

Technical College System of Georgia appoints new college presidents

Dr. John Watford assumes presidency at South Georgia Tech; Dr. Andrea Daniel named to top position at Athens Tech

ATLANTA – Commissioner Gretchen Corbin announced today that Dr. Andrea Daniel has been named the next president of Athens Technical College, and that Dr. John Watford will be the new president of South Georgia Technical College (SGTC). The state board of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) voted during its monthly meeting today to accept Commissioner Corbin’s recommendations to both positions.

Board member Dick Porter of Cairo made the motion to accept Corbin’s recommendation of Dr. Watford, and board member Trey Shepherd of Sandersville moved to accept the commissioner’s recommendation of Dr. Daniel. The full board voted unanimously to approve the selection of both. Dr. Watford and Dr. Daniel will assume their duties as presidents on April 1, 2016.

“These individuals have dedicated years to their respective colleges and have outstanding track records of success,” said Commissioner Corbin. “Athens Technical College and South Georgia Technical College are key to workforce development in their regions and I know Dr. Daniel and Dr. Watford will continue to maintain these colleges’ upward trajectories in exceeding the needs of both students and industry in their communities.”

Dr. Andrea Daniel currently serves as Executive Vice President of Athens Technical College. She began her 19-year career with Athens Tech on the college’s Elbert County campus, transitioned to the main campus as registrar, and then moved into vice presidencies in economic development, external affairs and student affairs. During her time as Vice President of Economic Development, the number of companies with whom the college partnered for contract training more than doubled and included Caterpillar, Hitachi, Novelis, and Haring.

Dr. Daniel previously worked as a senior planning analyst for the Atlanta Regional Commission. She holds a doctorate in Business Administration from Northcentral University, an M.A. in Public Administration from the University of Georgia, and a B.A. in political science from Lander University. She has completed additional training in economic development and is a graduate of the L.E.A.D. Athens Class of 2008. Dr. Daniel, her husband Sterling and daughter Kimberly reside in Elberton.

“I am very honored and pleased to be selected as the fourth president of Athens Technical College, which was founded in 1958,” said Dr. Daniel. “I look forward to leading our staff and faculty in providing students excellent opportunities to complete their education and provide companies with a qualified, trained workforce. I want to thank Commissioner Corbin and the search committee for this wonderful opportunity.”

Dr. Daniel succeeds previous president Dr. Flora Tydings. Dr. Gail Thaxton, president of North Georgia Technical College, has served as interim president of Athens Technical College, which serves 10 counties including Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Hart, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Taliaferro, Walton and Wilkes.

“For many years, Dr. Daniel has been a leader in education and economic development and she has forged partnerships throughout the region. I’m looking forward to seeing Athens Tech

grow even further under her leadership,” said Commissioner Corbin. “At the same time, I want to thank Dr. Gail Thaxton, who took time away from her presidency at North Georgia Technical College to lead Athens Tech with such expertise during this time of transition. Likewise, I want to extend my great appreciation to Dr. Mark Ivester at North Georgia Tech, who took the reins during Dr. Thaxton’s absence and continued to add to the college’s successes.”

Dr. John Watford is currently serving as Vice President for Academic Affairs at South Georgia Technical College. Since beginning his career at SGTC 26 years ago, he has also served as an instructor, Director of Information Technology, Director of Instruction and Vice President of Operations for the Crisp County Satellite Center. Dr. Watford has been integrally involved in the college’s partnerships with several businesses and industries including Caterpillar, John Deere, and Kauffman Tire. During his time at the Crisp County Satellite Center, he oversaw a 24,000-square-foot expansion project, including additional medical labs, classrooms, and a Quick Start economic development lab.

Dr. Watford, a native of Georgia, began his professional career at Metalux Lighting in Americus. He holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Georgia as well as an M.S. in Business Administration and a B.S. in Math, both from Georgia Southwestern State University. Additionally, he holds a Specialist in Education degree from Columbus State University. Dr. Watford and his wife Barbara reside at Lake Blackshear in Crisp County. They have three grown children.

“I am deeply humbled but very excited to be selected as the next leader of South Georgia Technical College,” said Dr. Watford. “Having served at the college for the majority of my professional career, I am keenly aware of the tremendous legacy of South Georgia Tech and understand how deep its roots run in this community. I look forward to working with the exceptional faculty and staff at the college in this new role. My top priority is to continue to strengthen business and industry partnerships, add new partnerships, and expand program offerings to provide more opportunities for our students.”

Dr. Watford will be the seventh president of South Georgia Technical College, which was founded in 1948 and is the second-oldest technical college in the state. He succeeds previous president Gary Lamar “Sparky” Reeves. Janice Davis, who has served as interim president, will resume her previous position as Vice President of Administrative Affairs.

“Dr. Watford’s long record of leadership at South Georgia Technical College has helped the college achieve the high level of recognition and engagement it now enjoys throughout the region and I know he will guide the college to even greater achievements,” said Commissioner Corbin. “I also know that the entire South Georgia Tech community joins with me in thanking Janice Davis, who has done an outstanding job of leading the college as interim president.”

About South Georgia Technical College

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC), in southwest Georgia, serves Sumter, Crisp, Macon, Marion, Schley and Webster Counties. South Georgia Tech has campuses in Americus and Crisp County and offers over 200 associate degrees, diplomas, and technical certificates of credit as well as continuing education classes, workshops, and specialized training. SGTC serves over 18,000 individuals annually through credit and non-credit programs, economic development and the adult education program. Visit www.southgatech.edu for more information.

About Athens Technical College

Since 1958, Athens Technical College has served citizens by providing quality educational programs in a 10-county service area. It offers over 150 program specializations in business, health, technical, and manufacturing-related areas. Students attend Athens Technical College on four campuses (Athens-Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Walton Counties), Athens Community Career Academy, Adult Learning Centers, and through Continuing Education opportunities. Athens Technical College is an Equal Opportunity Institution and a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia. To learn more, visit www.AthensTech.edu.

About the Technical College System of Georgia

The 22 colleges of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) are Georgia's top resource for skilled workers. TCSG offers world-class training in 600 associate degree, diploma and certificate programs to students who are trained on state-of-the-art equipment by instructors who are experts in their fields. The system also houses Georgia's Office of Adult Education, which promotes and provides adult literacy and education programs, including the GED® testing program, throughout the state. In addition, TCSG partners with companies through Quick Start, the nation's top customized workforce training program, and through its individual colleges, who work with local industry to provide workforce and training solutions. For more information, visit www.TCSG.edu.

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