



SC ATE Briefs

SC Advanced Technological Education (SC ATE) Center of Excellence
SC Technical College System Summer 2002, Volume 4, Issue 2

NSF Awards \$900,000 to Florence-Darlington To Establish SC ATE National Resource Center For Engineering Technology Education

Florence-Darlington Tech and Piedmont Tech create partnership for next phase of SC ATE Center work

At a July 23rd press conference, Florence-Darlington Technical College President Dr. Charles Gould announced that the college had received a three-year \$900,000 grant award establishing a National Science Foundation-funded National Resource Center for engineering technology education, effective Sept. 1.

The resource center, a partnership between Florence-Darlington (FDTC) and Piedmont Technical College (PTC), is the next phase of work for the South Carolina Advanced Technological Education (SC ATE) Center of Excellence.

SC ATE's main focus has been to increase the quantity, quality and diversity of engineering technology graduates to support economic development. In transitioning to a campus-based Center, SC ATE and its Engineering Technology Education National Resource Center will move forward with new strategies to enhance recruitment of engineering technicians for the workplace.

Elaine Craft will remain Center director/principal investigator. Co-principal investigators for the new grant are Kamil Zakhour and Joshua Phiri at Florence-Darlington and Lynn Mack and Bill Ware at Piedmont.



Dr. Charles Gould, Florence-Darlington Technical College president, and Dr. Lex Walters, Piedmont Technical College president, take a leadership role in the next National Science Foundation-funded phase of work for the SC Advanced Technological Education Center of Excellence.

Zakhour is dean of engineering technology and has responsibility for ABET accreditation at FDTC. Dr. Phiri is a physicist who has taught the SC ATE curriculum and develops Internet-based courses.

Mack, director of instructional development at PTC, served as PI for the SC ATE Exemplary Faculty Project and as Co-PI for faculty development for SC ATE. Ware is electrical engineering technology coordinator at PTC.

SC ATE Milestones

- 67% graduation rate for the first cohort of ET Core students from Tri-County and Florence-Darlington Tech.
- Students completing the ATE Core graduate at a rate four times the rate of “traditional” ET students.
- ATE has increased the percentage of minority and female students enrolled in ET. For example, African-American enrollment for all implementation sites is 37%.
- A record-high 170 students were enrolled in ATE classes in spring 2002.
- Industry support is evident through the SC ATE Scholars initiative (workplace experience and scholarships).
- More than \$66,000 was awarded to engineering technology students through other ATE scholarships.
- Technology Gateway and ET Core curriculum components were published and are available in print, on CD and on the web.
- Technology Gateway is adapted for use in industrial technology degree programs, for dual credit courses, for the evening program and for industry-based courses.
- Faculty development since March 2001 has included 7 Roundtables (peer sharing via teleconference), 3 teaching team training sessions, Instructional Leadership Institutes and numerous workshops.
- Faculty development outcomes include creation of interdisciplinary, industry-modeled faculty teams, workplace research, and a shared knowledge base in current learning theories.
- Emphasis is placed on learner-centered instruction and student recruitment and retention strategies.
- \$129,000 has been awarded for faculty projects to improve ET education.

SC ATE Funding History



- \$50,000 planning grant awarded to Tri-County Tech, Oct. 1, 1994.
- Exemplary Faculty Project grant awarded to SC Technical College System, (3 years, \$1.4 million), 1995.
- ATE Center of Excellence grant awarded to SC Technical College System (6 years, \$4.1 million), 1996.
- SC ATE, Engineering Technology Education National Resource Center grant awarded to Florence-Darlington Tech, (3 years, \$900,000), 2002.

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