



program for children who were disadvantaged by poverty. She stated that the program had 29 participants and stated that next year she hoped to have 40 participants. She stated this was a Children's Defense Fund program, and one of more than 200 sites across the country.

Dr. Isbell stated that the program focused on a rich multicultural curriculum in literacy as well as family involvement and provided two meals per day for the students. She stated the program also trained college students to work with both the children and the

family. She stated the program also included social action and civic engagement

Dr. Oldham added his congratulations and thanks to Dr. Geist.

Chair Harper presented Dr. Geist with a plaque expressing appreciation for her service.

Chair Harper stated that Tom Jones, as the incoming CEO of [REDACTED]

was able to dedicate his time to the Board when he was also CEO of his own company. She stated that Mr. Jones set a tone of professionalism, efficiency, and candor and reminded the Board to stay student focused. She stated that Mr. Jones stated the

President Oldham stated that among Tennessee public universities, Tennessee Tech ranked second in the state student retention. He stated that Tennessee Tech was

consistently above 75 percent for first-year retention. He stated that the goal was to reach 82 percent for first year retention by 2025

President Oldham stated that the national standard for graduation rates was to report a six-year rate, which is considered one and a half times the norm. He stated that Tennessee Tech's six-year rate was at 54-55 percent, which was an all-time high. He stated that the five-year graduation rate was also increasing and was not much different from the six-year rate. He stated that the four-year graduation rate was at a record high for Tennessee Tech at 37 percent. He stated that the goal for 2025 was to pass 50

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- Continued growth of online programs;

• Strengthening career development to ensure students have a

successful career;

- Continued push in sponsored research with a goal of \$40,000,000 in sponsored research by 2025; and

- Recognition throughout Tennessee as the champion and center for excellence regarding the future of rural Tennessee communities

Chair Jones stated he wished there was a conversion from undergraduate to graduate students. He stated this is another area that could be focused on.

President Oldham stated that many faculty and institutions actually discouraged

students from staying at the same institution for all their degrees, but in some cases it would be the right thing to do. He stated that there was room to grow in that regard and opportunity for Tennessee Tech undergraduates to remain at the university. He stated that the right mix of graduate programs must also be highlighted to attract those

**AGENDA ITEM 6.B—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT, REPORT ON
COMPLETION OF PRESIDENT’S PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

Chair Harper stated that the Board completed its annual evaluation of the President’s performance. She stated that there was no recommendation on a salary increase for the President because President O’Neil’s performance was not exceptional. The

Mr. Stites stated the Committee also received an update on the five-year strategic