



**2023**

**STATE OF THE COLLEGE**

**Beaufort | Bluffton | Culinary | Hampton | Online**

[www.tcl.edu/2023](http://www.tcl.edu/2023)



## DEAR FRIENDS,

Excellence can be defined in many ways. From having “exceptional quality” to “superior merit,” excellence centers on being remarkably good at what you do. In 2023, I am proud to share some of the many ways that Technical College of the Lowcountry excels.

From our 60+ workforce and university transfer programs to our professional and supportive faculty and staff, TCL sets the bar high for quality teaching and hands-on learning. Student-centered instruction flourishes in-person, online and also out among our community-based clinical partners and internship hosts.

Institutional excellence fosters student excellence. College wouldn't be college without grades and tests, but we know that building leadership skills and creating career networks are equally important to student success. This is why we include diverse opportunities for our students across our curriculum and majors. Excellent students turn into excellent graduates who become excellent workers and successful professionals.

Elevating our students and communities is our guiding strategic vision for today and tomorrow. Please explore our State of the College report to learn more about some of our recent accomplishments and what's in store for 2023.

Excellence already abounds at TCL, but there is still work to do. Please join me as we continue raising the bar with our students and communities.

The best is yet to come.

Richard Gough, Ed.D.  
President



## POINTS OF EXCELLENCE



### BEST DRESSED ▲

TCL's **cybersecurity lab** was recently outfitted with a custom-designed, cyber-inspired wall mural nearly 100 feet wide. The lab features 15 new high-performance computers with large curved monitors, four teaming stations with 50-inch-wide monitors for group work and an interactive white board for in-person and virtual learning. TCL offers a certificate pathway in cybersecurity and launched its associate degree program in January 2023. Plans are also in the works to add an on-campus cybercafé for more student and industry collaboration and to offer cybersecurity as a dual enrollment program to area high school students.



### BEST IN CLASS ▶

TCL's **Early Care and Education** program was awarded \$16,500 in November 2022 in recognition of its high-quality educational experiences for students. Given by SC Endeavors, the money will go toward improving and enhancing classes and activities within the department.



### MOST INNOVATIVE ▶

In spring 2022, TCL's **surgical technology** program was the first in the state of South Carolina to receive LapSim®, an advanced simulator that uses virtual reality technology to give students a realistic way to practice laparoscopic surgery.

### MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

All 56 students in **Massage Therapy, Medical Assisting, Nursing** (2nd quarter cohort), **Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technology** and **Surgical Technology** passed their respective 2022 national licensing exams, equaling a 100 percent — or perfect — pass rate.



### ON THE MOVE

The **Supply Chain and Logistics** certificate launched in fall 2022. Created to meet the needs of the emerging Lowcountry manufacturing sector, the 18-hour program is offered fully online. Courses cover distribution, transportation operations, warehousing and materials, and inventory management.



### NEWEST UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

**Lander University and TCL** joined forces in the fall of 2022 to offer a transfer partnership for paralegal students. The articulation agreement allows TCL **paralegal students** to easily transfer their credits into Lander's Bachelor of Science in Paralegal Studies program and enter as juniors.



**Christina Ranck is the first graduate of the Culinary Institute of the South's baking and pastry arts associate degree program. She is currently finishing her associate degree in culinary arts and will head to Hersheypark in Hershey, Pennsylvania, this summer to complete a highly competitive baking and confectionery internship.**

## A GROWING CULINARY INSTITUTE

The Culinary Institute of the South at the Technical College of the Lowcountry is already experiencing rapid growth. In fact, enrollment in culinary and hospitality programs has nearly tripled since classes began in 2019:

FALL 2019	FALL 2020	FALL 2021	FALL 2022
33	51	69	92

In addition to three primary tracks that students choose from — baking and pastry arts, culinary arts and hospitality — TCL also offers certificate programs as well as personal enrichment classes for adults who just want to drop in and take a class or two for fun or personal enjoyment.




The culinary institute also boasts of two student-run eateries: The Bistro, which offers a fine-dining experience, and The Clist Café, a grab-and-go café featuring a variety of breads, pastries, soups and sandwiches along with coffee, tea and other beverages.

What's more, in 2022, the institute welcomed new Dean Dr. Francine Marz. Chef Marz has over 30 years of industry experience, most recently serving as Culinary Director for Northampton Community College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

"I'm very excited about the building and all the potential opportunities that are here," Chef Marz said after arriving in the Lowcountry.

Last but certainly not least, the culinary institute will serve as home to one of the Lowcountry's most unique attractions when it opens in late 2023. The FOODseum will offer an interactive museum experience to visitors and feature revolving and permanent exhibits and artifacts as well as guest lecturers and hands-on seminars.

## POINTS OF EXCELLENCE

-  The Culinary Institute of the South is a 30,000+ square foot, two-story facility which opened in 2021 with a community-wide celebration.
-  Features four fully-outfitted teaching kitchens, a culinary auditorium, a baking lab, a teaching restaurant, a café, eight multi-purpose classrooms and a ballroom.
-  The school was made possible through a partnership with Beaufort County, Beaufort County School District and the Town of Bluffton. In addition, funds came from the State of South Carolina and private sources.



# FIRST IN CLASS

## CULINARY INSTITUTE OF THE SOUTH GRADUATES FIRST BAKING STUDENT

Growing up, Christina Ranck liked to watch cooking shows, make meals for her family and of course, bake. So it only seems fitting that Ranck is the first to graduate from TCL's baking and pastry arts program at the Culinary Institute of the South.

Baking cookies was something she and her dad particularly enjoyed doing together — especially around the holidays.

"Every year, we would bake Christmas cookies for his office," said Ranck, adding that they even began keeping a database of the recipes they enjoyed or wanted to explore. "I think we have about 1700 recipes in there now."

Ranck finished her program in December — just in time for the holiday baking season. In fact, she and her classmates helped distribute more than 500 cookies made by students at the culinary institute for the Town

of Bluffton's tree lighting event in December.

She now holds an associate in applied science in baking and pastry arts. But TCL hasn't seen the last of her yet. The 20-year-old is also working to finish an associate degree in culinary arts technology, which she expects to complete in May.

In the meantime, her instructors have only words of praise for her drive and enthusiasm.

"We are very proud of Christina, as she has shown to us her drive to excel in the baking and pastry field through her dedication, creativity and passion in her work," said Chef Jacqueline Orak, Baking and Pastry Arts Program Director. "She brings natural enthusiasm and devotion for learning that makes an instructor feel as they have accomplished their purpose of being a teacher."

Ranck has been there since the beginning. She started her program at TCL's New River campus in 2019

and watched as an entirely new campus devoted to hospitality and culinary arts sprung up at Buckwalter Place in Bluffton.

But it wasn't just the building that impressed her, it was also the environment and the school itself.

"I liked how diverse it was," said Ranck. "We're all different ages and everyone gets along and works together. It's a very supportive environment."

While in school, Ranck gained real-world experience working for a local bakery and also for Montage Hotel Palmetto Bluff, a high-end resort in the Palmetto Bluff community. After she graduates in May, she will go to work at Hersheypark in Hershey, Pennsylvania, where she already has an internship lined up.

As she detailed, the family theme park which features roller coasters and restaurants, also has a large-scale baking and confectionery operation.

"They do so much cool work," she said excitedly.

Asked what she hopes to do there, Ranck doesn't hesitate.

"I'll be doing whatever they need me to do," she said. "But I plan to learn everything they do, from start to finish." ■



# SMARTEST DECISION

## DOUBLING UP WITH DUAL ENROLLMENT

Darlyn Estrada, a senior at Battery Creek High School in Beaufort, is a step ahead on her journey to becoming a pediatric surgeon, thanks to a little help from TCL.

Estrada is enrolled in the college's dual enrollment program that allows qualified high school students to take classes at TCL and simultaneously earn high school and college credit.

"It's double the credit for the same work," Estrada said. "It was almost a no brainer."

Estrada, a first-generation college student, relied on her friends' recommendations about enrolling in the program.

"This is all new to me and my family, so my friends really helped encourage me," she said.

Estrada has taken ten TCL classes during her junior and senior years, earning 30 credit hours — equivalent to an entire year of college — that will transfer to her university of choice. She hopes that college is Clemson

University where she plans to major in biology as a pre-med student.

"One reason why I chose dual enrollment courses over other options is because I know my classes will transfer," Estrada said. "It's actually really easy to check and see what courses are transferable to which colleges."

Logan Morgan, also a senior at Battery Creek High School, said he was familiar with dual enrollment because the model had been very successful for his older siblings. Plus, he liked the experience of being enrolled in "actual college classes," as he put it.

TCL provides this early path to college for hundreds of Lowcountry high school students like Estrada and Morgan every year. More than 400 high school students enrolled in the program last year alone, and the number is growing.

Part of the growth can be attributed to the fact that tuition and fees are covered for dual enrollment

◀ **Battery Creek High School students Logan Morgan and Darlyn Estrada have taken 19 college classes combined through TCL's dual enrollment program.**

students in Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper county school districts, meaning these students pay nothing out-of-pocket.

"Most of our dual enrollment students are getting a jumpstart on their college degree or future career for free," dual enrollment coordinator Sara Cain said.

Estrada agrees that the zero dollar price tag is a draw.

"It's a great opportunity especially because we don't have to pay for it," she said. "Of course we have to do our part and make good grades, but that's a small price to pay for the opportunity."

Estrada has shaved off a year from her higher education timeline while saving nearly \$17,000 — what that same year of tuition and fees would have cost at Clemson.

Dual enrollment students can choose to attend classes at any TCL campus or online.

"Online classes are more flexible. I work and take my sister to school and even have clubs after school, so I can do my online classes when I can fit them in," she said.

—“—  
*Most of our dual enrollment students are getting a jumpstart on their college degree or future career for free.*

**Sara Cain**  
 Dual Enrollment Coordinator

—”—

However, she sees positives of attending in-person as well.

"They were much more diverse than my high school classes," she said. "There were people of all ages that reminded me it is never too late for college."

Whether on-campus or virtual, the learning environment has been very positive, Morgan said.

"The quality is great, the teachers are amazing and the communication is fantastic," Morgan said.

Popular dual enrollment classes include introductory college

courses across a variety of subjects such as English, humanities, mathematics, language, physical sciences and social sciences.

TCL dual enrollment isn't just for university-bound students. There are plenty of career and technical course offerings ranging from building construction and HVAC to culinary arts and computer technology, just to name a few.

As an added benefit to the community, these career-focused options increase the pipeline of work-ready high school graduates who then bring their much-needed talent and technical skills directly to local business and industry.

Indeed, dual enrollment earns an A+ for being one of the smartest pathways to college or a career. ■

### ▲ ON THE RISE

No. of Dual Enrollment Students

FALL 2019

414

FALL 2020

374

FALL 2021

427

FALL 2022

471



◻ **Darlyn Estrada hopes to attend Clemson University in the fall and has already completed her first year of college for free through TCL dual enrollment, which translates into a savings of nearly \$17,000 in tuition and fees at Clemson.**

### POINTS OF EXCELLENCE

🏆 TCL's Dual Enrollment program is a member of the **National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP)**, the only national membership-based organization representing concurrent and dual enrollment partnerships.

🏆 Research shows that dual enrollment courses can help **ease the transition** to college and can lead to **better grades, higher retention** and **higher completion** rates at four-year universities.

🏆 Dual enrollment is **key to expanding access and affordability**, especially among those who are low-income, underrepresented in higher education or at risk of not completing postsecondary education, according to the College in High School Alliance.



# BEST IDEA

The new Beaufort HUB will feature a welcoming reception center (pictured) to help students navigate the college admissions and enrollment process from start to finish.

## HISTORIC SPACE GETS NEW ROLE AS BEAUFORT HUB



The HUB at TCL's Beaufort, New River and Hampton campuses offers incoming students a "one stop" or streamlined experience for all their enrollment needs.

"Our goal is to make sure that potential students from all communities feel like they can come in, find everything they need in one place and leave feeling confident about their next steps," said HUB Director Danielle Consider.

Now a renovated building on the historic Beaufort Mather Campus will make reaching that goal even easier. Moor Hall, built in 1939, is currently under renovation and will become the Beaufort HUB's new home later this year.

The building is original to the Mather School, which opened in 1868 to educate the daughters of formerly enslaved people during Reconstruction. For 100 years, this extraordinary establishment educated and empowered countless individuals. In 1986, the property was given to the state of South Carolina and eventually became TCL. In 2020, The Mather School was named part of the Reconstruction Era National Historic Network by the National Park Service.

"Preserving Moor Hall is a priority of the college

because of its historical and educational significance," Vice President for Institutional Advancement Mary Lee Carns said.

The Moor Hall restoration project has been in the works for a few years, but the building was only recently identified as the perfect place to house the HUB after it began to outgrow its current space in Building 2.

Moor Hall offers 8,000-square-feet of space that is large enough to house various student services — admissions, advising, financial aid, testing and more — in one central location. As an added benefit, some of TCL's health sciences programs will then be able to expand into Building 2 once the HUB relocates.

Moving the two departments into new larger spaces that can better accommodate the unique needs and features of each just "made a lot of sense," said Nancy Weber, Vice President for Student Services.

Creating a "student-central" enrollment hub was a strategic priority as part of the *Pathways to the Future: Increasing Persistence and Retention to Graduation* grant that TCL received in 2019 to increase student engagement and achievement.

Research for the grant underscored the importance of offering students a clear and efficient path from their first weeks at TCL all the way through to graduation, Weber said.

"Creating a one-stop shop for enrollment and onboarding processes is vital to the success of students and can increase persistence, retention and graduation rates," she said.

The HUB's design also helps lessen or eliminate anxiety caused by the process itself.

"There's always going to be some anxiety that prospective students bring with them, but eliminating what's causing it on our end is truly the goal of the entire guided pathways program," she said.

Consider agrees that the new HUB will facilitate better communication and an optimized experience for students.

"We see so many students who this is their first time going through college enrollment or they are a first generation college student. They've never had anyone to walk them through this," she said. "We want them to walk out of here knowing exactly what their next steps are and that once they complete those steps we're going to follow-up with them after that point."

The overall goal is that the new, expanded HUB will help more students succeed.

"We are excited to have additional resources to help more students start and finish college and excel along the way," Weber said. ■

## WHAT IS THE HUB?



**Military & Veterans Navigator Jamella Taylor, HUB Director Danielle Consider, Navigator Natiema Busby, and Navigator Curtis Bolden.**

The HUB is one of the first places students visit when they enroll at TCL. The HUB offers a number of critical "first year" services for students including admissions, advising, financial aid, testing and many others. The HUB is also where students meet with their assigned Navigator, or the person who helps them with these initial first steps. Having all of these services in one place increases a student's chances of continuing with their education and ultimately graduating.

## MORE EXCELLENCE IN THE MAKING

The college recently launched The **Liz and Todd Clist Center for Excellence** to provide training opportunities and professional development for faculty and staff. Named for donors and longtime TCL supporters Liz and Todd Clist, the center will also house institutional research and strategic planning while overseeing online instruction. In addition, the center will offer training and meeting space as well as a recording studio for faculty and staff to make videos to use in virtual instruction. Online instruction has grown tremendously, especially since the pandemic, and the center will focus on offering employees the latest tools to enhance the online experience for students.



**Moor Hall (above) is currently being renovated to become the Beaufort Campus' new admissions and enrollment HUB. Original to the Mather School, the historic building has housed classrooms and also served as an administration building, a science laboratory, a library and a bookstore since it was built in 1939.**



# BIGGEST INITIATIVE

## WORKFORCE TRAINING CENTER TAKING SHAPE

From hospitality to health care, TCL excels at meeting the workforce needs of today’s employers. But business and industry is evolving, globally and locally. Preparing for tomorrow’s economy starts now.

As such, the college has plans underway for a 50,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art workforce training center to be built at its New River Campus in Bluffton.

“We see this as the solution to current and emerging workforce needs for our region and beyond,” TCL President Dr. Richard Gough said.

The Arthur E. Brown Regional Workforce Training Center, named for longtime TCL advocate and commissioner of Hilton Head Island, will be the second building on the New River campus that spans Beaufort and Jasper counties. The new facility will dramatically increase TCL’s capacity by an estimated 850 students.

The center will house new and expanded programs and offer the latest technology and industry credentialing in construction, computers, business and entrepreneurship, logistics and more.

In addition, the center will feature fast-track workforce certifications from forklift operations to HVAC training that can be earned in a few months or less. Stackable offerings will help break longer programs into smaller chunks, which has many advantages.

“It allows both career changers and incumbent workers to gain new skills as their schedules allow without them having to put a hard stop on their current income,” Vice President for Advancement Mary Lee Carns said. “Plus, students are more likely to finish shorter classes.”

The center’s new programs also align with ongoing initiatives by local chambers of commerce and

economic development organizations that are recruiting key sectors — aerospace and defense, light manufacturing and distribution, headquarter and back office, green and alternative energies, cybersecurity and more — to expand or locate here.

“These sectors have been strategically identified to fit well within the Lowcountry way of life while having the potential to offer higher wages and to create a more diversified local economy,” said John O’Toole, Executive Director for the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation.

The center’s program alignment will become an important part of the recruitment pitch to prospects, according to O’Toole.

“I will be able to say that we have a workforce that is trained and ready to go, which is such an important component of economic development,” O’Toole said.

The center’s course offerings also mirror the training needs of two other key workforce groups in the Lowcountry: military and small business.

Military members and veterans often turn to TCL to help translate their aviation electronics and aircraft maintenance service into industry-recognized credentials, which sets them up for future employment opportunities.

Business and entrepreneurship are becoming popular pathways for veterans as well. One recent study showed that veteran-owned businesses doubled in 2021 making up nearly 11% of new business owners in 2021 compared to 5.4% in 2019.

The Lowcountry economy relies on small business success, while entrepreneurship is one of the most popular career choices for younger generations.

Data show that more than 60% of Generation Z have started or want to start their own business.

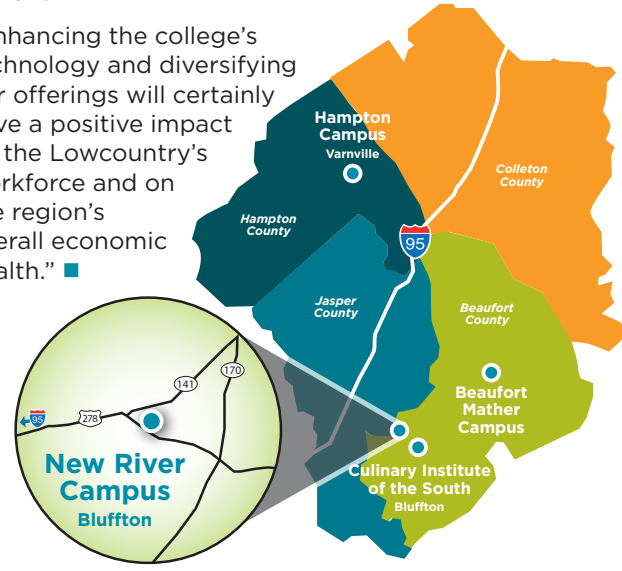
While the programs and classrooms have carefully been chosen, the plan also leaves room for flexible spaces and adaptable technology, Carns said.

Latest estimates show a three-to-four-year construction timeline and a price tag of around \$26 million to cover construction and startup operations.

“We are optimistic that both local and state dollars will fund this project,” Carns said. “It’s really an investment that will pay for itself for generations to come.”

Gough agrees that the community at large will greatly benefit.

“Enhancing the college’s technology and diversifying our offerings will certainly have a positive impact on the Lowcountry’s workforce and on the region’s overall economic health.” ■



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*We see this as the solution to current and emerging workforce needs for our region and beyond.*

**Dr. Richard Gough**  
TCL President

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- ### FAST FACTS
- Size:** Three-story, 50,000-square-foot facility
  - Location:** Second building on TCL New River Campus in Bluffton
  - Capacity:** 850 students
  - Cost:** \$26 million construction and start-up operations
  - Timeline:** three-to-four-year approval and construction process
  - Programs:** Construction, computer technology, business and entrepreneurship, logistics and more



# TCL Fast Facts

Based on available data as of January 2023. Subject to change.

**2,196**  
students  
FALL 2022

student  
faculty  
**12:1** RATIO

average  
age  
**25**

**\$0** tuition  
& fees  
Spring 2023

**314+**  
annual  
graduate  
awards

**71%**  
female  
students

**60+**  
programs  
of study

**94%**  
graduate  
placement RATE

**5** CAMPUSES

**17%**   
military  
active/veteran/dependent

**471**  
dual-enrolled  
high school  
students

**29%**  
male  
students

**87,000+**  
students  
since 1968

Alumni  
Association  
**350** members

**180+**  
online  
classes

part-time  
students  
**79%**

**\$648,891**  
2022 TCL donor support