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P&HCC, NCI partner to develop computer science training following Google investment

Martinsville, VA– Martinsville, VA – This week, Google pledged to invest \$300 million in Virginia. This statewide announcement investment will have a direct impact on the Martinsville, Henry and Patrick County area as some of this money will be funneled directly into developing new technology-related training opportunities through Patrick & Henry Community College and the New College Institute.

As a part of the larger investment, Google is providing a \$250,000 grant to bring computer science opportunities to students. Virginia’s computer science advocacy and service provider, CodeVA will partner with Virginia’s community colleges and higher education centers (including NCI) to offer this training.

In response to the news, Patrick & Henry Community College President Dr. Greg Hodges and New College Institute’s Interim Executive Director, Karen Jackson have initiated discussions on how their two institutions can collaborate to leverage the proposed offerings and deliver a seamless training experience for students of all ages in Martinsville, Henry and Patrick County.

Together, these partners will develop a network of computer science lab schools, provide computer science professional development opportunities for instructors and expand computer science resources for Virginia’s students and workers looking to re-skill for the knowledge economy.

“By aligning resources made available through this new program, learners of all ages will have a unique opportunity to gain industry relevant IT skills, seamlessly pursue credentials and/or academic credit,” said Karen Jackson, Interim Executive Director at NCI. “With our two institutions in such close proximity, it is a great opportunity for us to ‘double down’ on the opportunity and develop an unparalleled experience for students and potential employers alike.”

During Google’s statewide announcement event, Governor Youngkin stated, “We have to prepare this workforce for the future. The opportunities are growing faster than we can believe.” He continued to state that the partnership “will prepare the next generation of Virginia’s students for careers in computer science.”

P&HCC and NCI will provide access to professional certification training locally to help workers and learners gain in-demand technology skills. The training opportunities are anticipated to be a great boon to students, workers, and employers in the Martinsville, Henry, and Patrick County areas.

According to Google’s landing page for digital education, “digital tools are creating new opportunities for Americans [...] 75 percent of program graduates report a positive career impact [...] 78 percent of small business report that adopting digital tools over the last two years created new opportunities for their business.”

In rural localities, access to this training can be a crucial step for communities seeking to keep up with emerging and transforming markets. A report published [in Ag Decision Maker](#) reveals that rural communities have historically ranked below larger metropolitan areas on many bench markers for knowledge economy-based work.

The report states: “Despite trailing metro areas in capturing knowledge occupations, current rural job growth is being driven by high-skill industries often associated with the knowledge economy [...] Many of the economic opportunities

emerging in the knowledge economy are being supported by rural institutions that are realigning themselves for the 21st century.”

With the statewide partnership and support from the grant, P&HCC and NCI are poised to do exactly that. President, Dr. Greg Hodges, summarizes this sentiment in his response to the news, “Skills associated with the digital economy are now critical for every student in every program. We are grateful for the opportunity to create these partnerships with Google in order to fill this essential pipeline and prepare all of our students for the knowledge economy.”

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About P&HCC: Patrick & Henry Community College, a comprehensive two-year institution, services Martinsville city as well as Patrick and Henry counties. P&HCC is a top-tier leader among community colleges in areas such as athletics, technology, and unique program offerings. By providing a multitude of innovative curricula such as motorsports, entrepreneurship, and mechatronics, P&HCC is changing lives and enriching the community it serves. P&HCC is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

About NCI: New College Institute is a state-funded educational entity that provides access to degree programs (bachelor, master, and doctorate) through our partnerships with VA colleges and universities. NCI strives to be accessible and convenient for students of all ages. Our staff, faculty, and board members are all committed to making NCI a premier educational facility for students, businesses, and the community at large.