**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR TRI‑COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE FOR FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE AND QUALITY EDUCATION TO THE CITIZENS OF ANDERSON, OCONEE, AND PICKENS COUNTIES AND FOR ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to learn that Tri‑County Technical College will celebrate a half century of providing quality technical education for students in the Palmetto State; and

Whereas, on April 7, 1962, Tri‑County Technical College became the first multicounty technical institute in South Carolina when the residents of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties united to plan the college after the General Assembly established the State Committee for Technical Education and provided for the establishment of regional centers; and

Whereas, Governor Ernest “Fritz” Hollings signed Act 905 of the General Assembly on April 7, 1962, creating what would eventually become Tri‑County Technical College; and

Whereas, its mission was to serve as a tool for economic development and to attract diverse manufacturing industries to the State, as well as to serve as a comprehensive community college providing equal educational opportunities for all citizens; and

Whereas, the Tri‑County Technical Education Center opened the doors of Pickens Hall September 10, 1963, and attracted nine hundred nineteen students during its first year of operation; and

Whereas, the college has grown from a technical‑education center to today’s comprehensive two‑year college featuring twenty‑five associate‑degree programs, seven diploma programs, and fifty‑four certificate programs and offering myriad noncredit courses in continuing education; and

Whereas, still dedicated to preparing the state’s greatest resource, its people, for employment in the ever‑changing, fast‑paced work environment of today and tomorrow, Tri‑County College meets the needs of new and expanding industry through the readySC program, one of the State’s greatest incentives and often the deciding factor for industries to locate in South Carolina; and

Whereas, Tri‑County has been led by three presidents: W. T. “Bill” Yarborough from 1962 to 1971; Dr. Don C. Garrison from 1971 to 2003; and Dr. Ronnie L. Booth from 2003 to the present; and

Whereas, during his tenure, Mr. Yarborough grew the college from one building and nine hundred nineteen students to three buildings and more than sixteen hundred students, and for the 1970‑71 school year, Tri‑County exceeded all other South Carolina technical colleges in total growth enrollment; and

Whereas, from the time Dr. Garrison assumed the presidency in 1971 until his retirement in 2003, he was known as a tireless advocate for technical education, placing Tri‑County at the forefront of two‑year colleges in the nation; and

Whereas, under his leadership, the College dedicated its Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the first in the State, located at the main entrance to the Pendleton Campus on May 25, 1980, to honor military veterans from Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties who died in Vietnam; and

Whereas, since 2003, Dr. Booth has made college education accessible, available, and affordable to residents of the tri‑county region by opening the school’s first community campuses: the Anderson Campus, the Oconee Campus at the Hamilton Career Center which opened in the fall 2007, and the Easley Campus; and

Whereas, the Oconee and Easley campuses have QuickJobs Development Centers, offered through the Corporate and Community Education Division, which are designed to provide the training necessary to build a strong, viable workforce by offering quick, affordable training for displaced and under‑employed workers in a series of in‑demand jobs; and

Whereas, growth during the past five years has been especially significant as more and more Oconee County citizens are making Tri‑County their college of choice, and enrollment in the fall of 2011 reached six thousand nine hundred forty‑one students, the largest in the school’s history; and

Whereas, in addition to quality instructional programs taught by faculty who can offer one‑on‑one instruction, Tri‑County is dedicated to student success by providing financial aid, counseling, career services, and advisory services; and

Whereas, over the past five years, the average salary of Tri‑County graduates has exceeded the state average by eight percent, and Tri‑County students enjoy a twenty‑one percent annual return on their investment because, for every dollar invested, Tri‑County students receive six dollars in higher future earnings over an expected thirty‑year career; and

Whereas, the college’s vision statement focuses on becoming the role model for community‑college education through dedication to high standards, a nurturing environment, community alliance, and innovative leadership; and

Whereas, over the past fifty years, Tri‑County has grown into a comprehensive community college that serves the educational needs and significantly contributes to the quality of life enjoyed by residents of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, honor Tri‑County Technical College for fifty years of service to the citizens of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties by providing quality education and for its contribution to the economic development of the State.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Ronnie L. Booth, president of Tri‑County Technical College.

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