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St. George QuickJobs Center Taking Shape

ST. GEORGE, SOUTH CAROLINA

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A handsome QuickJobs Center will greet visitors entering St. George on US Highway 78 next fall thanks to a partnership between Dorchester County, Trident Technical College, the Upper Dorchester County Legislative Delegation, and the South Carolina Department of Commerce.

Representative Patsy Knight, South Carolina House of Representatives District 97, and Senator John Matthews, South Carolina Senate District 39 provided new funds of \$375,000 from the Upper Dorchester County Economic Development Fund and Trident Technical College provided an additional \$100,000 to the project. As a result, the exterior and interior of the building will have significant enhancements that improve its overall quality and appearance.

Senator John Matthews said, "The St. George Quick Jobs Center and Trident Technical will be a welcome addition to St. George and upper Dorchester County and lower Orangeburg County. I am glad to I was able to help make this center a reality because it is just what we need to train workers for better paying jobs so they can support their families and have a better quality of life."

"With the new county Courthouse being built, the cooperation between the Town of St. George and the County to provide water and sewer to the area, and the new St. George Quick Jobs Center, this town is going through a renaissance. I am glad I was able to help the county secure a \$1.3 Million Community Development Block Grant for the center, which was the largest grant in the state," said Representative Patsy Knight.

Charleston firm Rosenblum Coe Architects, Incorporated, completed the design for the new QuickJobs Center, which will be located at the corner of Jim Bilton Boulevard (US Highway 78) and Academy Road in St. George. The center will be a one story 5,630 gross square foot building. The exterior will include brick and arch elements that match the new courthouse which is the centerpiece of the campus. Inside the center, there will be three dedicated classrooms and flexible space that can double as a fourth classroom. It will serve the industries and citizens of upper Dorchester County and the surrounding area.

According to Willie Davis, Vice Chairman of County Council and a former educator, "This St. George Quick Jobs Center fits into County Council's Strategic Direction for Dorchester County, which included an Economic Development strategy to 'Partner with local educational institutions to bring technical training and education to the upper Dorchester County area' in order to 'attract business and industry that is compatible with our community values and culture' and 'recruit and attract high tech, manufacturing operations'. I am excited with the leg up this center will give us."

The purpose of the St. George QuickJobs Center is to bridge the gap between the manufacturing skills required by industry and the lack of available training opportunities in upper Dorchester County. Trident Technical College will provide targeted workforce training with a curriculum of courses structured to meet both the needs of students in the area and the requirements of local industries that are looking to hire persons with particular skill sets.

County Council Chairman Larry Hargett said, "You must have a trained workforce in order to attract industry and this center will help us prepare our workforce with the skills they need. County Council is committed to this project and committed to bringing economic development to the upper end of Dorchester County."

The building will be ready for classes in December 2009. The primary focus will be on Continuing Education courses based on industry needs for entry-level skills. Logistics and transportation will be major topics of training, in response to the growth in import and export businesses locating in the area.

Dorchester County received a \$1.3 Million Community Development Block Grant from the South Carolina Department of Commerce for the design and construction of the QuickJobs Center. The total design and construction cost of the QuickJobs Center project is \$2.4 million. Funding for the project will come from the following sources:

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| South Carolina Department of Commerce | \$1,300,000 |
| Dorchester County Government | \$375,000 |
| -In-kind site development work | \$200,000 |
| -8.74 acres with water and sewer | \$218,500* |
| Upper Dorchester County Economic Development Fund | \$375,000 |
| <u>Trident Technical College</u> | <u>\$146,000</u> |
| | \$2,400,000 |

* Land costs are not included in the \$2.4 million budget