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## Grant to Provide Funding for Students To Train for High Growth Careers at SVCC

A Southern Virginia economic development and education partnership has been awarded a \$648,000 state grant to prepare local students for high-growth careers in information technology, advanced manufacturing, and related fields.

The Go-TEC (Great Opportunities in Technology and Engineering Careers) collaborative was one of nine regional projects announced recently by Governor Ralph Northam to receive funding through GO Virginia (Growth and Opportunity for Virginia). It was the only project chosen for funding in Region 3, which includes the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the counties of Pittsylvania, Halifax, Henry, Patrick, Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward. These grants are for “projects that each region identified as vital to their efforts to diversify the regional economy, strengthen their workforce, and support collaborative programs between localities, public entities, and private businesses,” according to a release from the governor’s office.

Go-TEC is a partnership between Southside Virginia Community College, Danville Community College, Patrick Henry Community College, the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center in South Boston, the New College Institute, and the K-12 school systems in their service areas.

“This grant will provide more opportunities for the students in our region to gain the necessary skills for the higher paying technology jobs of the future. It is only through partnerships and collaboration that we are able to develop and deliver this kind of training,” said Dr. Al Roberts, SVCC President.

The grant will build on existing high-tech programs at the college level while giving younger students more hands-on exposure to these in-demand career pathways starting in middle school. Areas of focus are precision machining; welding; information technology and cybersecurity; robotics, automation, and mechatronics; and advanced materials.

SVCC’s plan is to provide professional development training for junior high and high school teachers. Technical career exploration will be a focus along with supporting technical programs already existing within the SVCC service area.

Go-TEC will build on this concept to further develop the region's K-12 offerings in information technology, advanced manufacturing and materials, expanding the pipeline of students training for careers in these areas. In addition to equipment, the grant will fund a Go-TEC trainer who will work with middle and high school teachers on use of the lab technology, and the development of a career exploration curriculum that can be used by school systems across the state.