



# News Release

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## Charleston County Economic Development Celebrates Milestones at the 20<sup>th</sup> Industry Appreciation Luncheon

Charleston County Economic Development hosted its 20<sup>th</sup> annual Industry Appreciation Luncheon on Tuesday, January 30 at Trident Technical College. The event brought together distinguished industry leaders, government officials, economic development allies, and community stakeholders to commemorate the collective accomplishments advancing economic development in Charleston County throughout 2023.

In the past year, Charleston County welcomed 14 public company announcements with a capital investment surpassing \$94 million, creating 923 new jobs. These relocations and expansions created a noteworthy \$77 million new annual payroll for the regional economy. Charleston County Economic Development (CCED) is excited to announce a pivotal milestone with the creation of 40,000 new jobs and \$7 billion in capital investment since the department's inception in 1993.

The Industry Appreciation Luncheon, a flagship event for CCED, serves as a significant platform to celebrate and recognize the flourishing business community in Charleston County. Attendees were briefed with updates from the Business Development Division, and the acknowledgment of businesses with Industry Impact Awards. Noteworthy accolades included the 2023 Economic Development Ambassador Award and the esteemed Lifetime Achievement Award.

The distinguished 2023 Industry Impact Award winners encompassed various categories, featuring small business – Firefly Distillery, medium business – Molina Healthcare, large business – Scientific Research Corporation (SRC), and community impact – Neal Brothers, Charleston Inc. Chadwick Vail of the Charleston County School District was honored as the Economic Development Ambassador, recognizing him for his leadership and significant contributions that promote economic growth in our community.

CCED also paid tribute to Mary Thornley for her outstanding leadership at Trident Technical College. Dr. Mary Thornley was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award, a prestigious accolade reserved for individuals demonstrating exceptional and sustained contributions to their community and field throughout their entire career. The last presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award occurred in 2016, honoring Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. as he concluded his 41-year tenure as the Mayor of Charleston.

"As we reflect on the remarkable achievements of 2023 and celebrate two decades of the Industry Appreciation Luncheon, it is clear that our community's strength lies in the collective efforts of our local industries, leaders, and partners," stated Charleston County Economic Development Executive Director Steve Dykes. He continued, "The milestones we've reached underscore the resilience and vitality of Charleston County's economic landscape."



### *About Charleston County Economic Development*

*For over three decades, the Charleston County Economic Development Department has been dedicated to establishing and maintaining business relationships with new and existing industries to preserve the Charleston area's exceptional business climate and quality of life. To learn more about Charleston County Economic Development, visit [www.charlestoncountydevelopment.org](http://www.charlestoncountydevelopment.org).*

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