Thanks to Thomas Holbert’s perseverance and the guidance he received at Spartanburg Community College, his future is bright and promising. However, that was not always the case for the Spartanburg native.

Thomas grew up in a rough area of Spartanburg and his childhood was filled with hardship and exposure to criminal events. The result was a young boy and teenager who made many bad decisions, which led Thomas to serving one year in prison. However, it was in prison where Holbert made a decision to turn his life around and attend SCC after his release. And, he did just that and more.

While at SCC, several instructors became Thomas’ mentors, taking him under their wings, helping him transition from prison to college. As a result, Thomas flourished and graduated from SCC in 2014 with an Associate Degree in Electronic Engineering Technology. But, Thomas’ educational journey did not end there – today he continues his studies at the University of South Carolina Upstate in pursuit of a degree in Engineering Technology Management.

The SCC Foundation recently honored Thomas for his achievements at a Scholarship-Donor Brunch recognizing outstanding SCC students and donors who make college possible for so many. As the featured speaker, Thomas said, “SCC took the time to see what a unique person I am – they got to know me as an individual, and it changed my life. Plans can change but when you have a desire that is your foundation, you have to keep pressing towards it.”

Thomas Holbert is one example of hundreds at SCC who prove that an educational opportunity can and does “change lives and build futures.”
Campus Highlights

SCC Central Campus

The SCC Lyceum Lecture Series continues in 2015 at the central campus with free lectures by SCC faculty members showcasing topics in all academic areas exploring historical, religious, cultural and economic themes. The series continues each month through March. For topics, lecture dates and times, visit the SCC website events calendar at www.sccsc.edu.

SCC Cherokee County Campus

The Cherokee County Campus is proud to announce the addition of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Industrial Technology. Groundbreaking for the CAMIT building was held on December 11, 2014.

SCC Downtown Campus

New and exciting things are happening at the Evans Academic Center (EAC) thanks to an SCC theater class and dedicated students who presented the first play held in the renovated EAC Auditorium - *A Rose for Emily*, a play based on the short story by William Faulkner. Performances were held on February 28 and March 1 at the SCC Downtown Campus with rave reviews. Congratulations to all involved in this endeavor!

SCC Tyger River Campus

Exciting events scheduled for 2015 include BMW Black Belt Workshops, the SC Department of Education PACE Cohort 12 Training, weekly veterans’ meetings, Development Dimensions International Testing for readysc sponsored projects and SCC’s Corporate & Community Education training classes.

Union County Advanced Technology Center

Welding students from the Union County Advanced Technology Center will visit and tour Timken and Gestamp as part of the County’s Industry Showcase series. The tours are designed to create an awareness of today’s manufacturing environment and career opportunities available to SCC students.
Leaders In Our Community:
The Honorable Merita A. “Rita” Allison
SC House of Representatives, District 36

Spartanburg County native Rita Allison’s achievements are a reflection of her determined focus on family, community and state.

In December 2014, Allison was unanimously elected chairwoman of the SC House Education and Public Works Committee and is the only female leader of a SC House committee and the first female chair in 12 years.

Educated in Upstate SC public schools, Rita opened a small business after high school dedicated to helping others through self-development, improvement and business skill retraining. Named an “Outstanding Young Woman of America,” Rita’s community service continued as a member of the Spartanburg County School District Five Board and the RD Anderson Applied Technology Center Board.

Since her 1993 election to the SC House of Representatives, Rita has served on multiple committees dedicated to children, education and kindergarten - grade 12 funding. Locally, Allison has been a loyal community partner and advocate for Spartanburg Community College, working with SCC leadership to ensure that Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union county citizens have access to higher education.

Rita recognized early in her public service the important role that SCC plays in our community, changing the lives and building the futures of students while acting as a catalyst for economic development in the Upstate and throughout SC. In 2002, SCC dedicated a tutoring and academic support center to Allison as a tribute to her commitment to higher education.

Today, The Rita Allison Learning Center, or the “TLC” as it is affectionately called, serves hundreds of SCC students monthly through academic and career-related services, which for many, is the life-blood of their SCC success.
Dear Friends,

The Spartanburg Community College (SCC) Foundation recently conducted extensive market research to determine how well equipped SCC is to supply Upstate employers with the skilled workforce needed in the next 10-15 years. Study results forecast a “tsunami of retirees” on our horizon in the College’s Spartanburg, Union and Cherokee county service area because 42 percent of the current manufacturing workforce is over the age of 40 and will retire in the near future. Although these results confirmed a trend we have long suspected, the most significant finding was in the heavily concentrated manufacturing areas – the number of baby boomers exiting the workforce is disproportionately higher in the Upstate than in the state as a whole. Because of this manufacturing concentration in the Upstate, our workforce will face unique and staggering employment demands.

To meet these workforce demands, SCC has launched a new initiative – “Targeting the Upstate Workforce” – to preempt any retirement shortfall while simultaneously building the next generation of highly skilled employees. Our plan focuses on four critical paths: 1) expand current program capacity for high demand STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) related programs; 2) develop and offer new high technology programs; 3) hire additional full time SCC instructors and support staff; and 4) pilot programs that include Work Key and MSSC certification in the manufacturing curriculum.

We must all work together to accomplish these goals and address the challenges ahead. SCC leaders will work closely with the SC legislature to put our plans into action and to identify new funding sources to sustain a thriving and growing manufacturing workforce for years to come. Please join me as we endeavor to address these pivotal issues facing our community.

Sincerely,

Henry C. Giles, Jr.
President, Spartanburg Community College
Working adults seeking to earn a college degree can now enroll in SCC’s new Weekend College. Offered on Saturdays at SCC’s central college in Spartanburg, participants earn an associate degree in two years by taking hybrid classes that meet in the traditional classroom setting as well as attending classes online. Offerings include an Associate of Arts (AA) degree and introductory classes for an Associate Degree in Applied Science, Mechatronics Technology.

Weekend College is ideal for highly motivated individuals who desire to earn an associate degree and continue on to earn a bachelor’s degree at a four-year college. Part of SCC’s University Transfer Program, Weekend College credits seamlessly transfer to any public, four-year college in SC, and costs are affordable as many SCC students receive grants and scholarships to cover tuition, fees, books and even living expenses. Essentially, at SCC, it is possible to earn a degree completely debt free, if you qualify. For more information, visit www.sccsc.edu/weekend-college.