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PRESS RELEASE

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Southern Union Strategic Planning Initiative Moves Forward

MONTGOMERY – Alabama Community College System Chancellor Jimmy Baker on Thursday announced the selection of the Southern Union State Community College Strategic Planning Committee as well as the dates for 3 community town halls. These efforts are part of the ongoing strategic planning initiative at the College, designed to address critical issues and culminating in the selection of a permanent President.

“The appointment of the Strategic Planning Committee and the announcement of community town halls at each of the schools’ campuses is all part of the effort to ensure the voices of every Bison family member is heard,” Chancellor Baker said. “I am encouraged by the participation thus far through the online survey and we look forward to our committee members receiving even more community feedback in the coming weeks.”

The community town halls will take place at the following times and locations:

Thursday, November 2
Valley Campus
6:00 p.m. EST, Room 101

Monday, November 6
Opelika Campus
6:00 p.m. CST, Southern Room

Tuesday, November 7

Wadley Campus

6:00 p.m. CST, Renaissance Auditorium

Individuals unable to attend the town halls can provide their input through the online survey by visiting bit.ly/southernunionsurvey. The survey will close on November 10.

Dr. Humphrey Lee, President of Northwest-Shoals Community College announced his retirement today effective December 31st. Dr. Glenda Colagross will return to Northwest-Shoals in her previous role as vice president and upon Dr. Lee's retirement will be appointed interim president of the college. Prior to her tenure at Southern Union, Colagross spent 20 years at Northwest-Shoals beginning as a Developmental Studies instructor and rising to vice president of Instruction and eventually vice president of the college.

Chancellor Baker announced the appointment of Dr. Bill Blow to serve as interim president of Southern Union until the selection of a permanent president in the spring. Dr. Blow's appointment is effective November 1st.

"Dr. Blow is a seasoned community college and higher education leader who is committed to leading Southern Union State Community College during this critical time," Chancellor Baker commented. "The Southern Union strategic planning initiative will result in the selection of a permanent president for the college no later than spring of 2018. I'm confident that Dr. Blow's impact on Southern Union will outlast his short tenure at the school."

Dr. William (Bill) Blow most recently served as interim president at Jefferson Davis Community College and also served in that role at Alabama Southern Community College and Gadsden State Community College. Dr. Blow also spent time at the Alabama Commission on Higher Education where he was appointed twice as interim executive director.

"I am proud to accept this appointment to join the Southern Union team at this important time," Dr. Blow said. "With a staunch commitment to doing what's best for every Southern Union student and with the help and input of the Bison community, I'm confident our efforts will result in the long-term success of the college."

To ensure the Strategic Planning Initiative is responsive to the needs of the college and community alike, Chancellor Baker announced the appointment of 10 members to the Southern Union Strategic Planning Committee who will lead the initiative moving forward. The committee will be co-chaired by Interim President Blow and Cary Cox, Director of Workforce Development for the City of Auburn. The remaining committee members include:

- Representative Bob Fincher (R-Woodland)
- CJ Hincy, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Auburn University

- Cisco King, Human Resources Manager, Briggs & Stratton
- Whitney Miller, President of Phi Theta Kappa, Southern Union State Community College
- Dr. Mark Neighbors, Superintendent, Opelika City Schools
- Madeleine Partridge, SGA Vice President, Southern Union State Community College
- Leonard Riley, Mayor, City of Valley
- Gary Weaver, Regional Workforce Director, Alabama Community College System

The committee's work will conclude by the end of the year and will culminate in the presentation of the Southern Union State Community College Strategic Plan.

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