

PRESIDENT GRIFFIN OUTLINES WCCS GROWTH AND WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON IN STATE OF THE COLLEGE ADDRESS

SELMA, Ala. — Wallace Community College Selma President Dr. Donitha Griffin shared the college's progress and plans for the future during her State of the College address at Faculty and Staff Orientation on September 24. Speaking to faculty, staff, students and alumni, Griffin introduced the message guiding WCCS forward: "Building Pathways. Creating Opportunities. Changing Lives." She acknowledged that change has asked a great deal of the college community, while expressing confidence in where that work is leading. "We are going somewhere," Griffin said.

ENROLLMENT GROWTH AND STUDENT SUCCESS

WCCS enrolled 2,263 students in fall 2026, an increase of 338 students, or 17.56%, since fall 2024. Total credit hours produced rose from 15,405 to 18,951 during that period, a 23% increase.

Griffin attributed the growth to a coordinated effort across the college. Admissions, recruiters and advisors adopted new outreach strategies, followed up with prospective students more quickly and worked more closely together. The college also strengthened its use of communications and admissions tracking to identify students who need support before they lose their place in class.

Keeping students enrolled remains a priority. Academic coaches and student success staff are working with Admissions, Financial Aid and the Cashier's Office to help students resolve account holds



and other barriers. Griffin noted that more than 85% of WCCS students receive financial aid, underscoring the importance of helping students navigate that process. The address also recognized Adult Education for helping students earn high school equivalency credentials, strengthen basic skills, prepare for work and move toward college. Griffin highlighted dual enrollment as a way to help high school students begin earning credentials before graduation.

Training for the region's workforce

Griffin pointed to workforce development on both the Selma and Demopolis campuses as a central part of the college's mission. WCCS offers training connected to local employment needs, including CDL, medical billing and coding, industrial maintenance, welding and other skilled fields.

In Demopolis, the college is working with employers including Drax, Cemex and Smurfit Westrock. Recent training has included HVAC courses, and a welding night class is expanding access for people who cannot attend during the day. In Selma, WCCS has provided customer service training for City of Selma employees and partnered on wastewater and leadership training. Skills for Success training continues on both campuses.

The college is also connecting classroom learning with work experience. Griffin highlighted registered apprenticeship and work based learning opportunities involving healthcare, welding, industrial maintenance and electrical training, along with the Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education, or FAME.

New programs and a wider reach

Looking ahead, Griffin described plans to grow WCCS programs in sectors where the region needs trained workers: industrial maintenance, electricity, welding, healthcare and aviation.

The college's plans include an Associate of Applied Science program in aircraft maintenance and an expansion at Craig Field. Proposed healthcare growth includes radiologic technology, surgical technology and medical laboratory technology. WCCS is also pursuing dual enrollment healthcare pathways in Selma and Demopolis in fields such as physical therapy technology, dental assisting, sterile processing and emergency medical services.



Night classes are planned to expand into Hale, Sumter and Greene counties, extending access to students across more of the Black Belt. Griffin also identified adult learners—including working adults and people returning to school—as a focus for future enrollment efforts. Flexible class times, support services and clear routes from training to careers will be important to reaching them.

On campus, Griffin outlined investments that would increase training capacity and strengthen student life. Those plans include an advanced manufacturing building, upgrades to the baseball facilities and renovations to the gym. The first phase of the gym renovation is scheduled for completion in November 2026, with a second phase, including new locker rooms and concessions, planned by fall 2028. A dedicated healthcare training center in Demopolis is projected for fall 2027.

A shared goal of 3,000 students

WCCS is working toward an enrollment goal of 3,000 students. Griffin said reaching that mark will take sustained outreach, new program launches, fully staffed advising and financial aid teams, and services that help students move through the college without unnecessary barriers. She emphasized that every department has a role in that effort—from instruction and student services to the employees who maintain welcoming, safe campuses and keep the college operating each day.

"We are Change Agents. We are Builders of Opportunity. We are Transformers of Lives and Communities," Griffin said.

For WCCS, the next chapter is focused on turning that commitment into more ways for students to learn, earn credentials and build their futures close to home.

