

Hartsville PULSE Initiative Selected as Finalist for Dick and Tunky Riley WhatWorksSC Award for Excellence

August 25, 2016 11:55 AM ET

Hartsville, S.C., U.S. – The TEACH Foundation (Teaching, Educating and Advancing Children in Hartsville) is pleased to announce its **PULSE (Partners for Unparalleled Local Scholastic Excellence)** initiative has been selected as a finalist for The Riley Institute at Furman University's [2016 Dick and Tunky Riley WhatWorksSC Award for Excellence](#). The WhatWorksSC award, first given in 2011, highlights outstanding evidence-based educational initiatives throughout South Carolina. Finalists were chosen by a panel of judges from more than 100 entries in the Riley Institute's [WhatWorksSC clearinghouse](#). As a finalist, PULSE will receive a small grant from the Riley Institute for enhancement of the program or consulting with other schools, districts and organizations interested in its replication.

PULSE is a one-of-kind public-private partnership formed to implement a comprehensive scholastic excellence program in Hartsville public schools that expanded curriculum opportunities and further improved student achievement through collaborative academic and social development initiatives. Partners include the Darlington County School District, South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM), Coker College and Sonoco. Sonoco funded the initiative through a \$5 million grant over five years.

"We believe it is our responsibility to build the community as we build our business," said Harris DeLoach, executive chairman of the board, Sonoco, and chairman of the board, TEACH Foundation. "It is absolutely critical that every child, regardless of economic status, leaves the public school system with the skills needed to succeed in the workplace."

After its five year implementation, a snapshot of results is as follows:

? A key component of PULSE, the Comer School Development Program, focusing on academic achievement and personal development of elementary students, **served more than 6,500 students** at four area elementary schools. On average, **students increased reading scores by 12-points and math scores by 14-points** on Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) testing.

? **Accelerated Learning Opportunities (ALO) served more than 840 high school students** in Hartsville with courses such as Mandarin Chinese, Molecular Biology, Engineering Design and Development, Circuitry and Electronic Inventions, Applied Piano, Class Voice, and more. The ALO program **grew to 14 course offerings** during the 2015-16 school year and celebrated **three successive years of all students passing AP tests**, earning college credits. Students participating in ALO have published scientific papers, earned prestigious scholarships and been selected for competitive internships at organizations like NASA.

? The local Scoutreach component helped more than **350 male students in grades 5k-5 gain leadership skills**.

? The summer reading program (six weeks long) exceeded its goal of **increasing reading proficiency** – from four months to six months of reading growth.

"Every accomplishment begins with action, and PULSE is no different. The five-year program is a great example of coordinated action resulting in positive change. We must build on it," said Jack Sanders, president and CEO of Sonoco.

"The TEACH Foundation is much more than just an exciting and unique partnership," said Dr. Eddie Ingram, superintendent of Darlington County School District. "The Foundation's leadership is forward-thinking in approach and execution. In addition to substantial fiscal support of the PULSE program, the TEACH Foundations also brings innovation and networking opportunities to the people of our district."

Finalists will be recognized and the winner of the 2016 award will be announced at a luncheon October 14 in conjunction with South Carolina Future Minds' annual Public Education Partners (PEP) conference at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center. The public is invited to attend the full conference or the luncheon only. For more information and/or to register for the luncheon or conference, please visit the [Riley Institute's website](#) or contact Jill Fuson at jill.fuson@furman.edu.

About TEACH

The TEACH Foundation is a not for profit, 501(c)(3) organization that serves as the administration arm for the PULSE initiative which includes accelerated learning programs at Hartsville High School, students living in Hartsville attending Mayo High School and the Comer School Development Program in four area elementary schools. It was formed as part of the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce. The Foundation manages the \$5 million in funding provided to PULSE by the Sonoco Foundation.

About Sonoco

Founded in 1899, Sonoco is a global provider of a variety of consumer packaging, industrial products, protective packaging, and displays and packaging supply chain services. With annualized net sales of approximately \$5 billion, the Company has 20,800 employees working in more than 330 operations in 34 countries, serving some of the world's best known brands in some 85 nations. Sonoco is a proud member of the 2015/2016 Dow Jones Sustainability World Index. For more information on the Company, visit our website at www.sonoco.com.

Contact:
Julie Scott
+843-383-7794
julie.scott@sonoco.com