



**REGIONAL COLLEGE & CAREER  
ACADEMY UPDATE**  
LOWNDES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
06.10.24

MARY BETH BROWNLEE  
DIRECTOR  
ONE VALDOSTA-LOWNDES FOUNDATION, INC.



“You show your humanity by how you see yourself not as apart from others but from your connection to others.”

- Desmond Tutu



# Our Leadership Team

- Mary Beth Brownlee – One Valdosta-Lowndes
- Elton Dixon – Enay Coaching
- Nakia Taylor – Bank OZK
- Tullis Beasley – Bank OZK
- Andrea Schruijer – Valdosta-Lowndes Co. Development Authority
- Christie Moore – Valdosta-Lowndes Co. Chamber of Commerce
- Mary Crawford – Girls on the Run South Georgia
- Barbara Grogan – Georgia Power Company
- Michael Rewis – Valdosta City Schools
- Russ Moore – Seamless Education Associates



# Focus on Pathway to Prosperity

How a College & Career Academy Can Elevate the Discussion





# What We Know About the Region

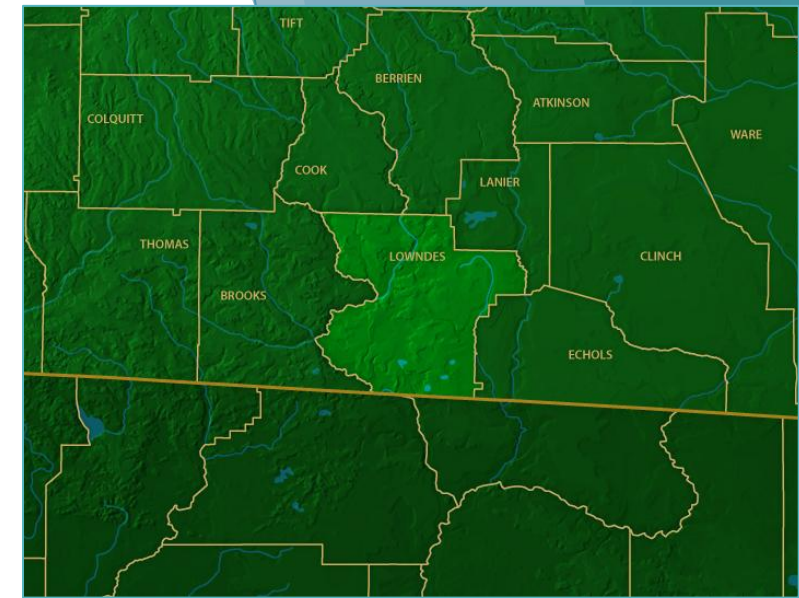
## ▶ Poverty Rates by County

(2022)

- ▶ Berrien – 21.9%
- ▶ Brooks – 25.5%
- ▶ Clinch – 21.5%
- ▶ Cook – 20.6%
- ▶ Echols – 21.1%
- ▶ Lanier – 19.2%
- ▶ Lowndes – 15.4%
- ▶ Hamilton – 23.4%
- ▶ Jefferson – 16.0%
- ▶ Madison – 21.2%
- ▶ **Regional Average – 20.6%**
- ▶ Georgia – 12.7%
- ▶ Florida – 12.7%
- ▶ U.S. – 11.5%

## ▶ Labor Force Participation by County (2018-2022)

- ▶ Berrien – 52.9%
- ▶ Brooks – 53.1%
- ▶ Clinch – 48.8%
- ▶ Cook – 59.7%
- ▶ Echols – 65.2%
- ▶ Lanier – 45.0%
- ▶ Lowndes – 56.5%
- ▶ Hamilton – 36.6%
- ▶ Jefferson – 51.9%
- ▶ Madison – 42.2%
- ▶ **Regional Average – 51.2%**
- ▶ Georgia – 62.9%
- ▶ Florida – 59.0%
- ▶ U.S. – 63.0%



# What We Know About Our Community

## ▶ Occupational Employment & Wages (Valdosta, 2022)

- ▶ Average Hourly Wage
  - Valdosta MSA – \$21.06
  - U.S. – \$29.76

## ▶ Household Survival Budget (ALICE, 2023)

- ▶ Berrien – 54% (below)
- ▶ Brooks – 63%
- ▶ Clinch – 54%
- ▶ Cook – 59%
- ▶ Echols – 52%
- ▶ Lanier – 66%
- ▶ Lowndes – 53%
- ▶ Georgia – 48%

*“Workers in the Valdosta, GA Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.06 in May 2022, 29 percent below the nationwide average of \$29.76...wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 21 of the 22 major occupational groups.*

*When compared to the nationwide distribution, Valdosta area employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups, including transportation and material moving, food preparation and serving related, and sales and related. Fourteen groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including computer and mathematical, business and financial operations, and office and administrative support.”*

*- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2022.*

# State of Our Workforce: Early Feedback

- Perception of “CTAE to Nowhere”
- Engage students, teachers & parents
- Open jobs, not being filled or able to be filled by current workforce
- Strong existing manufacturing base; gap exists in transitioning to advanced manufacturing
- Robotics, Drone technology, AI, Agribusiness + Entrepreneurship
- Aviation + Moody
- Leadership development
- Can we start younger? Look at middle grades, etc.
- Introduce to industry sooner!
- Incorporate other career paths, like law enforcement, public administration, tourism, etc.

# Seeking Input!

- Regional Stakeholder Survey
- Workforce Needs Assessment

*Input Needed!*

## SOUTH GEORGIA-NORTH FLORIDA BUSINESS & INDUSTRY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

*Planning for Tomorrow's Workforce Today!*

*The Regional College & Career Academy will use a business model approach to education that connects students to real jobs and ensures everybody wins!*

*With a focus on growing the economy of South Georgia & North Florida, we need regional employers to complete the Workforce Needs Assessment Survey. The link below provides direct access.*

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/SGACCA](https://tinyurl.com/sgacca)

Contact Mary Beth Brownlee to learn more:  
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# Needs Assessment – Early Data!

96 Unduplicated Respondents

8 High Demand Business Sectors

Currently Employ 11,899 Workers\*

24 High Demand Job Titles

Adding 3,254 NEW Employees;  
1,218 NEW Positions\*  
in 5 Years

| Category                        | Count 1 | Count 2 | Count 3 | Count 4 | Count 5 | Count 6 | Count 7 | Count 8 | Count 9 | Count 10 | Count 11 | Count 12 | Count 13 | Count 14 | Count 15 | Count 16 | Count 17 | Count 18 | Count 19 | Count 20 | Count 21 | Count 22 | Count 23 | Count 24 |   |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| Victim services/social services | 8       | 2       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Manufacturing                   | 6       | 1       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Non Profit                      | 184     | 8       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Insurance                       | 20      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Manufacturing                   | 158     | 5       | 0       | 7       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Teaching                        | 4       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Legal                           | 3       | 1       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Government Affairs              | 190     | 2       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Insurance                       | 20      | 5       | 2       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Professional services           | 24      | 5       | 2       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Real Estate                     | 37      | 4       | 15      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Estate                          | 1       | 1       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Professional Services           | 10      | 0       | 9       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Information & Business Services | 0       | 1       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Healthcare                      | 7       | 0       | 1       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Manufacturer                    | 3       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Education                       | 20      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Manufacturing                   | 39      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Manufacturing                   | 23      | 17      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Utility                         | 13      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |
| Utility                         | 150     | 0       | 50      | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0       | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0        | 0 |

**Workforce Increasing  
by Minimum of 54%\***

# Major Job Titles, To Date

20% or More of Current Workforce

Difficult to Hire and/or Retain

Adding New Employees Over 5 Years ABOVE Annual Replacement

1. Administrative Assistant
2. Administrator
3. CDL Driver
4. Certified Nursing Assistant
5. Commercial Lender
6. Customer Service Representative
7. Electrical Technician
8. Electrician
9. Electrician Lineman
10. Engineer
11. Heavy Equipment Operator
12. Landscaper
13. Lawyer
14. Legal Assistant/Paralegal
15. Logistics Technician
16. Maintenance Technician
17. Medical Technician
18. Personal Banker
19. Physical Therapist
20. Production Operator
21. Registered Nurse
22. Salesperson
23. Teacher
24. Teller

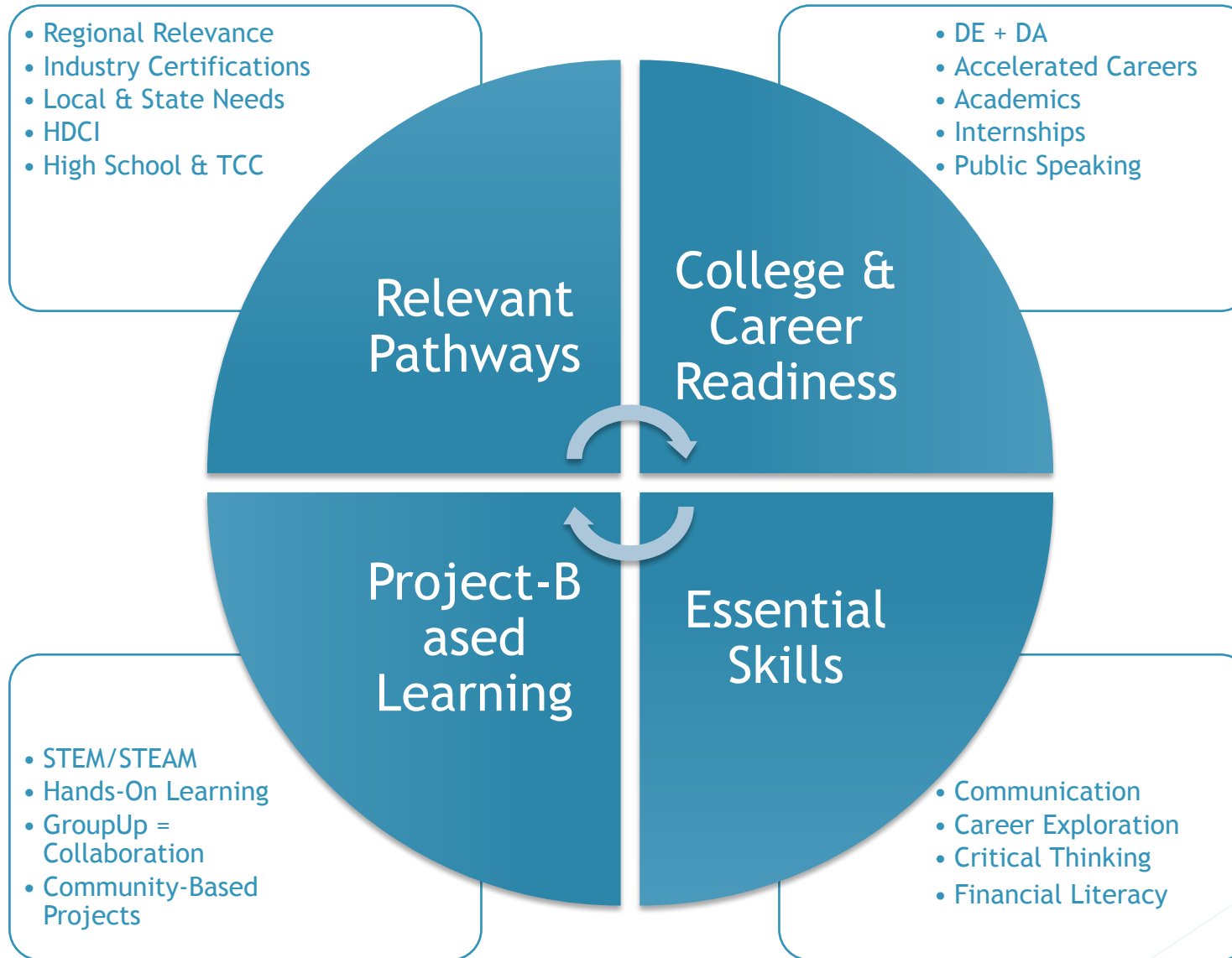
# It's About Employers, NOT School Systems

- Business-driven approach to education
- Responsive and adaptive to industry needs
- Alignment of needs to educational outcomes - > Both evaluative and accountable
- Flexibility is Key!
- Process:
  - Partnership + Innovation = Success!





# Regional CCA Model



Source: Commodore Conyers College & Career Academy

# Precedent for Multi-State Partnerships

- Hart County College & Career Academy – Hart County, Georgia + South Carolina contiguous counties
- Jordan Vocational High School College & Career Academy – Columbus-Muscogee County, Georgia + Phoenix City, Alabama

# College & Career Academy Models

Central Location  
serving students from  
multiple base high  
schools in the district

Stand-alone model  
with full-time  
students

School Within A  
School

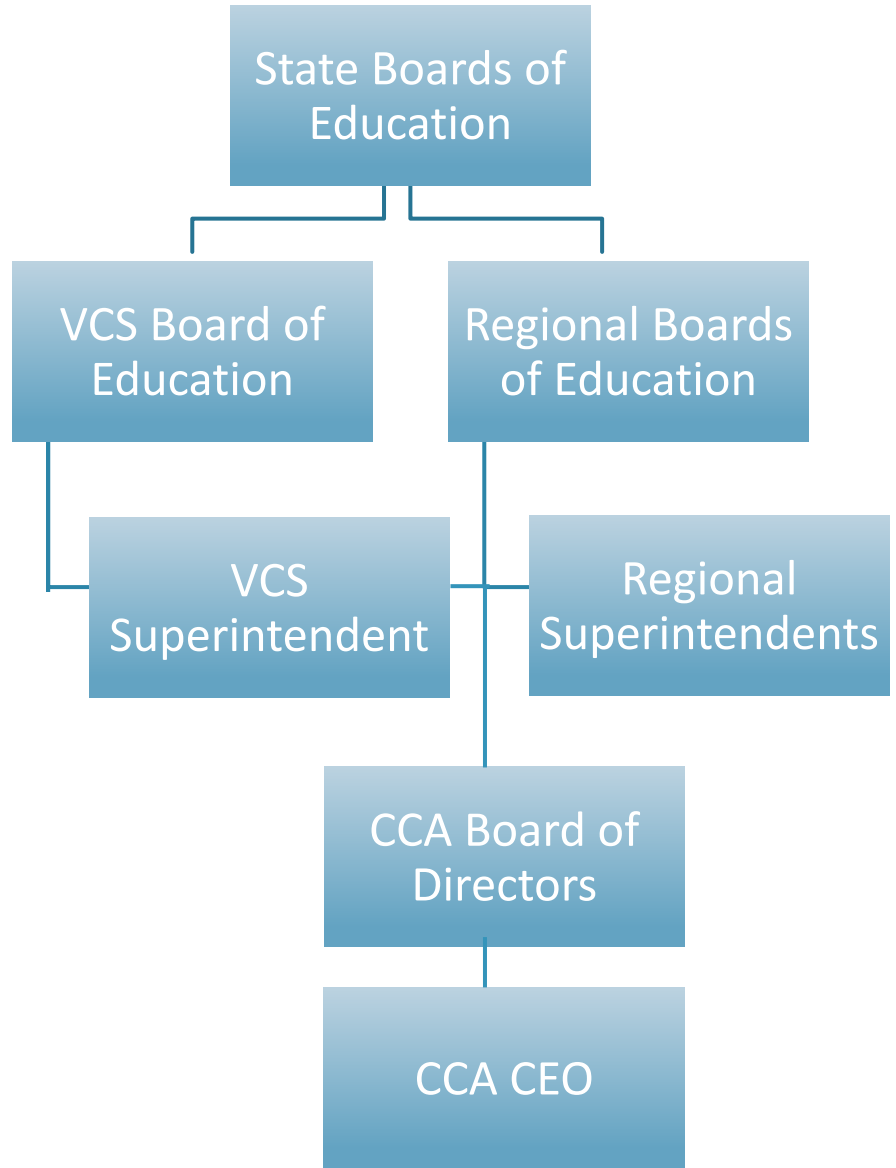
Whole High School  
Transformation

Multi-District  
Partnership

- *Technical College System of Georgia*



# The Governing Body: A Standard Model

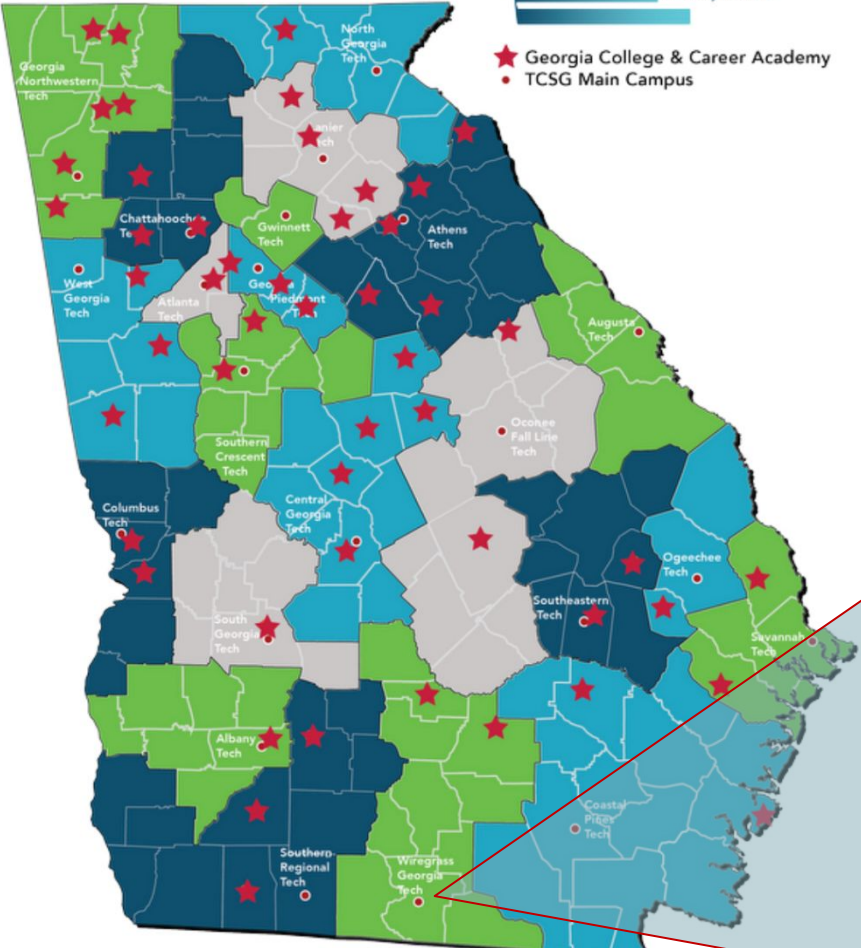


# BUILDING A REGIONAL COLLEGE & CAREER ACADEMY

Georgia College & Career Academy Accessibility



- ★ Georgia College & Career Academy
- TCSG Main Campus



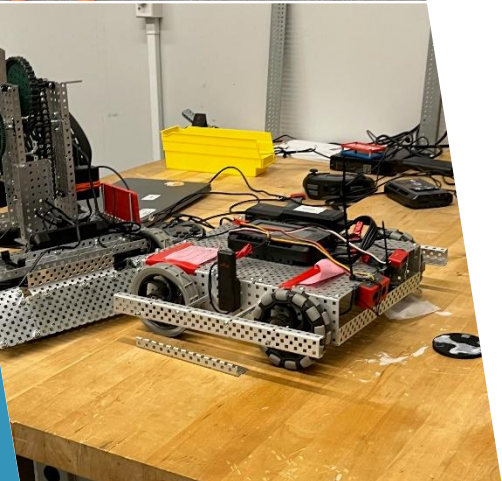
26 Contiguous Counties in South Georgia have NO CCA!



Source: Technical College System of Georgia

# Culture: Establishing a New Standard & Expectation

- Excitement + Energy!
- Student ownership/accountability – leverage in the decision-making process
- Professionalism
- Informed stakeholders, make better decisions
- Strong, accountable Governing Board
- Accessible, open
- Light! Colors! Inviting!
- Collaborative learning environment, cross-functional teams, projects
- Emulate actual workforce settings
- Innovative
- Hands-on skills, training
- Self-directed, self-motivated
- Access to higher pay, QOL
- Leadership skills! Workforce readiness
- Project driven, experiential learning





# Professional Skills Rubric Tied to Student Performance

- Appearance
- Attendance
- Attitude
- Character
- Communication
- Cooperation
- Critical Thinking
- Leadership
- Productivity
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Work Ethic

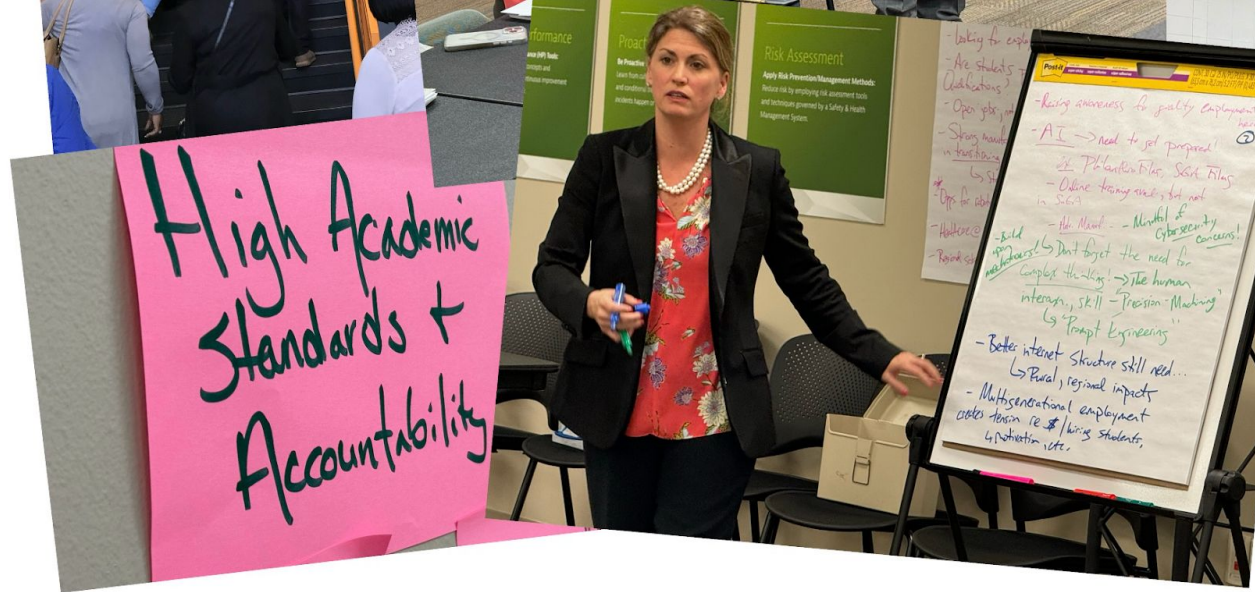


# How You Can Engage!



- 109 Volunteer Members
- Public & Private Sector Meetings
- 3 Subcommittees
- Regional Outreach
- State-Approved Certification Process



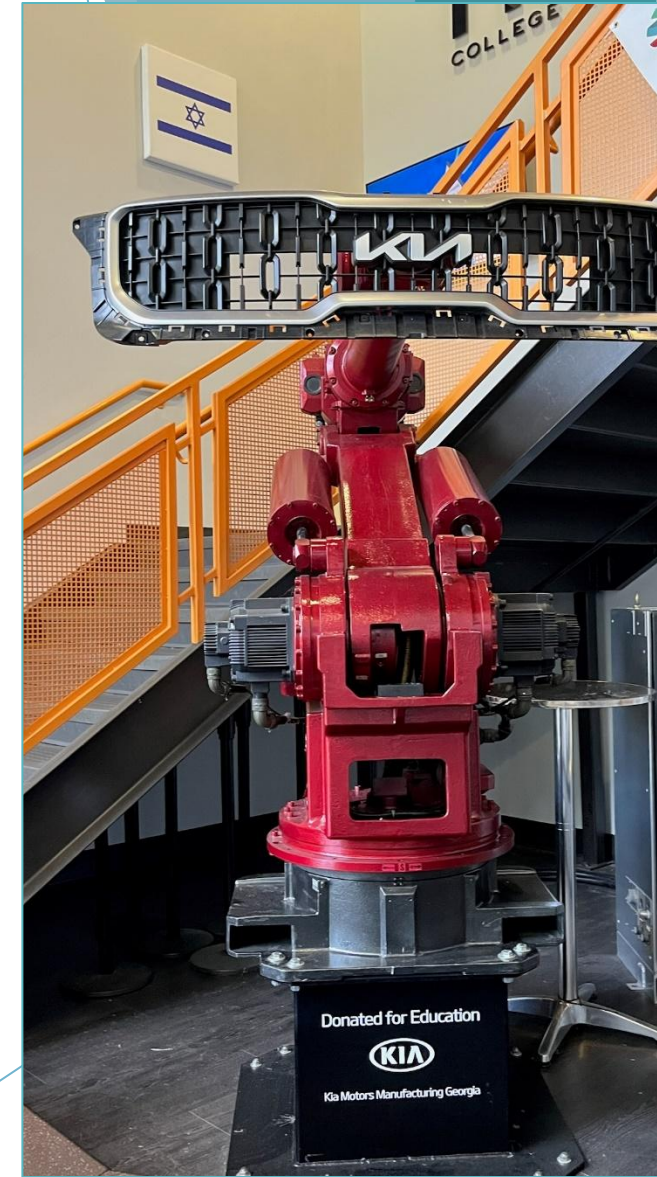


High Academic Standards + Accountability

Handwritten notes on a whiteboard:

- Being awareness to quality employment trends!
- AI -> need to get prepared!
- Ph.D. in AI, Soft Skills
- Online training courses, but not in SEA
- AI Model - Mental & Cybersecurity concerns!
- Don't forget the need for complex thinking! -> The human element, skill - Precision 'Making' -> Prompt Engineering
- Better internet structure skill need... -> Rural, regional impact
- Multigenerational employment creates tension re. hiring students, retention etc.











# CONTACT INFORMATION

“ *One Valdosta-Lowndes has the potential and expectation to be a game-changer for Lowndes County.*

*--Mary Beth Brownlee*



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