

For immediate release

March 25, 2019

Contact: Christie Hales

## Local Students Encourage Other Females to Study Technology

According to statistics, women hold less than 20% of technology jobs. Southside Virginia Community College is working to change that statistic ONE student at a time. Sophie Crowder, at Kenston Forest and Ella Patton, at Park View High School, partnered with the community college to bring a day of hands-on activities geared at encouraging girls to consider Information Technology pathways. Subject matter experts Marcy Melendez, Microsoft, Ashley Barrett, Red Hat and Cat Graham, Humanity Road spoke about their successful tech careers. College students, Christian Jackson, SVCC, Jordan Berkompas, Longwood University and Rachel Neller, Virginia Commonwealth University, encouraged the 80 + girls to believe in themselves and challenged them to pursue Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) careers.

Students were tasked with dismantling a laptop computer and then reassembling. The reassemble version had to work. Kelly Arnold, SVCC apprenticeship coordinator, reminded the groups that when they learned their task, they all thought it would be a hard if not impossible task, but each group was successful and found out they could accomplish it with ease and teamwork.

“The growing interest in IT careers is a positive, but it could be even higher if more young people had better access to information about

career options," said Kathleen Martin, CompTIA's community manager for the Advancing Women in Technology group. SVCC is working hard to encourage and foster females to pursue IT Careers. The Center for Information Technology Excellence (CITE) lab in South Hill offers classes Monday – Thursday and, also online options that make SVCC a stepping-stone in the path to IT employment.