Governor McAuliffe Announces Danville Community College's Designation as a Center of Excellence in Cyber Defense

~The determination was made by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security~

Danville – Speaking at an event at Danville Community College (DCC), Governor McAuliffe announced that the National Security Agency (NSA) and U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have officially designated DCC as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense**.** This designation recognizes schools that excel in training students to become leaders in cyber defense and establishes DCC as one of the nation's academic trailblazers in the area of cybersecurity.

"This prestigious designation is not only good news for DCC, it is good news for the Commonwealth," **Governor Terry McAuliffe said.** "There are currently 36,000 open cyber-security jobs in Virginia, so we need young people throughout the Commonwealth to pursue cyber security training. I am especially pleased to see one of our rural community colleges attain this designation so students can earn their cyber credentials closer to home. DCC has worked hard to earn this designation, and I look forward to the dividends it will pay as we continue to build the new Virginia economy."

Based upon a list of knowledge, skills, and abilities provided by NSA/DHS, DCC had to demonstrate significant contributions in the areas of cybersecurity education, outreach, and knowledge to earn the designation.

Currently, there are only a small number of educational institutions nationwide that have earned this specific designation. With the addition of DCC, the Commonwealth's total of Community Colleges designated as a Cyber Center of Excellence increases to four, up from one at the beginning of the McAuliffe Administration.

"DCC's designation as a National Center of Excellence in Cyber Defense is an outstanding testament to the commitment our community colleges have to innovation and career readiness," **Secretary of Education Dietra Trent said**. "They are on the front lines, preparing students to take on the challenges of the 21st century and to embrace the career opportunities of the future."

"The need for industry-ready, credentialed cyber workers is increasing exponentially," **said Secretary of Technology Karen Jackson**. "By achieving this certification, Danville Community College has enhanced the Commonwealth's cyber footprint and expanded opportunities for students to become part of Virginia's growing cyber-community."

"Throughout its 50 year history, Danville Community College has been a constant source of innovation, creativity, and high-quality workforce development for the region," **Senator William Stanley** said. "This honor from the NSA and DHS is further proof that this institution remains committed to providing our students with the skills they need for the jobs that they want. Now more than ever, we need our young people pursuing cutting-edge careers in developing industries like cyber security, and Danville Community College is leading the way."

"Danville Community College continues to excel in training students for high level jobs that offer the young people of our region a promising future," **said Delegate Danny Marshall.** "We know the importance of cyber security in today's world and are excited that DCC has received the prestigious designation as a Center of Excellence in Cyber Defense. We applaud the work of the DCC faculty and leadership for this outstanding training program."

"Not only will this give DCC students access to important scholarship opportunities, internships, and employment recognition, it will also open doors for collaboration with industry and other institutions in this field of study including high school students looking towards a future career in cybersecurity," **said Cybersecurity Academic Program Director Mr. Steve Carrigan**.

"Through foresight and innovation on the part of our faculty, DCC's program will become a model for other community colleges in cybersecurity," **DCC President Dr. Bruce Scism said**. "Professor Steve Carrigan and the team he assembled will help not only our local community and state, but our nation to stay safe both in the real world and in the virtual world. We have built both introductory and advanced certificates in cybersecurity and there are tremendous, exciting, high-paying employment opportunities waiting for graduates."

"DCC is excited to offer a full Cybersecurity Certificate, and an Associate of Science degree in Information Systems Technology with a Cybersecurity Technician CSC as the focus and to have the designation as a National Center of Excellence in Cyber Defense says volumes about the quality of the program," **said Dean of Business, Engineering, and Technology Mr. Jimmie Tickle**.

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GOVERNOR TERRY MCAULIFFE

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