

Virginia Governor Attends SVCC Power Line Graduation

Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe was tapped as the honorary 100th graduate of the Southside Virginia Community College Power Line Worker Training School on November 21, 2017. He joined the 24 other graduates completing the sixth class held since opening of the program in March of 2016

SVCC's Power Line Worker Training Program is a direct result of McAuliffe's belief in credentials for workforce readiness and he noted his administration provided the first \$200,000 Talent Solutions for Economic Development Grant to get it rolling.

In introducing the Governor, Dr. Al Roberts, SVCC President, said, "Governor McAuliffe's presence at today's ceremony serves to highlight the value of the Power Line Training Program in meeting a critical workforce need."

"This is a great day in Virginia. We are training people for real jobs, higher paying jobs, this is exciting that we are preparing for the Bold New Virginia Economy," McAuliffe said.

He noted that the state of Virginia is at almost full-employment, noting his efforts to bring industry and jobs to the state while ensuring there are people to fill these jobs.

The governor also praised the community colleges in Virginia for the move in the right direction by training the workforce of the state. The Power Line program also fits into the Virginia Community College System Rural Virginia Horseshoe initiative of which the goals are improving the educational outcomes of rural communities to establish a common foundation for all Virginians, wherever they may live.

The first of its kind in Virginia, the school was founded by a public-private partnership between Virginia's electric co-ops, Southside Virginia Community College, the Virginia Community

College System and the Commonwealth of Virginia. The motivation to establish the program grew from the demand for power line workers throughout Virginia and the nation.

Clyde Robertson, Instructor and a 41-year veteran lineman, has lead each class through completion with a 90 percent hiring rate.

Students completing the program receive five Workforce credentials, including Commercial Driver's License, OSHA 10, CPR/First Aid, NCCER Power Line Worker Level 1 and VCOT Traffic Controller.

After the ceremony, the class demonstrated their prowess at climbing poles, rescuing techniques and repairing lines on the field where they train at the SVCC Occupational/Technical Center at Pickett Park; the field is often referred to as "The Playground."