

# **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**



**· In-Person Meeting ·**

**A G E N D A**

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Hilton Downtown Richmond  
Miller-Rhoads-Gerhart Rooms  
501 East Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23219**

**Monday, January 6, 2025**

**1:30 P.M.**

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If participating in the meeting by phone, dial: **1-332-249-0607** and enter access code: **328 396 15#**.

The Commission will not change the method by which it chooses to meet without providing a new meeting notice that is in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. If you experience problems calling in, please contact: **Suzette Patterson** at **(804) 894-9662**, **[spatterson@revitalizeva.org](mailto:spatterson@revitalizeva.org)** or **Roz Stein** at **(804) 894-9651**.

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<b>Welcome and Call to Order</b>	<i>Ms. Amanda Cox, Chair</i>
<b>Call of the Roll</b>	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
<b>Introduction</b>	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
<b>Approval of <u>9/9/2024</u> Minutes (published on website)</b>	<i>Ms. Amanda Cox, Chair</i>
<b>Public Comment</b>	
<b>Grant Projects</b>	<i>Ms. Vicki Humphreys</i>
<b>TAP Exception Request</b>	<i>Ms. Stephanie Kim</i>
<b>Other Business</b>	<i>The Honorable James Campos, Executive Director</i>
<b>Adjournment</b>	

**FY25 Competitive Education  
Staff Summaries & Recommendations  
January 6, 2025**

The Commission received 8 applications for the October 10, 2024 application deadline of the FY25 Competitive Education Program. The Education Committee will act on these applications at its meeting scheduled for January 6, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. The applications are grouped by category.

<b>Req #</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Request Amount</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
<b>Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Training</b>				
4301	Central Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, Inc.	CVCC Meets Workforce Demand through NC3 Training and Advanced Manufacturing Expansion	\$243,464	\$243,464
<b>Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Training (1 request):</b>			<b>\$243,464</b>	<b>\$243,464</b>
<b>Post-Secondary Programs with a focus in STEM-H</b>				
4303	Southern Virginia Higher Education Center	Expanding Educational Access: The Learning Resource Center at the SVHEC	\$172,827	No Award
<b>Post-Secondary Programs with a focus in STEM-H (1 request)</b>			<b>\$172,827</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Workforce Training Programs</b>				
4305	The Bridge Ministry, Inc.	Heavy Equipment Operator/Technician and CDL Driver Building	\$200,000	\$100,000
4302	Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation	P&HCC Building Trades Expansion: Electrician Training	\$129,527	\$129,527
4304	Southside Virginia Community College Foundation	SVCC's Occupational Technical Center Expansion	\$400,000	\$400,000
4307	Southwest Virginia Community College	Automotive Technology Program Expansion to Include Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technology	\$105,142	\$105,142
4306	Virginia Highlands Community College Educational Foundation	Electrical Technology Program Modernization Initiative	\$313,022	\$313,022

4308	Wytheville Community College	Wytheville Community College Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Program	\$188,820	\$188,820
<b>Workforce Training Programs (6 requests):</b>			<b>\$1,336,511</b>	<b>\$1,236,511</b>
<b>TOTAL (8 requests)</b>			<b>\$1,752,802</b>	<b>\$1,479,975</b>

### Advanced Manufacturing Workforce Training

**Central Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, Inc.**  
***CVCC Meets Workforce Demand through NC3 Training and Advanced Manufacturing Expansion (#4301)***  
**\$243,463.67 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** CVCC is Central Virginia's leading workforce trainer, committed to expanding regional training that increases Advanced Manufacturing educational achievement and accommodating student needs through traditionally and non-traditionally timed instruction. To further satisfy this commitment, CVCC has embarked on a \$840,406 project (\$730,389.80 of which is eligible for matching funds due to payment dates) to expand NC3 training and Advanced Manufacturing capacity. This project will provide classroom upgrades, purchase additional training equipment, and fund NC3 faculty training. This will allow CVCC to increase student enrollment without decreasing hands-on instructional time. In addition, through CVCC's NC3 partnership, students will receive industry-led national certifications upon program completion while earning embedded micro-credentials throughout their training. Students will be able to include these earned credentials and micro-credentials on their resume, making them more desirable candidates for work-based learning opportunities so they can 'earn as they learn.' Students will also be stronger candidates when seeking full-time employment as their skills have already been proven, thereby reducing the required training time once hired. CVCC's AM programs include Mechatronics, Networking and Electronics Technology, Nuclear Technology, and Industrial Maintenance, each tailored to meet the employment requirements of our region's industries, including five main sectors: Nuclear, Conveyors, Telecommunications, Packaging, and Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

***Matching Funds:***

A total of \$486,926 in Matching Funds were provided from the following sources:

- \$243,464 from the Al Stroobants Foundation, application filed
- \$206,700 from the Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund, money in hand
- \$13,200 from the National Science Foundation, money in hand
- \$23,562 from Framatome and other corporate partners, money in hand

### ***Project Outputs:***

Total students completing credentials annually is anticipated to increase by 5, from 38 to 43:

- Mechatronics Associates – increase by 2 annually, from 19 to 21
- Nuclear Technology Associates, increase by 1 annually, from 6 to 7
- Industrial Maintenance CSC – increase by 1 annually, from 2 to 3
- Networking and Electronic Technology CSC – increase by 1 annually, from 11 to 12

### ***Staff Comments:***

Grant funds are requested to expand CVCC's Advanced Manufacturing Program supporting equipment purchases for advanced manufacturing workforce programs. TRRC funds would be used to purchase Festo equipment while matching funds would purchase additional equipment, complete electrical upgrades and pay for staff training. Quotes were provided by Bluegrass Educational Technologies for the requested equipment. Employer letters supporting the project were received from Electronic Design & Manufacturing, Fleet Laboratories, Framatone, and Hanwha. Letters of support were also included from Appomattox County, Bedford County, Campbell County, the Central Virginia Planning District Commission, and the Central Virginia Workforce Development Board. While modest gains of almost 10% are expected, this project would continue to meet workforce needs in the region.

### ***Financial Viability Assessment:***

Overall, this project appears to have merit and potential for positive impact on the region's workforce development efforts in advanced manufacturing. The project has identified appropriate matching funds from diverse sources that make up 66.7% of the total budget. A sizable portion of the project's budget is slated to come from the Al Stroobants Foundation, for which an application has been filed. The viability of the total project rests on the approval of that funding, and as such a contingency for securing full matching funds will be part of the award conditions.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award up to \$243,404 for up to 50% of equipment costs contingent on securing 1:1 Matching Funds.

**Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (#4303)**

***Expanding Educational Access: The Learning Resource Center at the SVHEC***

**\$172,827.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** In spring 2025, the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center will add a learning resource center to its campus to increase students' access to and success in their programs of study. The space currently known as Leggett Resource Center will be renovated and renamed the Leggett Learning Resource Center, signifying its new role in fostering student success at the SVHEC while still honoring the Leggett family as legacy donors. Learning resource centers on higher education campuses are critical supplements to classroom learning, providing purpose-designed spaces for students to study, access supportive services, participate in learning and life skills workshops, and develop a sense of inclusion in the campus community. Rural students in particular need accessible and appropriate study spaces with technology resources and supportive services. Reaching the milestone of completion, whether in a degree program or certification-based technical training, contributes to the individual's economic mobility and to regional prosperity.

***Matching Funds:***

A total of \$225,282 in Matching Funds were provided from the following sources:

- \$100,000 from Sentara, cash in hand
- \$58,590 from Southern Virginia Higher Education Foundation, cash in hand
- \$41,692 from Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, in-kind
- \$25,000 from the Microsoft Corporation, cash in hand

***Project Outputs:***

- Renovations and Outfitting of the newly branded Leggett Learning Resource Center

***Staff Comments:***

Grant funds in the amount of \$172,827 are requested to provide support for renovations and new furniture to assist in the transformation of the Leggett Learning Resource Center. The rebranded center would expand study space primarily for nursing students. Employer letters of support were provided by Comfort Systems USA and Sentara, and partner institutions Southside Virginia Community College and Danville Community College also provided letters of support. While it is a laudable project, staff did not feel it met the requirements of the RFP in that it did not increase educational achievement in work-ready certifications or degree programs. No evidence was provided to support an expansion of the program in terms of students served or an increase in credentials.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

A review of key viability criteria for this project indicates it is financially a highly achievable endeavor if TRRC funds could fill the funding gap. The project budget is detailed and backed up with current quotes for requested renovations and equipment. The project has more than the minimum required match funding committed at the time of the application. The project, however, does not meet the requirements of the RFP and therefore is ineligible for TRRC funding.

***Staff Recommendation:* Staff recommends no award.**

## Workforce Training Programs

### **The Bridge Ministry, Inc.**

#### ***Heavy Equipment Operator/Technician and CDL Driver Building (#4305)***

**\$200,000.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** The Bridge Ministry, Inc. works in Virginia to transform the lives of troubled men and their families by providing behavioral and mental health services, vocational skills and training, education, and the relationships they need to bridge the gap from addiction to productive community and family life. The funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission will support a new heavy equipment building that will provide training to students in heavy equipment operation and maintenance. During the construction of this building, students will receive hands-on training in many areas including excavation, construction, heating and air conditioning, electrical work, roofing, plumbing, painting, carpentry work, and landscaping. The normal cost of building the heavy equipment facility can be halved by providing the labor ourselves as a workforce development project. Most students who enter the program enter as an alternative to incarceration, have no previous skilled training, did not graduate from high school, and have no financial resources to their names. When they graduate from the program, they have earned 2-6 professional industry-recognized certifications, are placed in career employment based on the certifications they earned, can earn a living wage (\$18.00 to \$30.00/hour), and there is room for advancement.

#### ***Matching Funds:***

- \$100,000 from an individual donor to the Bridge Ministry, cash in hand

#### ***Project Outputs:***

- Purchase of an excavator
- Construction of a heavy operator building

Total credentials completed annually is anticipated to increase by 80

- Heavy Equipment Operator – 30 credentials awarded annually
- Heavy Equipment Technician Training - 30 credentials awarded annually
- CDL Operator License – 20 credentials awarded annually

#### ***Staff Comments:***

The Bridge Ministry, a not-for-profit organization based in Buckingham County, offers an 18-month residential program aimed at transforming the lives of troubled men through addiction recovery, vocational training, and education. Partnering with Piedmont Virginia Community College, the program provides professional certification courses in various trades, including heating and air conditioning repair, electrical work, and welding. This vocational training, combined with therapeutic programming and education services like GED preparation, aims to equip participants with the skills necessary for successful reintegration into their communities.

Staff visited their campus in Buckingham County to learn more about their facilities and services. Cohorts of 50-60 men from across the Commonwealth move to the campus to receive residential services. Evidence-based practices, including the Matrix Model, Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT), and

Seeking Safety, form the foundation of the program's approach. This comprehensive methodology has yielded impressive results:

- 14% recidivism rate, significantly lower than the state average of 23.9%
- 100% job placement rate for graduates
- 98% pass rate on certification exams

Strong partnerships, particularly with Piedmont Virginia Community College, enhance the program's credibility and effectiveness in providing professional certification courses. The Bridge Ministry proposes to expand the credentials available to residents by adding a program focused on heavy equipment building. Heavy equipment operator, heavy equipment technician training and eventually CDL training would be added to an impressive list of workforce development options for residents.

Sam Northington, Virginia Infrastructure Academy Coordinator for Virginia's Community College System (VCCS), has been a volunteer at the Bridge Ministry for seven years and provided a strong letter of support for the project, citing the shortage of skilled heavy equipment operators for the infrastructure and construction sectors. Employer letters of support were received by Chemung Contracting Corporation and Cedar Mountain Stone Corporation, and a community letter of support was received from Senator Creigh Deeds for the project. The Bridge Ministry's advisory board is comprised of area professionals in business and real estate, law enforcement, and construction. Also serving on the board is retired Virginia Circuit Court Judge Jay Swett.

The first project for the new credential program will be the construction of a heavy equipment training building on the campus, under the supervision of Mr. William Washington, the ministry's executive director and a former contractor. Grant funds were originally requested to fully purchase an excavator and pay for a portion of the concrete slab for the heavy operator building. Because some of the proposed matching funds were spent prior to a grant award decision by TRRC, staff is recommending funding for 50% of future equipment expenses.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

The non-profit applicant, established in 1996, has a long history of providing training and workforce development services to a non-traditional student population. A detailed, reasonable budget was provided with documentation of costs for equipment. The required match is fully committed at the time of application. The proposed project demonstrates cost-effectiveness, serving as both a training opportunity and a future facility while saving approximately \$2 million in construction costs. It is the staff's conclusion that this project would be a worthy investment for the Commission in terms of generating skilled workers for the infrastructure and construction sectors.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award up to \$100,000 for 50% of equipment and concrete slab expenses contingent on 1:1 Matching Funds.



**Patrick & Henry Community College Foundation**  
***P&HCC Building Trades Expansion: Electrician Training (#4302)***  
**\$129,527.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** P&HCC has experienced great growth in both employer demand and enrollment in building trades programming in the last two years, and is working on planned expansions of multiple building trades training programs. P&HCC is seeking funding to bring training to students with barriers that prevent or make it difficult to travel to the college's main campus. P&HCC requests funding for equipment needed to offer expanded electrician training. This equipment will be housed in an existing mobile trailer and will be used at P&HCC's Patrick County site, The Franklin Center, and to serve the Henry County Adult Detention Center, in conjunction with classroom space at each location. Students participating in training in the mobile lab can earn up to 11 industry recognized certifications.

***Matching Funds:***

A total of \$448,314 in Matching Funds were provided from the following sources:

- \$261,000 from Virginia Community College System – Workforce Pipeline Funds, application approved
- \$176,266 from the Ratcliffe Foundation, money in hand
- \$6,048 from Carter Bank & Trust, money in hand
- \$5,000 in kind funding from Henry County Sheriff's Office, application approved

***Project Outputs:***

Total students completing credentials annually is anticipated to increase by 27.

***Staff Comments:***

P&HCC is seeking \$129,527 in grant funds to expand their Electrician Training program in Patrick County as part of a larger building trades program expansion. This builds on a previous expansion in Patrick County to include a welding program (Grant #3415 for \$141,475). The project aims to establish a mobile training lab for electrician training, offering industry-recognized Greenlee certifications and reaching students in remote areas and incarcerated individuals.

TRRC funding is intended to support \$125,327 for Greenlee equipment, \$1,700 for professional development of two P&HCC instructors to attend Greenlee Train-the-Trainer sessions, and \$2,500 for professional branding and logo wrap for the trailer, featuring credit to TRRC. Matching funds totaling \$261,000 from the Virginia Community College System's Workforce Pipeline Funds will support P&HCC's Building Trades Programming expansion. Additionally, the Ratcliffe Foundation is providing funds to purchase Heavy Equipment Operator simulators for the Patrick County site, further enhancing the building trades program's offerings. Employer support was provided by Monogram Foods, Signode, United Felts and Ten Oaks, all of which acknowledge difficulty in finding qualified job candidates.

The mobile electrician training program will be implemented through a 60-hour curriculum offered at multiple locations, including the Henry County Adult Detention Center, P&HCC's Patrick County site, and The Franklin Center. This approach utilizes a 24-foot trailer equipped with Greenlee equipment for hands-on training, complemented by classroom lectures at each site. The proposed training program would offer up to 11 NC3 Greenlee certifications, providing students with industry-validated proof-of-skills achievements. These certifications cover a range of essential electrical skills, including hand bending

and advanced bending techniques, wire pathways and terminations, conductor fishing and pulling, and three-phase testing and insulation resistance testing.

The 60-hour program will be offered as a short-term, noncredit Fast Forward course, with state board approval anticipated by January 2025. Students who complete the certifications can also earn 3 academic credits towards a career studies certificate in Residential and Commercial Electrician or an Associate degree in Industrial Electronics Technology, enhancing their career advancement opportunities. Four additional cohorts would be added to their offering of coursework.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

A review of key viability criteria for this project demonstrates several strengths, including its direct response to local workforce needs, increased accessibility through mobile training, and focus on industry-recognized certifications. The applicant has a proven record of accomplishment with high completion rates. The budget was detailed and informed by current vendor quotes. Match is committed and in hand at the time of application. These conditions and the project's alignment with growing skilled trades demand and its potential for positive impact make it a strong candidate for funding.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award of up to \$129,507 for up to 50% of equipment costs, marketing, and professional development.

**Southside Virginia Community College Foundation**  
***SVCC's Occupational Technical Center Expansion (#4304)***  
**\$400,000.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** Southside Virginia Community College is requesting funding to expand workforce training opportunities at the Occupational Technical Center in Blackstone, VA. The project has received \$2,664,357 from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and if awarded, funding from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission will serve as match funding, further bolstering financial resources for this critical initiative. Key components of the project include the purchase and construction of a prefabricated training facility at the Occupational Technical Center Complex and the addition of 44,000 square feet of pavement for a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training and testing course. Additionally, the project includes funding for tools/equipment, furniture, IT equipment, and fiber infrastructure installation. The proposed expansion leverages existing specialized facilities, such as a pole yard for power line training and the only regional diesel technician training site. This strategic initiative will ensure that students from rural areas have equal opportunities to achieve industry-standard certifications and gain employment with competitive pay.

***Matching Funds:***

A total of \$3,465,038 in Matching Funds were provided from the following sources:

- \$2,664,357 from US Economic Development Administration, application approved
- \$800,682 from the Southside Community College Foundation, cash in hand

***Project Outputs:***

Total students completing credentials annually is anticipated to increase by 63, from 249 to 312:

- Power Line Worker – increase by 3 annually, from 75 to 78
- Truck Driver Training - increase by 8 annually, from 116 to 124

- Diesel Technology – increase by 5 annually, from 15 to 20
- Fiber Installation – start-up will be 25 annually
- Solar Installation – increase by 22 annually, from 43 to 65

***Staff Comments:***

Southside Virginia Community College Foundation (SVCC) is seeking \$400,000 to support construction costs related to expanding its Occupational Technical Center Complex at Fort Barfoot in Blackstone, VA. This project aims to construct an additional building and expand the truck driver training space, complementing an existing \$2,664,357 award from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. This project builds on two previous TRRC grants: #4172 for \$316,000 to replace CDL training equipment, and #3410 for \$400,000 that was primarily used to construct an 8,000 square foot building for the Power Line Worker program.

The Occupational Technical Center in Blackstone, Virginia houses several in-demand technical training programs that have demonstrated significant success. These include:

- Power Line Worker: Established in 2016, it has trained 597 graduates from 55 counties and 15 independent cities throughout Virginia.
- Truck Driver Training: Operating since 1996, this program has produced 2,675 graduates to date.
- Diesel Technician: A 22-week program teaching fundamentals of diesel systems, hydraulics, and air brakes.
- Solar Photovoltaic Installer Training: Offered in partnership with the Solar Hands-On Instructional Network of Excellence (SHINE).
- Planned Fiber Technician program: To be added in the near future.

The expansion of SVCC's Occupational Technical Center is driven by pressing capacity constraints and regional economic challenges. With the current facility reaching its limits, planned program growth is hindered, particularly affecting the driver's training range which cannot accommodate current needs or expanded CDL testing in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. The proposed expansion includes constructing a prefabricated building on land already owned by the SVCC Foundation and adding 44,000 SF of pavement for CDL truck-driver training and testing, which will increase training capacity. Detailed enrollment projections show a 69% growth over a 9-year period, indicating potential for long-term impact of this capacity building project.

Employer letters were received by Dominion Energy, P&S Transportation Inc, and Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative. Additional letters of support were received from Virginia Trucking Association, Nottoway County, the Commonwealth Regional Council and SHINE.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

Overall, the project's alignment with high-demand workforce sectors and the significant matching funds already secured make it a compelling candidate for grant funding. The requested amount (\$400,000) is relatively small compared to the total project cost, indicating good leveraging of other resources. A detailed budget and supporting documentation were provided. The project builds upon existing successful programs, suggesting a high likelihood of success, and cross-training opportunities between programs add value to the overall educational experience. It is staff's conclusion that the grant would be a solid investment in workforce development for the Commission.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award up to \$400,000 towards construction of a training center at the Occupational Technical Center Complex.

**Southwest Virginia Community College (#4307)**

***Automotive Technology Program Expansion to Include Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technology***

**\$105,142.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** Commission funds are requested to expand the automotive technology programs at Southwest Virginia Community College. This expansion will include hybrid and electric vehicle technology, battery technology, and additional supporting certifications with skills aligned to clean energy related pathways. Commission funds will be used for training for instructors, marketing, program supplies, a hybrid vehicle systems panel trainer, and an electric vehicle car kit.

***Matching Funds:***

The Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority has approved \$105,142 for the project. This funding will support instructor training, program supplies, and equipment purchases.

***Project Outputs:***

This project will result in the expansion of SWCC's automotive technology program to include hybrid and electric vehicle technology.

- 12-16 students will enroll over the first two years of the program (6-8 per cohort).
- 70% of students enrolling earn the Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technology Career Studies Certificate.
- 80% of program completers will earn the Automotive Services Excellence (ASE) Light Duty Hybrid/Electric Vehicle Specialist Certification.
- 80% of program completers will earn the NC3 Snap-On Battery, Starting, and Charging Certifications.

***Staff Comments:***

The proposed expansion of SWCC's existing automotive technology program will allow students to earn three new credentials which will qualify them to perform maintenance on hybrid and electric vehicles. Although these vehicles have become increasingly popular with consumers, existing automotive technology programs in the region do not currently provide this type of training. The application states the closest similar programs are in Nashville, TN and Charlotte, NC. Local dealerships have engaged with

the College regarding the need for employees with these skills. Automotive diagnostic and repair technicians are in demand in SWCC's service region. There are currently 8-12 open positions with starting wages of approximately \$30. Future demand is also strong. According to Virginia Works occupational data, an estimated 311 positions will need to be filled by 2030.

The outcomes for this application are modest although this is not unusual given the specialized nature of these credentials. An additional 12-16 students, across the three credentials, are expected to enroll each year with 70%-80% expected to earn the credential. These figures reflect the expectation that SWCC will offer the programs to two cohorts each year.

The majority of Commission funds will be used to support 50% of the cost of two hybrid vehicle systems panel trainers and two electric vehicle care kits. The grant will also cover half of the cost of instructor training. TRRC is also asked to support 100% of marketing and outreach activities. A marketing plan was not provided with the application and, if approved, Staff will work with SWCC to develop details for this line item. Funding is also requested for program consumables with \$10,000 of this line item allocated to TRRC and \$15,000 allocated to VCEDA.

This program will ensure that SWCC's automotive technology program, the only in the SW region, will continue to provide training opportunities aligned with current industry needs.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

Overall, the proposal presents a well-structured plan to address an emerging need in automotive technology education. The applicant presents a relatively clear budget with vendor quotes to substantiate expenses. Match is fully committed at the time of application. The inclusion of multiple industry-recognized certifications enhances the program's value to students and employers. Once implemented, the program is expected to generate tuition-based revenue for ongoing operation. SWCC should explore strategies to increase enrollment projections to sustain the program going forward. These factors position the proposal as a potentially impactful initiative to create a skilled workforce pipeline for the growing hybrid and electric vehicle market in Southwest Virginia.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award of \$105,142 to support the expansion of SWCC's automotive technology program.

**Virginia Highlands Community College Educational Foundation**  
***Electrical Technology Program Modernization Initiative (#4306)***  
**\$313,022.00 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** Commission funds will be used to purchase updated equipment for VHCC's Electrical Technology programs. The updated equipment will allow the College to better align instructional resources to current industry standards. A detailed equipment list was provided to document the specific items to be purchased with grant funds. An additional list describing items to be purchased with matching funds was also provided.

***Matching Funds:***

The applicant will utilize \$313,022 of VCCS Equipment Trust Funding to purchase additional equipment.

***Project Outputs:***

Equipment serving the Electrical Technology program cluster at VHCC will be updated resulting in increased enrollment capacity.

- AAS Electrical Technology – increase of 5 annually, from 65 to 70
- AAS Electrical Technology – Energy Technology – increase of 2 annually, from 3 to 5
- AAS Electrical Technology – Mechatronics – increase of 2 annually, from 28 to 30

***Staff Comments:***

This request will allow Virginia Highlands to modernize and expand its Electrical Technology programs. Current enrollment is at capacity due, in part, to limited space and outdated equipment. The project described in this application will result in a renovated, and more functional learning space which will allow for modest increases to enrollment. The equipment purchased with TRRC and matching funds will serve students in the AAS in Electrical Technology, AAS in Electrical Technology, Energy Specialization, and AAS Electrical Technology, Mechatronics Specialization programs. Each AAS pathway includes related Certificates and Career Studies Certificates including the CSC in Applied Mechatronics and the CSC in Advanced Mechatronics. These programs are some of College's most popular. Over the past three years, VHCC has graduated an average of 65 students per year with one or more program related credentials.

The projected enrollment increase of 4-5 students annually is not unusual for projects focused on enhancing existing program offerings rather than creating new programs. These outcomes continue to accrue long after the close of the grant. According to the data presented in the application, about 30 skilled electricians are needed per year in the region. Assisting with the modernization of VHCC's Electrical Technology program will help to ensure that there is an adequate supply of trained graduates to serve the region's employers.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

A review of key viability criteria for this project demonstrates several strengths. This is a Long-established program with a 40-year history, indicating community importance, and consistent enrollment numbers suggest long-term viability. The budget is supported with vendor cost information, and match is fully committed at the time of application. There is demonstrated regional demand supported by employment data and company letters. This strong regional demand underscores the importance of VHCC's Electrical Technology program in meeting workforce needs and supporting local economic

development. It is staff's conclusion that expansion of this program, though modest, would still be a solid investment for the TRRC.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a grant award of \$313,022 to support the Electrical Technology Program Modernization Initiative project.

## **Wytheville Community College (#4308)**

### ***Wytheville Community College Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Program*** **\$188,820.29 Requested**

***Project Summary:*** Commission funds are requested to establish a short-term Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Program at Wytheville Community College. The grant will primarily support the salary for a full-time faculty position (\$176,264.40) during the first three program years. Additionally, the College will purchase an EKG simulator, an EKG 12 lead, and a PCR Analyzer needed for the program. The program will be offered at either the college's campus in Wytheville or at its off-site location at the Crossroads Institute in Galax.

#### ***Matching Funds:***

The College will contribute \$188,820.29 of Workforce Development Revenue Funds to match the Commission request.

#### ***Project Outputs:***

- A Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Program will be established.
- National Healthcare Association – 16 credentials awarded annually
- Basic Life Support - 16 credentials awarded annually

#### ***Staff Comments:***

This request will allow WCC to add a short-term Certified Clinical Medical Assistant Program, thereby expanding their inventory of healthcare programs. Due to the strength and variability of the College's existing healthcare offerings, this program can be established with only a few additional resources including start up salary support and two pieces of equipment. Commission funds will support 50% of the cost of the equipment and reimburse the instructor salary on a sliding basis over the first three program years. Under this plan, the Commission will reimburse 75% of the salary during the first year, 50% during the second year, and 25% for the third year. By the end of the grant period, revenues from student enrollment will be sufficient to sustain the program.

Because this program utilizes existing resources, it can be implemented very quickly. A full time CCMA faculty member will be hired by February 2025 with the first cohort of students to enroll in April 2025. A second cohort will enroll in September 2025 with 2 to 3 additional cohorts to enroll in academic years 2026 and 2027. Ten students will be enrolled in each cohort with 80% of these completing. Despite the quick implementation timeline some program details, including the location, remain undecided. Both WCC's main campus in Wytheville and its off-site location at the Crossroads Institute in Galax have classroom facilities, healthcare skills labs, and simulated hospital labs available to serve the program. Depending on the instructor's capacity, the program could be offered at both locations simultaneously. The application notes that this instructor will also have the qualifications required to reestablish a Nurse

Aid program and one or both locations. The College's previous Nurse Aid program was paused during the pandemic.

***Financial Viability Assessment:***

Overall, the proposal presents a well-structured plan to address a clear workforce need in rural Southwest Virginia, demonstrated by healthcare provider demand and projected 15% job growth for Medical Assistants over the next decade. The project aligns with WCC's strong reputation in healthcare programs and leverages existing resources like the Simulated Hospital and Practical Nursing Skills Lab, reducing overall implementation costs. The budget is supported with vendor cost information, and match is fully committed at the time of application. The program adds value for students by offering potential for career advancement through stackable credentials and industry-recognized certifications. It is expected that student enrollment revenue will sustain the program after the initial funding period. It is the staff's conclusion that the project as presented is viable.

***Staff Recommendation:*** Staff recommends a \$188,820.29 grant award to support the establishment of a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant program.