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THEC Releases Snapshot of Higher Education Data for 2015-16 Academic Year

NASHVILLE – *May 24* – The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) has released the redesigned 2015-16 Higher Education Fact Book, providing a snapshot of higher education as Tennessee moves toward the goals of the Drive to 55.

The publication includes information about the 244,572 students enrolled in public higher education in Tennessee in Fall 2015 and shows how programs such as Tennessee Promise have begun to shape the state's higher education landscape. The report also includes detailed information on Tennessee's unprecedented increase in the [college-going rate](#), which THEC previewed earlier this spring, as well as the 10 percent increase in first-time freshmen enrollment across public institutions.

"The efforts and investments that have been put into higher education in recent years are truly reflected in the data we have seen from the institutions. Enrollment is up, remediation is down, and we are moving forward with the Drive to 55's education attainment goals," said THEC's Interim Executive Director Russ Deaton.

Among the highlights of the report's data snapshot:

- Public higher education in Fall 2015 enrolled 244,572 students across all sectors, including full-time and part-time students:
 - 19,796 students at Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCATs)
 - 87,890 students at community colleges
 - 136,886 students at public universities
- For the fourth year in a row, the percent of students requiring learning support has decreased, even as enrollment has increased during that timeframe
- The institutions with the largest student headcount (including part-time and full-time):
 - University: University of Tennessee, 27,640 students enrolled (undergraduate and graduate)

- Community college: Nashville State Community College, 10,701 students enrolled
- Average tuition and mandatory fees:
 - \$3,554 at TCATs
 - \$4,121 at community colleges
 - \$8,625 at universities
- Total headcount at community colleges and universities has grown by over 24,000 students in the past decade

“The growth in enrollment in Tennessee higher education is unparalleled, especially when you consider the post-recession numbers,” said Emily House, assistant executive director for Policy, Planning and Research at THEC. “Students are entering higher education at the highest rates we have seen in Tennessee and are enrolling full-time in much higher numbers, which means they are much more likely to graduate within 6 years.”

The most recent Fact Book was redesigned for 2015-16, including new individual institution profiles, programmatic descriptions for Drive to 55 initiatives, and redesigned tables and graphs for easier reading of the data. The [2015-16 Tennessee Higher Education Fact Book is available on THEC's website](#) and a [summary of notable data](#) is also available.

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission was created in 1967 by the Tennessee General Assembly. The Commission develops, implements, and evaluates postsecondary education policies and programs in Tennessee while coordinating the state's systems of higher education. There are nine public universities, two special purpose institutes, 13 community colleges, and 27 colleges of applied technology in Tennessee that educate nearly 250,000 students annually.