

Shelby County Achieves Certification as ACT® Work Ready Community

Shelby County has announced that it has met all criteria to become a certified ACT® Work Ready Community.

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Shelby County has announced that it has met all criteria to become a certified ACT®

Work Ready Community. This

achievement caps an ACT Work Ready Community Boot Camp process and begins a two-year growth and maintenance phase to retain certification.



The ACT Work Ready Communities initiative is designed to assist a particular area, region or state in developing its workforce pipeline to provide skilled workers for employers. The framework allows each participating community to quantify and improve the skill levels of its workforce through a standardized workforce skill credential—the ACT WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate®—supported by data updated online by Iowa-based ACT on a monthly basis.

“We congratulate the ACT Work Ready team and their partners for their work in achieving this distinction for Shelby County,” said Shelby County Government Chief Administrative Officer Harold Collins. “Becoming an ACT Work Ready Community demonstrates the drive, innovation and spirit of our communities to come together to provide the resources needed to develop a competitive workforce that will further generate economic prosperity for our county and region.”

To begin this certification process, Shelby County leaders attended the ACT Work Ready Communities Boot Camp, an executive leadership and training program designed and hosted by ACT. They then began to work toward their certification goals by building awareness, cooperation and commitment with local employers, policymakers, educators and economic developers.

“A skilled workforce is the foundation of any growing economy, including ours here in Memphis,” said Ted Townsend, president and CEO of the Greater Memphis Chamber. “This nationally

recognized certification process will help us expand and accelerate the development of our workforce to meet historic economic development across our region. More than that, it will help us build a greater and more prosperous Memphis for all."

Southwest Tennessee Community College has worked with ACT to align the needs of local businesses and industries to education since it began using the WorkKeys system in 1995, just a few months after the product became available. As a national ACT testing site for employers, the College has a licensed profiler who works with area subject matter experts to match people to jobs, a formula for economic success that benefits the community and stakeholders.

"We are thrilled Shelby County has received this designation and proud to have partnered with the Workforce Ready Community Leadership Team to achieve the benchmarks for this certification," Southwest Tennessee Community College President Tracy D. Hall said. "In our role as the "Workforce Solutions Center of the Mid-South," we are vested in levelling up the skills that students or employees need to succeed on the job. It has been a privilege to be a part of an elite workforce collaborative committed to empowering the workforce, building strong communities and fostering economic growth."

"We congratulate Shelby County for this significant achievement, and we are proud to add them to our growing list of certified ACT Work Ready Communities," said Fred McConnel, Director of Workforce at ACT. "The progressive thinking and positive action demonstrated by county leadership shows an enduring commitment to growing the economic success of the area. As a result, local residents will begin seeing the important linkage between education and workforce development and the value of matching people to jobs."

The common building blocks of the initiative include:

ACT WorkKeys assessments: Standardized tests that measure an individual's essential work readiness skills in applied math, workplace documents and graphic literacy. According to decades of ACT research, these foundational skills are essential for a majority of today's jobs.
ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate: A national credential based on assessment results and issued at the bronze, silver, gold or platinum level to indicate career readiness.
ACT Career Curriculum training tools help individuals improve their "hard" and "soft" skill levels.
Job profiles: A job analysis system that helps employers understand the specific ACT WorkKeys assessment scores required for entry into and effective performance in a given job.

For more information on this initiative, go to workreadycommunities.org. For more information on all of ACT's workforce solutions, go to act.org/workforce.

About ACT

ACT is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people achieve education and workplace success. Headquartered in Iowa City, Iowa, ACT is trusted as the nation's leader in college and career readiness, providing high-quality achievement assessments grounded in more

than 50 years of research and experience. ACT offers a uniquely integrated set of solutions that help people succeed from kindergarten through career, providing insights that unlock potential. To learn more about ACT, go to www.act.org.

About Southwest Tennessee Community College

Southwest Tennessee Community College is a comprehensive, multicultural, public, open-access college with two main campuses in Memphis, Tenn. and five sites in Shelby and Fayette counties. Southwest awards associate degrees and certifications in more than 120 programs of study to raise educational levels, enhance economic development and enrich quality of life for students and the community at large. Southwest is a Tennessee Board of Regents institution, accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. For more information, visit www.southwest.tn.edu. Follow Southwest at [Facebook.com/southwesttn](https://www.facebook.com/southwesttn), [Twitter.com/southwesttn](https://twitter.com/southwesttn) and [Instagram.com/southwesttn](https://www.instagram.com/southwesttn).

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