

# Wiregrass Georgia Technical College



## 2021-2025

### Strategic Plan

*"Committed"*



# WIREGRASS

GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE®

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Wiregrass Georgia Technical College's strategic plan defines the goals and priorities of the college. The college's mission of workforce development serves as the foundation of the strategic plan. With input from internal and external stakeholders, the goals and objectives of this plan are designed to support student success while carrying forth technical education, adult education, and economic development in our 11-county service area and the State of Georgia. Our systematic evaluation of this plan provides the avenue to ensure our goals are met and will provide an avenue to adjust any strategies needed.

The qualified and dedicated faculty and staff of Wiregrass are preparing the new collar worker. This new collar worker is highly skilled for today and tomorrow's workforce. In fact, you will find our graduates in essential jobs throughout our communities. This 5-year strategic plan will guide us as we continue to serve the needs of our students, our business and industry partners and our communities.

It is with great pleasure that I present Wiregrass's Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025.

*Tina K. Anderson*

Dr. Tina K. Anderson, President  
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College







Ben Hill-Irwin Campus

Wiregrass Georgia Technical College is a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia. Recognized for achievements in workforce development, Wiregrass provides individuals with the education, training, and skills to positively influence our economy. Having several programs ranked as the top in the state or nation validates the quality of education and competence of Wiregrass graduates.

Wiregrass offers more than 100 academic programs in the areas of Allied Health, Business and Computer Sciences, Professional Services, and Trade and Industrial trades. During the Fiscal Year 2020, the college had an unduplicated enrollment of 6,576 students.

The college works closely with 12 school systems and over 20 high schools to offer early enrollment programs for high school students. In FY20, the college had 3,035 high school students enrolled in dual enrollment.

In addition to academic programs, the college provides Adult Education and Economic Development services. The Wiregrass Georgia Technical College Adult Education Department served 1,035 students in Adult Education programs such as GED® preparation classes, English as a Second Language, and Adult Education basic skills classes during FY20. Approximately 108 students received their GED® diploma in FY20.

During FY20, the Department of Economic Development provided customized training classes to 87 companies with 7,038 students totaling 60,844 hours of training. Approximately 940 continuing education students enrolled during the fiscal year for a total of 50,141 continuing education training hours. Wiregrass Department of Economic Development served a total of 341 credit students and 4,951 non-credit students for Georgia Department of Corrections and Core Civic during FY20.



Coffee Campus



Cook County Workforce Development Center

By combining the academic programs, Adult Education services, and continuing education provided through Economic Development, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College impacts the lives of more than 7,986 students annually.

On September 4, 2008, the State Board of Technical and Adult Education (SBTAE) approved the merger of East Central Technical College (ECTC) and Valdosta Technical College (VTC) to be effective July 1, 2010. Almost a year to the day the merger was announced, the local board, with input from stakeholders, decided on a new name for the combined college – Wiregrass Georgia Technical College (WGTC).

Wiregrass Georgia Technical College has four campuses – Ben Hill-Irwin campus, Coffee campus, Cook County Workforce Development Center, and the Valdosta campus – as well as an off-campus instruction site, located on Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta. The college provides Adult Education services in each of the 11 counties served by the college: Atkinson, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, and Wilcox counties.

Individually, both East Central Technical College and Valdosta Technical College have long, meaningful histories within the communities they have served. The rich history between these colleges and the local communities demonstrate how important training and educational opportunities have been, and will continue to be, for the citizens of the Wiregrass Georgia Technical College service area.



## East Central Technical College

East Central Technical College (formerly Ben Hill-Irwin Technical Institute and East Central Technical Institute) was established in 1966. Ben Hill-Irwin Tech officially opened its doors on September 21, 1970, occupying three buildings with large vocational-technical labs and a small administration area. The first full-time graduates received their diplomas on September 15, 1971.

During the next 30 years, East Central Technical College underwent enormous transformation and growth. On June 10, 1977, Ben Hill-Irwin Tech held groundbreaking ceremonies for a new \$600,000 expansion to house new programs. The Charles Harris Learning Center opened in 1994 housing an auditorium, classrooms, and office space.

In 1995, the Board of Regents deeded land, originally part of South Georgia College, to the Department of Technical and Adult Education for the Coffee campus. On November 7, 1996, the name officially changed to East Central Technical Institute. Further county expansions occurred including the addition of the Wilcox Lifelong Learning Center in Rochelle. On April 10, 2002, the state allocated \$10,000,000 for a new technology building on the Ben Hill-Irwin campus, which was completed in 2006.



# Valdosta Technical College

Valdosta Technical Institute was founded as a cooperative agreement by the state legislature, the Valdosta Board of Education, and the Lowndes County Board of Education in 1963 to serve the citizens of Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Lanier, and Lowndes counties. Valdosta Tech's original 40,300 square foot building, Berrien Hall, opened for classes in September of 1963.

The first addition to the campus was a 7,200 square foot building to house the heating ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) and welding programs. The vigorous economic growth of the area initiated a need for an additional expansion that almost doubled the size of the facility. In 1984, the college completed its second addition to house the horticulture, electronics, and health programs.

A few short years later in 1989, a 7,800 square foot addition for the auto collision program completed the U-shape of Berrien Hall. In 1989 the Georgia Legislature provided \$175,000 for the purchase of 80.2 acres of land to continue the growth of the campus. Governor Zell Miller then approved a \$7.64 million-dollar, 83,770 square foot expansion which would be the second largest technical school expansion at that time. From this expansion, Valdosta Tech Buildings 300, 400, and 500 were opened in 1997.

The Cook County Workforce Development Center in Sparks opened its doors as a branch campus of Valdosta Tech in June 2002. Valdosta Tech opened an office at Moody Air Force Base in February 2004. In December 2007, Valdosta Technical College was accredited and approved for unconditional membership with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

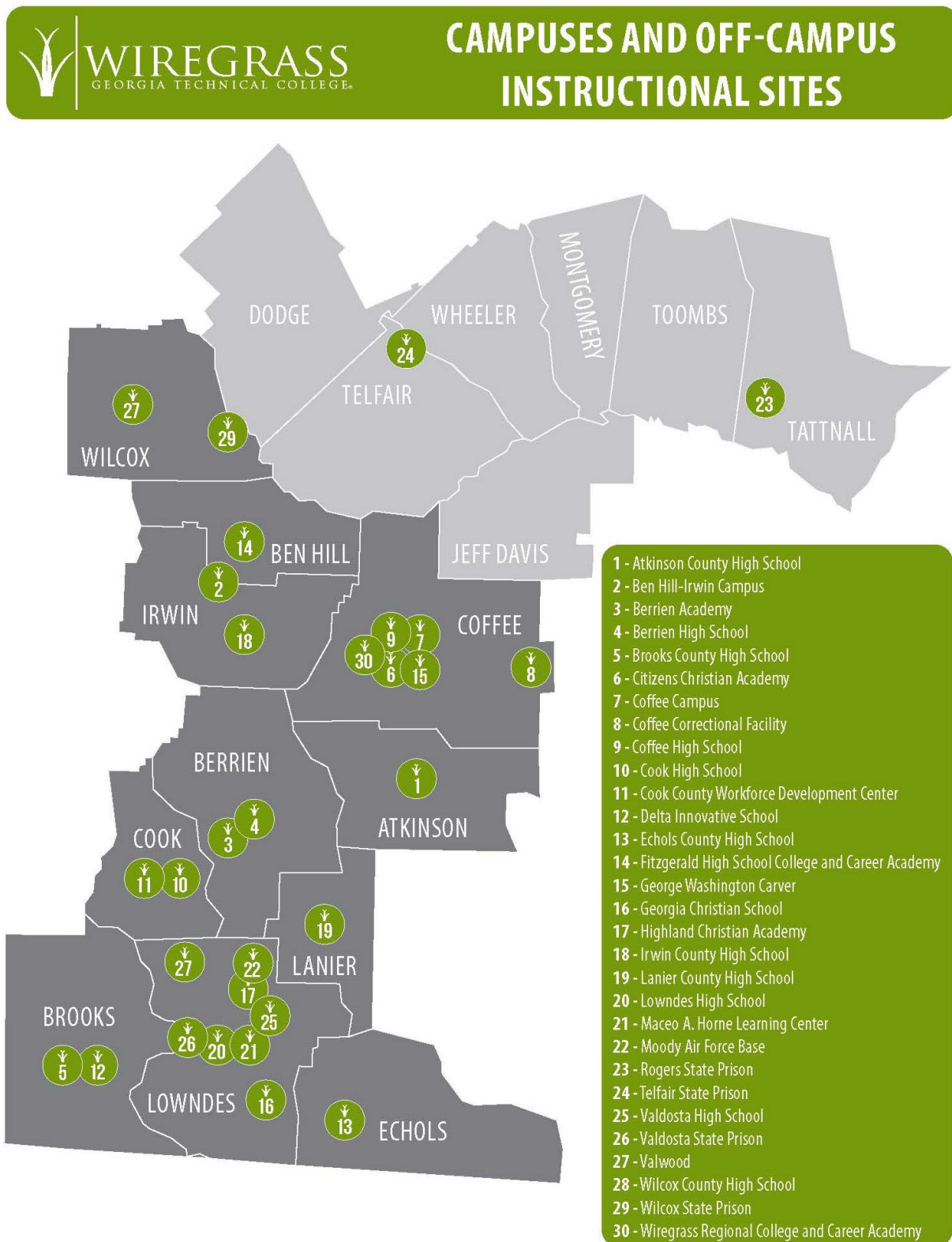
In February 2009, Lowndes Hall officially opened housing the administrative offices of the President, business programs, a new 7,000 square foot library, an auditorium, early childhood education, drafting technology, and printing and graphics programs. A new student center was also constructed and includes 6,625 square feet of space for the Upper Crust, security offices, and offices for student activities.



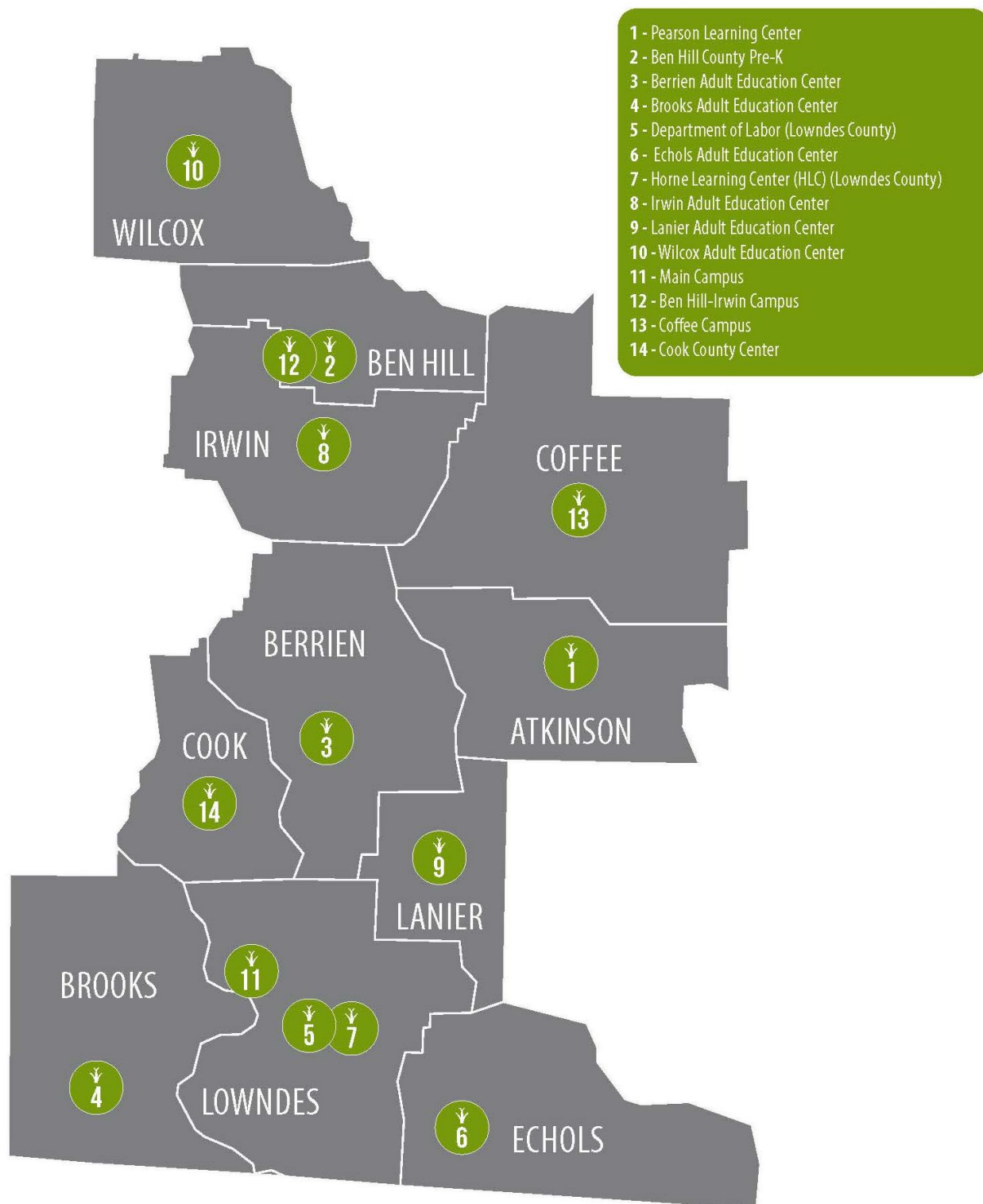
Valdosta Campus

# Wiregrass Service Area

Wiregrass serves 11 counties in South Georgia: Atkinson, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, and Wilcox. Through a partnership with the Georgia Department of Corrections, Wiregrass also serves institutions across the State of Georgia. The Wiregrass campuses, off-campus instructional locations, and adult education locations are identified in the below maps.



## ADULT EDUCATION SITES





*A thorough understanding of the strategic plan is made possible by knowing the foundation upon which the college operations are based as articulated in our mission statement.*

## Our Mission

The mission of Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, is to promote community, educational, and economic development by providing a trained workforce in our 11-county service area and throughout the State of Georgia. The college fulfills the mission by supporting student success and providing technical and academic instruction, through traditional and distance education delivery methods, leading to associate degrees, diplomas, and technical certificates of credit; customized training for new and existing industries; professional and personal development through continuing education programs; and adult education services to meet the needs of citizens, business, and industry in the service area.

# Vision

*The vision statement is a values-based description of the college's desired future and its distinctive characteristics of success. It clarifies what the college should look like and how it should conduct itself as it fulfills its mission.*

## Our Vision

Wiregrass Georgia Technical College will be recognized as a leader in the Technical College System of Georgia exemplifying premier qualities that meet the vigorous life-long learning needs of the students, communities, businesses, and industries within the college's 11-county service area and throughout the State of Georgia.



*Values are the traits or qualities that we consider to be worthwhile. Our values represent our highest priorities and our deeply held driving forces and beliefs. Our values reflect how we value ourselves and our internal and external customers.*

## Our Values

Core values are a set of principles that guide Wiregrass Georgia Technical College in creating its educational programs and environment and the foundation from which we perform work and conduct ourselves. We are convinced that the key to creating a truly great learning organization is an intense focus on the values that guide our actions.

- **Student Focus:** We value and respect all students as unique individuals. We assist students in identifying and realizing their educational goals and create an accessible and dynamic learning environment. We focus on providing students with a positive educational experience.
- **Accountability:** We understand and value our individual roles in the college. We take responsibility for processes, decisions, and outcomes within our scope of influence. We work hard to communicate effectively and apply our expertise to continuously improve our systems and strengthen organizational performance.
- **Diversity:** We recognize the many diverse qualities of the citizens within our service area and strive to promote a positive and inclusive environment that encourages respect and enhances the unique qualities and strengths of each individual. We provide an equitable experience to ensure that all students, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to grow and to achieve their greatest potential.
- **Safety:** We proactively promote a safe, healthy, and secure environment that enhances the learning process by allocating appropriate resources toward preparedness training, communication, and a highly-qualified police department to ensure the protection and wellness of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors on our campuses.
- **Exceptional Service:** We create and improve relationships through positive interactions with others. United by a common purpose to support and enhance student learning, we collaborate to provide lifelong learning opportunities that enhance the well-being of individuals, businesses, and communities.





Once every five years, the college undergoes a new strategic planning process, facilitated and supervised by the Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness. In compliance with the revised TCSG Procedure—2.3.3p TCSG College Strategic Planning, the college decided to update its current strategic plan for FY21-FY25.

With input from employees, students, and the local community, the current and projected needs of the service area were analyzed. Planning activities included national, state, local, and institutional trend analysis, as well as evaluation of resources that are currently available or that should be included in long-range future plans. The strategic plan, which includes strategic goals, measurable objectives, and strategies, was built upon the mission of the college and was the basic planning document which serves as a compass for all college-wide planning activities.

Each year, members of the Senior Staff update the strategic plan through review, evaluation, and report the strategic goals, objectives, and expected results that were established the previous year. The Associate Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness is responsible for the update process. Results, including deficiencies and achievements, contribute input for improvements and revised objectives for the coming year. These conclusions also provide information for unit operational plans and departmental and institutional budget preparation.

## Environmental Scan

In December 2019, a group of internal and external stakeholders reviewed the college's student achievement goals which include graduation rate, retention rate, enrollment, total placement rate, in-field placement rate, and dual enrollment count. Additional internal data was analyzed which included the following: student satisfaction survey, annual colleague survey, advisory council survey, and special populations/disabilities surveys. The stakeholders reviewed the 11-county service delivery area EMSI labor market data and the in-demand occupations for this region from the WorkSource Southern Georgia.

Due to the COVID-19 disruption, the annual planning to revise the strategic plan was not held until November 2020. During the annual planning day, the environmental scan, data analysis, survey analysis, selected group work sessions, and annual planning meeting were used to develop the strategic plan which consists of the following:

- Mission, Vision, and Core Values
- Goals, Measurable Objectives, and Strategies
- Measurements of Goal Attainment

## Economic Impact Study

Wiregrass continually promotes economic growth through its direct expenditures and the resulting expenditures of students and businesses within the 11-county service area and the State of Georgia. According to the economic impact analysis produced by EMSI, Wiregrass added \$159.6 million in income to the Wiregrass service area economy in FY19, a value approximately equal to 1.8 percent of the region's total gross regional product. Expressed in terms of jobs, WGTC's impact supported 3,308 jobs. In fact, 1 out of every 39 jobs in the Wiregrass service area is supported by the activities of Wiregrass and its students. The analysis presented in this report considers Wiregrass a strong investment from the perspectives of students, taxpayers, and society in Georgia. Students receive a great return for their investment in a Wiregrass education through higher earnings. At the same time, taxpayers' investment in Wiregrass returns more to government budgets than it costs and creates a wide range of social benefits throughout Georgia.



# Strategic Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

*To fully support its mission of workforce development, Wiregrass Georgia Technical College has established the following strategic goals along with supporting measurable objectives and strategies.*



- Goal 1** Provide quality, industry-driven education and training that prepares students to enter the workforce in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area.
- Goal 2** Provide avenues for student success.
- Goal 3** Increase the adult literacy rate and the number of high school equivalency credentials among the population in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area.
- Goal 4** Provide customized workforce training for businesses and industries in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area to remain competitive by ensuring a well-trained workforce.



**Goal 1** Provide quality, industry-driven education and training that prepares students to enter the workforce in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area.

### Measurable Objective 1

All credit programs of study offered will meet the needs of the business and industry in the service area.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Complete a comprehensive program review of the validity of current programs within the service area and region by analyzing the need for an award for employment, program enrollment, program placement, and EMSI data for the service area.

**Strategy B.** Gain input from advisory council to review the quality of programs, technology used within programs, and skill sets needed of graduates.

**Strategy C.** The rigor of occupational programs will be maintained by the continual pursuit of program accreditation.

### Measurable Objective 2

Increase the number of registered apprentices who earn the USDOL certificates of completion by 10 percent from FY20 through FY25.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Seek input from industry on viable apprenticeship opportunities (credit and noncredit).

**Strategy B.** Evaluate success rate of current apprenticeships (completion rates, skills check offs).

### Measurable Objective 3

Increase the number of seats available in fully online courses available to students by 10 percent from 5,486 in FY19 to 6,034 by FY25.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Conduct faculty training to implement a stronger course design and ensure quality of online courses.

**Strategy B.** Evaluate the design and development of online courses.

**Strategy C.** Utilize Open Education Resources (OER).



## Goal 2 Provide avenues for student success.

### Measurable Objective 1

Increase total awards (Degree, Diploma and Technical Certificate of Credit) by 5 percent from 2,535 in FY19 to 2,662 in FY25.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Create a more robust schedule for non-high school students.

**Strategy B.** Utilize technology to monitor and track academic progress and completion.

**Strategy C.** Increase awards/completions of dual enrollment students by evaluating scheduling of dual enrollment occupational pathways to ensure that students have ample time to complete the award.

### Measurable Objective 2

Promote equitable success among student groups by meeting college goals for transition and retention of specific student groups.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Survey Perkins subgroups within Perkins programs for success/barriers to completion/retention. Identify barrier(s) to address and develop action plan.

**Strategy B.** Survey dual enrollment students for barriers to transition to regular admit students after high school graduation. Identify barrier(s) to address and develop action plan.

**Strategy C.** Survey adult education students who complete a high school equivalency diploma for barriers that stop them from transitioning to credit enrollment. Identify barrier(s) to address and develop action plan.





**Goal 3** Increase the adult literacy rate and the number of high school equivalency credentials among the population in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area.

### Measurable Objective 1

Ensure Adult Education students obtain improved literacy skills.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Wiregrass AES will provide targeted instructional support and training to instructors who need assistance in meeting benchmarks.

**Strategy B.** Wiregrass AES will offer test alternatives (HiSET) to the current GED® test to increase high school equivalency testing options for students.

**Strategy C.** Adult Education students will receive individualized, targeted instruction to enable students to earn measurable skill gains.

### Measurable Objective 2

Ensure Adult Education students receive academic and career training to successfully transition to post-secondary education and/or careers.

### Strategies

**Strategy A.** Wiregrass AES will provide integrated education and training (IET) opportunities for students.

**Strategy B.** Wiregrass AES will offer in-person and virtual transition workshops and the GED Step-Up dual enrollment program to students.

**Strategy C.** Wiregrass AES will offer transition services to successfully transition students to Wiregrass's credit programs.



**Goal 4** Provide customized workforce training for businesses and industries in the Wiregrass 11-county service delivery area to remain competitive by ensuring a well-trained workforce.

#### **Measurable Objective 1**

Increase the number of customized contract training hours by 5 percent from 60,844 in FY20 to 63,886 in FY25.

#### **Strategies**

**Strategy A.** Increase the number and types of contract training courses offered to businesses and industries in the region.

**Strategy B.** Establish new partnerships which will allow the opportunity to increase the contract training courses offered.

**Strategy C.** Develop high-quality marketing materials to utilize in promoting contract training offerings.

#### **Measurable Objective 2**

Increase the number of companies served by customized contract training by 5 percent from 87 in FY20 to 92 in FY25.

#### **Strategies**

**Strategy A.** Seek creative partnerships with area businesses and industries, the Georgia Department of Corrections, the local WIOA board, and other community partners to help increase the workforce pool training and to better meet industry needs.

**Strategy B.** Develop and implement new contract training courses to reach additional partners.



# WIREGRASS

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GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE®

*Wiregrass Georgia Technical College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees, diplomas, and technical certificates of credit. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Wiregrass Georgia Technical College.*

*Equal Opportunity Institution / A Unit of the Technical College System of Georgia*