



INSTITUTES OF
**INNOVATION AND
INFORMATION**
SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

South Carolina Institutes of Innovation and Information

E-Newsletter

Inaugural Edition Spring 2024

www.sciii.net

The South Carolina Institutes of Innovation and Information, a program under the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, leverages the resources of the state's seven Historically Black Colleges and Universities through campus institutes that partner with South Carolina businesses and industries to expand scholarship, increase the state's workforce, empower local communities and enrich South Carolina's economy.

A Message from Executive Director Dr. Gwynth R. Nelson



The South Carolina Institutes of Innovation and Information (SCIII) was established in 2021 to provide new opportunities for each of South Carolina's treasured Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to create and expand partnerships with in-demand industries and key businesses, address and meet critical community needs and provide workforce development solutions. Three years later, the seven institutes have created unique niches that serve and complement the institutions' mission and growing student populations while delivering the community's needs through partnerships with local, regional and national businesses, corporations and nonprofit organizations. These partnerships range from federal agencies, such as the Department of Commerce, Department of Transportation and Department of Labor, to business entities, including Scout Motors and research organizations, like Naval Information Warfare Center Atlantic. (cont. page 2)



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South Carolina HBCU students and staff at the SCIII Ideation Workshop on February 23, 2024, at EdVenture Museum in Columbia.





A Message from Executive Director (Cont.) Dr. Gwynth R. Nelson



SCIII leadership and three Institute Directors attend the 3rd Annual HBCU Engage conference in April 2024 and network with UIDP CEO and President Tony Boccanfuso (second from left photo) and UIDP HBCU Special Projects Lead Tamara Hayman Henry (left photo).

This newsletter highlights some of the many activities, milestones and achievements of SCIII's headquarters and campus institutes. We are grateful for the ongoing support and investment of the South Carolina Legislature, South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the businesses and individuals who contribute to SCIII's success. As we chart our path forward for the upcoming years, we are certain that SCIII's effect in areas such as health equity, civility, healthcare, transportation, information technology and economic development are driving measurable, positive outcomes for the colleges and universities and the cities and regions where they serve. The collective economic impact of the state's HBCUs totals \$136 million, which contributes to uplifting communities, counties and citizens throughout South Carolina.

Most recently, SCIII headquarters sponsored the SCIII Ideation Workshop in February in collaboration with Benedict College at EdVenture Museum in downtown Columbia—and virtually—as an opportunity for all SCIII member institutions and stakeholders to help increase career success for students at South Carolina's HBCUs. More than 30 students from our seven SCIII institutions participated. This is just one example of our ongoing commitment to the change agents and intellectual innovators that attend our state's educational jewels. Additionally, five SCIII members attended the 3rd Annual HBCU Engage 2024 conference in Baltimore, Md. This event was an opportunity to support long-term partnerships between HBCUs, companies, research funders and other collaborators. Alongside six HBCUs in the state, SCIII is on the planning committee for the 4th Annual HBCU Engage event scheduled for March 25-26, 2025, in Charleston, S.C.

Join us for the additional events and engagements planned by our SCIII institutes. We look forward to sharing more stories of SCIII's transformational change for South Carolina's HBCUs and our great state.

Yours In Service,

Gwynth R. Nelson, Ph.D.

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The Late South Carolina Senator John L. Scott, Founder, SCIII



The South Carolina Institutes of Innovation and Information (SCIII) was created under the visionary leadership of the late Senator Scott, who stated, “This is an initiative that I believe will not only revolutionize the state’s HBCUs but develop and strengthen the relationships with our state’s businesses and industries.” His legacy continues as SCIII continues to fuel innovation at South Carolina’s seven HBCUs that, as noted by Senator Scott, “are learning centers that provide specific skills or trade to the learners, faculty, students, private partners, as well as, federal, state, local and non-profit partnering.”



Symposiums on Civility Bring National Leaders to Allen University

The Boeing Institute on Civility (BIC) at Allen University (Columbia) hosted its inaugural symposium on January 19, 2024, which featured a discussion on the topic, “The Meaning and Impact of the Preamble of the Constitution.” The conversation featured former U.S. House of Representative members Liz Cheney of Wyoming and Val Demings of Florida, who examined the U.S. Constitution’s opening statement and its purpose and principles. The Institute hosted a second symposium titled, “Civility and Social Justice: Bridging Past and Present” on March 26 and highlighted national leaders and Boeing Company senior executives. The discussion, moderated by Dr. W. Franklin Evans, director of BIC, featured insights from Dr. Russell Wigginton, president of the National Civil Rights Museum; Della Britton, president and CEO of the Jackie Robinson Foundation; and Tommy Preston, Jr., global vice president of ethics at Boeing Company.

Additionally, Allen has extended its programmatic work on civility by developing and offering four online courses: The Art and Practice of Listening; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Examining Facts and Fictions and The Philosophy of Language.

More information is available at www.allenuniversity.edu.



Advancing Technology and Academic Success Drive Results at Benedict College

The Business, Entrepreneurship, Science and Technology (BEST) Institute at Benedict College (Columbia) spearheaded efforts to improve connectivity that supports teaching and learning initiatives, assists student scholars through experiential learning opportunities, provides competitive internship programs and further develops the university’s BEST Institute Business Innovation Center. Thought leadership, student scholarships and programming are at the forefront of Institute initiatives that have reached more than 2,000 students, faculty, staff and community members.

These offerings included: improving and upgrading the college’s technological operations and wireless security systems; funding conference, internship and external networking programs offered both domestically and abroad for students; assisting students in BEST-related academic disciplines with need-based scholarships; promoting entrepreneurial engagement through community and business partnerships; securing more than \$526,000 in grant funding and awards; supporting student and faculty skill development; and conducting outreach for counseling, mental health and student health services to enhance overall student well-being.

Learn more on BEST at www.benedict.edu.



Filling Critical Shortages in Education and Nursing Powered Progress at Claflin University

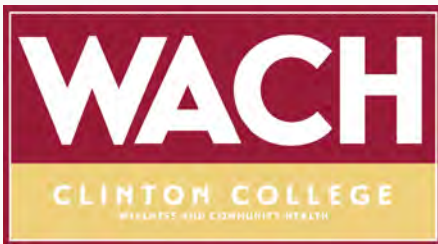


Disproportionately low rates of minorities serving in education and nursing in central South Carolina have fueled Claflin University's Institute of Teaching and Nursing (Orangeburg) in providing a pipeline of new talent. TITAN is addressing the critical workforce shortage through a partnership with the South Carolina Technical Colleges System. The university is expanding relationships with Family Health Centers, Inc. for nursing, and Collective Impact for teaching, which will provide additional opportunities for students to gain hands-on training in both disciplines.

The university is closely tracking recruitment, enrollment and retention in both education and nursing's undergraduate and graduate programs and providing supplemental training, including study abroad opportunities. TITAN is elevating Claflin's goal of increasing and supplying newly credentialed professionals that will help close the gap and fulfill immediate and long-term shortages in education and healthcare. Through diverse experiential exposure provided by exchanges with the London Metropolitan University and aiding research of sporting events in Johannesburg, South Africa, during the spring and summer 2024, respectively, Claflin and TITAN are building new partnerships that can extend beyond central South Carolina and further global exchanges in other countries in Africa, Asia and Europe.

Visit www.claflin.edu to discover more about TITAN.

Clinton College's Collaborative Community Wellness Initiatives Aim to Reduce Health Disparities



Addressing public health challenges is at the forefront of work undertaken at Clinton College's Wellness and Community Health Institute (WACH) (Rock Hill).

Located at Fountain Park in downtown Rock Hill, WACH and its team, including the institute director and two community health coordinators, have initiated and cultivated partnerships and held more than 35 community-based programs with nearly 20 campus departments, local businesses, organizations and other higher education institutions. This extensive network includes the United Way of York County, Rock Hill School District, Winthrop University, the Faith and Health Coalition of York County, Family Trusts Federal Credit Union and local houses of worship. To help foster student success, WACH's new health outreach on Clinton's campus supports critical health promotion efforts on topics ranging from sex trafficking to mental health awareness.

WACH hosted several activities in the first quarter of 2024 under the theme of "Working to Advance the Color of Health"; this one-on-one outreach is benefiting the Clinton campus and surrounding Rock Hill communities. These activities included an HIV/STD Health Education Forum, Good Samaritan Training and education with a local nonprofit dedicated to preventing youth substance misuse and abuse, two heart-healthy events, one with a local congregation and the other with campus organizations, a celebration for National Wear Red Day, aimed at raising awareness for women's heart health and Black Movement Initiative to promote physical fitness among students.

Learn about WACH at www.clintoncollege.com.

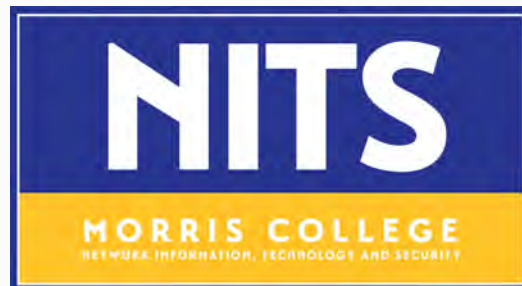


Morris College Focuses on Training Cybersecurity Industry Experts and Influencers

The John L. Scott Jr. Cybersecurity Institute of Network Information, Technology and Security (NITS) at Morris College (Sumter) is at the forefront of producing cybersecurity specialists that fuel the state's information technology workforce. The need for skilled specialists is more essential than ever with cybercrimes costing more than \$8 trillion in 2023. A new academic program, Exports and Cybersecurity Program, now offers instruction taught by a cybersecurity industry professional. With funding from SCIII, the campus' Cybersecurity and Exports Laboratory was outfitted and upgraded to include state-of-the-art equipment. The college awarded 10 scholarships and provided two summer research internships. To ensure a robust prospective student pipeline, NITS hosted a Cybersecurity Awareness Day for 400 high school juniors and seniors. Most notably, enrollment in the cybersecurity and exports program has more than quadrupled, with 30 students now taking courses during the 2023 academic year.

In February, SCIII Executive Director Gwynth R. Nelson served as the keynote speaker for the Science in Action Week Assembly; she presented on the theme, "Technological Innovation in the Age of Artificial Intelligence."

Information on NITS can be found at www.morris.edu.

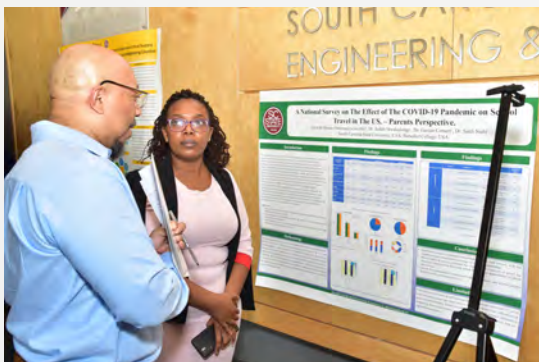


Transportation Conference Brings Federal Officials to South Carolina State University

The Institute of Business, Environment, Communications and Transportation (BECT) at South Carolina State University (Orangeburg) is cultivating career opportunities for students with companies and local, state and federal agencies. The inaugural One DOT Transportation Summit, sponsored by BECT and SCIII in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Transportation, was a two-day event held in late 2023 that featured a keynote address by U.S. Representative James E. Clyburn alongside agencies with transportation responsibilities, including policymakers and transportation experts. More than 300 students, faculty and staff from SCIII's seven participating institutions attended.

In 2023, BECT launched a 12-month Small Business Research and Entrepreneurial Accelerator designed to provide strategy, planning and one-on-one coaching that guides and grounds successful business development for budding entrepreneurs. An eight-week project management experiential learning program culminated with the execution of a Jazzy Christmas Program that yielded more than 150 attendees. Other BECT initiatives include a Faculty-Student Research Academy that has generated nearly \$7,500 in grant awards, creation of a Research Symposium that was held on February 15, 2024, development of the BECT Education and Innovation Journal, which is scheduled for publication in 2024, and a two-day Multi-Media Journalist (MMJ) Bootcamp that was led by 13 professional journalists.

Discover more on BECT at www.scsu.edu.



Voorhees University Outreach Initiatives Work to Change Health Outcomes and Invest in High School Students' Social and Academic Development

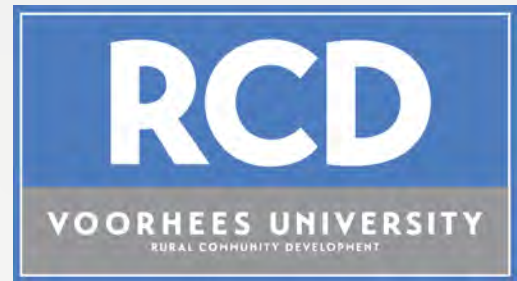
The Rural Community Development Institute (RCD) at Voorhees University (Denmark) is changing health outcomes for Denmark and the greater Bamberg County region. With assistance from a two-year grant totaling \$500,000 awarded by the South Carolina Central for Rural and Primary Healthcare and HBCU Discovery Program to Voorhees, the collaborative program will power discovery and a needs assessment on the healthcare system and health disparities through student training and work with community stakeholders.

RCD also oversees the university's GEAR UP program that prepares high school students to thrive socially, academically and professionally in vocational, career or higher education pursuits. Currently, Voorhees University GEAR UP serves 10 school districts and engages public school students in the Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Chester, Colleton, Edgefield, Hampton, Orangeburg and Williamsburg counties, reaching more than 3,100 high school students.

Additionally, Voorhees was the only HBCU awarded a \$1.9 million U.S. Department of Education Rural Postsecondary Economic Development Grant in late December 2023 to improve enrollment, persistence, and completion among rural students. The grant will assist RCD through the development of high-quality career pathways and in-demand industries and occupations in the region.

Other RCD initiatives and collaborations include a Liberal Arts Innovation Center for Healthcare, Access, and Equity, designed to provide services that promote increased access to healthcare services for the university and the surrounding community with help from a rural healthcare team. The institute also partners with the Voorhees University Health Services and Black Aids Institute and campus Greek organizations in support of awareness on HIV/AIDS.

Learn more about RCD at www.voorhees.edu.



Join Us!



Please visit www.sciii.net for more information on SCIII programs and events or call 803-516-4629.

HBCU engage

March 25-26, 2025

Charleston, SC



Partnerships to Expand Research
and Program Capabilities

Save the Date 2025

HBCU Engage 2025

a national dialogue

Join us for this national HBCU
external engagement event!

This multi-sector forum convenes thought leaders and practitioners to develop actionable strategies that magnify the impact of engagement for research-engaged Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), companies, other universities, government agencies, and innovation communities.

At this one-of-a-kind event, hundreds of representatives will exchange ideas and learn from peers in government program leadership, academic and corporate engagement, research administration, and talent development during workshops, fireside chats, panel discussions, and breakouts.

Early Registration
ends
Nov. 20, 2024

REGISTER NOW at
<https://bit.ly/HBCUEngage2025>



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HBCU Engage is organized by UIDP in
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