



CALHOUN  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

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## N E W S R E L E A S E

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **CALHOUN COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO RECEIVE \$5 MILLION FROM DEPARTMENT OF LABOR 2<sup>nd</sup> GENERATION WIRED ACTIVITIES**

**Decatur, AL** -- U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao has announced that a regional workforce development effort led by Calhoun Community College is among the 13 regions across the country to share in up to \$65 million from the Department of Labor for the Second Generation of the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative.

**The Calhoun-led North Alabama/Southern Tennessee WIRED region will receive an initial award of \$500,000, with the ability to access a \$4.5 million balance contingent upon completion of a regional implementation blueprint.**

"This \$5 million grant will provide the resources and strategies to unify many economic development efforts currently ongoing in our region. The catalyst for this effort is biotechnology/nanotechnology and information technology resulting in a highly skilled workforce, improved teaching and learning and enhanced quality of life," commented Calhoun President Marilyn Beck.

"The focus areas for this initiative are advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agriculture, healthcare, and automotive manufacturing. We realize that the major strength of this project lies in the commitments of our Alabama and Tennessee partners: schools, colleges, universities, businesses, industries, governments, and economic development agencies. We are most grateful to Secretary Chao, Assistant Secretary DeRocco and the DOL for their continuing support of our region," added Dr. Beck.

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*CALHOUN RECEIVES \$5M*

DOL launched WIRED in 2005 with a competition for grants involving the nation's governors. In February 2006, 13 competitively selected regions were awarded \$195 million to transform their economies. Later, an additional 13 regions (which included the Calhoun-led region) were awarded \$100,000 grants to begin fostering the implementation of their talent development strategies. Today's announcement lays the groundwork for this second generation of selected regions to take the next steps in carrying out their initiatives.

The North Alabama/Southern Tennessee WIRED partners include Alabama Workforce Development Office (WIA Regions I and II); the Alabama College System (Calhoun, Drake State Technical College, Northeast Alabama Community College, Northwest Shoals Community College, Snead State Community College, Wallace State Community College-Hanceville); AIDT; the Alabama Technology Network; BizTech; Economic Development Partnership of Alabama; the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce; Limestone County EDA; Morgan County EDA; the **North Alabama International Trade Association (NAITA); the North Alabama Region: A Globally Competitive Community (GC2)**; Port of Huntsville; South Central Tennessee Development District; South Central Tennessee Workforce Alliance; the University of Alabama in Huntsville; the USDA Rural Development; Vanderbilt University; and Workforce Solutions.

Today's announcement marks the fourth DOL grant awarded to Calhoun in the last two years. In addition to the two awards associated with the WIRED initiative, in 2005 Calhoun was awarded a \$3.5 million grant to establish the Center for Manufacturing Innovation (CMI) and a \$2.5 million award to fund Project AHEAD (Alternate Health Education Asynchronous Delivery), created to improve and expand training programs targeting careers in nursing, surgical technology, radiography and clinical laboratory technology.

The Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development initiative is an effort by the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration to integrate economic and workforce development activities and demonstrate that talent development can drive economic transformation in regional economies across the United States.

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