ad hoc committee, which held its first meeting on September 2, is composed of the Commission's Executive Committee which includes the chair, vice chair, and chairs of the Commission's standing committees (Commissioners Ken Wingate, Jim Sanders, Bettie Rose Horne, and Cyndi Mosteller) as well as Commissioners Hood Temple and Bill Scarborough. A status report on *Action Plan* recommendations was shared with the Commission. For a copy of the status report, [CLICK HERE](#). For more information about *Action Plan*, see [http://www.che.sc.gov/HigherEd\\_ActionPlan.htm](http://www.che.sc.gov/HigherEd_ActionPlan.htm).

### **CALL TO INFORM AND WORK TOGETHER FOR SUCCESS**

Higher Education for all our citizens has never been as important as it is today in the Knowledge Economy. To change our state we must make sure all our citizens have the work skills and education they need to compete in the new world economy. They also must know how to access this education.

We are sharing this message with Chambers of Commerce, civic organizations, business organizations, parent and school organizations and others. If you are interested in a program, please call us today.

**CONTACT: Rita Allison, Director of Communications, at 803-767-8352 or [rallison@che.sc.gov](mailto:rallison@che.sc.gov).**

### **NEWS AND UPDATES FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dr. Garrison Walters, Executive Director of the Commission on Higher Education, provided a summary of his recent speaking engagements. Presentations have included the Beaufort Chamber of Commerce, the Fountain Inn Rotary Club, and a Regional Education Center Coordinators' meeting. Dr. Walters also shared details of his recent visit to Kingsport, Tennessee, where he met with community and business leaders to learn more about their successful initiative, "Educate and Grow." Kingsport's goal is to have every citizen obtain at least two years of college; their initiative covers about 70% of the costs of education with local scholarships to encourage their youth to stay in the community. Significant improvements to Kingsport's economy have resulted from the initiative's focused and collaborative efforts to increase awareness about the value of higher education. Dr. Walters emphasized the importance of fostering similar developments in South Carolina and stressed the role and responsibility of CHE in promoting similar efforts. To review a copy of Dr. Walters' presentation, [CLICK HERE](#).

In other news, Dr. Walters reported that statewide agency budget reductions of 4% were just approved by the Budget and Control Board in response to the State's Board of Economic Advisors reduced FY 2009-10 revenue estimates. He noted that CHE FY 2010-11 budget requests and details relating to a four-year budget strategy in support of implementation of the Action plan would be forthcoming.

Dr. Walters called upon staff to report on significant Commission initiatives focused on improving student success and increasing the numbers enrolled in postsecondary education:

- Dr. Gail Morrison, Director of Academic Affairs, reported on the **Course Alignment Project** and the **Transfer and Articulation Web-based System**. Thirty-two public institutions are participating in the transfer and articulation web-based project. A full demonstration on the system will be made at the December CHE meeting. For additional details, visit [www.sctrac.org](http://www.sctrac.org). The *Course Alignment Project* is focused on the alignment of senior high school courses and entry-level college courses in order to promote successful transitions from high school to college. The project is entering Phase 2 which includes development and implementation of pilot paired courses. To learn more about this exciting project, don't miss the upcoming presentation of national college readiness expert and partner, Dr. David Conley, at the September 30, 2009, CHE meeting.
- Mr. Mike Brown, Director of Access and Equity, gave a report on adult education initiatives and progress on the New Front Door Project which focuses on increasing the numbers of adults who enroll in and successfully complete college programs. He briefed members on a recent meeting he and Chairman Wingate held with Richland School District One officials about stackable certificates to assist adults in successfully entering or returning to postsecondary education.