

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman  
July 20, 2005  
TCL Groundbreaking, New River Campus

On behalf of Beaufort County Council, I congratulate Dr. Anne McNutt and the members of the TCL Commission as we stand together today and publicly acknowledge the significance of this investment in the future of our region.

This new campus will open its doors in just a few short months. But it did not emerge overnight. Like a classic Lowcountry oak tree... its roots go back more than 100 years to 1868 with the founding of Mather School for the daughters of freed slaves. Now, the oak has branched out. Today TCL has 7 satellite campuses – two on military bases and others strategically placed throughout our 4-county area offering a wide variety of programs – including those taught via internet. The oak has matured as our Lowcountry region has matured. Today, our place in the world-wide economy is more firmly rooted and the seed planted more than a century ago has become the valuable institution we honor today.

The Technical College of the Lowcountry is a regional treasure. This new campus will further our families, our business community and our workforce. It will help move Beaufort County and the Lowcountry region forward in the global marketplace.

Through the creation of a Tax Increment Financing -- or TIF District -- The people of Beaufort County established a mechanism for funding the bulk of this \$10 million dollar investment. A portion of the money from property tax revenues within the district will pay for most of this new campus. Bond sales will also help. But, for the most part, it was the careful cultivation of a vision aimed at meeting the needs of our citizens that brought about this achievement – this investment.

The value of this investment will be reaped throughout this entire Lowcountry region, which includes our good neighbors in Jasper, Hampton and Colleton Counties. By strengthening our region, we strengthen each individual.

Opportunities for higher education do more than enrich our lives. Economic development experts list them among a community's greatest assets for attracting new business and industry. Therefore, local opportunities for higher education directly or indirectly benefit each and every resident of this entire 4-county area.

This new campus also reflects an investment in our young students, our non-traditional, mature students, and our families, whose sons and daughters and mothers and fathers strive to secure a future in today's world-wide marketplace. It's an investment in our workforce -- in our economy -- in our business community and, ultimately, in our quality of life.

Again, on behalf of Beaufort County Council, sincere congratulations to Dr. McNutt and the TCL commission on your successful stewardship of this valuable Lowcountry resource.