



Dr. Angela M. Garcia Falconetti was named Polk State College's fifth president in May 2017. From the collective input of the Polk State and Polk County communities, Dr. Falconetti developed a vision to strengthen student success. She expanded partnerships with local employers, added new academic and workforce programs, and increased connections with local businesses, government agencies, and non-profit groups that provide support services and funding for students. Additionally, she has been instrumental in securing more than \$106 million from the legislature. During her tenure, the College broke ground on its eighth location, the Polk State Haines City-Davenport Campus; completed \$16.2 million in renovations to the Winter Haven Fine Arts Building, a project submitted for Public Education Capital Outley (PECO) funding since 2008, with funds allocated in 2021 and construction taking place from 2023 to 2025; and preserved the JD Alexander Center with the support of the Polk County Legislative Delegation, District Board of Trustees, and community. In 2021, Polk State also celebrated its decennial reaffirmation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges with no findings, placing the College in an approximated 5% of higher education institutions in the southern region.

A native Floridian with over two decades of service in three states and the District of Columbia, Dr. Falconetti holds a bachelor's degree in communications and education from New York University, and a master's degree and a doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of North Florida with Instructional Leadership, Postsecondary Education, and Adult Learning specializations. Dr. Falconetti completed an endowed post-doctoral fellowship in Community College Leadership with The University of Texas at Austin while working as a research associate for the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. In 2016, she became a Certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE). Dr. Falconetti has served as adjunct faculty for four higher education institutions, has published numerous scholarly papers and book chapters, and has served as editor for two higher education journals. She currently serves as Affiliate Visiting Professor for Florida Atlantic University's Department of Educational Policy and Research Methodology, College of Education.

At the national level, Dr. Falconetti served as Special Assistant to the first Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges in Washington, D.C. Prior to being named President of Polk State College, she served as Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Virginia Western Community College, and as Executive Director of the Foundation.

Dr. Falconetti has received several awards and recognitions for her work and commitment, including:

- Named Honorary Nurse by Polk State College's AdventHealth Dean of Nursing and Faculty in 2026.
- Named Honorary Deputy by Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd in 2026.
- The key to the City of Winter Haven in 2026.
- Resolution of nine years of service by the Polk County Commission in 2026.
- Florida Trend's Florida 500 Most Influential Business Leaders, 2022-2025.
- The Tampa Bay Business Journal's Power 100 Most Influential Business Leaders, 2023-2026.
- The News Service of Florida's 2023 Above and Beyond Award.
- Florida Trend's Women in Leadership, 2022-2024.
- The 2022-2023 Larry Miller Award for Exemplary Leadership, Vision, and Integrity from CareerSource Polk.
- The key to the City of Lakeland in 2022.
- Florida Trend's Top 9 Women in Leadership in 2021.
- The 2020 International ATHENA Leadership Award from the Lakeland Chamber of Commerce and Junior League of Greater Lakeland.
- Distinguished Leader in Central Florida for Women's History month in March 2020. U.S. Congressman Darren Soto read Dr. Falconetti's biography into the congressional record and entered it into the U.S. Library of Congress.
- The Paragon Award and Distinguished Service Award in February 2019 nominated by the students of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society.
- The declaration of November 15, 2018, as *Angela Garcia Falconetti Inauguration Day* by the Polk County Board of County Commissioners and municipalities.
- The National Orientation Directors Association's 2007 National Research Award.
- The University of North Florida's 2007 Thomas Mulkeen Award for Doctoral Research.
- The University of North Florida's 2003 Outstanding Academic Advisor Award.

Dr. Falconetti is and has served as an active leader in statewide and national organizations, including the following gubernatorial appointments:

- The Education Commission of the States.
- The Florida Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention State Advisory Group as a member of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Talent, Leadership, and Culture Subcommittee.

- Governor DeSantis' Transition Education and Workforce Advisory Committee.
- The Florida Department of Transportation's Multi-Use Corridor of Regional Economic Significance Task Force and Southwest-Central Florida Connector Task Force.

As well as the following organizations:

- The Florida College System Council of Presidents (COP) as 2021-2022 Chair, leading the acquisition of \$400,000,000 in Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds, the largest allocation in the history of the Florida College System Council of Presidents; and the appropriation of \$150,000,000 for the 28 Florida Colleges.
 - COP Vice Chair, Chair of Policy and Advocacy.
 - COP Chair of the Media and Public Relations Committee, member of the Steering Committee, and member of the Workforce Development Taskforce.
 - COP Steering Committee Member.
 - The Florida Risk Management Consortium as Vice Chair.
- The Florida Chamber Foundation Board.
- The Community College Journal of Research and Practice as a member of the Editorial Board.
- The Association of Florida Colleges Board of Directors and Steering Committee.
- The Florida Association of Colleges and Universities.
- The American Association of Community College's Commission on Institutional Infrastructure and Transformation.
- Excelencia in Education and Excelencia in Action Network's Presidents for Latino Student Success.

In Polk County, she served on numerous boards of organizations representing all areas of Polk County, including:

- The Winter Haven Economic Development Council's Executive Board of Directors as Chair.
- The Polk Vision Board of Directors as Immediate Past Chair.
- The CareerSource Polk Board of Directors and its Workforce Committee.
- The Lakeland Economic Development Council High-Skill High-Wage Initiative.
- The Winter Haven Hospital Board of Directors and Clinical Excellence Committee.
- The Greater Winter Haven Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors as Chair.
- The Central Florida Development Council as Chair.
- The Lakeland Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.
- The Reopen Lakeland Taskforce.
- United Way of Central Florida.

- The Vanguard School Foundation.
- Club Hispano de Lakeland.
- The Polk County Heart Walk Executive Team, of which she served as Chair.