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**Association of Florida Colleges and the Council of Presidents
Announce the James L. Wattenbarger Award Winner**

TALLAHASSEE, FL – The Association of Florida Colleges and the Florida College System Council of Presidents are excited to announce that this year’s James L. Wattenbarger Award winner is Dr. E. Ann McGee, President Emerita, from Seminole State College. Dr. McGee is the 20th recipient of the honor. To be considered for the award you must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstration of an exceptional commitment to one of Florida’s colleges and/or the Florida College System
- Be a student, faculty member, administrator, trustee, or alumni of one of Florida’s colleges or be a supporter of a college and/or champion for the Florida College System, or be a state legislator or member of the executive branch of state government.

Dr. McGee, who retired in 2018, is a graduate of St. Petersburg Junior College and served the Florida College System for 47 years, with 22 years as president of Seminole State College of Florida. As the second president in the college’s history, Dr. McGee was a dynamic and visionary leader and a passionate proponent of progress in education, business, and the community in Central Florida. Under Dr. McGee’s leadership, Seminole State College grew from a single-campus community college into a dynamic higher education institution with four campuses enrolling nearly 30,000 students annually. Based on requests from the business community, Seminole State also expanded its offerings to include bachelor’s degrees in high-demand workforce areas completing its transition from a community college to a state college.

“I am honored and humbled to be recognized in this fashion by the Association and the Council of Presidents. As a graduate of our system, I know how important the 28 colleges are to the future of our state. The Florida College System has earned a national reputation as the “best of the best.” This distinction is based on the System’s talented faculty and staff who are totally focused on student success. The past 47 years have passed too quickly. I am blessed to have spent them with dedicated individuals who are truly changing the lives of our students. Even as mine was changed many years ago at St. Petersburg Junior College,” said Dr. E. Ann McGee.

“Dr. McGee’s contributions to the Florida College System cannot be measured,” said Association of Florida Colleges CEO and Executive Director Michael Brawer. “She was a superb legislative advocate who was student-centered and focused on making higher education in Florida accessible to everyone.”

“The James L. Wattenbarger Award is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed to a champion of the Florida College System,” said Dr. Ed Massey, President of Indian River State College and Chair of the Council of Presidents Awards Committee. “Dr. Ann McGee’s record of service and commitment to our system make her a worthy selection for this esteemed honor. On behalf of my fellow Presidents and our ‘Great 28,’ we offer our many congratulations.”

Dr. McGee was recognized at the AFC Annual Meeting and Conference on November 7, 2019 at Innisbrook in Palm Harbor.

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About the Association of Florida Colleges

The Association of Florida Colleges represents all employees, presidents, and trustees associated within the Florida College System. It has become the most inclusive higher education organization serving any college system in the nation. Today, all 28 of the state's colleges support the work of the Association through institutional dues as do nearly 7,000 regular and retired members through the sharing of their talents, time and energy.

About the Florida College System Council of Presidents

The Florida College System Council of Presidents is the collective body on issues and matters of concern to Florida's public college system and will provide information, as it deems appropriate, to the State and Federal Executive and Legislative branches and to the Chancellor of the Florida College System, the Commissioner of Education, the State Board of Education and other public and private entities and individuals as appropriate.