From Enrollment **to Transfer**

Building an Education Pathway with Community at its Core

USC Union · South Carolina Afterschool Alliance · USC Upstate

THE CHALLENGE

Students shouldn't have to choose between ambition and community.

⚠

Lost Credits

Without a mapped pathway, students transferring to four-year programs often lose credits — costing time, money, and momentum.

❓

Unclear Paths

Students who want careers in specific fields often don't know how their coursework at a regional campus connects to a degree program at a receiving institution.

🏠

Leaving the Community

Families and communities lose educators when students must relocate to pursue four-year degrees — creating gaps in the workforce that serve local schools and children.

WHO WE ARE

USC Union

A Regional Palmetto College · University of South Carolina

Flexible

Course formats and schedules designed around working adults, parents, and students with responsibilities.

Accessible

Affordable tuition, local access, and a University of South Carolina credential — without relocating or taking on unnecessary debt.

High Quality

Students earn a University of South Carolina degree. Starting at USC Union isn't settling for less — it's a smart start.

Community-Rooted

USC Union exists to serve Union County and the surrounding region — connecting local students to careers that strengthen the communities they come from.

How the System Works

01

USC Union

AA or AS Degree
2 Years

02

Transfer

Meet GPA &
Admission Requirements

03

USC Upstate

Bachelor's Degree
2 Additional Years

04

Career

Career in Your
Home Community

TRANSFER EXCELLENCE

A pathway is more than a list of courses.

What We Built

→ An intentional plan of study — not improvised at the point of transfer

→ Coursework mapped ahead of time for maximum credit applicability

→ A clear four-year timeline from enrollment to graduation

→ Relationships with receiving departments before students arrive

→ A credential that serves the student and the community they came from

What Students Experience

→ Certainty — they know where they're going and how to get there

→ Continuity — credits apply, time isn't wasted

→ Community — they don't have to leave home to build a career

→ Confidence — they arrive at the receiving campus prepared

The Education Pathway

USC Union → USC Upstate

Early Childhood Education · Elementary Education

A student who begins this pathway graduates with a University of South Carolina degree — and returns to teach in the community that raised them.

Two Programs. One Clear Path.

Early Childhood Education

USC Upstate

- Focuses on birth through grade 3
- Prepares graduates to teach in PreK and early elementary settings
- Meets growing demand for qualified early childhood educators across South Carolina
- Coursework at Union provides the foundation — students arrive at Upstate prepared

Elementary Education

USC Upstate

- Prepares graduates to teach grades 2 through 6
- One of the most in-demand teaching credentials in the state
- Students complete foundational coursework at Union before transferring into the program
- Clear articulation ensures credits count toward degree requirements at Upstate

THE PLAN OF STUDY

Intentional by Design.

Students don't figure out how their credits transfer at the point of transfer. They know before they begin.

Year One

USC Union

General Education Core

Introduction to Education

SCAA Internship Course

English Composition I & II

Math

Year Two

USC Union

Education Foundations

General Education Core

Education Psychology

Issues and Trends in Teaching and Learning

PRAXIS Core

Year Three

USC Upstate

Transfer into Program

Education Methods

Practicum

Year Four

USC Upstate

Student Teaching

Capstone

Licensure Preparation: PRAXIS II

Graduation

** Specific course requirements available upon request.*

Early College: Where the Pathway Begins

Early College Students Can:

- Complete transferable general education coursework
- Begin building a four-year academic plan
- Connect with USC Union before making transfer decisions
- See teaching as a local, achievable career path

The Partnership That Makes It Real

USC Union × South Carolina Afterschool Alliance

The Internship Course

A signature course within the education pathway that places students in real afterschool and early childhood settings through the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance network.

Students gain hands-on experience with the children and communities they will one day serve as credentialed educators — before they transfer, and before they graduate.

Why It Matters

→ Students see the community impact of their degree before they earn it

→ Practical experience strengthens transfer applications and academic preparation

→ Builds relationships between USC Union students and local schools and programs

→ Gives back to the community that this pathway is designed to serve



SC AFTERSCHOOL Alli

The Power of Afterschool

Making a difference in South Carolina!

Zelda Quiller Waymer, President & CEO

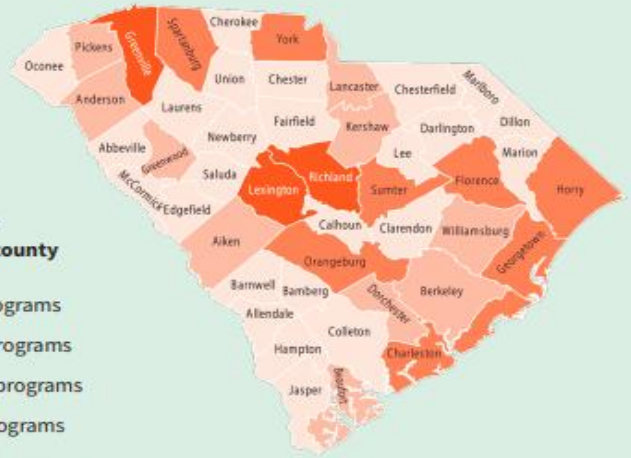
Supporting afterschool and summer providers with:

- **Professional development**
- **Technical assistance**
- **Funding opportunities**
- **Networking events**
- **Training & resources**

SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance

Reach & Impact

Afterschool programs by county



# of programs serving each county

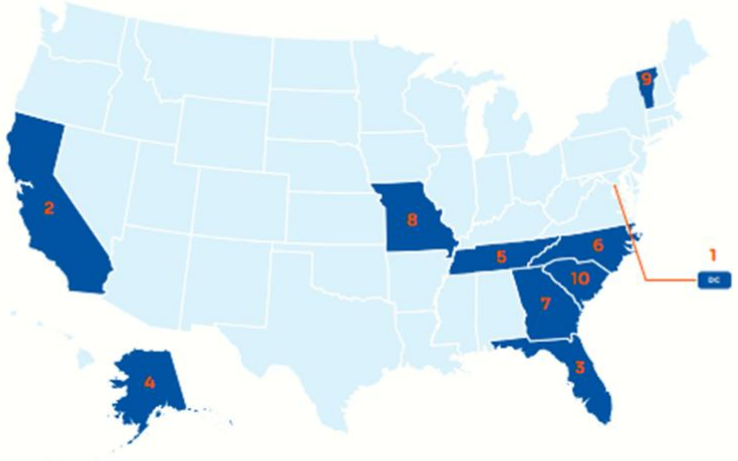
- 1-25 programs
- 26-50 programs
- 51-100 programs
- 101+ programs

108,157 youth enrolled[1]

1,762 programs

37,000+ youth have STEM learning opportunities in afterschool

The **Top 10 States** for Afterschool



Rank	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
State	Washington, D.C.	California	Florida	Alaska	Tennessee	North Carolina	Georgia	Missouri	Vermont	South Carolina

Exploring Career Connections Through Afterschool

Helping undergraduates expand their career pathways.

SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance



SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance

South Carolina is one of seven states leading EC² — a national model connecting afterschool programs to workforce development. Led by the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance (SCAA), EC² exposes youth to high-demand STEM careers, prioritizing rural and underserved communities.

Zelda Quiller Waymer
President & CEO
SC Afterschool Alliance



OUR INITIATIVE

EC2 equips afterschool providers with **STEM facilitators that are certified mandatory child abuse and neglect reporters and Mental Health First Aide Trained peer educators** — all designed to strengthen STEM, youth health, resilience, and informed decision-making.



Peer-Led Education

Undergraduate peer educators deliver engaging, science-based lessons for youth ages 10–18 that explore how substance misuse impacts the brain and body, build awareness around drug prevention and mental health, and encourage healthy coping skills and positive choices.

Evidence-Based Curriculum

Ready-to-implement lesson plans and activities designed to increase prevention knowledge, strengthen refusal skills, and support youth and family engagement.

Mental Health First Aid

Afterschool staff can receive Mental Health First Aid certification — a nationally recognized training that equips adults to identify early signs of emerging mental health conditions and respond with confidence.

Summer Programming

Structured summer support for students who may be at greater risk — providing prevention-focused, supportive enrichment during critical months.

FUTURE LEADERS START HERE.



Before the lights. Before the crowd. Before the big moments—success starts after school.

The Healthy Futures Afterschool program provides safe, supportive environments that help our youth build confidence, explore careers, and develop the skills needed to make healthy decisions—strengthening mental well-being and helping **prevent substance misuse** before it starts.

CAREER EXPLORATION
Discover interests.
Explore possibilities.

LEADERSHIP & LIFE SKILLS
Build confidence.
Lead with purpose.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION
Make healthy choices.
Protect your future.

Protecting South Carolina's future—one afternoon at a time.

Learn how Healthy Futures is helping prevent substance misuse before it starts.

SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance

PREVENTION. PROTECTION. POSSIBILITY.

Safe spaces. Strong support. Bright futures.

Made with GAMMA

WHAT EC² DOES

- Provides paid, structured work-based learning for peer educators ages 14–21
- Builds career skills: leadership, communication, professionalism
- Connects students with employers and industry partners
- Trains participants to deliver hands-on STEM in afterschool programs

RESULTS: FIRST 9 MONTHS

33 High school and college peer educators engaged in Union, Bamberg, Barnwell, and Allendale Counties

652 Elementary and middle school students served

+20 College peer educators added through Richland County expansion

In the coming months, peer educators are set to **impact 300 students** in Richland County.

WHY IT MATTERS

Expands STEM access in rural communities

Aligns local talent with industry demand

Creates pathways to internships and higher education

WHAT'S NEXT

Expand to additional rural communities

Strengthen higher education and industry partnerships

Scale sustainable STEM career pathways statewide



SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance

KEY PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS

Powered by a coalition of trusted institutions — from universities and government agencies to community organizations — working together to support youth in the Lower Savannah area, Union and Richland County

Higher Education

Local colleges and universities providing research, training, and academic partnerships

Richland County Government

County leadership and public agencies aligning resources for youth initiatives

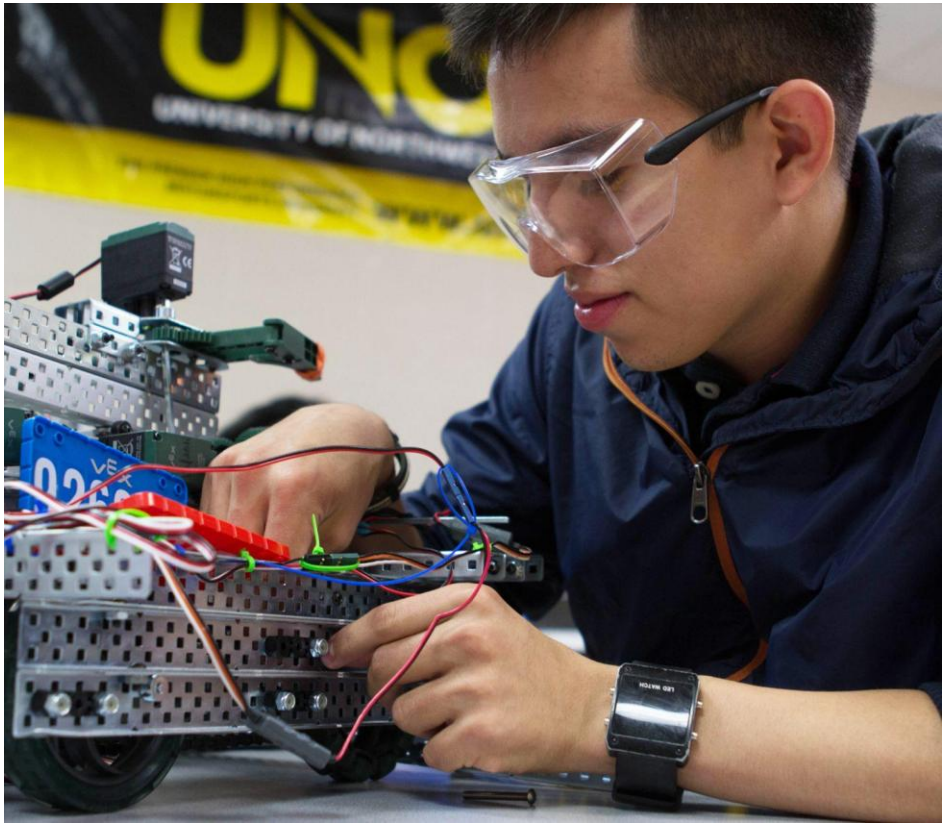
SC Office of Mental Health

State-level expertise in behavioral health and youth mental wellness

Community Organizations/Schools

Local Organizations serving as local sites serving as work-based learning opportunities.

College and Career Innovation Digital Badge Program



Helping students build skills to meet the SC Dept of Education's Profile of the South Carolina Graduate

Unlocking opportunities with local employers and universities

- Job shadowing
- Apprenticeships
- Research opportunities
- Mentoring
- Access to coursework

400+ badges earned



IMPACT & REACH



Since inception, **EC2** has made a significant impact across Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Richland and Union Counties.

Key achievements include:

67 High School and College Students
Hired and trained as peer educators

5,800+ Students engaged in programs and curriculum that fosters a healthier, safer futures for the youth of our communities

5,026 Elementary **713 Middle School** **110 High School**

SC AFTERSCHOOL Alliance

How We Built The Partnership

USC Union Provides

- Academic Course Structure
- Advising and Pathway Coordination
- Faculty/Staff Support
- Transfer Alignment

SCAA Provides

- Afterschool Partnership Network
- Field-based Learning Opportunities
- Connection to Youth-Serving Programs

Students Gain

- Credit-Bearing Experience
- Early Professional Identity
- Confidence Before Transfer
- Meaningful Service in Their Own Community

TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS

What Students Need to Make the Move

GPA Requirement

2.75

Required for admission to the education program at USC Upstate

Credit Hours

60

Minimum credit hours completed at USC Union before transfer

Required Courses

ENGL101/102, SPCH140, MATH111, etc.

Completed Application and Two Written References

Students must apply to the professional education program and provide reference letters

Background Check

Required

Education programs require criminal background clearance prior to field placement

Additional Requirements

PRAXIS Core or Exemption

Program-specific requirements for Early Childhood or Elementary tracks

Who Benefits

The Student

· A clear four-year path from enrollment to graduation

· No lost credits, no uncertainty at the point of transfer

· A University of South Carolina degree without leaving home

· Hands-on experience through the SCAA internship before transferring

The Community

· Educators who return to teach in the schools and programs that need them

· Local investment — families stay, careers are built at home

· A pipeline of qualified teachers connected to afterschool and early childhood programs

· Stronger schools, stronger communities

The USC System

· Seamless transfer that reflects the strength of Palmetto College

· Regional campuses functioning as true partners in four-year degree completion

· Students who arrive at receiving institutions prepared and connected

· A replicable model for other programs and pathways

Four Steps to Replicate

01

Start with the end point

Identify the bachelor's degree, licensure requirements, GPA, testing, and admission expectations.

02

Map backward

Build the first two years so credits apply directly to the receiving program.

03

Add applied learning early

Create a field experience, internship, service-learning course, or community-based placement.

04

Coordinate continuously

Keep advisors, faculty, receiving campuses, and community partners in regular communication.

Transfer excellence isn't an accident.

It's what happens when an institution decides that a student's zip code shouldn't determine the ceiling of their credential — and then builds the structures to prove it.

- Intentional pathway — mapped before students begin
- Community partnership — SCAA internship connects campus to classroom
- Four-year completion — from USC Union to USC Upstate degree

Table Activity

How can you apply this framework to your location/program?

THANK YOU

Contact Us

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