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Roane State Community College Cumberland County Brings New Technology Program to Campus Aimed at Middle School Girls

The Verizon Innovative Learning Program Will Introduce Augmented Reality, 3D Printing, Entrepreneurship and More to Prepare Girls for the Tech Careers of the Future

Crossville, Tennessee – This summer, Roane State Community College Cumberland County Campus will join Verizon Innovative Learning, the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation, to introduce more girls, especially those in rural parts of the country, to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills.

Launched in partnership with the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE), the 2-year program was piloted last summer at five community colleges, including Roane State Community College Cumberland County Campus and will expand to 16 community colleges, engaging over 1,500 students.

Kicking off this summer with a three-week intensive learning experience, 60 local middle school age girls from across the Upper Cumberland area will attend courses the Roane State Community College Cumberland County Campus in augmented and virtual reality, coding, 3D design, entrepreneurship and design thinking principles. Following the summer, the students will participate in monthly sessions throughout the academic year where they will develop a technology solution for a community problem that aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Focus areas of the SDGs include poverty reduction, quality education, good health and well-being, climate action, peace and justice or gender equality.



Holly Hanson, Roane State Community College Cumberland County Campus Director and Cumberland Business Incubator Director states “We were pleased to be one of the five colleges selected for the pilot program last summer and are thrilled to be invited to expand our program and continue to offer this year long STEM experience this summer and academic year (2018/2019) as well as next summer and academic year (2019/2020). We will have worked with 170 middle school aged girls by the end of this current program expansion.”

Women continue to be underrepresented in STEM careers, where a staggering 86 percent of engineers and 74 percent of computer professionals are men. The percentage of women in STEM careers has not improved since 2001, specifically within the engineering (12 percent) and computing (26 percent) workforces.¹ As a member organization of more than 300 community colleges across the country, NACCE is dedicated to supporting job creation and entrepreneurs in local communities.

Verizon Innovative Learning gives free technology, free access and innovative curricula to students impacted by the digital divide to help them realize a brighter future. To date, Verizon has invested \$200 million in this initiative and has reached more than one million students.

Learn more at www.VerizonInnovativeLearning.com.

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About Verizon Innovative Learning

Verizon Innovative Learning, the education initiative of the Verizon Foundation, brings technology and hands-on learning opportunities to middle and high school students in underserved schools and communities. We not only fund the programs, but we also create and administer them in partnership with leading nonprofits. We diligently measure the impact of our work and refine our programs to ensure we're making a difference. We've reached more than 1 million students so far – and we're just getting started. For more information about Verizon's philanthropic work, visit www.verizon.com/about/responsibility; or for regular updates, visit Facebook (www.facebook.com/verizonfoundation) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VZFoundation>).



¹ Change the Equation, The Diversity Dilemma, 2015.

<http://changetheequation.org/sites/default/files/2015%20Solving%20the%20Diversity%20Dilemma%20FINAL%206.2015.pdf>

² Work to Do, Carnegie Science Center, 2014.

http://www.carnegiesciencecenter.org/csc_content/stemcenter/pdf/Work_to_Do_The_Role_of_STEM_Education_in_Improving_the_Tri-State_Regions_Workforce.pdf