



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Honors Former Trustee John O. McNairy  
with a \$250,000 Gift to Cars for College Program**

*Trustees provide honorarium to commemorate McNairy's 20 years of service to the Foundation*

**Kinston, NC (August 26, 2019)** – To commemorate former Trustee John O. McNairy's 20 years of service to the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Trustees have gifted an honorarium of \$250,000 to Lenoir Community College Foundation to help launch its Cars for College program, an economic mobility initiative that will secure transportation for students who are enrolled in Lenoir Community College and earning college credit. The intended outcome is to remove the mobility barriers that often prevent students from owning and operating a safe and dependable motor vehicle.

The idea of Cars for College was developed when transportation was identified as a primary factor in students not completing educational programs or continuing enrollment in degree programs. The goal of this program is to assure that low-income working students have access to safe, legal, affordable, and dependable vehicles to get them to college and work instead of purchasing a one-way ticket for every stop they make on the local bus service or having to depend on someone else for a ride to campus.

The Cars for College program will launch in early 2020, during the spring semester. The way the program will work is that the Lenoir Community College Foundation will acquire vehicles and turn them over to Lenoir Community College's Automotive Systems Technology program where any repairs and a diagnostic check for the vehicle will happen. Once the vehicle passes inspection from the Automotive Systems Technology program, it will be sold by Lenoir Community College Foundation to a student who qualifies for the Cars for College program at a projected cost of \$4,000 or less per car. The vehicle will come with a membership to Carolina AAA and carry a six-month 6,000-mile warranty.

Students will apply to the Cars for College program through the NCWorks Career Center, which will assess the student needs, resources, and work history, and provide counseling regarding training, employment, and job placement services. Lenoir Community College advisors will collaborate with the student and NCWorks personnel to get the student enrolled in the appropriate academic program that meets the student's career goals. The student will agree to complete the degree or certificate program and then be eligible to purchase a car through the program.

Lenoir Community College will notify students of the launch of the program by posting on its website and social media platforms as well as utilizing emails, text messaging and signage around campus. The College will also contact local media to assist in publicizing this innovative program.

"I am grateful to have served as a Trustee of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation," said John O. McNairy. "While I was fortunate to assist the Foundation in investing in various communities across North Carolina, I am a longtime resident of Lenoir County and have a great appreciation for this part of the state. Cars for College will support students attending Lenoir Community College who have demonstrated that they are committed to attaining an education and have created a plan to carry out their future goals. This is a collaborative program, spearheaded by Lenoir Community College Foundation, that I am confident will result in countless opportunities for young people."

"We were extremely grateful, and fortunate, to have John's perspective and expertise on the Board of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation for 20 years," said W. Noah Reynolds, president of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. "This honorarium is a token of our appreciation not only for John's contributions to the Foundation and to North Carolina, but also to support his continued efforts to make Eastern North Carolina a great place to live and work."

"We are very thankful of this award as it will make a significant difference to our students and to the communities we serve by assisting those who may not have an opportunity to get an education and training because of transportation and financial barriers," said LCC President Dr. Rusty Hunt. "With reliable transportation, low-income working students can experience success as members of the workforce. Without it, they will struggle each day to reach the jobs, classes, or training that could bring them economic security. We are appreciative of John's (McNairy) longtime support of the College and its Foundation and we are excited to launch this new initiative that will help our students in achieving a more productive future."

Cars for College expects to provide vehicles for more than 20 eligible students during its first three years of operation.

For more information on the Cars for College program, contact Lenoir Community College Foundation Executive Director Jeanne Kennedy at (252) 233-6812 or email [jmkennedy48@lenoircc.edu](mailto:jmkennedy48@lenoircc.edu).

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#### **ABOUT Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION**

Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation (ZSR) is committed to improving the quality of life for all North Carolinians. ZSR is a statewide, private, family foundation that has been a catalyst for positive change in North Carolina for more than 80 years. In June 2018, the Foundation announced **All For NC: Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation's Framework for Grantmaking and Learning**. Headquartered in Winston-Salem, NC, the Foundation has invested \$589 million into North Carolina. To learn more about ZSR and its Framework, visit [www.zsr.org](http://www.zsr.org).

#### **ABOUT LENOIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Lenoir Community College (LCC) in Kinston has a rich history of providing quality education and services to the citizens of Lenoir, Jones, and Greene Counties. Student success continues to be the College's top priority. LCC offers many unique programs and attracts students from across North Carolina, as well as from across the United States, with its distance education offerings. To learn more about the College and its programs and services, visit [www.lenoircc.edu](http://www.lenoircc.edu).

#### **ABOUT LENOIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION**

The Lenoir Community College Foundation has been an integral part of Lenoir Community College since 1972 for the purpose of generating private support as a nonprofit entity. Guided by a 21-member board of directors who are community leaders from Lenoir, Jones, and Greene Counties, the Foundation is a nonprofit corporation organized under North Carolina and Federal laws in compliance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. The Foundation provides scholarships, emergency loans, and supports the mission and vision of Lenoir Community College.