

Contact: Kris Cross  
Director of Public Relations  
937-393-3431, ext. 2676  
800-628-7722, ext. 2676  
kcross@sscc.edu

SOUTHERN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
**PRESS RELEASE**  
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CUTLINE: A new SSCC/WC partnership agreement to establish a 2+2 pathway for biology/biotechnology students was signed by (seated, l-r) Wilmington College President Jim Reynolds and Southern State Community College President Dr. Kevin Boys. Also attending the signing are (standing l-r) Dr. Douglas Woodmansee, WC Professor of Biology and Biotechnology Liaison; Dr. Erika Goodwin, WC Vice President for Academic Affairs; and John Joy, SSCC North Campus Director and Dean of Workforce Development.

## **Biotech partnership lets students start classes at SSCC, live at WC**

Southern State Community College and Wilmington College have partnered to increase access and affordability to a four-year college education by establishing a 2+2 pathway option for students interested in biotechnology.

Students can spend two years taking courses at Southern State's North Campus in Wilmington that can seamlessly transfer into a bachelor's degree program at Wilmington College — with an opportunity to reside on WC's campus all four years.

The residency option makes Southern State's biotechnology program especially appealing for students from outside the institution's normal radius for commuters.

SSCC President Kevin Boys said its relatively new, "but strong," program in biotechnology would merge well with WC's biology concentration in the growing biotech field, which offers excellent employment opportunities.

"We'd like our students to think beyond the 30- to 40-minute drive and consider housing at Wilmington College," he said, noting those students would be entitled to all the amenities provided on the residential campus, yet would take advantage of the appealing tuition rates while attending the community college.

"Then, after two years (and attaining an Associate of Applied Science degree in biotechnology), they'd transfer to WC and end up with a Bachelor of Science degree."

WC President Jim Reynolds said he's not aware of any similar public/private arrangement between two- and four-year colleges that offers both residency and a seamless transfer of credits within a specific academic program.

"The opportunity for students to be housed on our campus and take advantage of what we can offer residential students is very appealing," he said. Students would be eligible to participate in a meal plan, a host of campus organizations, and use of facilities like computer labs and the fitness center.

Reynolds noted the higher education landscape is changing and innovative partnerships like that between WC and SSCC will help ensure greater opportunities for students.

"We want to be creative in using the resources we both have to form beneficial models for students," he said, adding that students would use state-of-the-art biology labs and classrooms in WC's newly opened Center for the Sciences & Agriculture.

Boys echoed those sentiments about the partnership between the two institutions. "Its strength is that we're doing things better together for the benefit of students," he said. "Wilmington College is a known commodity as a place to go for a bachelor's degree and the (2+2) biotechnology program might be an opportunity many students might not otherwise have."

Reynolds added that the schools' biotech programs offer "significant workforce development" for local industry with regard to internships and employment in the Wilmington community.

"Wilmington and Clinton County have really good K through 12 schools, and terrific two-year and four-year colleges," he said. "That should really be attractive to many students and families."

More information is available by contacting Southern State's Office of Advising at 800-628-7722, ext. 2825.