

Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.



March 6, 2015

Chattanooga State Community College Presidential Search Committee  
ATTN: Crystal Cheatham  
Executive Search Consultant  
Greenwood/Asher & Associates, Inc.  
42 Business Centre Drive, Suite 206  
Miramar Beach, Florida 32550

Dear Members of the Presidential Search Committee:

Please accept this letter and accompanying curriculum vitae as my application for the position of president of Chattanooga State Community College. I have the skills, attributes, qualifications, and experience necessary to provide the leadership required to guide Chattanooga State Community College in achieving its mission of providing excellence in teaching and learning while transforming the lives of students. I would bring to the college a proven record of developing the capacities of business, industry, and communities through the power of technical and postsecondary education. I would also bring a commitment to engage key stakeholders – students, faculty and staff, business partners, K-16 education partners, government leaders – to create and sustain an organization committed to providing exceptional opportunities for students.

Since 2003 I have served as president of Athens Technical College, a multi-campus, two-year institution serving a 10-county region of Northeast Georgia. We enrolled 6,349 academic program students, 1,862 adult education/GED students, and 1,645 continuing education/business and industry program students in the 2013-2014 academic year. The college has worked with business and industry partners, many of whom have provided financial support and equipment, to develop and start 32 new academic programs of study that address critical workforce development needs. We were one of the first technical colleges in Georgia to introduce associate of science degree programs that enable graduates to transfer to University System of Georgia institutions as rising juniors. The educational foundation students receive at Athens Technical College enables them to perform above national norms on certification and licensure examinations on a consistent basis. Job placement rates exceed 90 percent, a trend that held even during the worst of the economic downturn.

**Demonstrated Commitment to Serving Students, Faculty, and Staff**

I am very passionate about and committed to student success and have a record of consistently taking actions which reflect this commitment. Athens Technical College was the first institution in Georgia to participate in *Achieving the Dream (ATD)*, a national coalition of community and technical colleges dedicated to increasing student persistence and graduation rates. Our

## Chattanooga State Community College Presidential Search Committee

March 6, 2015

Page 2

participation in *ATD* reinforced the importance of listening to members of the college community when addressing problems and issues. We hold community conversations throughout the year as a means to afford students the opportunity to share their thoughts on whether the institution is meeting their needs and for faculty and staff to explore ways they can contribute to the college's student success agenda. Research into ways to improve persistence and graduation rates led us to increase significantly our investment in our faculty and staff and provide more meaningful professional development opportunities and resources. The lessons learned through our participation in *ATD* provided the platform for developing a more comprehensive, dynamic strategic plan to guide college operations through 2020.

I believe that technology can be an effective means to increase student engagement. In order to help faculty use existing technology effectively, the college obtained grant funding to create a Center for Teaching and Learning. Staffed by a director, instructional designers, and administrative support staff, the center provides faculty with a means to become expert users of learning management systems and to create innovative materials for use both in the classroom and online.

### **Demonstrated Commitment to Strategic Improvement**

In order for a college to achieve its mission and strategic goals, the president must be an authentic leader who is effective in building a cohesive organization focused on ensuring that the college remains relevant to the students and communities it serves. During my tenure as president of Athens Technical College, I have worked to create a robust culture grounded in these basic tenets:

- ***Each faculty and staff member brings value to the organization.*** An effective leader recognizes this truth by creating an atmosphere in which all members hold ownership and have a voice in the direction and future of the institution.
- Students and their needs change. Economic and workforce needs change. The political environment we operate in changes. The president is responsible for establishing an environment to facilitate change. ***Faculty and staff must be the driving force behind change;*** they hold the experience and expertise to enact change.
- ***Change cannot take place haphazardly.*** Sound, logical reasoning based on an evaluation of data and the environment must serve as the foundation to initiate change.

This framework has served me well during the past 12 years as I have strived to create an efficient and innovative organization that involves all individuals directly and broadly in improvement efforts. We now operate within a culture of inquiry in which all faculty and staff are expected and encouraged to give voice to issues impacting the ability of the college to fulfill its mission and responsibilities. Faculty engage in the governance of the College through a Faculty Council made up of elected representatives from every division. The chair of the Faculty

## **Chattanooga State Community College Presidential Search Committee**

March 6, 2015

Page 3

Council serves on the Academic Affairs Leadership Team, and I meet with the executive council before and after each meeting of the Faculty Council.

During my tenure, I have been able to build a strong team of leaders who share my philosophies and who consistently work as a cohesive team to improve the college. We have been able to attract and retain highly qualified faculty members who are committed to making a difference in the lives of our students. We understand how to use data and evidence to drive continuous quality improvement. We have succeeded in creating an environment that values all individuals and an environment that encourages and expects everyone to contribute to the overall good of the institution. Because of my proven ability to create an atmosphere of collaboration and cohesiveness, I was appointed on two different occasions by the commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia to serve as the interim college president to stabilize an environment of uneasiness as a result of the departure of sitting presidents.

### **Demonstrated Expertise in Financial Management and Resource Development**

Being financially sound and accountable to our taxpayers is an important aspect of running a successful college. A college president must be held accountable for the institution's fiscal budget. Under my supervision, Athens Technical College was the first institution in the Technical College System of Georgia to receive the Award of Distinction for Excellent Financial Reporting from the Georgia Department of Audits. We received zero findings as part of an audit of financial resources.

The president must also find ways to make college more affordable and accessible by reducing out-of-pocket costs to students and developing new financial streams during times of decreased state allotments. I am firmly committed to using technology to make a college education more accessible and affordable. Accessibility is enhanced through the use of online and hybrid instructional models. Affordability is achieved through the adoption of electronic textbooks and open resource instructional materials. Our data show that approximately 35 percent of our students attended classes without purchasing textbooks during Spring Semester 2014. The majority of those students cited limited financial resources as a reason for not purchasing the textbooks. This statistic underscores the need to find ways to make a college education more affordable and demonstrates the value of using data to guide the decision-making process.

Having an entrepreneurial mindset has served me well at Athens Technical College, especially during the recent economic downturn. We created partnerships with the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services to develop online employee training modules and the Georgia Department of Agriculture to deliver licensure examinations for the pest control industry. In addition, establishing a strong Foundation with the involvement of key members of the community is important to developing relationships and building a donor base. Through these relationships, I led the first capital campaign undertaken by Athens Technical College. The

## **Chattanooga State Community College Presidential Search Committee**

March 6, 2015

Page 4

campaign raised funds to construct a new life sciences facility, purchase equipment, and expand the footprint of the college to accommodate future growth.

We have also been successful in obtaining grant funds for strategic initiatives. Most recently, the college received a \$13.6 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) consortium grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. This funding was used to introduce associate degrees in Electromechanical/Manufacturing Engineering Technology, Environmental Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Nanotechnology. The college used grant funding to develop statewide policies and practices for prior learning assessments (PLA) and to provide PLA training to personnel at all member institutions of the Technical College System of Georgia. The emphasis on PLA earned Athens Technical College an invitation to participate in the Community College Transformative Change Initiative based at the University of Illinois.

### **Business Partnerships**

Colleges contribute significantly to local economies and play an important role in creating the workforce needed to bring new industry to the region. The college president must take a leadership role in addressing workforce development issues. At Athens Technical College, I have worked with business partners and faculty to create new instructional programs in order to meet workforce development needs. In my role as president, I partnered with local and state government officials to secure commitments from Caterpillar and Baxter International to construct manufacturing facilities in our community. These partnerships will bring over 2,500 jobs to our service area and numerous opportunities for collaboration through training and program development. The State of Georgia renovated a facility on our main campus in Athens to serve as a training facility for Caterpillar employees. We are providing training for employees of Baxter International while the State constructs a 42,000-square-foot bioscience training center across from the company's \$1 billion biomanufacturing plant.

### **Educational Partnerships**

In addition to establishing effective, mutually beneficial relationships with business and industry, Athens Technical College has worked closely to establish strong relationships with school districts. We partner with three different districts to operate career academies, which provide high school students the opportunity to enroll in college courses taught by our faculty during the junior and senior years in high school. Students may begin work on the general education coursework associated with two- and four-year college degrees, and they also have the opportunity to earn postsecondary certificates in a number of subject areas such as early childhood care and education, criminal justice, mechatronics, and 3D gaming and design.

Furthermore, we have developed a number of partnerships with public and private postsecondary institutions in the area. We have created articulation agreements with The University of Georgia, Clayton State University, Mercer University, Piedmont College, and Southern Polytechnic State

**Chattanooga State Community College Presidential Search Committee**

March 6, 2015

Page 5

University that allow students to transfer to those institutions as rising juniors in a number of areas, including consumer economics, early childhood care and education, engineering technology, and nursing. We have recently been selected by the Portuguese Flagship Program at The University of Georgia to participate in a grant project designed to strengthen and expand Portuguese language instruction beginning with elementary immersion programs and continuing through postsecondary study. We are also participating with the Georgia Institute of Technology in a U.S. Department of Labor grant to develop and offer certificate programs in health informatics and have partnered with Southern Polytechnic State University to write a National Science Foundation grant to develop multi-axis CNC program curriculum. We are also working with Emory University to develop the first academic program in Georgia designed to prepare students to sit for the national certification exam for ophthalmologic technicians.

I am proud of what has been accomplished at Athens Technical College thus far in my career, and I am eager to bring my skills and knowledge to Chattanooga State Community College. I am particularly impressed by and interested in the Seamless Alignment and Integrated Learning Support (SAILS) program and the STEM Academy. My experience working with learning support faculty to re-design the learning support math program and my involvement with the community in developing career academies and dual-enrollment puts me in an ideal position to support the current scalability efforts of these initiatives in Tennessee.

In closing, thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my professional accomplishments with the members of the committee. I look forward to discussing in person how I can contribute to the future of Chattanooga State.

Respectfully,



Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.

Enclosure

## Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.



---

### Professional Experience

---

#### **President (2003 – Present)**

*Athens Technical College, Athens, Georgia*

Responsible for leading an organization with more than 800 full- and part-time employees; fostering an environment of academic excellence while appreciating and rewarding faculty dedication to student learning; engaging all college constituencies in thinking strategically and collaboratively on the development and accomplishment of measurable goals; obtaining alternative funding sources from foundations, federal government grants, and business and industry partners; and continually working to enhance the visibility of the college with local and state elected officials, economic development organizations, K-16 institutions, and the business community.

#### **Selected Achievements:**

- Experienced a 133 percent growth in enrollment since 2003 (current yearly enrollment exceeds 10,000 students in academic programs of study, adult education/GED preparation classes, and continuing education/customized business and industry workshops).
- Secured more than \$30 million in private and public grants.
- Selected to be one of four colleges in the state to receive a *Complete College America* grant to redesign learning support/remediation coursework as part of the *Complete College Georgia* initiative originating from the Governor's Office; redesigned learning support courses, resulting in student success moving from below 50 percent to over 80 percent.
- Received a \$13.9 million Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the U.S. Department of Labor in collaboration with two other colleges within the Technical College System of Georgia; funding used to create associate degree programs in Electromechanical/Manufacturing Engineering Technology, Environmental Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering Technology, and Nanotechnology.
- Strategically introduced 32 new programs of study to address critical workforce development needs of the college community.
- Earned an invitation for membership in *Achieving the Dream* thus becoming the first college in Georgia to join this national coalition of community and technical colleges committed to increasing student persistence and graduation rates.
- Created a first-semester seminar course, introduced additional student support services, and implemented a redesign of academic advisement services based on information collected as part of the college's participation in *Achieving the Dream*.
- Implemented a series of professional development programs designed to enhance faculty expertise in active and collaborative learning, flipped classrooms, and other learner-centered instructional practices that contribute to higher levels of student achievement.

**Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.**

Curriculum Vitae

Page 2

- Increased funding significantly to support faculty participation in state and national workshops related to their fields of expertise and other professional development opportunities that will contribute to the college's success agenda.
- Created the Center for Teaching and Learning to support the creation of innovative materials for use both in the classroom and online.
- Redesigned the Faculty Council as a means to enhance shared governance of the institution.
- Implemented prior learning assessments to reduce duplication of effort and to increase student persistence and graduation.
- Created career academies with three school districts to increase student interest in career and technical education and to increase dual enrollment opportunities that allow students to complete college courses in order to earn both college and high school credit.
- Developed articulation agreements with The University of Georgia, Clayton State University, Mercer University, Piedmont College, and Southern Polytechnic State University that allow Athens Technical College graduates to transfer to those institutions as rising juniors.
- Partnered with The University of Georgia, the Georgia Institute of Technology, and Southern Polytechnic State University on federal grant initiatives.
- Worked with Emory University to develop a certificate program in ophthalmologic technology to prepare students to sit for the national certification exam for ophthalmologic technicians.
- Played a key role in helping to recruit and secure manufacturing facilities in the college's service area for both Baxter International and Caterpillar.
- Successfully completed a five-year review, multiple substantive change reviews, and the ten-year reaffirmation of accreditation process (with zero recommendations) as established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- Increased the Foundation membership from 8 to 24 engaged trustees and the Foundation assets to over \$8 million.
- Successfully leveraged \$32 million in capital improvement funds for the college and added 25 acres to the college footprint.
- Developed a statewide web-based pest control licensure testing system in partnership with the Georgia Department of Agriculture thus adding an additional revenue stream to the college and saving the pest control industry over \$4 million a year.

**Interim President** (June 2009 – December 2009)

*Central Georgia Technical College, Macon, Georgia*

**Interim President** (June 2005 – December 2005)

*Sandersville Technical College, Sandersville, Georgia*

Asked to serve by the Commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia to stabilize an environment of uneasiness as a result of the departure of sitting presidents.

**Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.**

Curriculum Vitae

Page 3

**Vice President for Academic Affairs (1998 – 2003)**

*Central Georgia Technical College, Macon, Georgia*

Responsible for the management, operation, and supervision of the Instructional Services Division, including four instructional directors, 168 full-time faculty, all part-time faculty, and more than 15,000 students annually.

**Selected Achievements:**

- Developed and implemented a comprehensive strategic planning process.
- Retrofitted existing facilities and participated in designing, equipping, and staffing of new facilities.
- Hired faculty and ensured that faculty credentials were appropriate and met standards as established by the college, state system of technical colleges, and regional and professional accreditation bodies.
- Conducted survey research, analyzed results, and prepared publications and reports.
- Served as the college's liaison to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- Promoted public relations with employers and the community.
- Developed and monitored departmental budgets and expenditures.

**Director of Curriculum and Staff Development (1996 – 1998)**

*Macon Technical Institute, Macon, Georgia*

Responsible for planning, coordinating, and supervising curriculum development and faculty development that promoted the overall efficiency of Macon Technical Institute and met the objectives of the Georgia Board of Technical and Adult Education.

**Selected Achievements:**

- Developed and updated academic policies and procedures to meet the criteria established by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- Conducted research and made proposals for distance education course development.
- Planned and implemented a Commission on Colleges faculty and staff training retreat that focused on effectiveness in educational programs.
- Planned and established computer-aided instruction labs.
- Established instructional program groups and helped define their mission statements, philosophies, and goals.

**Apprenticeship Director (1994 – 1996)**

*Houston, Dooly, Peach, and Pulaski County School Systems, Warner Robins, Georgia*



**Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.**

Curriculum Vitae

Page 4

**Adjunct Instructor for Developmental Reading and Regents' Test Preparation (1994 – 1995)**

*Middle Georgia College, Cochran, Georgia*

**Psychometrist (1990 – 1994)**

*Applied Psychology Center, Warner Robins, Georgia*

**Co-Owner/Operator (1984 – 1990)**

*Traditions Gift Shop, Warner Robins, Georgia*

**Professional Educator (T-5 Certificate) (1976 – 1984)**

*Houston County Board of Education, Warner Robins, Georgia*

---

**Education**

---

**The University of Georgia**

Doctor of Education, Occupational Studies

Dissertation: *A Comparison of Work Ethic Descriptors Among Technical College Advisory Committee Members, Instructors, and Students*

**Mercer University**

Master of Education, Reading Specialist

**Georgia Southern University**

Bachelor of Science in Education, Behavioral Science

---

**Community, Civic, and Professional Associations**

---

- American Association of Community Colleges, Former Commission Member
- Community Colleges of Appalachia, Board Member
- Higher Education Research and Development Institute, Board Member
- Athens Rotary Club
  - Board Member (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 )
  - Paul Harris Fellow
- Athens-Clarke County Chamber of Commerce, Board Member
  - Chamber member for Elbert, Greene, Hart, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Walton, and Wilkes counties
- Athens-Clarke County Economic Development Foundation Board
  - Vice-Chair (2005-2006), Chair (2007-2009)
- Georgia Department of Economic Development Regional Advisory Council
- Partners for a Prosperous Athens, Steering Committee Member

## **Flora W. Tydings, Ed.D.**

### Curriculum Vitae

Page 5

- Georgia Technical College Presidents' Association, Officer
- United Way of Northeast Georgia, Board Member
- Mayor's Task Force for Regional Economic Development
- *Innovation Crescent* Working Committee created by the Governor's Office for Workforce Development
- Northeast Georgia Biotech Committee
- Arts Development Council of Georgia, Board Member
- Georgia Bio Education and Workforce Development Committee
- Child Care Resource and Referral of Northeast Georgia, Advisory Board Member

---

### **Relevant Professional Presentations**

---

- Annual Meeting of the Elbert County Chamber of Commerce, Keynote Speaker (2004)
- Georgia Department of Labor State Administrative Professionals Conference, Keynote Speaker (2005)
- Pest Management Commission at The University of Georgia, Presenter (2006, 2014)
- Southern Regional Education Board, League for Innovation in the Community College *Forum: Building Transitions from High School to College and Careers for Georgia's Youth*, Presenter (2006)
- *Girls Going Places*, Welcome/Kick-off Speaker (2006)
- Georgia Department of Labor Workforce and Touch the Future/Transition Conference, Closing Session Speaker (2006)
- Georgia Department of Labor EXCEL Leadership Class, Keynote Speaker (2007)
- Leadership Georgia, Keynote Speaker (2007)
- Senate Appropriations Higher Education Subcommittee, Presenter (2007)
- Georgia House Study Committee on Bio-Science, Presenter (2007)
- State EAGLE Awards, Luncheon Speaker (2009)
- Georgia Occupational Award for Leadership, Luncheon Speaker (2010, 2011, 2012)
- Athena Awards Luncheon, Keynote Speaker (2011)
- Georgia Association for Women in Higher Education, Presenter (2013)
- Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc., Keynote Speaker (2014)
- Jeanette Rankin Foundation Women in Higher Education, Keynote Speaker (2014)

---

### **Honors and Awards**

---

- Phi Theta Kappa International Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction (2008)
- Athens Rotary Club W. Lee Arrendale Award for Vocational Excellence (2008)
- Atlanta Business Chronicle, Recognized Leaders in Education (2009-2014)
- Athena International Award (2010)
- Jeanette Rankin Foundation Founders' Award (2012)
- Boy Scouts of Northeast Georgia Distinguished Citizen Award (2014)

