

2020 JMGBL Awards Application

Submission Date	2020-06-26 13:14:41
This application is for:	J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award
Project Title	Berkeley County ManuFirstSC
County/Counties	Berkeley County
Staff Contact	Hannah Moldenhauer
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Please provide a summary of your entry (no more than 100 words) to be used in a handout for the awards competition and included in press releases/publications. You may either type the summary in the text box or upload it as an attachment below.

The ManuFirstSC™ initiative was developed to support Berkeley County manufacturing industries by providing Berkeley County residents who have little-to-no manufacturing experience with an innovative pathway to a long-term career. This program was the first of its kind, pioneered in Berkeley County in 2017. Three years later, Berkeley County continues to expand the program by bringing it into communities and into high schools. To date, it has helped train 1,090 people for manufacturing positions in the Charleston Region, including approximately 100 high school students and 400 other Berkeley County citizens.

Presentations may include more than one speaker; however, each speaker should be aware that the 10-minute time limit is strictly enforced. Please list the name, title, and e-mail address of each speaker:

Name	Title	Email
Kristen Lanier	Economic Development Interim Director, Project Manager	kristen.lanier@berkeleycountysc.gov

Please check boxes for attachments you will submit as part of your application

CHECKED: A concise Project Description to explain the purpose and significance of the entry (up to eight pages). Please follow the prescribed naming convention for your Project Description file.

CHECKED: Any additional materials needed to support your application (up to five pages).

UNCHECKED: Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award applications must include letters of support from the chief administrative officers for each participating political subdivision.

CHECKED: Submissions for The COVID-19 Response and Resiliency Showcase and the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award must include a letter of support from the county council chairman or the county chief administrative officer.

**To submit these attachments
online, please upload
Microsoft Word or PDF
documents below.**

[Berkeley County ManuFirstSC.JMG2020.pdf](#)

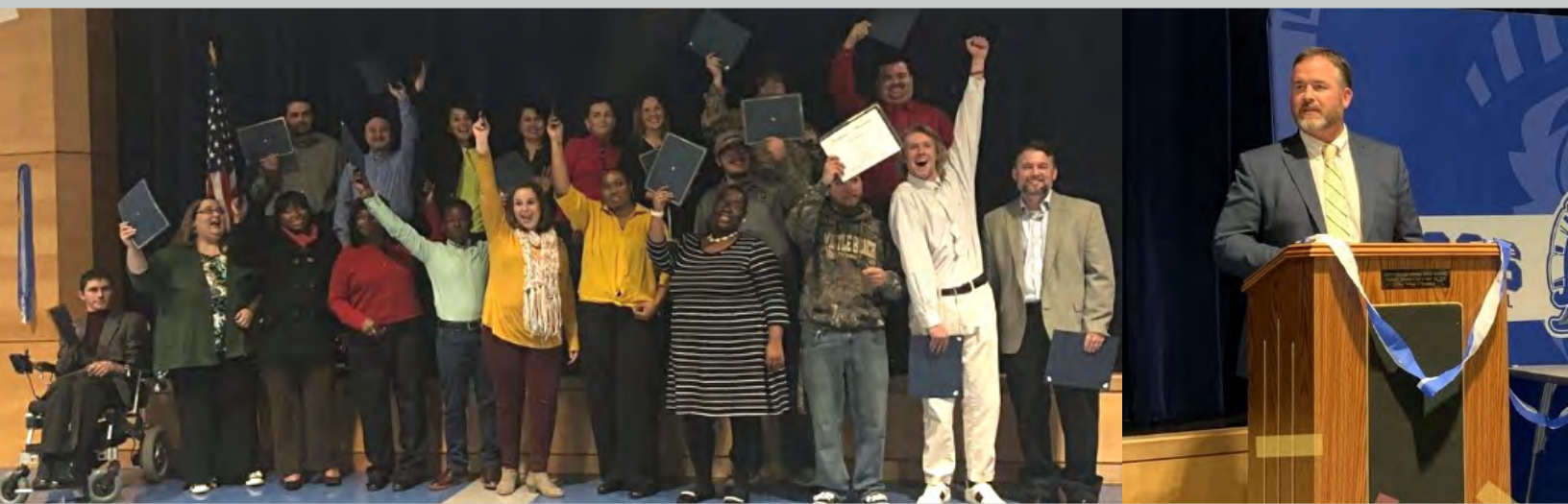


The J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: ManuFirstSC™ Program



**BERKELEY
COUNTY SC**
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**RICH HISTORY.
BRIGHT FUTURE.**
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BerkeleyMeansBusiness.com



J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: Berkeley County ManuFirstSC™

Summary The ManuFirstSC™ initiative was developed to support Berkeley County manufacturing industries by providing Berkeley County residents who have little-to-no manufacturing experience with an innovative pathway to a long-term career. This program was the first of its kind, pioneered in Berkeley County in 2017. Three years later, Berkeley County continues to expand the program by bringing it into communities and into high schools. To date, it has helped train 1,090 people for manufacturing positions in the Charleston Region, including approximately 100 high school students and 400 other Berkeley County citizens.

How it started: Since 2015, Berkeley County has experienced approximately \$4 billion in economic development growth and the creation of nearly 10,000 new jobs. Many of these jobs are trade positions that require manufacturing experience.

In **May 2015**, Volvo Cars announced it was bringing its first U.S. factory to Berkeley County. The intent to construct, open, and operate a new factory would require Volvo to make substantial investments in Berkeley County and would offer career opportunities for lowcountry residents. Thus, County leaders knew Volvo Cars' presence would have a great impact on the County, region, and State. Volvo Cars, like many industries, required that applicants for manufacturing positions have at least one year of manufacturing experience.

Volvo initially announced a \$500 million investment with 2,000 new jobs created. Later, in **September 2017**, Volvo Cars announced a second line and facility expansion, creating 1,910 additional jobs and bringing total investment to \$1 billion and 3,900 new jobs. Volvo Cars' presence, coupled with myriad other manufacturing industries in the County, created incredible opportunities for citizens. However, in order to fill these positions, individuals had to be qualified with at least one-year of manufacturing experience.

Berkeley County leaders wanted County residents to have the first opportunity to apply for open (and forthcoming) manufacturing positions – ahead of other qualified candidates from outside the County. In early 2017, Berkeley County leaders and County Economic Development staff worked to devise a planned 'path to employment' to ensure Berkeley County residents could get the training and experience necessary to meet the minimum qualifications for application.

Berkeley County leaders and staff worked with South Carolina Department of Commerce, Trident Technical College, ReadySC, and Volvo Cars to develop a fast-track program to a career for residents with little or no manufacturing experience. The program was piloted in Berkeley County and launched in **Spring 2017** under the name *Lean Manufacturing*. It served to meet the demands of an expanding workforce.

Berkeley County held several informational meetings to launch the program and to demonstrate to residents the path to obtain the prerequisite qualifications for manufacturing positions at Volvo Cars and other industries in the County and State. The initial information meetings (listed below) were for Berkeley County citizens only. Thousands of people attended these meetings.

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: Berkeley County ManuFirstSC™

- June 8, 2017 at Timberland High School
- June 10, 2017 at Cane Bay Middle School
- July 22, 2017 at Goose Creek High School

The program: The program is now a 4-week course consisting of 70 hours of classroom instruction and hands-on training. When it was first launched, it was provided FREE to Berkeley County citizens, funded by Berkeley County through industry fees. It was initially taught at Trident Technical College. The course has been modified over the years, refining the program to meet the needs of the manufacturing industries and industry standards with nationally recognized certifications that can be more transferable and stackable with other credentials. The Lean Manufacturing program (now called “ManuFirstSC™”) course includes training in the following areas:

- Manufacturing and safety
- Quality awareness
- Production and processes
- Maintenance awareness

The latest version of this program includes heightened manufacturing safety with a Six Sigma Lean Yellow Belt Certification. It also now meets the requirement for MSSC (Manufacturing Skill Standards Council) safety. Additionally, 10 hours of OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) training is required with this course.

Prerequisites: Lean Manufacturing was free for Berkeley County citizens who met the following prerequisites.

- 18 years or older
- High School diploma or equivalent
- Bronze Work Keys/Win Certificate (or ASVAB for Veterans/Military)
- Pass a basic panel drug screen
- Pass a S.C. State Law Enforcement Division background check

How it has transformed and expanded:

Scholarships continue to be offered to provide training at no-cost to Berkeley County residents. Additionally, Trident Technical College offers the course in the Continuing Education open enrollment.

In **Fall of 2018** (approximately one year-and-a-half after Berkeley County piloted the program), due to industry demand, South Carolina Department of Commerce expanded the program state-wide to other technical colleges, and officially dubbed it *ManuFirstSC™*.

In **May 2019**, Berkeley County Government partnered with Berkeley County School District to offer ManuFirstSC™ certificates in six of the district’s eight high schools, including: Timberland High School, Cross High School, Berkeley High School, Goose Creek High School, Stratford High School, and Cane Bay High School. ManuFirstSC™ is offered to high school seniors. To date, Berkeley County is the first and only County in the State to offer this program in schools. By

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: Berkeley County ManuFirstSC™

offering it in schools, it brings the course into communities, providing it for free and making it convenient for those interested. Additionally, it provides a direct path from high school to career, without necessitating a college education for success.

Berkeley County leaders recognized the need to advertise the program throughout the County – particularly to those experiencing underemployment. While information sessions were held at various communities across Berkeley County, the course itself was held at Trident Technical College's Berkeley campus in Moncks Corner. For more than three years, Berkeley County has had one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state, consistently at-or-below 3% since 2017; however, there continued to be some smaller communities with high underemployment. Berkeley County developed a way to remove barriers and bring the program into those communities.

In **August 2019**, Berkeley County helped coordinate a course for adults at St. Stephen Elementary, offered after regular school hours. The County hosted a graduation ceremony (see pictures attached). There was also a job fair following the graduation where the 32 graduates had an opportunity to connect with the six industries that attended the graduation.

In **November 2019**, through a similar program, 21 residents of the Cross community graduated (see pictures attached).

The numbers and the success of ManuFirstSC™:

- A total of 1,090 people have completed the ManuFirstSC™ certificate from Trident Technical College.
- Approximately 400 Berkeley County residents completed the ManuFirstSC™ program, through scholarships offered by Berkeley County.
- Additionally, 97 Berkeley County high school students have graduated from the ManuFirstSC™ program:
 - 50 students graduated in 2019
 - 47 students graduated in 2020
- More than 10% of Volvo's workforce are ManuFirstSC™ graduates (see video in presentation that highlights a success story).
- Dozens of industries in Berkeley County accept and encourage the ManuFirstSC™ program. These include, but are not limited to the following industries who have participated in the ManuFirstSC™ graduation employer meet and greet events:
 - Volvo Cars
 - VTL Group
 - Albany International
 - RePower South
 - Grand Forest
 - Thorne
 - Nexans
 - DAK Americas
 - Steel Technologies
 - Sanders Brothers
 - Acutec Industries, LLC.
 - Environmental Express
- Hundreds of employers across the State accept the ManuFirstSC™ Certificate.
- Through Berkeley County's partnership with both Berkeley County School District and Trident Technical College, ManuFirst training has been offered in the following communities in the County:

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: Berkeley County ManuFirstSC™

- St. Stephen
- Cross
- Moncks Corner
- Goose Creek
- Cane Bay

Awards:

- Volvo Cars USA was awarded 2018 Workforce Innovator Award for medium-sized company by S.C. Chamber of Commerce.
- ManuFirstSC™ was featured in the 2019 World Manufacturing Forum Report and presented at the annual meeting in Italy.

Concerns/Hurdles and how they were overcome:

Accessibility: Berkeley County leaders recognized the need to create a program geared toward individuals who were underemployed or looking for a change in career. The County needed to structure the program so it could be affordable and meet the time constraints of residents. County staff worked with partnering agencies to ensure it met the necessary requirements, yet was concise enough to fit into a working person's schedule.

The County worked with Trident Technical College to ensure staff could teach classes around working hours in the communities.

The County worked with Berkeley County School District to integrate the program curriculum into local high schools.

Resources: When Berkeley County brought ManuFirstSC™ into underemployed communities, the County recognized the need for additional resources. The County recruited help from D.S.S. (Department of Social Services), South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation, and S.C. Works to connect individuals with additional resources such as funding for transportation and childcare and assistance writing resumes and completing online applications. This helped provide opportunities for those with disabilities or other needs.

Attire: Berkeley County realized that some qualified graduates may not be able to afford clothes and attire for interviews. Berkeley County worked with Goodwill to provide vouchers to graduates to buy business attire for interviews.

Connections: Berkeley County works to ensure job fairs are offered at graduations, so industries that are actively hiring can immediately connect with qualified individuals. This has helped dozens of ManuFirstSC™ graduates get jobs in manufacturing positions in Berkeley County.

Financing: ManuFirstSC™ is funded by Berkeley County through industry fees. Industries pay a fee in lieu of taxes. A portion of this fee helps train the workforce through the ManuFirstSC™ program.

J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award: Berkeley County ManuFirstSC™

What's next: Due to COVID-19, the ManuFirstSC™ program has been modified to be offered virtually, with only four hours mandated in-person for the dexterity portion.

All students who started the program during the onset of the virus have been transferred to a virtual platform to be completed in Summer 2020. This includes a total of 22 students.

Although as a whole Berkeley County has a very low unemployment rate, County leadership recognizes the need to continue offering the program in underemployed communities. Prior to COVID-19, the County's unemployment rate was 1.3%. But, in some community pockets in the County, the unemployment rate has been as high as 30%. Additionally, underemployment continues to be prevalent in Berkeley County. Berkeley County's continued push to offer ManuFirstSC™ in communities around the County will help to address the unemployment and underemployment concerns in the County.

In Summary: ManuFirstSC™ program (formerly Lean Manufacturing) has been recognized for its success and focus on equipping people for manufacturing jobs. Berkeley County is proud that the initiative started with us, by us, and directly serves Berkeley County residents and industries. And, just as Berkeley County launched the program, the County continues to strive to make it better.

Berkeley County has brought the program into underemployed communities, developed and executed a plan with Berkeley County School District to offer it in six of the eight high schools in the County, and continues to work with S.C. Department of Commerce to refine and improve the program for its continued success in the County, region, and State.



A COLLABORATION WITH



BERKELEY COUNTY SC
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



South Carolina
Department of Commerce
Just right for business.



PAVING THE ROAD TO SUCCESS AND MEETING THE DEMANDS OF AN EXPANDING WORKFORCE

ManuFirstSC™ began in 2017 as 52-hours of instruction + OSHA 10:

Manufacturing & Safety



- Lean Production
- History of Manufacturing
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Conflict Management

Quality Awareness



- Craft Math
- Precision Measurement
- Quality Systems, 5S, & Continuous Improvement
- Quality Improvement
- Control Charts
- Quality Audits

Production & Processes



- Communications
- The Production Process
- Manufacturing Essentials
- Machine Operations
- Conditioning, Finishing, & Assembly

Maintenance Awareness



- Lockout/Tagout
- Maintaining a Clean Environment
- Total Preventive Maintenance
- Recognizing Problems

Berkeley County Hosted Community Meetings to kick off new program:



Meeting Attendance over 700!

- Cane Bay Middle 200+
- Goose Creek High 200+
- Timberland High 300+

150

Trained in first few months

snapshot

11



Rounds of Scholarships

400



Over 1,000 in the Lowcountry.

Berkeley County residents graduated

5



Communities: Moncks Corner, St. Stephen, & Cross, Goose Creek, and Cane Bay

100%



Is paid for by industry

100% of program is paid by Berkeley County Economic Development through industry fees.

10%



Of Volvo's workforce are ManuFirst SC graduates

+ Hundreds of manufactures are accepting the certificate in the Lowcountry and across the state.

Graduation Pictures



Sept. 2019: 32 graduate in St. Stephen



Berkeley County Supervisor Cribb and St. Stephen Mayor Rivers shake graduates' hand.



Nov. 2019: 21 graduate in Cross



Berkeley County Supervisor speaks at graduation

Testimonials from VOLVO

“ ManuFirstSC™ is an important program for Volvo Cars, which is why we helped to create and launch it. The program is providing opportunities for those without manufacturing experience, and what’s even better is that 60 companies in the state of South Carolina will accept this certificate in lieu of one year of manufacturing experience. It is making a real impact in our state and in our region, and we’re happy to be part of it. We’d like to see this program expand beyond the technical colleges and reach more of our high schools, and we will do our part to make that happen. ”



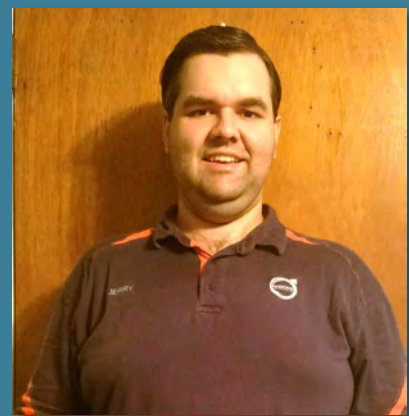
~Stephanie Mangini

Corporate Communications & Community Relations



DALLAS BOLEN

Dallas, a former bartender, is a proud graduate of ManuFirstSC™ and a recipient of a Berkeley County scholarship. Dallas was hired as a production team member and promoted to a launch leader in his first year at Volvo.



JERRY KIRKLAND JR

Jerry lives in Russellville and was employed as a security guard at the GP Plant. His employment ended when GP closed their Russellville site and removed all buildings from the property. He took the ManuFirstSC™ training with a scholarship from Berkeley County and now works at Volvo as a Team Member.



WINNIE HARLEY

Miss Winnie, a resident of Pineville, was a cosmetologist and wanted to make a career change. She participated in the very first Berkeley County sponsored ManuFirstSC™ class at Trident Tech in 2017 and immediately applied to Volvo. She was hired as a Team Member and has since been promoted to Team Lead. She is very proud of her work and loves her brand new Volvo S60.



Testimonials from our Partners



ManuFirstSC™ and its partnership with business leaders, including Grand Forrest, Inc. is exactly what one consumer with SC Vocational Rehabilitation needed to pursue her vocational goal. This consumer worked for some time in customer service and recruitment but has seen how competitive manufacturing has become in our area. As a resident of Cross, SC she had limited options until the ManuFirstSC™ class was offered within her own community.

She successfully completed the class at Cross and at the most recent graduation met with Grand Forest. She was well prepared having found extra support from SC Voc. Rehab to prepare for interviews and polish her resume. She impressed the CEO who recalled their first meeting at the graduation, wondering how this young lady new about their industrial sewing company.

Currently VR and Grand Forest are in the process of developing an On-the- Job-Training opportunity in order for the consumer to apply the knowledge she has learned in the class to the field as an Industrial Sewer.

“ ManuFirstSC™ has been a crucial part of opening the doors of opportunity for job seekers who have the potential to succeed in the Manufacturing Industry. ”



~ Michelle McDonald
Business Development Specialist



SC Works has several success stories of transitioning ManuFirstSC™ graduates into manufacturing careers with employers around the Tri-county Area.



Century ALUMINUM

Jerry Gavins had no manufacturing experience but decided he wanted a career and was willing to put in the work. After graduating from the ManuFirstSC™ program, he is now a Production Associate at Century Aluminum in Goose Creek.



Carla Pagan came into the WIOA program with SC Works Trident after being unemployed. After her career assessment she decided to take the ManuFirstSC™ training at Trident Technical College and is now the Inventory Controller at Key Logistics in Hanahan.

Ramon Cruz was self-employed and his manufacturing experience was outdated for today's market. He took the ManuFirstSC™ program at Trident Tech with the help of SC Works Trident. He completed On-The-Job Training with the SC Port Authority and he is now a full-time Container Operator Trainee at the Port.



BERKELEY COUNTY SC

RICH HISTORY.
BRIGHT FUTURE.
One Berkeley

June 16, 2020

John P. Cribb
SUPERVISOR

Citizens are the heartbeat of Berkeley County, and it has always been County leaders' top goal to provide them with a safe and healthy quality of life with boundless opportunities. Reaching that goal not only means meeting and exceeding the needs of our residents but also supporting the business community. The past several years, both across the County and State, industries have issued a resounding plea for more skilled labor to fill open positions. And, with a similar desire to grow the County's workforce, help citizens make a rewarding living to provide for their families, County leaders have worked with local industries and technical colleges to develop the ManuFirst SC program.

Initially named Lean Manufacturing, the program first started in Berkeley County in June 2017 as a training course at Trident Technical College. As the need for the program and its success grew, Berkeley County moved the program into the community, offering the training in various rural communities and working with Berkeley County School District to also offer it to high school seniors. As a result, career opportunities for the community and graduating seniors have significantly increased while simultaneously closing the local workforce's previously staggering skills gap.

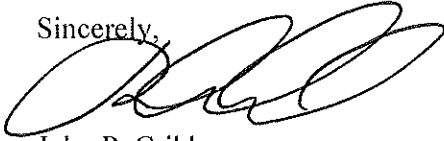
Through the ManuFirst SC program, County and industry leaders have also dismantled the traditional ideology that the only path to a lucrative career and future success is by way of a four-year college degree. While attending college remains a worthwhile steppingstone for many individuals on specific job paths, not every County resident can afford secondary education, nor do they have the desire or time to pursue it.

Thankfully, through the ManuFirst SC Program, citizens can find a fast-track training program that not only makes them valuable assets to employers but also doesn't touch their wallets. The program is free to qualified Berkeley County residents, and upon program completion graduates can claim a training certificate equivalent to one year of work in the manufacturing field. Through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on experience, participants gain prized knowledge and hands-on experience to both boost their confidence and magnify their potential.

As one of the fastest-growing counties in South Carolina, Berkeley County is driving much of the state's industry boom and investment. Many large-scale companies are choosing to locate and expand here. That means ManuFirst SC is becoming even more necessary and valuable to the area. In three short years, the program has proven to be wildly successful not only on the local level but also across the region and state, as other government entities have also implemented the program. Its success has also consumed international conversation and recognition.

Berkeley County takes great pride in being able to publicize that we held the pilot program and helped conceive the idea years ago. In every place it's offered, this innovative program is leaving a lasting footprint. Simply put, Manufirst SC is transforming the community and changing lives. We look forward to it's continued success in the County and region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John P. Cribb', written in a cursive style.

John P. Cribb
Berkeley County Supervisor



Henry McMaster
Governor

SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Robert M. Hitt III
Secretary

June 22, 2020

South Carolina Association of Counties
Awards Committee
P.O. Box 8207
Columbia, South Carolina 29202

Dear Awards Committee Chair:

Please accept this letter of support on behalf of Berkeley County for this year's J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties.

When Volvo Cars announced the decision to locate its first North American plant in Berkeley County, the company wanted to ensure that jobs would be available for Berkeley County residents. Recognizing the rural portion of the county where the plant would be located, the economic development community – especially at the county level – realized there may be challenges to ensure residents met the minimum requirements needed to apply for positions at Volvo Cars.

In collaboration with Volvo Cars USA, Trident Technical College, readySC and Berkeley County, ManuFirstSC was launched. This program initially provided an innovative solution to the challenge of ramping up the workforce for Volvo Cars and also provided a training path for Berkeley County residents to meet the employment eligibility criteria.

Berkeley County immediately offered to provide scholarships to residents to participate in ManuFirstSC training classes. This effort paved the way for not only improving the quality of life for the county's citizens, but also supporting the prosperity of its manufacturing industry. Berkeley County has continued to be a key contributor to the program by coordinating community events to educate its citizens about the opportunity to pursue a rewarding career in manufacturing utilizing the ManuFirstSC program.

With the success of ManuFirstSC in Berkeley County, the program quickly gained popularity in the greater Charleston Metro area and, then, throughout the state. ManuFirstSC has been replicated statewide by numerous counties and technical colleges, and there are no more than 100 participating manufacturers. ManuFirstSC also received international recognition earning a selection from the World Manufacturing Forum as an "Initiative on Skills for the Future of Manufacturing."

Berkeley County played a pivotal role in developing this innovative solution to address a community challenge and enhance citizens' quality of life in a unique way. The county's commitment to ManuFirstSC is representative of the best qualities of local governance as recognized by the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elisabeth Kovacs".

Elisabeth Kovacs, SCCED
Deputy Director-Workforce Development

V O L V O

June 19, 2020

Dear Awards Committee Chair:

Please accept this letter of support for the J Mitchell Graham Memorial Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties.

The award recognizes innovative projects completed by South Carolina's counties, and we fully support your submission of the ManuFirstSC workforce development initiative.

When Volvo Cars first teamed up with SC Commerce to develop a plan to hire locally in the field of advanced manufacturing, it was Berkeley County who stepped up to pilot the program and provide technical training to its residents. It was a collaborative effort with state and local government, as well as our education partners, including readySC and Trident Technical College.

Since the program was launched in 2017, more than 1,000 people have joined Volvo Cars. We're proud to say that 96% of our production and maintenance team members hired are from the state of South Carolina. Of that number, nearly 78% are from the tri-county area of Berkeley, Dorchester and Charleston. Over 6% of our production team members are also proud graduates of the ManuFirstSC certificate program. The ability to hire a local workforce is linked to the work of ManuFirstSC.

Since the program launched, ManuFirstSC is now available to all residents in the state of South Carolina, with many state technical colleges offering the program. In addition, a number of manufacturing companies in the state of South Carolina are also accepting the ManuFirstSC certificate in their hiring decisions.

We thank you for your continued support of Volvo Cars, and for working collaboratively with us and others to find innovative ways to drive our growing economy.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Mangini

Community Relations

Volvo Car USA

1801 Volvo Car Drive, Ridgeville, SC 29472



June 16, 2020

On behalf of Trident Technical College, it is with great pleasure I write this letter of support for the Berkeley County Office of Economic Development's consideration for the prestigious J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties. Berkeley County led the way in developing a short-term training program in support of Volvo Cars USA, whereby Volvo agreed to waive their normal requirement of one year's manufacturing experience for employment in their production facility for those individuals who successfully completed the 62-hour training program originally labeled "Lean Manufacturing". Further, Berkeley County provided scholarships for their citizens to take the training at Trident Technical College thereby providing an opportunity for many who otherwise would not have qualified for these high-tech, high paying jobs. This in itself changed lives and the futures of families across Berkeley County.

Berkeley County's vision was soon adopted by Charleston and Dorchester counties' economic development offices as they realized the potential of this program and its importance to their citizens vying for similar manufacturing jobs around the Lowcountry. Moreover, the South Carolina Department of Commerce championed the program, renaming it ManuFirst SC. Now, the South Carolina Technical College System office has assumed responsibility for curriculum content and its distribution to the remaining fifteen technical colleges across the state. Most recently, the program was moved to an online format thus making it even more accessible to South Carolina citizens, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This will certainly position South Carolina to come back from this pandemic faster and stronger.

Trident Technical College is proud to have partnered with Berkeley County on this important project and to date over 1000 students have successfully completed the program in our tri-county region. We believe for these reasons; Berkeley County is most deserving of the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Walker
Vice President for Continuing Education and Economic Development
Trident Technical College

Updated Feb 2012

Berkeley Campus | Main Campus | Mount Pleasant | Palmer Campus



*Office of Career and Technical Education
Division of Academics and Instruction*

June 16, 2020

Dear Awards Committee Chair,

It is my pleasure to provide you with this letter of support for Berkeley County Government for the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award from the South Carolina Association of Counties. Through the implementation of ManuFirst SC, I believe that Berkeley County Government is worthy of this award.

When new manufacturers entered the county a couple of years ago providing additional employment opportunities, Berkeley County Government quickly identified the immediate needs and challenges facing residents in our communities. A major challenge facing many of our residents was the lack of manufacturing experience to obtain employment within the manufacturing industry. Understanding that these new employment opportunities would improve the quality of life of many of our residents, Berkeley County Government collaborated with several partners to develop ManuFirst SC, a program that would prepare residents for entrance into the manufacturing industry. Residents across Berkeley County have access to ManuFirst SC with special concentration given to our underserved communities.

By providing scholarships to residents to participate in the ManuFirst SC program, Berkeley County Government is efficiently using Economic Development industry fees to improve the quality of life of its residents. I can truly say that Berkeley County Government invests in its citizens.

The success of ManuFirst SC has caused it to be replicated across the state. Many have recognized the benefits of this program. Therefore, I would highly recommend Berkeley County Government to receive the J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award for their commitment to creating opportunities and improving the quality of life of its residents.

Sincerely,

Sonya D. Addison-Stewart
Career Coordinator