



# PRESS RELEASE

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**June 22, 2021**

## **FDTC SCATE Center and Mentor-Connect Project receives ATE sub-award**

**Florence, S.C. (June 2021) – The SCATE Center and Mentor-Connect: A Leadership Development & Outreach Initiative for ATE** at Florence Darlington Technical College is proud to announce it has received a \$107,000 NSF ATE sub-award grant, in partnership Westchester Community College (NY) and Arizona State University. The sub-award will continue work in conjunction with the **HSI ATE Hub** and expands on the Professional Development for Culturally Responsive Technician Education in the classroom.

This faculty development project will guide educators in translating and applying theory and research on culturally responsive education in order to implement effective practices guided by knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. This will improve the diversity of the STEM technical workforce. Cultural responsiveness validates, affirms, and acknowledges students' diverse heritages. Westchester Community College (WCC), the Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) Center for STEM at Arizona State University, and the Florence-Darlington Technical College's ATE-funded Mentor-Connect project – all of which are experienced in implementing initiatives to improve outcomes for the Latinx and other underrepresented populations in the STEM technical workforce – will implement this project to address the need for culturally responsive technical education.

The Mentor-Connect project at Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) will have a leadership role to manage the HSI ATE Hub resource library within the Mentor-Connect website, engage Mentor-Connect participants, produce “just in time” webinars and support outreach, dissemination, as well as spearhead engagement of the HSI ATE Hub Advisory Council.

Elaine Craft, Mentor-Connect Principal Investigator said, “As the Principal Investigator of Mentor-Connect, I am excited to see our program continue to develop and grow. This new project allows us to reach and inform more people about the support and mentoring we offer as well as improving outcomes for Latinx students.”

Rick Roberts, Managing Director for SCATE Center and Co-Principal Investigator for the HSI-ATE Hub 2 project Mentor-Connect said, “Our role in the new project is helping to build and make available culturally responsive instruction that has been shown to increase student success for Latinx students in higher education generally and STEM education in particular.”

## **About Mentor-Connect**

**Mentor-Connect: A Leadership Development and Outreach Initiative for ATE** is an initiative of the [South Carolina Advanced Technological Education Center of Excellence \(SCATE\)](#) at [Florence-Darlington Technical College](#) designed to actively engage more two-year technical and community colleges in the improvement of technician education. Mentor-Connect works in partnership with the [American Association of Community Colleges \(AACC\)](#) to help STEM faculty teams from participating institutions apply for grant funding from the [National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education Program \(NSF ATE\)](#). Potential grantees are assisted in developing grant writing skills and leadership skills. Mentoring is used for knowledge transfer. Those with many years of experience with NSF ATE funded projects serve as Mentors to those who are new to the program. The project itself is also currently funded through work supported by the NSF under grant numbers 1840856, but has been previously funded under grant numbers 1501183 and 1204463. For more information, visit [About Mentor-Connect](#).