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### **Colleton County Certified as State's Third Work Ready Community**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 28, 2014  
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WALTERBORO - Colleton County became the state's third county to receive the South Carolina Work Ready Community designation through ACT. This means it has met all its workforce and education goals that demonstrate to businesses its strong workforce and commitment to economic growth.

"South Carolina's world-class workforce is one of the main reasons we've seen record economic activity in our state," said Gov. Nikki R. Haley. "We couldn't be more excited about Colleton County becoming a Certified Work Ready Community and continuing South Carolina's strong commitment to expanding economic opportunity through the participation in this nationally recognized initiative."

A national effort, led by ACT, the initiative provides a framework for states to strengthen economic development using a community-based approach grounded in certifying counties as work ready. To earn a Certified Work Ready Community designation, counties have to reach goals in earning National Career Readiness Certificates, meet or exceed the three-year graduation rate average or improvement percentage, and engage business support.

"Congratulations to Colleton County for earning the Work Ready Community designation," said Mikee Johnson, President of Cox Industries and chairman of the South Carolina Workforce Investment Board. "The significance behind the South Carolina initiative is that it brings together community leaders with a common goal of improving educational achievements and the employability of its workforce. Colleton's achievement in becoming being a Certified Work Ready Community reinforces the fact that South Carolina is committed to having the best business environment possible."

"I am excited to celebrate Colleton County becoming a Certified Work Ready Community. Earning this designation takes great leadership, teamwork and commitment all in an effort to help bolster the county's workforce and economic development standing," said SC Department of Employment and Workforce Executive Director Cheryl M. Stanton. "I continue to be impressed with the state's rural counties, and I look forward to being a part of their many success stories to come."

Clarendon and McCormick counties previously received Certified Work Ready Community designation.

South Carolina was one of four pilot states selected to participate in the ACT Certified Work Ready Community program. For additional information, please visit [www.scworkready.org](http://www.scworkready.org).

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