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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Southern Union Strategic Plan Update**

**MONTGOMERY** – Alabama Community College System Chancellor Jimmy H. Baker on Thursday announced the posting of the position of President of Southern Union State Community College. This announcement is the culmination of the Southern Union Strategic Planning Initiative announced in August of 2017.

Applicants will have until March 19 to submit their applications. An Advisory Search Committee will be appointed to assist the Chancellor with reviewing applications. The committee will consist of the ACCS Chancellor, Southern Union faculty and staff, an ACCS college president, and representatives from local business and industry or community members. After a thorough interview process, the Chancellor will make a recommendation to the System's board of trustees.

“As promised, the placement of a permanent president for Southern Union State Community College has been made a priority and is moving forward,” said Chancellor Baker. “Impressive work has been done by the Strategic Planning Committee with input from the entire Bison Community and a permanent president will be named no later than June of this year.”

Additionally, Chancellor Baker announced the appointment of Mr. Mark D. Ellard to serve as interim president of Southern Union effective March 1, 2018. Due to the state's restrictions on employment for those who have previously retired, Dr. Blow's service at Southern Union will end on February 28, 2018.

“I am grateful for Dr. Blow’s service to not only Southern Union and the Alabama Community College System but to the entire higher education community, his leadership will be greatly missed,” said Chancellor Baker. “Though his time at Southern Union will be short, I’m confident Mark’s experience and skill set are the perfect fit for this transitional time at the college.”

Ellard most recently served as interim president of Chattahoochee Valley Community College (CVCC). Prior to his time at CVCC, he served as interim president and executive vice president at Beville State Community College. Ellard holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration from the University of Alabama and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Mr. Ellard is a Certified Public Accountant and is licensed to practice in the State of Alabama.

“I am grateful for this opportunity to continue to serve our community colleges and I look forward to being a proud member of the Bison community,” said Ellard. “Southern Union is a special place and I am committed to helping in any way I can to continue the important work the college does on behalf of its students, our faculty and staff, and the greater community.”

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