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SC Department of Employment and Workforce  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Two groups receive apprenticeship grants for innovative workforce programs**

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce and the Tri-County Technical College have been awarded apprenticeship grants from the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), which made available \$267,000 for innovative apprenticeship grant initiatives.

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce received \$119,000 to provide apprenticeships for youths with barriers to employment. As the managing partner of the regional consortia for the Workforce Academies Youth Apprenticeship Program, the chamber's project would be to enroll, train and place an additional 200 youth apprentice students between April 2016 and May 2018. This grant will support 68 tuition and expense scholarships through the end of the grant period. The average summer earnings of an apprentice are \$3,200.

Partnering with the Charleston chamber are IFA Rotorion, Trident Workforce Development Board (TWDB) and its Palmetto Youth Connections (PYC) and Education 2 Employment (E2E).

Tri-County Technical College (TCTC) received \$148,000 to provide highway construction apprenticeships to unemployed ex-offenders. The program, Highway Construction Pathway for ex-offenders, will help individuals with criminal records and skill deficiencies find meaningful employment in highway construction entry-level jobs such as flagger, quality control technicians and CDL B dump truck drivers.

TCTC has partnered with Greenville Technical College, Piedmont Technical College and Spartanburg Community College. This collaborative group will align with South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVR) and the institutions' Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs)—Greenville County Workforce Development Board, Upper Savannah Workforce Investment Board, Upstate Workforce Investment Board, and WorkLink—as project partners.

Across industries, apprenticeships have proved to be effective because they benefit both the business community and the workforce. They are a focus of SWDB, which is the governor's arm for economic development.

“We are pleased to partner with the Charleston Metro Chamber and Tri-County Technical College to help them provide opportunities to people who must overcome employment barriers every day. The State Workforce

Board has placed an emphasis on the development of apprenticeship opportunities as they are a proven method of producing a highly skilled and productive workforce,” said Mikee Johnson, SWDB chairman and president of Cox Industries. “All of this makes South Carolina an exceptional place to do business.”

“It is exciting to see what innovative apprenticeships are going on in our state to meet both the needs of our citizens and of our businesses,” said Cheryl Stanton, executive director of the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce and SWDB member. “By thinking beyond traditional apprenticeships, we are finding smart ways to bridge the gap between education and employment and helping industries grow and retain its workforce.”

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#### ***About the South Carolina Workforce Development Board***

*The South Carolina Workforce Development Board provides direction to create a competitive talent pipeline for South Carolina by ensuring that a quality and effective workforce system exists. Appointed by the Governor, the board is comprised of business leaders, legislators of the South Carolina Senate and House, local elected officials, workforce partners and representatives of community-based organizations. Through cooperation and collaboration, South Carolina benefits from the vision and direction of the board as they seek to promote resources and services that leverage effective workforce development.*

#### ***About SCDEW***

*The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce is putting South Carolinians to work. The agency invests in building a pipeline of quality workers, matches workers with jobs, and is a bridge for individuals who find themselves out of work for no fault of their own. This promotes financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, individuals and communities. [SCDEW](#) is dedicated to advancing South Carolina through services that meet the needs of the state’s businesses, jobseekers and those looking to advance their careers.*