

**Blue Ribbon Commission Public Comment  
Dr. Thomas L. Hallman, Chancellor  
University of South Carolina Aiken  
471 University Parkway  
Aiken, SC 29801**

**803-641-3434  
tomh@usca.edu**

Good Afternoon, My name is Tom Hallman. I am Chancellor of the University of South Carolina Aiken. It is in this capacity that I am here today. I have lived in this community for 27 years and raised my family here. I would like to provide some brief comments about USC-Aiken and its role in the education foundation of this community.

The University of South Carolina Aiken is a four-year, public university offering undergraduate degree programs as well as two master's degree programs. Additional graduate courses and degree programs are offered through the USC Extended Graduate Campus program. Our University is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary later this year, and for 13 consecutive years we have been ranked among the Top Three Public Baccalaureate Colleges in the South by *U.S. News & World Report's Guide*, "America's Best Colleges." USC Aiken holds seven #1 rankings: 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Approximately 3,203 undergraduate students attend USCA. With a 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio, our small class sizes exemplify our motto, "Focused on You." In that effort to cultivate a strong student base, USC Aiken has also been committed to fostering a future workforce that could help meet the varying needs of SRS.

- USC Aiken's Ruth Patrick Science Education Center has been involved with the Science and Technology Enrichment Program, which is a cooperative effort with the DOE, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, National Audubon Society and the U.S. Forest Service. This program provides K-12 teachers and students with hands-on science, mathematics and technology opportunities through real-world, issues-oriented investigations. Similarly, the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center offers an annual Science Education Enrichment Day (SEED) that allows students to experience a variety of science activity stations.
- USC Aiken also has offered an SRNS Scholars program, which was started in 2009 through donations by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. The program provides scholarships for academically talented students at USC Aiken, with the hope of keeping them in the area to become part of the local workforce. Similarly, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) has supported students in the sciences for a number of years.
- We also are doing our part to contribute in the field of research. Earlier this year, USC Aiken's Dr. Chad Leverette, who was named the state's Professor of the Year, helped secure a more than \$264,000 grant to purchase a one-of-its-kind microscope for any university or college in South Carolina. This microscope will be used for research in developing nanotechnology-based sensors for low-level uranium detection and to analyze novel hydrogen storage materials by the Toyota Corporation. The proposal for Dr. Leverette's grant included the collaboration of scientists from Toyota and the Savannah River National Laboratory.

In a recent announcement by the Department of Energy concerning educational grants to U.S. Universities and Colleges to help educate the next generation of nuclear scientists and engineers, and to strengthen nuclear research and education capabilities. U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu said this: "Restarting the U.S. nuclear industry is a critical part of our efforts to build a clean energy economy and create new clean energy jobs. To ensure American leadership in the global nuclear energy industry, we need a skilled workforce for years to come. This investment will give our students the support and resources they need to advance nuclear energy and keep America at the forefront of the nuclear industry."

I could not agree more, the role of education in this capacity is to provide people with the capabilities to become competent members of the nuclear industry. Networking of academic institutions is a key strategy for capacity building and making better use of available educational resources. There is no better example of local technical colleges, universities, encouraged by local employers and economic development organizations, collaborating to establish common platforms at both baccalaureate and associate degree levels than here in this community. You heard about this Nuclear Workforce Initiative from Dr. Susan Winsor earlier.

Highly educated people are needed for innovation, R&D in the nuclear field, for the entire life cycle of nuclear facilities and for overall capacity building. I wanted to let you know USC-Aiken is part of the existing educational capacity that makes this community unique and we look forward to our role and support in finding solutions for America's nuclear waste.