FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 17, 2016

STATE NOMINEES ANNOUNCED FOR THE
2016 ACT COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS CAMPAIGN

Montgomery, Ala. – The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is pleased to announce the state nominees for the national ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign celebrating achievement and creating awareness around the goal of college and career readiness for all. For the fourth year, ACT has partnered with Alabama and selected states for the College & Career Readiness Campaign to nominate students, schools, community colleges, and employers.

The campaign showcases the knowledge, skills, and preparation that public schools offer to students and that are included in the ALSDE’s strategic plan for education, Plan 2020: Every Child a Graduate—Every Graduate Prepared for College, Work, Adulthood in the 21st Century.

Alabama nominees were on honored in December 2015 at the ACT State Organization Conference. On April 7, 2016, resolutions celebrating the nominees will be presented at the Alabama State Board of Education meeting. State nominees will have the opportunity to be chosen by ACT as a national exemplar. The National Exemplars will be honored at the ACT National Gala on College and Career Readiness in Washington, DC, later this spring.

The nominees selected for the ACT College and Career Readiness Campaign are:

Student Readiness Award – Elizabeth Meads, Zion Chapel High School, Coffee County Schools
Elizabeth received a 28 on her ACT in Grade 11 and holds a 4.0 GPA. She is very diverse in her studies and interests, pursuing a degree in welding technology from Lurleen B. Wallace Community College. She is also a talented musician, playing five instruments fluently.

She prides herself on a strong work ethic saying, “I have always been willing to go the extra mile in any task that I perform, whether it be in the classroom or in real-world situations. I always make sure that the task is done ahead of time and done accurately.”

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College and Career Transition Award – Loveless Academic Magnet Program (LAMP)
High School, Montgomery County Schools

LAMP has a current enrollment of 500 students. Admission is open to students residing in the county who meet admission requirements and are entering the ninth through twelfth grades without regard to race, sex, religion, or creed.

The student body is comprised of 27% Asian, 26% Black, 42% White, and 5% other ethnicities. LAMP has students where both parents have doctoral degrees and students living in the home of an extended family member and who are free lunch recipients. All students are highly motivated and feel it is an honor and a responsibility to be chosen to attend LAMP High School.

Within LAMP, the STEM departments, the English department, and the World Languages department work well vertically and have developed a seamless curriculum that stresses analytical thinking and are all writing intensive. Each class involves ACT and SAT preparatory work.

LAMP teaches, as do all public schools, a Career Preparedness Class that includes computer skills for the workplace, interviewing skills, and some resume building skills. Its seniors must develop an impeccable resume and they write and critique their college application essays at the beginning of their senior year.

Career Preparedness Award - Calhoun Community College, Decatur
Calhoun Community College has been honored twice now with this award. Calhoun Community College has a very strong relationship with the K-12 schools, and especially the high schools, in its service area. The college participates in statewide and local articulation, which is a process linking high school course work and college course work to assist students in making a smooth transition from one level of education to another without experiencing delays or duplication in learning.

Calhoun Community College also has one of the largest dual enrollment programs in the state. This fall the college is offering 65 dual enrollment classes at 21 high schools. In addition, there are two dual enrollment welding classes on the Calhoun Decatur campus and two dual enrollment cosmetology classes. During the 2014-15 school year, 910 students participated in dual enrollment classes with Calhoun Community College during the fall semester, and 864 students were dually enrolled for the spring 2015 semester. For the fall 2015 semester, 474 students have been registered for dual enrollment classes on high school campuses, and 316 are taking course for dual credit on the Calhoun Huntsville and Decatur campuses.
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The college also offers several summer camps for middle and high school students, including the Summer Welding and Electrical Technology (SWeETy) camp for girls and Robotics and Information Technologies camps. Calhoun Community College is committed to career preparation. The college employs job placement specialist to assist students in choosing a career path, career preparation, and job placement opportunities.

Workplace Success Award – Toray Carbon Fibers America, Decatur
Toray Carbon Fibers America is a world-class manufacturer of carbon fiber. The Decatur facility was established in 1997. The site includes polymerization, spinning, and carbonization units. Through multiple expansions Decatur’s facility has grown to hold three PAN Spinning production lines, three Polymerization units, and four Carbonization lines.

Toray actively recruits potential employees each year by attending college and career fairs at universities and colleges across the country. Toray also offers tuition reimbursement for any employee who want to attend college to further their education. Toray has worked with Calhoun Community College to send employees back for further education specifically in the area of Process Technology.

Toray has used ACT WorkKeys in Production since 2007. Many positions in the plant have been job profiled. The company has seen first hand that employees who have WorkKeys scores have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully on the job.

Alabama has seen state nominees become national winners in past years. Sheree Gremillion of Rogers High School, Lauderdale County Schools, was honored with the Student Readiness Award in 2013, and Shelton State Community College was honored with the Career Preparedness Award in 2014.

Award Requirements:
Student Readiness Award – student nominee must have the following criteria:
(1) Performance in relation to ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks in English, mathematics, reading, and science
(2) Demonstrated progress toward college and career readiness between Grade 8 and Grade 12
(3) Demonstrated success in high school coursework as signified by high school grade point average
(4) Success beyond the classroom, including extracurricular activities, leadership positions, community service, and work experience
(5) Unique qualities such as personal traits, future plans, or success in the face of adversity or other extraordinary circumstances

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College and Career Transition Award – high school nominee must have the following criteria:
(1) Demonstrated student growth toward meeting ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks between Grade 8 and Grade 12
(2) Aggregate ACT scores and percentage of students meeting ACT’s College Readiness Benchmarks
(3) Demonstrated success at serving students from underrepresented racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds
(4) Demonstrated dedication to ensuring that students gain the knowledge and skills needed to prepare them for success after high school
(5) Demonstrated commitment to providing leadership opportunities for students outside the classroom

Career Preparedness Award – community college nominee must have the following criteria:
(1) Accessibility of career readiness assessments and career preparation programs
(2) Strength of relationships with local employers
(3) Student success indicators including second-year retention, graduation, and four-year college transfer rates, including for students from underrepresented racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds
(4) Demonstrated dedication to career planning and to providing a support structure for students
(5) Demonstrated commitment to providing leadership opportunities for students outside the classroom

Workplace Success Award – employer nominee must have the following criteria:
(1) Strength of relationships with local colleges and high schools
(2) Use of career readiness assessments for recruitment and advancement within the company
(3) Dedication to providing employees with opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills
(4) Demonstrated effort to create and maintain diversity in its workforce
(5) Demonstrated efforts of employer and employees to give back to the local community

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