# Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

### Strategic Plan Refresh

2024-2027

**Approved June 4, 2024** 

Driven by mission. Focused on impact.



**Mission** Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology educates Pennsylvania's economically and socially disadvantaged as well as other qualified students for skilled employment in a diverse, ever-changing workforce and for full, effective participation as citizens.

**Vision** Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology will be a leading provider of postsecondary technical Education that transforms lives by graduating students equipped to meet the demands of a global, competitive society.

Core Values INTEGRITY: We value the commitment to high moral/ethical standards, honesty, and fairness in teaching and learning, social engagements, and professional practices.

> **DIVERSITY**: We value the recognition of the variety of unique individuals within our world and the interdependence upon each other, each other's culture, and the natural environment. We value the differences and respect the qualities and experiences that are different from our own.

**RESPECT**: We value the unbiased consideration, treatment, and regard for the rights, values, beliefs, and property of all other people.

**TEAMWORK (COLLABORATION):** We value working cooperatively and collaboratively as part of a group in which there is a shared mission and vision aligned toward a goal.

LEARNING AND GROWTH (LIFE-LONG LEARNING): We value the relentless dedication to increasing the knowledge and competencies of all individuals associated with the College. We recognize that human resources are the College's only sustainable competitive advantage.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**: We value taking responsibility for actions and the results of those actions, honoring obligations, expectations, and requirements, delivering what is promised, and owning up to shortcomings and mistakes.

### Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

It has been an exciting year of planning and preparation as we focus on the next decade of our institution's priorities, particularly how we will impact Pennsylvania's next generation workforce.

As we continue to assess and formulate our next steps, we have included a focus on our strategic plan. Our current plan, which expired in 2018, has provided direction that helped guide meaningful progress through 2023. With that plan expired, we have been considering the best approach for our future strategic development. As we are engaged in our faculty, staff, and student-driven Middle States reaccreditation process, we will execute an abbreviated internal refresh rather than a full strategic planning restart. This process will allow us to realign key institutional priorities through 2027 while positioning a wider engagement around mission, vision, and long-range goals until after the re-accreditation cycle.

Your dedication and commitment to our students gives me confidence that we will continue fulfilling our vital educational mission in the years ahead. We aim for this targeted reset to provide an interim roadmap that sustains our strengths while forging a path forward.

Thank you for your unwavering support as we navigate this process together. Your contributions are invaluable, and I am grateful for your continued efforts in shaping the future of our institution. Together, we will embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, ensuring that we remain at the forefront of providing exceptional education and preparing our students for success in an ever-changing world.

Sincerely,

Pedro A. Rivera II President

### **Executive Summary**

Engrained in the College's mission and values, the following seven strategic directions embrace a future-focused vision and support the strategic growth of Thaddeus Stevens College:

- **1.** Enhance Facilities for Student Attraction and Retention to create a vibrant and conducive learning environment and contribute to student satisfaction and retention.
- **2.** *Enhance Technology Infrastructure* to facilitate innovative teaching practices and ensure students are well-equipped for the digital age.
- **3.** *Increase Enrollment, Progression, and Placement of Under-Resourced and Under-Represented Students* to create pathways for all students to succeed.
- **4.** Ensure Financial Sustainability and Institutional Stability to align resources with current operations and long-term goals.
- **5.** *Maintain Current and Responsive Curricula* to meet industry demands and ensure students acquire the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in their respective fields.
- **6.** *Develop New Curricula and Programs* to accommodate the growing student population and meet the evolving needs of industry.
- **7.** *Implement Marketing Plan for Institutional Distinctiveness* to attract prospective students and stakeholders while enhancing the College's reputation.

By encompassing a holistic approach to college, community, and curriculum, the College will position itself for long-term success, ensuring an enriching educational experience for all.

### Strategic Directions

### 1 Enhance existing **facilities** to attract new students and retain existing students

 Begin implementing the Facilities Master Plan with a focus on aging infrastructure and informal areas for gathering, such as a vending machine in the LRC, adding parking at the Almshouse property, and upgrading natural turf on the football field. Plans are underway for a new Dining Hall and Residence Hall.

STRATEGY 1.1	Conduct a comprehensive audit of the facilities at all locations
ACTION 1.1.1	Facilities study, due March 2024
ACTION 1.1.2	Develop a prioritized list of issues that must be addressed across the College. Prioritize issues within a category by the level of importance. Use deficiencies, faults, eyesores, and safety concerns as measures of importance. Establish three levels of importance: Critical, moderately critical, and routine.
ACTION 1.1.3	Develop and submit a plan to address the issues. Estimate the cost to address the issue. Develop plans to address each issue by overall priority.
ACTION 1.1.4	Implement corrective actions. Implement plans for corrective actions. Address issues by level of critical importance. Insource and outsource tasks as necessary.
ACTION 1.1.5	Prepare a report on corrective actions taken. Prepare monthly reports on actions taken. Prepare a final report for the resolution of all critical issues.
STRATEGY 1.2	Begin implementing the Master Plan with a focus on informal areas for gathering, such as a cafe in the LRC, parking, and artificial turf on the football field that will facilitate other outdoor activities for students.
ACTION 1.2.1	Invest in field reconstruction and install drainage and irrigation systems.
STRATEGY 1.3	Identify areas that do not meet the standards of universal design (UD)

and implement a plan to address these areas.

ACTION 1.3.1 Educate the campus community about UD concepts. Provide the campus community with resources to learn about UD. Provide faculty with online UD resources.

## 2 Enhance and increase **technology infrastructure** for the entire campus

• Complete the adoption of an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to systematize payroll, purchasing, enrollment, data collection, and fundraising.

STRATEGY 2.1	Increase the ability of students, staff, and faculty to stay connected by greatly improving Wi-Fi access across all campus locations and throughout all buildings.
ACTION 2.1.1	Add wireless assess points on the main samples and improve strongth

ACTION 2.1.1 Add wireless access points on the main campus and improve strength and speed.

### Increase the **enrollment**, **progression**, **and placement** of under-resourced and under-represented students

- Establish additional relationships with K-12 systems, in industry, teachers, parents/caregivers, and community leaders in order to recruit more academically qualified students.
- Increase the enrollment of females and minorities through targeted recruiting programs (examples: My Future Career, ESI)
- Support under-resourced and under-represented students currently enrolled at Thaddeus Stevens College to maximize their opportunity for graduation and career placement.
- Increase the progression and graduation rates of women, specifically in nontraditional majors through targeted enrollment, retention, and engagement strategies.

STRATEGY 3.1	Enhance pre-college experiences offered by the College for under- represented populations.
ACTION 3.1.1	Offer summer workshops to under-represented populations (women, low-income).
ACTION 3.1.2	Continue to offer and increase the amount of advertising for community/family events.
ACTION 3.1.3	Develop and implement a K-12 plan that will bring more students onto our campus.
STRATEGY 3.2	Establish relationships with K-12 systems, industry, teachers, parents/caregivers, and community leaders to recruit more academically qualified students.
ACTION 3.2.1	Increase the activities offered to School District of Lancaster students as part of the Thaddeus Stevens College K-16 initiative.
STRATEGY 3.3	Increase the enrollment of females and minorities through targeted recruiting programs.
ACTION 3.3.1	Expand the Women in Technology (WIT) program to include hosting more female students from high school/career and technical centers on campus.

STRATEGY 3.4	Support under-resourced and under-represented students currently enrolled at Thaddeus Stevens College to maximize their graduation and placement opportunities.
ACTION 3.4.1	Staff math and English labs with professional tutors for 60 hours per week.
ACTION 3.4.2	Pilot an expansion of professional math tutoring to Griscom Education Center; provide five hours of tutoring one day per week.
ACTION 3.4.3	Provide peer tutoring for all programs of study based on instructor recommendations and established grade requirements.
ACTION 3.4.4	Implement a new retention software system that the campus community can use as a tool to proactively identify at-risk students as well as a system that allows for early alerts and intervention tracking.
ACTION 3.4.5	Probationary students receive regular individualized follow-up and advising twice a month per student.
ACTION 3.4.6	Each semester, adjuncts and other qualified staff provide a series of academic seminars focused on building skills for success, such as study skills or taking notes.
ACTION 3.4.7	Support academically underprepared students in the pre-major program through individualized meetings, grade monitoring, and instructor collaboration.
ACTION 3.4.8	Identify, support, and monitor students in the ACT 101 program through individualized meetings, grade monitoring, and instructor collaboration.
ACTION 3.4.9	Five to ten academically qualified students participate in the summer bridge program, which consists of enrolling in two academic courses, attending daily structured study hall, participating in academic seminars, and attending math/English labs while living on campus.
STRATEGY 3.5	Increase the progression and graduation rates of women, specifically in nontraditional majors, through targeted enrollment, retention, and engagement strategies.
ACTION 3.5.1	Continue the Strategic Goal 3.5/Women's Activities Group, meeting monthly, working as a team, and collaborating between the various

	departments supporting Strategic Goal 3.5.
ACTION 3.5.2	Strengthen the WIT program.
ACTION 3.5.3	Coordinate an on-campus Lancaster Chamber Discovering Paths STEM Mentoring Program.
ACTION 3.5.4	Facilitate industry tours for female high school students.
ACTION 3.5.5	Host a day event, guest speaker, or roundtable discussion of Thaddeus Stevens College for women to support our female students, increase women in STEM careers, and build community collaboration.

# Ensure adequate funding to support **leadership**, **governance**, **and institutional stability** with current operations and master plan

- Participate in annual briefing meetings with members of the administration and leadership of the General Assembly to generate awareness and support for the College by highlighting outcomes and the resources needed to effectively deliver high quality academic programming and positive student experience.
- o Develop strategies to ensure level of increased state funding for the operating budget.
- Seek additional human resources to support the development and continued growth of the programs and services of the College.
- Develop a succession plan for the administration, faculty, staff, and governmental affairs.
- Increase philanthropic support and engagement with alumni, donors, industry partners, and community stakeholders.

STRATEGY 4.1	Conduct briefings to Administration members and leadership of the General Assembly to obtain support for increases in capital funding for Thaddeus Stevens College.
ACTION 4.1.1	Schedule meetings with leaders of the General Assembly and appropriate members of the Administration to present a case for support for capital projects at Thaddeus Stevens College.
ACTION 4.1.2	Prepare briefings for meetings referred to in Action Step 4.1.1, providing context and a compelling case for support for capital projects at Thaddeus Stevens College.
ACTION 4.1.3	Conduct meetings, make presentations, answer questions, and provide

	additional information requested as a follow-up.
STRATEGY 4.2	Develop strategies to ensure level or increased State funding for the operating budget.
ACTION 4.2.1	Determine the College's required operating budget for the following year. Analyze expenditures for the current fiscal year and estimate increases and decreases based on the best available information. Based on data analysis, prepare an operating budget request document. Submit the operation budget to the President. The President submits to the Board of Trustees for requested approval.
ACTION 4.2.2	Determine the best strategies to obtain approval for the College's operating budget request. Conduct meetings to discuss the best tactics for obtaining support based on experience and current General Assembly and Administration leadership.
ACTION 4.2.3	Execute tactics and strategies which include the following: Meetings with leadership of the General Assembly and Administration, solicitation of alumni and industry to communicate support for the College to their elected officials, follow-up letters, phone calls, and meetings to solidify support, testimony before the House and Senate Appropriates Committees, campus tours, visits, and presidential briefings for individuals who are in positions to influence State appropriations.
STRATEGY 4.3	Seek additional human resources to support the development and continued growth of the College's programs and services.
ACTION 4.3.1	Implement strategies and tactics utilized in Strategic Goals 4.1 and 4.2 to pursue funding in support of human resource needs projects.
STRATEGY 4.4	Develop a succession plan for the following: Administration, faculty, staff, and governmental affairs.
ACTION 4.4.1	Distribute job descriptions to all administrators, including Directors, Vice Presidents, and President. Create job descriptions for those positions that have none assigned.
ACTION 4.4.2	Update/change job descriptions for all administrative positions to accurately reflect each job. If a job is to be changed in the future, the

	job description must show those future changes. Changes must be approved by the supervisor.
ACTION 4.4.3	Identify essential functions within each job and define specific activities that support those functions. Based on an updated job description, each administrator will identify their major key functions. Technical information, contact information, procedures, data, and other critical information will be gathered and filed with the supervisor.
ACTION 4.4.4	Identify an individual (or individuals) who would be willing to serve as a temporary replacement for each administrative position should a sudden vacancy occur. Individual(s) may be from within the office, across campus, or outside the institution. An individual needs to be willing to assume the role in the case of a vacancy, have the necessary attributes and technical competencies to do the job, and have the flexibility in schedule to be able to respond at a moment's notice. A temporary replacement does not need to be a candidate for the permanent position (but could be).
ACTION 4.4.5	Provide training for each person for their assigned support position. Individuals can be trained through job shadowing, informal internships, casual office visits, or other means.
STRATEGY 4.5	Develop independent sources of funding from grants, alumni donations, corporate donations, and individuals.
ACTION 4.5.1	Develop independent sources of funding from foundation grants, corporate donations, and individual donations.
ACTION 4.5.2	Develop a closer working relationship with at least one community organization to identify and solicit funders for collaborative regional community partners (e.g., Lancaster County WDB, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, or Manufacturers Association).
ACTION 4.5.3	Successfully steward current state grant projects to increase the probability of future success via competitive solicitations and RFPs. Create and maintain a process whereby faculty involved in current state-funding grant projects gather and report project data and outcomes to Office of Advancement. Use associated processes and outcomes to create a plan to pursue additional state funding.
ACTION 4.5.4	Reapply and qualify annually for educational improvement tax credits (EITC) through Department of Community and Economic Development

	(DCED) to support the College's K-12 initiatives.
ACTION 4.5.5	Submit grant reports on time to all current funders, even when not required, thus increasing the likelihood of continued funding.
ACTION 4.5.6	Annually reapply to all current Foundation funders if allowable.
ACTION 4.5.7	Communicate annually to all previous educational improvement tax credits (EITC) donors to ensure awareness of the College's qualification for continuation of program funding. Develop a fundraising campaign strategy to solicit additional new funders to increase the base of support for the expanding K-12 initiatives.
ACTION 4.5.8	Research potential new funders using various fundraising strategy mechanisms.
ACTION 4.5.9	Write and submit at least 25 customized letters of inquiry per year.
ACTION 4.5.10	Identify and develop strong collaborative relationships with local, regional, and statewide K-12 districts and organizations, and other such organizations to identify and pursue K-12 STEM collaborative funding opportunities.
ACTION 4.5.11	Work with the College's technical programs to assist in securing funding for their departments, soliciting equipment donations, identifying members for their Occupational Advisory Committees, and developing additional program partnerships.
ACTION 4.5.12	Identify and develop new partnerships with industry and professional organizations and continue to grow existing relationships.
ACTION 4.5.13	Establish an annual donor cultivation and recognition event that acknowledges donors on major giving levels and retains other existing donors by expressing our gratitude.
ACTION 4.5.14	Develop one new signature event for the College. Seek to leverage the event to attain significant marketing and public relations coverage that elevates the College's profile in the local community.
ACTION 4.5.15	Establish a legacy program to develop an interest of high-income individuals, friends of the College, and alumni who would consider large capital donations or endowments to underwrite campus facilities, equipment, faculty/staff, and programs. Develop a legacy brochure that outlines selected opportunities and donor-naming capabilities.

### **ACTION 4.5.16**

Develop an ambassador program that encourages successful alumni or business persons to return to campus to present a career or technology session to the program from which they graduated. Also, they could serve as ambassadors and mentors to the program, assist in visiting schools, and refer students to Thaddeus Stevens College. Lastly, ambassadors will assist their programs in identifying funding or in-kind donations.

### **ACTION 4.5.17**

Increase visits with company and community leaders off-site to develop partnerships and sponsorships with the College.

## 5 Ensure **existing curricula** remain current and responsive to the needs of the industry they serve

- o Increase the number of internship opportunities available to students.
- o Develop cross-curricular activities for programs to enhance their technical training.
- Advance student success and employability through focused education in soft skills (initiative, teamwork, problem-solving, communication, group leadership, etc.), as well as technical skill sets that align with the current workforce trends and needs.
- Encourage programs to embed a three-credit internship into their curriculum.
- Ensure all Occupational Advisory Committees (OACs) include diverse representations from applicable industries and actively engage in ensuring curriculum alignment to current and future industry needs and standards.

STRATEGY 5.1	Increase the number of internships available to students.
ACTION 5.1.1	Evaluate existing internship programs. Review what has been done in the past per program and institutionally. Use current data to develop a baseline for future growth.
ACTION 5.1.2	Create campus-wide internship policies and procedures for students and employers. Develop an internship program mission statement. Develop a statement of policies. Develop internship guidelines for the student. Develop internship guidelines for the employer. Develop an online internship application for students.
ACTION 5.1.3	Introduce internship programs/opportunities to faculty and students annually. Facilitate internship workshops during the fall semester of a student's second year of an associate degree program. Offer six to ten workshops at varying times during October and November to all first-year students. Educate first-year students on the process necessary to connect with industry for a summer internship experience. Educate students on the policies, procedures, and academic and social expectations for participation. Communicate with all technical faculty about the workshops to encourage student participation (Faculty development days, email notification, posters/flyers, social media, Occupational Advisory Committees).
ACTION 5.1.4	Network with industry throughout Pennsylvania to ensure internship opportunities exist for our students. Utilize relationships from the College's annual career fair, job posting/recruitment efforts, and

	Occupational Advisory Committees to solicit internship opportunities for our students. Partner with the College's Advancement Office to network with industry to create scholarships and sponsorships for internship participants.
STRATEGY 5.2	Develop cross-curricular activities for programs to enhance their technical training.
ACTION 5.2.1	Review all technical programs to evaluate credit assignment and reduction.
ACTION 5.2.2	Investigate a technical elective option for all technical programs.
STRATEGY 5.3	Advance student success and employability through focused education in soft skills (initiative, teamwork, problem-solving, communication, group leadership, etc.) and technical skill sets.
ACTION 5.3.1	Work with staff to identify soft skills most needed by most students.
ACTION 5.3.2	Develop a schedule for the delivery of soft skills training.
ACTION 5.3.3	Deliver and regularly upgrade soft skills training.
STRATEGY 5.4	Implement credit bearing internships within the College's programs of study where appropriate.
ACTION 5.4.1	Review the internship options that are available to students throughout the various programs of study.
ACTION 5.4.2	Create an internship option for students.
STRATEGY 5.5	Ensure each Occupational Advisory Committees has the best possible membership and is actively involved in maintaining the currency and relevance of its program's curricula.
ACTION 5.5.1	Review the current, active memberships in all Occupational Advisory Committees to assess diversity, business types, membership education, administrative levels, etc.
ACTION 5.5.2	Propose an ideal cross-section of committee membership for all Occupational Advisory Committees.

### The Perseverance of Excellence

ACTION 5.5.3	Work with faculty to redesign committee membership and pursue new members according to the ideal cross-section.
ACTION 5.5.4	Establish a format for the administration and operation of the Occupational Advisory Committee.
ACTION 5.5.5	Require each technical program to hold at least two annual Occupational Advisory Committee meetings.
ACTION 5.5.6	Require a written report of attendance and the recommendations posed by each Occupational Advisory Committee.

# 6 Develop **new curricula and programs** that are relevant to the College's growing student population and meet the needs of the economy

- Continue to ensure strong faculty credentials.
- o Continue environmental scanning and identify potential new programs.
- Apply the College's new program criteria to potential programs and select and implement new programs as resources are available.

STRATEGY 6.1	Continue to ensure strong faculty credentials.
ACTION 6.1.1	Establish the minimum qualifications for each faculty position, including education, work experience, and other relevant skills and competencies.
ACTION 6.1.2	Monitor faculty progress in meeting conditions of employment.
STRATEGY 6.2	Continue environmental scanning and identify potential new programs.
ACTION 6.2.1	Create an Internal Committee to utilize the established process to identify the feasibility of potential programs additions and/or expansions. Conduct an internal documented analysis of the proposed new program or expansion. Review findings from the analysis to determine the appropriate recommendation.
STRATEGY 6.3	Apply the College's new program criteria to select and implement potential new programs through the DACUM (Develop a Curriculum) process, contingent on resource availability.
ACTION 6.3.1	Identify individuals who represent a cross-section of experts in the discipline, from management to labor to business office recruited directly from business and industry to form a DACUM committee.
ACTION 6.3.2	The DACUM Committee will collectively and cooperatively describe the occupation in the language of the occupation and the required competencies.
ACTION 6.3.3	Through the DACUM, identify the general knowledge and skills required of successful workers, the tools, equipment, supplies, and materials used, the important worker behaviors essential for success, and the

future trends and concerns within the industry.

### **ACTION 6.3.4**

Formulize the general knowledge and skills required within the industry as elements of courses for delivery within the program. These competencies will become the foundation of the learning outcomes for each course.

# 7 Implement the College's marketing plan to showcase its institutional distinctiveness to support the College's mission, enrollment goals, and reputation

- Develop a strategy to enhance the perception and raise awareness of the College among core stakeholder groups, including potential students, parents/caregivers, educators, counselors, school administrators, business and industry leaders, alumni, state legislative and administrative leadership, workforce community, community organizations, and community members.
- Develop marketing strategies to target students identified as fitting within the College's mission and brand by the Admissions Office.
- Develop a strategy that highlights the competitive value and cost comparison of the College.
- Evaluate the College's messages and brand and establish a unified, consistent message through all communications and marketing efforts based on the College's audience understanding, messaging verticals, and core messaging focus.
- Develop a process to evaluate marketing based on core metrics ranging from but not limited to: application numbers, attendance at major events, donations and donor numbers, alumni engagement, social media engagement and growth, and digital marketing engagement.
- Strengthen the College's message by developing and enhancing the College's messaging channels and connections with audiences.

STRATEGY 7.1	Develop a strategy to enhance the perception and raise awareness of the College among core stakeholder groups, including potential students, parents/caregivers, educators, counselors, school administrators, business and industry leaders, state legislative and administrative leadership, community organizations, and community members.
ACTION 7.1.1	Create defined audience personas for each stakeholder group, identifying challenges, core communication channels, and messaging strategies.
ACTION 7.1.2	Develop for each brand persona identifying every possible brand intersection from a comprehensive list of marketing and communications channels.

ACTION 7.1.3	Create website pathways mapping to identify the focus pages of the website for each stakeholder audience, and cascade priorities of website updates based on data and best-practice-driven information to finesse website into user-friendly and effective tool for marketing and enrollment goals.
STRATEGY 7.2	Develop marketing strategies aligning within the College's mission.
ACTION 7.2.1	Identify and continually update prospective-student-focused marketing objectives, including geofencing events, digital ads based on seasons or events, event and sponsorship presence, recruitment tools and tactics.
ACTION 7.2.2	Determine data to be used to create a marketing strategy.
ACTION 7.2.3	Standardize core set of brand advertising messages and designs.
STRATEGY 7.3	Develop a strategy that highlights the College's competitive value and cost comparisons.
ACTION 7.3.1	Utilize graduation rates and career placement data to create branding and talking points relative to marketing. Pull data from annual graduate surveys relative to where students are working, annual surveys, etc. Use data in branding the College's high graduation rate and placement rate. Update this information comprehensively on at least an annual basis.
STRATEGY 7.4	Establish a unified, consistent message through all communications and marketing efforts.
ACTION 7.4.1	Enforce branding standards for the College. Use branding style guide for the College.
STRATEGY 7.5	Strengthen the College's message by developing and enhancing the College's messaging channels and connections with audiences.
ACTION 7.5.1	Develop a process to evaluate marketing based on core metrics with departments throughout the College.
ACTION 7.5.2	Create regular reports with impactful data used to drive additional action regarding all-digital, event, public relations, website, and

	advertising metrics available. Regularly share insights with leadership on actions informed by such data and completion of actions.
ACTION 7.5.3	Develop an integrated digital strategy including social media, website, digital advertising, staff and faculty online presence, public relations, and other advertising and sponsorship opportunities. Update strategy regularly based on trends and data.
ACTION 7.5.4	Use web pathways research and analysis to create prioritization and next steps plan for website development and integration with other digital media.