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Glaccum, DavidDavidGlaccum@gov.sc.gov  
**Subject:** South Carolina Youth Challenge Academy Graduation Exercise for Cohort 1  
**Location:** Aiken Technical College, Building 900, 2276 Jefferson Davis Highway, Graniteville, S.C.  
**When:** 5/27/2016 1:50:00 PM - 3:00:00 PM

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Advance: Brian Welch  
(864)982-3937

**Michael will attend.**

**NOTE:** The stage party will assemble in the Community room #1300 prior to the event. That is located in the Health Science building (1200/1400 building on map). At approximately 1:50 PM, the stage party will walk to the gym for the ceremony.

**EVENT:** South Carolina Youth Challenge Academy Graduation Exercise for Cohort 1

**DATE:** Friday, May 27, 2016

**TIME:** 2:00 PM

**LOCATION:** Aiken Technical College, Gregg-Graniteville Student Activities Center Gymnasium, 2276 Jefferson Davis Highway, Graniteville, S.C.

**LOCATION SET-UP:** The graduation ceremony will be held in the Greg Graniteville Student Activities building (900 building) in the gymnasium. The Governor, Mr. Haley, and those engaged in the ceremony will be seated on stage.

**SEATING:** Gov. Haley will be seated on stage.

The following people will be seated on stage:

Governor Haley, Speaker  
Michael Haley, First Gentleman  
General Livingston, Intro Speaker  
General McCarty  
Jennifer Troke  
Dr. Winsor, Welcome  
Dr. Frock  
Ernie Gonzalez, Closing Remarks  
Larry Snipes, Master of Ceremonies

**ON-SITE LOCATION CONTACT:**

Sgt. John McCord  
Aiken County Sherriff's Deput  
Cell: (803) 617-9721  
Office: (803) 508-7359

**SCHEDULING CONTACT:**

Jackie Fogle

(803) 331-6675  
[FogleJ@tag.scmd.state.sc.us](mailto:FogleJ@tag.scmd.state.sc.us)

Larry Snipes  
Site Director  
SCYCA POST Challenge program  
[SnipesL@tag.scmd.state.sc.us](mailto:SnipesL@tag.scmd.state.sc.us)

**PRIMARY STAFF:** Ashton Lee

**ADVANCE STAFF:**

**PURPOSE:** The Governor and First Gentleman will attend the graduation of the inaugural cohort from the Post Challenge Program. Governor Haley will give brief remarks during the graduation ceremony.

**PRESS:** Yes.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Nikasha Dicks  
Marketing & Public Relations Director  
Aiken Technical College  
(803) 508-7477  
[dicksn@atc.edu](mailto:dicksn@atc.edu)

**PUBLIC:** Yes.

**REQUESTED BY:** Michael Haley

**INTRODUCED BY:** MG Robert E. Livingston, Jr

**LENGTH OF SPEAKING:** 5 mins of remarks

**ATTENDEES:** 200-250 attendees

**SPEAKING ORDER/LINE-BY-LINE:**

Master of Ceremonies	Mr. Larry Snipes, Director, Post Challenge Program
Processional	Stage Party and Cadets
Presentation of Colors	S.C. Youth Challenge Color Guard
National Anthem	
Invocation	Mr. Connor Burch
Post Challenge Cadet	
Introduction of President	Mr. Snipes
Welcome	Dr. Susan A. Winsor, President, Aiken Technical College
Introduction of Governor	Major General Robert E. Livingston, Jr., South Carolina Adjutant General
Remarks	The Honorable Nikki R. Haley, South Carolina Governor
Presentation of Graduates	Dr. Gemma K. Frock, Vice President of Education and Training,
Aiken Technical College	
Conferring of Degrees	Dr. Winsor, Assisted by Dr. Frock and Mr. Snipes
Closing Remarks	Mr. Ernie Gonzales, Director, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense,
Manpower and Reserve Affairs	
Benediction	Ms. Mercedes Wright, Post Challenge Cadet
Recessional	Stage Party and Cadets

**BACKGROUND ON POST CHALLENGE:**

The Post Challenge Program is a collaborative effort between the South Carolina Army National Guard, Aiken Technical College, Clemson University's Youth Learning Institute Camp Long facility, Lower Savannah Council of Governments' Workforce Opportunity Investment Act, and Aiken County Public School

District.

The program was created due to the award of a nearly \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to create a 20-week extension to the South Carolina Army National Guard's Youth Challenge Academy based at McCrady Training Center in Eastover, S.C.

Cadets selected for the Post Challenge program have an opportunity to earn applied science certificates from Aiken Technical College in high-demand fields—welding, basic tower and wireless installation, production technology, computer technology, and patient care assisting—while being housed at Camp Long.

The inaugural cohort of the program began classes in January 2016 and today we celebrate their success.

#### **BACKGROUND ON COHORT 1:**

- Cohort 1 is the first of 6 cohorts funded by a DOL grant to create demonstration programs to test the effectiveness of the Youth Challenge model in an occupational training program.
- Cohort 1 started on January 4, 2016 when 48 graduates of the SC Youth Challenge Academy reported to Camp Long in Aiken, SC.
- This first class was made up of 13 females and 35 males.
- On January 11th, 45 cadets actually started classes at Aiken Technical College in Basic Production Operations, Welding, Computer Network Installation, Patient Care Assistant training, and Tower Technician and Wireless Installation.
- As this cohort prepares to graduate, 24 cadets (8 females and 16 males) have completed training and will graduate on May 27th.
- Of interesting note is that among the four Tower Technicians is one female, Sky Beavins from Anderson; and among the five welders graduating in Cohort 1 are two females, Tatiyana Benjamin from Columbia and Deana Robinson from Edgefield.
- Cohort 1 cadets represent 13 counties in South Carolina: Aiken, Anderson, Barnwell, Charleston, Dorchester, Edgefield, Greenwood, Jasper Kershaw, Lee, Lexington, Orangeburg, and Richland.
- We expect that by graduation 20 of the 24 graduates will have earned a GED and that all of them will have achieved a Silver-level WorkKeys Certification.
- Occupation plans range from entering the military to joining the family business to continuing college in pursuit of a bachelor's degree while they work in the field they have been trained in.
- These cadets have overcome obstacles and challenges that have held back a large number of their peers to accomplish things they didn't think would be possible just one year ago; and they are now poised to move forward and achieve even more in their lives.

#### **SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:**

##### **Introductory Remarks:**

- It's a great day in South Carolina, and it's an honor to be here with you all celebrating your success and the success of this fantastic program.
- I am always excited to have the opportunity to celebrate young adults that have taken steps to get back on track and work towards earning a degree, getting a job, and becoming financially self-sufficient.
- I understand that if you're here graduating today, it means that you have had some adversity in your life. For one reason or another, you decided that high school wasn't for you and you dropped out. But that is all in the past, and what's important is that you are here today.
- Somewhere along the way, you recognized the importance of an education and you've recognized the doors that it can open for you and your loved ones.
- And that is the only reason that we are here today – to celebrate you and to celebrate the decision

- that you made to lift yourself up, to persevere through this innovative but difficult program, and to show what you are capable of.
- Cadets in this class have done tremendous work. Taking classes in areas such as welding, computer network and wireless installation, and patient care assistant training provide important and sought-after skills in good career paths.
- I know most of you have earned a GED and all have achieved a Silver-level WorkKeys Certification, proving that you have all developed the skills necessary to become a part of South Carolina's workforce - one of the strongest and most loyal in the world.
- South Carolina's economy is in a good place. Since 2011, we have announced over 77,000 jobs coming to the state, with companies like Boeing, Volvo, Mercedes, and Bridgestone, which is located right here in Graniteville, hiring thousands of South Carolinians for their plants here.
- We are able to bring those jobs here because these companies trust that people like you are the most capable in the world to build their products. Those jobs are for you, and I couldn't be more excited for the opportunities that are ahead for each and every one of you.
- As the inaugural class of the POST Challenge program, y'all have set the bar for others that will graduate in future years.
- Your success moving forward will inspire others to follow in your footsteps.
- Again, I want to congratulate you on your successes. We are excited to see what you will do next.

### **Other Programs Helping Youthful Offenders Achieve Success**

- Youthful Offenders
  - When we took office, youthful offenders ages 17-25 years old were returning to prison at a rate of more than 50%.
  - During our first year, our Corrections team started a Youthful Offender Intensive Supervision program to make our communities safer and reduce the youthful offender recidivism rate.
  - As a result, we have seen 13.5% 2-year recidivism rate.
  - 2,102 Youthful Offenders have been assigned to Intensive Supervision and 1,730 have been paroled.
  - The reduction in the number of young men and women in prison is saving tax dollars and helping to end the generational cycle of incarceration.

### **Other Haley Administration Successes**

- Our economy is among the fastest growing in the nation.
  - First in U.S. exports for tires and passenger automobiles, second in exports of gas turbines, and twelfth in civilian aircraft.

- South Carolina ranked first for jobs linked to foreign investment.
- Unemployment at 5.7% with more people working in SC than ever before.
- Tens of thousands of new jobs announced. ex. (just recently, Volvo announced it is investing \$500 million and creating 4,000 new jobs).
- Moved more than 35,000 people from welfare-to-work.
- Working on reforms to our SNAP program to ensure accountability and help people find sustainable employment.
- Between October 2012 and February 2016, DSS helped more than 14,000 SNAP recipients find a job.
- Cut our debt service by almost half while doubling our General Reserves.
- Biggest education reform in decades.

Aiken County Senate Races:

District 24 – Incumbent: Tom Young

Unopposed

District 25 – Incumbent: Shane Massey

Shane Massey (R)

John Pettigrew (R)

District 26 – Incumbent: Nikki Setzler

Nikki Setzler (D)

Brad Lindsey (R)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION:

From David: I'm including the text because I know that you look for it but please note that we are getting a False message back because employment has actually decreased in Aiken. So has unemployment, but still...

Between January 2011 and March 2016, the unemployment rate in Aiken County has decreased by 3.3 percentage points from 8.9 percent to 5.6 percent. There are now -983 more people employed in the county and 2733 fewer people unemployed.

Announcements Total Capital Investment  
Total Jobs

Announced Date	Company Name	Objective	Pr
2016-03-22	Autoneum North America Inc.	Expansion	At

2016-01-05	AGY Holding Corp.	Expansion	Fi
2015-08-19	AmbioPharm, Inc.	Expansion	ph
2015-01-13	Columbia Farms - Monetta	Expansion	ch
2014-04-24	Medac Inc.	New	He
2013-07-31	Tognum America, Inc. (Diesel Engines)	Expansion	Of
2013-04-16	Owens Corning Non-woven Technologies	New	Fi
2013-02-20	Reclim, LLC	New	Fi
2012-03-21	Tognum America, Inc. (Diesel Engines)	Expansion	R
2012-01-24	Pactiv Corporation	Expansion	Fo
2011-09-21	Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC (PSR Plant)	Expansion	Ti
2011-09-21	Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC (PSR Plant)	Expansion	Ti
2011-07-20	Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, LLC (PSR Plant)	Expansion	Ti