



Ronnie L. Booth, Ph.D.

Dr. Ronnie L. Booth is President Emeritus of Tri-County Technical College a public two-year technical college serving Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties in South Carolina with campuses in Anderson, Easley, Pendleton, and Westminster. He retired as President of Tri-County Technical College in 2019. Since retiring, he has worked part-time for a regional architectural firm in business development and as interim executive director for a non-profit community development organization.

During his sixteen years at Tri-County, Dr. Booth launched three community campuses, three Workforce Training Centers, an Economic Development Center, and a state-of-the-art Industrial Technology Center. In addition, he led the establishment of several groundbreaking initiatives, including the nationally-recognized Bridge to Clemson program with Clemson University and the Connect to College program for high school dropouts.

For several years, Tri-County Technical College earned top rankings in student success, transfer, and graduation rates among the sixteen colleges in the S.C. Technical College System. The College also ranked in the top five percent nationally for successful transfers to four-year colleges and universities and third in the United States for the number of students trained in the nationally-recognized Manufacturing Skills Standard Certification (MSSC) program. The College launched the first Michelin Manufacturing Scholars program, which is now used as a model across the state and was the first in South Carolina to implement the I-BEST Manufacturing Pathway Program for under-resourced adults who want to gain marketable skills. During Dr. Booth's presidency, the College launched the Technical Career Pathways program for high school students, which grew from seven to several hundred students and serves as a model for the State. Dual enrollment of high school students grew 33 percent over a five-year period, enrolling nearly 850 students in FY19.

A native of Aiken, South Carolina, Dr. Booth holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, a master's in education in Student Personnel Services, and a Ph.D. in Higher Education



Leadership and Policies from the University of South Carolina. He also holds a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Humanities from Clemson University and an Honorary Doctorate in Education from Piedmont University in Georgia.

During his tenure, he served in a number of professional associations, civic groups, and State and national boards, including the Board of Trustees for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Executive Committee of the Upstate SC Alliance; Board of Directors for Anderson County Economic Development, Duke Energy South Carolina President's Advisory Board; Alliance Pickens, WorkLink, Oconee Economic Alliance, SENIOR Solutions, Community Colleges of Appalachia, Partnership for Academic and Career Education, and Tamassee DAR School. He is a former member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee for the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and former chair of the AACC Finance Committee, Leadership South Carolina Board of Directors and its past chair, and Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce. He has also served on the U.S. Department of Education's National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity.

In 2015, he was named the Southern Region Winner of the Chief Executive Officer Award by the Association of Community College Trustees. He is the recipient of the Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award (2017, 2019) and was named one of "15 over 50" in 2018 by the Anderson-Independent Mail. In 2019 he was awarded the Order of the Palmetto, the highest civilian honor in the State, by Governor Henry McMaster. Also, in 2019 the Tri-County Technical College Commission named him to the Order of Merit, the highest honor bestowed by the College, and named the Student Success Center, the newest building on the Pendleton Campus, in his honor.

He is married to Sara Booth and they have two adult daughters and two granddaughters.



Dr. Christopher J. Hall

Dr. Christopher J. Hall has had a distinguished career in higher education administration and community service for over twenty years. Dr. Hall is the Interim Director of Enrollment Management and Records at Morris College, initially serving as the Management Specialist. Dr. Hall has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and dedication to advancing educational opportunities.

Prior to his current role, Dr. Hall was the Interim President of Denmark Technical College. His tenure in academia includes serving as Dean of Business and Public Service and the Program Manager for the Criminal Justice Department at Central Carolina Technical College. Dr. Hall's career in education began at Denmark Technical College as a Criminal Justice Technology Instructor, following his service as a correctional officer with the South Carolina Department of Corrections.

Dr. Hall holds a Doctorate from the University of Maryland University College, a Master's in Public Administration/Criminal Justice from Jacksonville State University, a Certificate in Higher Education Administration, and a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of South Carolina.

Active in his community, Dr. Hall mentors new higher education professionals and participates in various fraternal and civic organizations including Rotary. He also served as a Reserve Deputy with the Richland County Sheriff's Department and as a Sergeant in the Provost Marshal's Command of the South Carolina State Guard.

Dr. Hall is renowned for his innovative use of technology in education. He integrated interactive boards and student response devices in his classroom to foster engaging and dynamic learning environments. As a Certified Online Instructor, he has developed rigorous online courses and mentored other faculty in the effective use of educational technology. Dr. Hall is well-known for taking learning outside the classroom into realistic crime scenes, and mock trials that included participants from the faculty, staff and members of the community.

Dr. Hall's contributions to education have been widely recognized. In 2014, he was honored as the S.C. Governor's Professor of the Year for Two-Year Colleges. He also received the E. C. "Red" Kneece Instructional



South Carolina
Commission on Higher Education
Access | Affordability | Excellence

Excellence Award in 2013 and was named Central Carolina's Educator of the Year in 2004. These accolades underscore his dedication to teaching excellence and his ability to inspire and motivate students.



John Payne

John Payne was taught early by his parents that helping others is a noble calling and he has spent more than three decades doing so. John began his career in Washington, DC as an aide to Senator Strom Thurmond advising on regulatory matters and serving constituents in solving problems with government. Most recently John returned to his hometown of Darlington, South Carolina as city manager where he redesigned verification and enforcement processes that improved revenues without raising millage rates, helped rebuild its 100-year-old water and sewer system, increased employee wages to market rates, and significantly enhanced relations with the local school district and municipalities, the county council, local legislative delegation, and federal and state officials. Prior to assisting his hometown, John served clients and firms as a financial advisor, a company controller, a hospital financial manager, a staff accountant to a CPA firm, and led two departments for Beaufort County Council. John is an expert in budgeting, financial and policy analysis, exceptional in evaluating agency operations and developing and implementing corrective action plans and has a proven record of achievement in restoring employee relations. Moreover, John has demonstrated a proficiency in building positive relationships with all stakeholders.

In addition to John Payne's professional work, he also serves youth. While in college, John was a Big Brother to an eight-year-old boy and will soon become President of Youth Mentors of the Pee Dee. In 2013, John became the first elected board chairman of a new public charter school in Beaufort, South Carolina, and was later appointed by the Speaker of the House to serve on the South Carolina Public Charter School Board of Trustees where he was elected chairman by his peers. As chairman, John successfully led the District through challenging times and left them stronger fiscally and operationally, with new and reinvigorated personnel and an improved reputation with the state legislative and executive branches.

John Payne is a lifelong learner. He holds bachelor's degrees in political science and business economics from Francis Marion University, a master's degree in public policy from Regent University, and an MBA from The Citadel (Beta Gamma Sigma). Wanting to hone his business expertise, John also earned a significant number of undergraduate and graduate hours in accounting. Additionally, John is an excellent communicator and listener, and an exceptional team leader and collaborator who strongly supports his employees and helps them develop professionally. He works hard to improve efficiencies and leave an entity better than he found it. John and his wife of 24 years, Lucille, have two children in college.



Dr. L. Jeffrey Perez

Dr. L. Jeffrey Perez offers 25 years of dynamic higher education leadership in three states, including 16 years in South Carolina.

Currently, Dr. Perez is president and CEO of South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, where he oversees advocacy, fundraising and campus support initiatives on behalf of SCICU's 21 member institutions and 36,000 students. In his time at SCICU, Dr. Perez has provided robust management of the organization, strengthening its capacity to serve the member institutions while enhancing its financial position. Throughout the pandemic he delivered strategic guidance to campus presidents, chief academic officers, and chief financial officers that bolstered their capacity to successfully address the many unprecedented challenges they faced.

Before his leadership of SCICU he was Winthrop University's vice president for university relations where he provided strategic communications guidance, served as principal institutional spokesperson, and represented the university at the local, state, and federal levels. He also oversaw university events and was part of the leadership team that developed the SACSCOC reaccreditation submission.

Previous to Winthrop University, Dr. Perez was vice president for external affairs at The Citadel where he developed and implemented communications and marketing plans that helped the military college achieve record enrollments and the highest annual giving in its history.

At Shawnee State University in Ohio, Dr. Perez served as executive director for Communications and Government Affairs. He rebuilt the public relations operation to more effectively promote the institution and served as secretary to the Board of Trustees. Dr. Perez also secured the first federal funding in the university's history which funded a motion capture lab for its gaming and simulation arts program.

Dr. Perez also held leadership positions in the State University of New York system. As director of communication services at the headquarters of the State University of New York, he served the largest college system in the country with 400,000 students across 64 campuses. He also administered the committees of SUNY's Board of Trustees. He later served as director of public affairs for the Charter Schools



Institute of the State University of New York. He was also director of research and government relations representative for the New York State School Boards Association.

Dr. Perez has chaired the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities – State Executives, and sat on NAICU’s Board of Directors. He currently serves on the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce’s Education and Workforce Development Committee and is a Furman University Riley Fellow.

Dr. Perez holds a Ph.D. in American history from the College of William and Mary. He earned a master’s degree from Binghamton University and a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service degree from Georgetown University.