

## **USC officially opens new iCarolina Learning Lab in Kershaw, S.C.**

**Kershaw, S.C.** – Today, the University of South Carolina Lancaster officially opened a new Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab in the Kershaw, S.C., community. The new lab is the second location operated by USC Lancaster.

The new lab, located inside the Kershaw Branch of the Lancaster County Library System, joins seven other labs in Allendale, Clinton, Lancaster, Laurens, Sumter, Union and Walterboro. Begun in early 2022, these labs provide underserved communities in South Carolina with access to high-speed broadband internet.

The existing Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab at USC Lancaster, housed on the USCL campus, serves as a hub for the new location within the Lancaster County Library-Kershaw Branch. The Kershaw Branch has a dedicated space that features four iMac stations, four MacBooks, four iPads and four Apple TVs on a video wall for greater collaboration.

In March 2021, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster awarded \$6 Million of the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funds to the University of South Carolina, which in partnership with Benedict College, have been establishing Apple computer labs to serve communities statewide. The existing labs, located at regional USC Palmetto College campuses, are all situated within 15 miles or less of a broadband desert, according to the South Carolina Broadband Map, providing reliable technology and internet access to these communities.

"We are pleased to expand the Palmetto College Learning Lab Network to serve the Kershaw community," said Dr. Susan Elkins, Palmetto College Chancellor. "This technological investment in our campuses and communities opens the door for so many South Carolinians to gain skills and certifications that will enable them to grow both academically and professionally, including the Swift programming language. Continued thanks to Governor McMaster for the leadership and vision that has created such a tremendous opportunity for these communities. Also, thanks to USC Lancaster Dean Walter Collins and the entire USC Lancaster team for their work in executing this vision in the Kershaw and Lancaster communities."

The Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab network, a partnership with Apple Inc., launched a free Swift coding certification course beginning this spring to teach Apple's iOS language to community members across South Carolina, as well as to students in the USC System. Those enrolled in the courses learn the skills needed to develop apps for iOS (iPad and iPhone), MacOS (iMac and MacBook), Apple TV and Apple Watch.

"At USC Lancaster, we are very excited to be able to expand the mission and mandate of Palmetto College iCarolina Lab Networks initiative beyond Lancaster into the Kershaw community," said Dr. Walter Collins, campus dean at USC Lancaster.

“We are excited for the opening of the Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab in Kershaw,” said Bill Kirkland, executive director of the USC Office of Economic Engagement. “Thanks to the support of Governor McMaster, USC continues to invest in our communities by providing access to technology and high-demand skills training. As the state’s flagship institution, USC is committed to ensuring that our underserved communities and rural populations have access to broadband internet and workforce development opportunities.”

The new Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab is housed in the community room of the Lancaster County Library-Kershaw Branch, 101 N. Hampton Street, Kershaw, S.C. To learn more about both Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Lab locations in Kershaw and Lancaster, visit <http://go.sc.edu/iCarolinaLancaster>.

The Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Labs across South Carolina have been strategically located for use by citizens in the community, the regional USC Palmetto College campuses, local school districts, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and the South Carolina Technical College System. Each site provides Apple products and educational programming to community members, faculty, staff and students at no cost to the user. To date, eight Palmetto College iCarolina Learning Labs have opened to serve the surrounding communities of USC Lancaster (Lancaster and Kershaw), USC Salkehatchie (Allendale and Walterboro), USC Sumter (Sumter) and USC Union (Union, Laurens and Clinton).

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**Ribbon Cutting Photo**

Front row L to R: Mr. Blake Faulkenberry, Director of Information Technology, USC Lancaster; Mr. Billy Faulkenberry, Library Circulation, Lancaster County Library – Kershaw Branch; Ms. Susan Gandy, Branch Manager, Lancaster County Library – Kershaw Branch; Dr. April Williams, Director, Lancaster County Library, Dr. Susan Elkins, Chancellor, USC Palmetto College; Dr. Carl Owens, Palmetto College iCarolina Lab Project Director and Apple Distinguished Educator

Back row L to R: Dr. Walter Collins, Dean, USC Lancaster; Mr. Bob Dyer, Director of Information Technology, USC Palmetto College