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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Polk State President Falconetti inducted as Chair of Florida College System Council of Presidents

Wednesday, July 7, 2021 — Polk State College President Angela Garcia Falconetti was inducted in June as Chair of the Florida College System Council of Presidents for 2021-2022.

The Council of Presidents (COP) is comprised of the presidents of Florida's 28 public colleges who advise and advocate to state and federal legislators, oversee the coordination of statewide functions such as risk management, and maintain close working relationships with universities, school boards, and more, among other responsibilities that benefit the Florida College System.

"It is an incredible honor to serve as Chair of the Council of Presidents, which continues to work diligently and collaboratively to ensure world-class higher education and workforce training for the Florida College System's 730,000 students," Dr. Falconetti said. "I extend sincerest thanks to my predecessor, St. Johns River State College President Joe Pickens, for his leadership and congratulate St. Petersburg College President Dr. Tonjua Williams who has been named Vice Chair."

Additionally, Pasco-Hernando College President Dr. Tim Beard was selected as Vice-Chair Elect and Florida Gateway College President Dr. Larry Barrett was selected as Parliamentarian.

Dr. Falconetti served as Vice Chair of the COP as well as the Chair of its Policy and Advocacy Committee in 2020-2021.

"I am proud of Dr. Falconetti and confident in her strong leadership and wisdom from her broad experience working in higher education, as well as the hardworking, mission-driven members of the Council of Presidents," Polk State District Board of Trustees Chair Cindy Hartley Ross said.

The COP, which is an organization that promotes the value of the Florida College System to the economic, social, and cultural health of the State of Florida, is responsible for advising and advocating to the state and federal executive and legislative branches, as well as the Chancellor of the Florida College System, the Commissioner of Education, the State Board of Education, and other public and private entities and individuals on behalf of Florida's public colleges.

The Council accomplished its three goals for the 2021 Legislative Session by conserving the System's program fund, securing Public Education Capital Outlay funds for investment in infrastructure, and maintaining funding for the Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network.

"The COP and Florida College System were supported by legislative leaders whose time and dedication in supporting the State recover from the impact of COVID-19 continue to positively impact students' lives through the power of quality education provided by Florida's colleges," Dr. Falconetti expressed. "As we look forward to an even brighter future, it is my goal to ensure that the needs of our students remain at the forefront and that we secure the resources to expand quality educational and workforce training opportunities across our colleges."

The members of the COP also serve as the Board of Directors of the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium, the Florida College System Activities Association, and the Policy and Advocacy Committee, an official committee of the Association of Florida Colleges.

“I extend my sincerest appreciation for Polk State College’s students, faculty, staff, and District Board of Trustees for their support,” Dr. Falconetti added. “We will continue to support and expand opportunities for our students and the State of Florida.”

About Polk State College

Located in Winter Haven, Florida, and established in 1964, Polk State College is a multi-campus institution serving more than 15,000 students with Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Science degrees, as well as 9,000 individuals in a wide range of certificate and workforce training programs. The College also operates three charter high schools.

Polk State’s advantages include small class sizes; hands-on learning; dedicated faculty; day and night classes; online options; affordable tuition; excellent financial aid; and a diverse community and vibrant student life, including fine arts opportunities, clubs, and intercollegiate athletics.