CONGRATULATIONS 2017 SCC GRADUATES!
Andrew Tate had a busy couple of weeks in May.

On May 4, the 18-year-old graduated from Spartanburg Community College with an associate of arts degree – a full two weeks before being handed his diploma from Spartanburg High School. Tate and 10 other classmates are part of the inaugural Viking Early College class.

A partnership between Spartanburg High and Spartanburg Community College, Viking Early College allows students to earn a high school diploma and complete college credit hours. Designed for young men, the program is limited to 20 students or fewer each year and was created as a way to encourage them to continue their education after high school.

The four-year program eases students into the SCC experience by at first keeping them on the high school campus alongside other teenagers, then gradually moving them into college courses with older students at either the central campus or at the Downtown Campus.

“As an eight-grader, I didn’t know what I was getting into,” Tate said of the rigors of the program. “I got more than I bargained for, but it was good.”

Thanks to school administrators, participating students were still able to revel in the typical high school social experiences, such as pep rallies, extracurricular activities and sports. Tate, who plays basketball, said anything he might have missed by being part of the Viking Early College is more than outweighed by having one college degree and a jump-start on another.

By keeping each early college class together as a cohort for all four years, students form a bond and help each other through the years.

“At the beginning, I didn’t know a lot of these guys,” Tate said. “We’ve all grown together and grown closer.”

Tate plans to attend the University of South Carolina Upstate in the fall, where he will play basketball and study business management and pre-engineering.

As for what Tate would tell younger students thinking about Viking Early College as an educational path.

“I would tell them it may seem hard at the beginning,” he said, “but in the end, it’s definitely worth it.”
Campus Highlights

SCC Central Campus

The central campus hosted the Discover SCC Open House event on April 18 in the Dan Lee Terhune Student Services Building. The free event was open to students, parents and career seekers interested in SCC’s academic programs. Guests toured the campus and spoke to faculty members about career opportunities. In May, SCC honored individuals who have been selected for special honors by their peers and students. The 2017 winners include the following: Faculty of the Year-Student Award, Denise Huff, program director, ASL/Interpreting; Faculty of the Year-Peer Award, Betsy Maynard, instructor, Transitional Math; Adjunct Faculty of the Year Award, Sylvia Murray, adjunct instructor, Math; and Staff of the Year Award, Joan Fisher, administrative assistant, SCC Downtown Campus.

SCC Cherokee County Campus

Construction of the new Cherokee Technology Center continues on the Cherokee County Campus. When the facility opens in fall of 2018, it will be named the Institute of Innovation. The Cherokee County School District is leasing 12 acres from SCC for the district’s Center for Innovation, which will be almost 90,000 square feet and can accommodate about 1,000 students.

SCC Downtown Campus

The Downtown Campus serves as a Red Cross emergency shelter for the Upstate, one of the few that will accommodate animals. The Spartanburg County Emergency Services team, Archibald Rutledge residents, and the staff of the Downtown Campus are currently preparing for a simulation that will help emergency responders train for a traumatic event in Spartanburg.

SCC Tyger River Campus

Mayfest was held on the Tyger River Campus on May 13. The annual festival in Duncan features a competitive 5k run and fun run, food trucks, vendors, live music, car shows and promotional material about SCC. About 1,200 participants attended the community event. The family oriented festival promotes community awareness while giving local entrepreneurs an opportunity to showcase their businesses.

SCC Union County Campus

An information and application event was held April 25 at Union County High School for 2017 seniors and their parents or guardians. Students were able to speak with representatives from SCC’s recruiting, career services, admissions and industrial departments. Students received assistance with SCC applications and FAFSA. Twenty-one students attended with many parents participating as well.
Leaders In Our Community:

BMW corporate leader Sky Foster served as keynote speaker at SCC graduation

Sky Foster has played a pivotal role in shaping one of Spartanburg County’s largest employers.

Foster has been a leader in growing BMW Manufacturing since the automaker began operations off Interstate 85 in 1993. For more than 19 years, Foster managed corporate leadership, technical training, leadership assessment centers, recruiting and staffing, organizational development, benefits and compensation programs, executive coaching and intercultural language programs. She has traveled BMW’s Global Network, with visits to Africa, Europe, Mexico and Canada.

In 2012, Foster became department manager of corporate communications at BMW Manufacturing Co., and her name now appears in company-related news items around the world.

On May 4, Foster served as keynote speaker at SCC’s graduation ceremony at Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium, sharing her experience with more than 3,000 in attendance, including those students who earned 690 degrees, diplomas and certificates.

“As a team player and principal contributor during BMW’s start-up, Sky is successful in driving innovative solutions, balancing employee needs and organizational goals, and empowering others,” SCC President Henry Giles said of Foster. “Sky demonstrates a tapestry of talents, including coaching, consulting, talent management, using advanced technology, project management, change management, and communication strategies.”

A Gaffney, S.C. native, Foster graduated from South Carolina State University in Orangeburg with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education, and from North Carolina Central University in Durham, N.C., with a Master of Arts Degree in Psychology.

“Guided by faith and intuition and grounded in principles of integrity, diversity and wisdom, Sky Foster has been a respected corporate leader and a community educator for more than 25 years,” Giles said. “She is a role model for young people who want to find and fulfill their life’s purpose.”
Dear friends,

As SCC educates each generation of workers, equipping those students with skills that will carry them into their future careers, it is imperative that we, as an institution, look to the future as well.

In April, SCC added five new certificate programs that complement new or expanding industry fields.

Starting in the 2017-18 academic year, SCC will offer new logistics, press control technology, natural gas technician, sustainable agriculture and certified nurse assistant certificate programs. For example, logistics fills needs in transportation and at distribution centers, while students earning press control technology certificates could find employment at any number of major companies, such as Toray and Milliken & Co.

Also in April, the Duke Energy Foundation awarded the Spartanburg Community College Foundation a $20,000 grant to create a front-end web developer program. The grant will help create a curriculum that provides web development training to students, which in an increasingly digital world, will surely prove to be valuable career training.

A special event at the end of March served as a tangible representation of the tremendous impact opportunities each of these students has before them thanks to innovation and industry. More than 450 business leaders came together to celebrate the future of the Upstate economy at SCC’s inaugural Economic Visionaries event. James I. Newsome III, president/CEO of the S.C. Ports Authority, provided the keynote remarks at the event, which also recognized companies in four categories based on the number of people employed. Those companies named as “Economic Visionaries” were Broad River Electric Cooperative, Inc., Atchinson Transportation Services, The Timken Company - Tyger River Plant, and BMW Manufacturing.

Through the Economic Visionaries event and through the selection of coursework, SCC is continually looking to the horizon. Our administrators, faculty and staff recognize that SCC must continue to prepare students for jobs of the future, not those of the past.

Sincerely,

Henry C. Giles, Jr.
President, Spartanburg Community College

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In March, SCC welcomed Bea Walters Smith as the Executive Director of Advancement and the Spartanburg Community College Foundation. Smith is responsible for overseeing the Foundation, managing fundraising and operating the advancement office, which includes the SCC Alumni Association and grants department.

Smith started her career in higher education at Spartanburg Methodist College, and for the past 15 years, she worked at USC Upstate in the development area. After being promoted to the position of Director of Development and Foundation Scholarships in 2009, Smith raised millions of dollars to support the university’s mission.

She is married to Roy McBee Smith, Jr., SCC’s IT operations manager. The couple has one son, Hunter (age 13). Smith succeeds Sam Hook, who retired in November 2016 after more than six years with SCC. While at SCC, Hook raised funds for the renovation of the Evans Academic Center at the Downtown Campus and spearheaded the Aligning for Success campaign, which seeks to better inform students about the importance of choosing an educational path that aligns with their desired career.