



NEWS RELEASE

TCAT KNOXVILLE

Manufacturer's Donation to Benefit Anderson County Students, Community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KNOXVILLE, TN (November 11, 2021) — A generous donation by a prominent Anderson County business has paved the way for a new, modern facility to benefit students of the Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT) Knoxville and Roane State Community College.

On October 21, college and local officials gathered in Clinton to thank auto parts manufacturer SL Tennessee at the newly established Anderson County Higher Education Center. The manufacturing company donated seven acres of land, in the Clinton I-75 Industrial Park at 220 Frank L. Diggs Drive.

More than 200 students are expected to take courses at the Anderson County campus. TCAT Knoxville will feature programs in welding, diesel powered equipment technology, auto tech, industrial maintenance, building trades and a host of customized workforce development training to meet the skilled labor needs of employers in Anderson County. Additionally, Roane State will relocate students of its mechatronics program to the dual-purpose facility.

"You have no idea what this means for our students," said Kelli Chaney, president of TCAT Knoxville. "Technical Education should always be the catalyst that drives economic development, which paves the way for innovation and entrepreneurship in our community."

TCAT Knoxville's Anderson County campus currently resides in a former grocery store along Andersonville Highway – its home for the past six years. As result of relocating, the campus is expanding its welding program and adding auto technology and diesel technology to its course curriculum. The diesel technology program includes industrial maintenance, machine tools and building trades.

Roane State's mechatronics campus will be relocated from a former National Guard Armory off Charles Seivers Boulevard that's owned by Clinton. Along with mechatronics, the community college intends to add dedicated labs for the study of robotics and injection molding at the new campus.

Gordon Williams, who oversees Roane State's rapidly expanding mechatronics program, said the Tennessee Board of Regents approved the \$11 million higher education center, making it "cost efficient" to bring the two campuses together.

SL Tennessee, which is based in South Korea, has grown to employ more than 1,000 employees throughout its three buildings and 840,000 square feet of property since 2003. Since then, the company has gifted Clinton a new fire engine, created an injection molding program now used by 10 regional employers, and donated more than \$425,000 in material and equipment to support Roane State's injection molding and mechatronics programs.

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About the Tennessee College of Applied Technology – Knoxville (TCAT)

The Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology serve as the premier suppliers of workforce development throughout the State of Tennessee. The objectives of the programs offered by the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology are to:

- Give students the opportunity to acquire marketable skills for entry into the labor market or upgrade present skills and knowledge of persons already employed.
- Incorporate appropriate work habits and attitudes into the occupational program.
- Meet the present and anticipated needs of the business and industrial community.
- Meet student needs by utilizing open-entry enrollment.
- Permit students to begin on an individual level. Pace and progress will be measured against the curriculum's customary hours, and students will exit when specified competencies are met. Instructional methods are individualized, and competency based.