

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **DR. CONRAD FESTA IS PRESENTED THE “ORDER OF THE PALMETTO”**

A retirement luncheon was held for Dr. Conrad Festa, Wednesday, July 28th, at the Inn at USC. Many of his staff, Commissioners, former Commissioners and members of the S. C. Higher Education Foundation met to offer appreciation for his three years of service as the Executive Director of the S. C. Commission on Higher Education. Dr. Festa was presented the “Highest Civilian Honor”, the Order of the Palmetto, from Governor Mark Sanford. Governor Sanford recognized his outstanding service to the Palmetto State and its citizens and applauded his contribution to higher education. In expression of his gratitude, Dr. Festa stated, "I am deeply honored for the privilege to serve higher education in the state of South Carolina and humbled by the honor of the Order of the Palmetto."

During Dr. Festa's tenure, the Commission on Higher Education has become a stronger advocate for higher education in South Carolina. The Honorable Representative Cathy Harvin, a member of the S. C. Higher Education Foundation and former Commissioner, expressed her gratitude for Dr. Festa's service to the state and commitment to higher education. In honor of his accomplishments and service, she presented him with a resolution from the S. C. House of Representatives.

Dr. Festa has worked with the General Assembly, Presidents of the Colleges and Universities, and other education partners in a collaborative way to bring progress and vision for Higher Education in South Carolina. Dr. Gail Morrison who is assuming duties as Interim Executive Director for the Commission, shared her appreciation for the direction and energy Dr. Festa brought to the Commission.

Dr. Festa is returning to the College of Charleston, where he previously served as Provost, to become the college's interim president.



*Shown here left to right, Dr. Festa and Dr. Layton McCurdy, Chairman of the S.C. Commission on Higher Education.*