



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **For Immediate Release**

November 1, 2018

Last September 2017, Surry County Schools and Surry Community College embarked on a venture to create an innovative workforce development program, the Next Generation Career Academy (NGCA). The NGCA was born out of a desire to allow students to complete internships or apprenticeships with local business and industry partners that could ultimately lead to employment. Dr. Travis L. Reeves, Superintendent of Surry County Schools and Dr. David Shockley, President of Surry Community College partnered to create this program, one of the first of its kind in the state. Funded by a generous grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation, the NGCA began last year with 12 interns, who completed paid internships in a variety of local businesses and fields.

As part of NGCA, students would also earn industry-related career credentials and training from Surry Community College. To date, students have received training in Human Resource Development (Soft Skills), Microsoft Outlook & Excel, DiSC Behavior Assessment, LEAN Manufacturing Introduction, Resume, Job Interview, and Job Searching Skills. Additionally, Surry Arts Council trained students in Public Speaking. Moreover, students will receive OSHA training in the spring. “These are industry-recognized credentials and training requested by business partners,” stated Mrs. Crystal Folger-Hawks. Mrs. Folger-Hawks is the Career Coach who facilitates the program and serves as a matchmaker between businesses based on their needs and students, based on their skill sets.

This year, three of the interns returned to the NGCA program. Neal Board, Nathaniel McCraw, and Caleb Snow are returning interns. Board made a change to a different internship site this year, but both McCraw and Snow remained at the same internship sites. All three students

worked at their internships over the summer as well. This year, there are 13 new interns. Mrs. Folger-Hawks further stated, “This year we are fulfilling our Golden Leaf Grant requirements of 20 paid interns. We are starting off the fall with 16 interns and will add more in the spring. Internships include a wide range of positions from the front office, back office, to manufacturing, and construction. We are meeting the business partners’ needs while helping students learn real-world skills.”

Superintendent Reeves remarked, “We are striving to make learning relevant for students and are extremely proud of the way Mrs. Folger-Hawks is tying together workforce development, economic development, and education. We are also extremely proud of the students’ work in their internship sites. We want students to know there are viable jobs and opportunities they can take advantage of right here in Surry County. The partnership with Surry Community College was a great opportunity for us as a school district to make an impact on the economic development of Surry County and to keep students here, working and becoming a productive part of the local community. It’s a win-win for all involved. Students gain valuable job-related skills, and businesses gain prospective employees.”

Folger-Hawks commented, “The response has been great from the business partners involved. We are also seeing an increase in the number of students wanting to participate in an internship.” Business partners desiring to get involved in the Next Generation Career Academy should contact Mrs. Crystal Folger-Hawks at (336) 401-7820.



Front Row: Caden West, Abby Key, Analisse Saunders, Cheyenne Seal, Nathan Sheets. Back Row: William Walker, Dillon Whisenhunt, Quincy Smith, Levi Rorrer, & Hunter Peele. Not pictured were Luke Johnson and Jasmine Toney.