

Education center celebrates Manufacturing Day

From staff reports

FLORENCE — The South Carolina

Advanced Technological Education

Center of Excellence, headquartered at

Florence-Darlington Technical College

and funded by a grant from the National

Science Foundation, celebrated Manu-

facturing Day on Oct. 11-12.

National Manufacturing Day is a

celebration of modern manufacturing

meant to inspire the next generation of

manufacturers.

Manufacturing Day occurs on the first

Friday in October, and this year's Manu-

facturing Day was Oct 6, but companies

and community organizations can plan

their events on the date in October that

works best for them.

As part of the two-day celebration,

students from FDTC traveled to Sonoco

Products in Hartsville to tour the facility.

Then the next morning, the S.C. Ad-

vanced Technological Education Center

hosted its annual Industry Consortium

Partnership Breakfast at the South-

eastern Institute of Manufacturing and

Technology Center. FDTC students were

greeted at Sonoco by Todd Scherich, di-

rector of engineering, and Kristi Raines,

employer brand and university relations

strategist, who welcomed the students

and gave a brief presentation about

Sonoco.

The students also were shown a short

video about the roots of the company,

which began and is headquartered in the

South Carolina.

Students also were invited to ask ques-

tions and tour the engineering facility,

which included meeting other techni-

cians and viewing Sonoco's technology

equipment.

Dave Edwards, an FDTC instructor of

engineering technologies, helped orga-

nize the students for the day.

"This tour complements the materials

we're sharing in the classroom," he said

in reference to why this tour was benefi-

cial for his students.

Scherich conducted the tour and also

emphasized what it takes to be success-

ful as an engineer.

"Math is very important, and the future

of engineering is in need of more skilled

workers than unskilled, so getting the

training to complement your coursework

is important," he said.

FDTC has an active internship program

for its technology students. The Industry

Consortium Partnership assists in sup-

porting this effort.

The college SCATE Internship Program

provides an educational experience

in which students complement their

academic studies with relevant work

experience.

The Industry Consortium breakfast

has been hosted each year since 2005

by FDTC and the SCATE Center with the

goal of connecting industry leaders with

student talent to increase the pool of

well-qualified technicians.

More than 65 individuals attended,

representing 27 companies from the Pee

Dee region. The guest speaker was James

Richter, director of workforce develop-

ment and member relations for the S.C.

Manufacturing Alliance as well as execu-

tive director of S.C. Future Makers.

Richter spoke about the importance of

developing a strong pipeline of qualified

employees to fill the manufacturing sec-

tors job needs.

"S.C. Future Makers was created to

connect emerging talents to opportuni-

ties companies are looking for," he said.

Academy for Careers and Technology celebrates 50 years in Marion County education

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MULLINS — The director of the