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GLOBAL FOOD COMPANY SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH ESCC FOR WORKER SCHOLARSHIPS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Enterprise State Community College has entered into agreement with Pilgrim's, a subsidiary of leading global food company JBS, to train its employees for associate degrees and technical certifications in their respective regions.

ESCC signed the agreement on Wednesday, Feb. 2, to participate in the JBS/Pilgrim's Better Futures program that offers free college tuition to Pilgrim's team members and their child dependents. Pilgrim's offers to pay the remaining tuition balance – often called a last dollar tuition scholarship – for its workers to train in technical programs that help them succeed. The scholarship is effective after all other aid, including aid granted after completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), is applied.

"It is common for Alabama's business and industry to look to Alabama's community colleges to train their workers, and it's rewarding to reach agreements with companies and universities all over the state that deliver the whole-student approach in advising and student experiences, right alongside workforce development," said Jimmy H. Baker, Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System. "This agreement is among many that confirm our colleges' dedication to the communities they serve. We welcome Pilgrim's workers who choose our colleges and benefit from this agreement."

Pilgrim's employees are required to have worked with the company at least six months prior to becoming eligible for the tuition scholarship and to work for the company two years after graduation or completion of a certification.

Similar agreements for employee scholarships and professional development were signed with Pilgrim's at Northwest-Shoals and Snead State Community Colleges. Each of the colleges is within a region where a Pilgrim's facility is located.

"We are excited to partner with these colleges to offer this incredible benefit to our team members and their children," said Corey Friend, JBS/Pilgrim's Better Futures program manager. "This program will provide deserving individuals the opportunity to pursue their dreams for higher education and strengthen Alabama communities for generations to come."

In addition to JBS/Pilgrim's offering the last dollar tuition scholarship, ESCC committed to offer specialized advising, financial literacy and professional development to Pilgrim's employees who choose to attend.

"Enterprise State is excited to partner with Pilgrim's Pride to provide these educational opportunities for its employees and their families," ESCC President Matt Rodgers said. "We look forward to welcoming and assisting these students in the future at ESCC. I commend Pilgrim's Pride for its foresight and commitment to our community."

Cutline: ESCC and Pilgrim's Pride signed an agreement on Feb. 2 that would provide educational and training opportunities to Pilgrim's employees. Pictured, from left, are Alabama Community College System Chancellor Jimmy Baker, ESCC President Matt Rodgers, Pilgrim's Enterprise Complex Manager David Massey, Better Futures Program Manager Corey Friend and Pilgrim's Enterprise HR Manager Mathew Parkinson.

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About Enterprise State Community College

Enterprise State Community College is a comprehensive community college that serves more than 1,800 students annually between its Enterprise campus and the Alabama Aviation Colleges in Andalusia and Ozark. Each campus and site currently fulfills the Alabama Community College System's mission for education and training that leads to high-wage, high-demand jobs in integral careers worldwide. Students can obtain associate degrees and certificates through multiple programs at the college.