



STRONGER *Together*

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2024

Developed in January 2022

INTRODUCTION

In the 1960s, it may have been as rare to find women working in machining or auto mechanics as it was to find men working in nursing or early childhood education. Like the enormous social, economic, and workforce changes of the past six decades, Piedmont Technical College (PTC) also has undergone significant changes since its founding in 1966. Traditional jobs and the people who fill them have become much more fluid, and making the necessary changes to meet workforce needs always has been possible because of the strong partnerships developed at the local and state level.

What was once a single building in Greenwood, South Carolina, has grown to eight locations across a seven-county service area—the largest service region in the SC Technical College System. When the doors opened on the first day, PTC enrolled 300 students. Now the college serves over 10,000 students each year through credit and non-credit offerings.

With nearly 60 years of growth in the higher education space, PTC has remained steadfastly committed to offering a wide variety of career studies programs that will prepare students directly for today's workforce. The college also assists in the career goals of those seeking a bachelor's degree or higher through general education courses that transfer easily to four-year colleges or universities across the state and beyond.

Strengthening and building new partnerships is in Piedmont Tech's DNA, and these partnerships have been instrumental in making the college the best value for higher education in the region. Any given year, those partnerships can take shape in various ways, including:

- Providing college classes to over **1000 high school students** in collaboration with more than **35 schools and career centers** in the region.
- Served current employees at **over 70 companies**.
- Offering **123 apprenticeships** serving **53 companies** through our region.
- Providing nearly **80 transfer pathways**, including 32 destination colleges and universities.
- Working closely with federal, state and community organizations, as well as the PTC Foundation to lower the tuition barrier for all students.

Such partnerships have resulted in significant returns for students. For example, over the last three academic years at PTC:

- The college has **served over 10,000 students** each year across credit and non-credit programs.
- Over 1,400 students completed thousands of transferable credits—collectively **saving millions on tuition** in the process.
- Faculty and staff celebrated the **graduation of 3,519 students**, earning more than 4,500 associate degrees, diplomas and certificates.
- The college has provided **398,307 training contact hours** to help companies train their existing workforce.
- Students received **\$63,282,653 in funding** from federal, state, and local grants and scholarships.

- The PTC Foundation **awarded 532 scholarships** totaling \$453,611.
- A Job-Ready Guarantee was established as the college’s promise that graduates will be job-ready from day one or PTC will retrain them at no additional cost.

At PTC, we are just getting started. We will continue to develop and grow partnerships as the college looks to the future.

Each seemingly routine steppingstone leads us to a milestone. For PTC, each milestone has furthered our commitment to continuous improvement. All of our partnerships have and will continue to make us better than ever because we are stronger together.

ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Like all colleges and universities across the country, in 2020 Piedmont Technical College faced a series of unique challenges as the result of a global pandemic and a number of transitions. The college saw the retirement of its second president, Dr. Ray Brooks, and the beginning of Dr. Hope Rivers’ tenure. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary teamwork. And as in the past, every single member of the PTC community stepped up to keep the college performing admirably.

The college was particularly well prepared for the transition to a fully virtual environment. PTC has been a pioneer in the online and distance learning space for more than 20 years. In fact, PTC was actively working toward using technology to increase access to courses as far back as 1995, with the establishment of the Piedmont Education Network (PEN). Several years later, the college was already running its first fully online courses, with fully online degree programs to follow shortly thereafter. With this breadth of experience, PTC was uniquely positioned for a smooth transition to virtual operations.

As 2021 progressed, under Dr. Rivers’ leadership, the college continued to work closely with external partners to strengthen the educational and workforce opportunities available in the seven-county region PTC serves and made the transition back to more in-person activities in 2022. Throughout the year, Piedmont has been engaged in an ongoing effort to create a strong foundation for a new strategic plan—building on the excellent work in the past but focused on the challenges and opportunities on the horizon.

The Strategic Plan contains two primary sections. The first section contains the mission, vision, and core values of the institution. The second section contains the goals, strategies, and tactics of the strategic plan. The goals, strategies, and tactics are addressing student and community access and success, workforce development, and organizational sustainability and growth by nurturing and valuing diversity, inclusion, and equity.

In developing this strategic plan, numerous listening and discussion sessions occurred from May through August 2021. These sessions incorporated key constituents from all counties served by PTC. The following strengths and opportunities were identified during these sessions.

Strengths

- Competent, professional, and caring faculty and staff
- Physical presence in all counties served
- Strong relationships with community leaders
- Flexible course offerings to meet demands of community
- Strong financial stability

Opportunities

- Community and business partnerships and increased collaboration
- Competitive salaries that help attract and retain a diverse workforce
- Potential to expand dual enrollment opportunities in all school districts
- Recognition that Piedmont Technical College could bring relevant constituencies together to discuss important issues
- Expand current work on Guided Pathways to scale up the approach and better integrate career exploration with student onboarding
- Explore new and emerging markets/industries and adjust curricular options to maximize educational offerings for both students and community partners
- Develop stronger partnerships with area four-year colleges

The ideas generated during these discussions serve as a key foundation to aspects of this strategic plan, and, combined with the ideas generated from the PTC Leadership Team, provide important information that guides this institution over the next three years.

SECTION ONE: MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

Piedmont Technical College Mission

Piedmont Technical College transforms lives and strengthens communities by providing opportunities for intellectual and economic growth. The College, a member of the South Carolina Technical College System, is a public comprehensive two-year postsecondary institution. Piedmont Technical College contributes to the economic growth and development of the largest and most diverse region of the technical college system, Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry and Saluda counties and to the state. The College responds to the academic, training and public service needs of the community through excellence in teaching and educational services. Piedmont Technical College's open admissions policy provides accessibility for individuals with diverse backgrounds the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills for employment in engineering technology, industrial technology, agriculture, business, health, and public service. Piedmont Technical College graduates develop competencies in communication, mathematics, problem solving and technology. The College offers university transfer; associate degrees, diplomas and certificates in technical and occupational areas; college preparatory programs; student development programs providing academic, career and individual support; and custom-designed credit and non-credit programs to provide training for business and industry and to meet the needs of the community. To optimize access to higher education in the rural seven-county service area, Piedmont Technical College offers distance learning courses through multiple modes of delivery. (Revision approved by the PTC Area Commission on April 21, 2015. Approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education on June 30, 2015.)

Piedmont Technical College Vision

We will become a premier community college with a shared commitment to create vibrant learning communities through relentless pursuit of student success and economic prosperity for all stakeholders.

Institutional Core Values

Piedmont Technical College is guided by the practice of these Core Values (last approved by PTC Area Commission on January 15, 2019):

- Proactive Leadership and Innovation
- Integrity, Accountability, and Transparency
- Collaboration and Collegiality
- Inclusivity, Diversity, and Accessibility
- Student Success and Customer Service
- Awareness of, and Responsiveness to, Emerging Trends
- Entrepreneurship and Workforce Development
- Lifelong Learning and Community Improvement
- Data-Informed Decision Making
- The Ongoing Pursuit of Excellence
- Commitment to Lean Principles

SECTION TWO: STRATEGIC PLAN

In developing this strategic plan, the primary goal is to develop a new identity in which Piedmont Technical College (PTC) is recognized as the premier institution for students, faculty, staff, and the community across the regions served. To facilitate success this strategic plan identifies a series of goals (to be completed in 2-3 years), strategies (to be completed in 1-2 years), and tactics (to be started and possibly completed in 1 year).

The strategic plan adopts the following numerical notation:

- Goals (I, II, III, etc.) – to be completed in 2-3 years
- Strategies (A, B, C, etc.) – to be completed in 1-2 years
- Tactics (1, 2, 3, etc.) – to be started (and possibly completed) in 1 year

I. Develop a vibrant and comprehensive student experience.

A. Identify and implement research-based, proven strategies to create a holistic, college-wide program for student success and engagement.

1. Apply lessons learned during the CAREPlan implementation, alongside best practices in Guided Pathways research, to implement a holistic program for student onboarding and success in all academic programs.
2. Identify and implement additional research-based best practices to improve student success and engagement.

B. Enhance/Expand experiential learning.

1. Strengthen and expand work-based learning for students, including (but not limited to) apprenticeships, internships, and program-related part-time employment.
2. Broaden student perspectives beyond the local geographic region by developing and expanding external educational opportunities and workforce connections.

C. Develop and enhance extra-curricular campus and community engagement opportunities.

1. Identify and provide opportunities and incentives for increased student engagement on campus and in the community.
2. Develop sustainable partnerships with community organizations and four-year institutions to expand and enhance student engagement.

II. Expand and enhance the partnerships between Piedmont Technical College and the counties served.

- A. Increase visibility, communication, and engagement with key stakeholders in all counties served.
 - 1. Determine effective avenues and mechanisms for an open exchange of information.
 - 2. Develop a communication plan that effectively describes the value added by PTC.
- B. Develop an active presence that initiates and facilitates solutions to community challenges.
 - 1. Identify gaps in the current levels of community engagement.
 - 2. Empower and educate a broader range of individuals to advocate for PTC's offerings and services.

III. Ensure Piedmont Technical College's academic and non-credit programming is cutting-edge, market-driven, and of the highest quality to meet the current and emerging needs of the workforce.

- A. Develop a structure to identify current and future workforce development trends to enhance the quality and relevance of existing programs.
 - 1. Adapt and empower the academic program advisory committees to identify and address current workforce needs and effectively evaluate PTC programs.
 - 2. Develop mechanisms to identify long-term trends, new opportunities, and/or gaps in current programs.
- B. Develop a process to systematically assess Piedmont Technical College's programming mix, including the creation of new programs and the evaluation of existing programs.
 - 1. Develop a decision-making process for new program implementation.
 - 2. Develop a process to evaluate the quality, viability, sustainability, and potential transition of existing programs.

IV. Develop and enhance a culture of care among faculty and staff.

- A. Strengthen and promote a set of shared expectations related to the core institutional values of Piedmont Technical College.
 - 1. Identify foundational principles that drive a culture of care.

2. Demonstrate, communicate, and showcase our commitment to core values.
- B. Embrace and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
1. Build a workforce, including non-traditional career paths, that better reflects the communities we serve.
 2. Expand professional development and engagement opportunities to cultivate a deeper appreciation for differences, motivations, and challenges.

V. Continue to ensure fiscal sustainability

- A. Update and enhance the appearance of each campus.
1. Research and implement campus beautification projects and improvements to provide an appealing and modern learning environment.
 2. Maintain a state-of-the-art learning environment.
- B. Ensure that the college has the fiscal resources to sustain and expand the programs and services provided.
1. Explore local, state, and federal grant opportunities that increase student access and support college programs and services.
 2. Work with legislative delegations to secure funding to allow the college to address community needs.
 3. Provide a safe and secure learning environment.