



FLORIDA ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION  
CENTER for EXCELLENCE

NEWS from  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HCC Based Regional Center of Excellence in High-Tech Manufacturing Receives Funding  
Renewal from NSF**

Florida Advanced Technological Education (FLATE) Center, the National Science Foundation (NSF) regional center of excellence in manufacturing at Hillsborough Community College (HCC) in Brandon, was awarded an unprecedented third round of center-level funding for an Advanced Technological Education (ATE) regional center of excellence. According to Dr. Marilyn Barger, principal investigator of the grant and executive director of FLATE “This is a wonderful opportunity for HCC and its partner co-investigators, St. Petersburg College (SPC) and the College of Engineering at the University of South Florida (USF COE) to continue to work with the Florida Department of Education (FL DOE), manufacturers, manufacturing organizations. The Center will impact colleges across the state in addressing critical education, training and talent development needs for Florida’s high-tech manufacturing and related industries.”

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FLATE began “as a dream,” and officially as a planning grant from NSF in 2002 to develop a regional center of excellence for manufacturing in the greater Tampa Bay area. Encouraged by NSF, Dr. Barger of HCC, Bradley Jenkins of SPC and Dr. Richard Gilbert of the USF COE, expanded the Center’s focus to include the entire state of Florida. This expansion allowed FLATE to develop strategic state-level partners with FL DOE, Workforce Florida, statewide manufacturing organizations, and other important stakeholders. In 2004, FLATE was awarded its first ATE regional center funding at \$2.7M. With this latest 2012 award that takes the Center through 2015, and including several supplemental NSF grants, the Center through HCC has been granted nearly \$10 million to support advanced technological education supporting manufacturing in Florida through FLATE.

With this renewal, FLATE will continue to focus on the deployment of its award winning A.S. Engineering Technology Degree throughout the state, building capacity in the college programs and their feeder secondary programs, as well as continuing to strengthen industry buy-in for employing credentialed degree graduates. “It will also conduct additional research in technician education and industry credential alignment to academics.” Barger said. FLATE will also develop a partnership for its award-winning “*Made in Florida*” outreach campaign initiatives with the Center for Advanced Manufacturing Excellence (CAME). Dr. Carlos Soto, president of HCC in Brandon Campus says, “I am extremely pleased that NSF is continuing to support FLATE.” The Center’s impact on technical education in the state of Florida is impressive. “The education-industry partnership model that they have fostered is unprecedented and I look forward to the next three years” Soto said.

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**FLATE** is a National Science Foundation Regional Center of Excellence, committed to ensuring Florida has a well prepared workforce for advanced and emerging technologies. Created in 2004, FLATE is one of 46 Advanced Technological Education Centers in the United States funded by the National Science Foundation focused on improving science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education and training to meet the needs of American advanced technology industries. For more information visit [www.fl-ate.org](http://www.fl-ate.org).

Founded in 1968 as part of Florida's 28-member community college system, **Hillsborough Community College** is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Over 47,000 students take advantage of HCC's vast course offerings and multiple campus locations in Tampa, Brandon, Plant City, Ybor City, MacDill Air Force Base, Ruskin, and via online learning environment.

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