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Capital CoLAB Makes Progress Developing Region's Talent

New Employers Join Capital CoLAB, Four Area Universities Launch Digital Tech Credential and Jeanne Contardo Named as CoLAB Managing Director

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Washington, D.C.—The [Greater Washington Partnership](#) today announced two major regional employers—Booz Allen Hamilton and Stanley Black & Decker—will join the Capital CoLAB (Collaborative of Leaders in Academia and Business). Along with the new employers joining CoLAB, four new academic institutions—American University, Georgetown University, University of Richmond and Virginia Tech—launched the Digital Tech Credential program this fall.

"The Capital CoLAB has made incredible progress in a short amount of time, as the region's academic and business leaders recognize the incredible opportunity that exists to strengthen the talent pipeline from Baltimore to Richmond," **said Wes Bush, Inaugural Chair of the Capital CoLAB.** "The CoLAB has become a national model for collaboration between businesses and educational institutions, and through this effort we will transform the talent landscape in the Capital Region for years to come."

The Capital CoLAB, through its Digital Tech Credential and TalentReady programs, equips emerging talent with the skills needed to accelerate the region forward. The CoLAB's Digital Tech Credential is designed to integrate employer demanded digital tech skills into higher education curriculum. In doing so, the Credential program helps undergraduate students in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia better compete in today's economy, creating a broader talent pipeline for employers across the region. TalentReady is working to expand economic opportunity for thousands of young people from K-12 and community colleges by designing pathways that connect postsecondary degrees, certifications and real-world work experiences.

The Partnership also announced that Dr. Jeanne Contardo, a leader in higher education, has been named as the Managing Director of the Capital CoLAB. With almost 20 years of experience in strategic planning, cross-sector partnership development, research and policy analysis, and



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workforce development, Dr. Contardo will play an integral role in the development and growth of the Capital CoLAB and the Greater Washington Partnership's skills and talent initiatives. She most recently worked as a consultant for academic institutions looking to develop sustainable business strategies and shape regional programs and initiatives. Prior to her role as a consultant, she served as Vice President of Regional Operations for Excelsior College.

"Capital CoLAB is a groundbreaking program, developed by the region's preeminent educators and business leaders, that is creating change at scale to transform the Capital Region into a thriving global hub for innovation," said **Jason Miller, CEO of the Greater Washington Partnership**. "The work of the Capital CoLAB and the Greater Washington Partnership is paramount in driving solutions and fostering unity throughout the Capital Region."

The Capital CoLAB Digital Tech Credential program is focused on developing talent in the region by connecting students at participating academic institutions with top businesses across the region to provide them with opportunities and real-world experience. The first credential—the Generalist Digital Tech Credential—helps guide students in non-STEM majors to gain skills in areas such as data analytics, visualization and cybersecurity, using competencies defined by employers across multiple industries. George Mason University and Virginia Commonwealth University were the first two schools to offer the Digital Tech Credential starting last spring.

About the Capital CoLAB

The Capital CoLAB is an action-oriented partnership of business and academic institutions that develops the talent needed across the Capital Region. The CoLAB creates change at scale by engaging educational institutions and businesses simultaneously to develop the talent and workforce needed now and in the future, connect innovators across sectors to improve cutting-edge technology capabilities to position the region for global leadership, and improve awareness of the Capital Region as a leading innovation hub.

About the Greater Washington Partnership

The Greater Washington Partnership is a first-of-its-kind civic alliance of CEOs in the region, drawing from the leading employers and entrepreneurs committed to making the Capital Region—from Baltimore to Richmond—one of the world's best places to live, work and build a business. Working in collaboration with leaders across our communities, the Partnership connects and leverages the region's extraordinary assets to advance inclusive, actionable solutions that strengthen the Capital Region as a leading global region and center for commerce and innovation.

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