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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 15, 2015

Contact Information:

Sara Perry
SaraPerry@TriCountyCradleToCareer.org
843.953.5272

High School and College Leaders Address Math Pathways

Educators and senior administrators from five universities and four public school districts serving Lowcountry students have formed a collaborative team to focus on improving “math pathways” between high school and college. The team includes senior officials from Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester School Districts Two and Four, Charleston Southern University, The Citadel, Clemson, the College of Charleston, Trident Technical College and the University of South Carolina.

The TCCC *Regional Education Report* released earlier this year presented data on educational outcomes across the cradle to career continuum, including significant remediation needs for first year students at Trident Tech. Of more than 1,000 local high school graduates enrolled as first time freshmen at Trident Tech in 2014, nine of ten required remedial math coursework. Subsequent analysis performed for TCCC’s Postsecondary Education Consortium, comprised of seven institutions of higher education serving the Lowcountry, confirmed math ‘readiness’ issues were more extensive, especially for students considering STEM related disciplines. Close to 30% of the additional 1,000 regional high school graduates who take a math placement test at these institutions, in most cases voluntarily, fail to pass.

Geoffrey L. Schuler, Chairman of the World Trade Council and retired Boeing Executive has agreed to serve as convener for the team; TCCC has agreed to provide data and facilitation support. John C. Read, CEO of TCCC commented “As a highly respected business leader in the community committed to STEM education, Geoff brings a wealth of experience and trust to bear on this important issue. We are pleased to lend our assistance”.

Dorchester School District Two Superintendent Joe Pye remarked, “Although we have many graduates from our local schools who do well in entry level college math classes, the report brought to light the large number who aren’t prepared for college math when they leave our high schools. We have an obligation to make sure our schools are preparing EVERY child to succeed in college.”

According to University of South Carolina President Harris Pastides, “While math preparation at our high schools can be improved, we should do everything we can to better ensure the success of otherwise qualified students.”

“Much of our region’s economic future lies in the STEM fields, and a strong foundation in math is critical to success in the modern workforce,” noted TCCC Board Chair and CEO of The InterTech Group Anita Zucker.

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The Math Pathways Project Team is part of the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative effort to ensure every child graduates high school ready to succeed in postsecondary and is closely associated with TCCC's High School Graduation Network, at work to reduce dropouts and assure the quality of the high school certificate.

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About the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

The Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (TCCC) is a community-wide movement in Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester Counties, South Carolina focused on improving the quality of life of its citizens and its workforce through education by collectively aligning resources and working toward common goals. Using data and focused community collaboration across a continuum from "cradle-to-career," TCCC works to build and implement strategies that will facilitate widespread systemic change, with the ultimate goal of increased student success and economic prosperity for all.