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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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DLLR SECRETARY SCHULZ ANNOUNCES EARN GRANT AT TECH CONFERENCE:

\$566,000 Grant Expands Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence's Capacity

CUMBERLAND, Md. (Oct. 24, 2018) – Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) Secretary Kelly M. Schulz announced today that the Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence will receive \$566,000 in Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland program funds for 2019 and 2020.

Speaking to crowd of more than 215 business, technology and education professionals assembled for the Tech at the Gap: Igniting Innovation '18 conference, Schulz lauded the County's workforce and economic development initiative for its transformative ability to unite regional business, education and community development partners. "The Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence is the gold standard for what an EARN program can accomplish."

Schulz noted the importance of stakeholder participation. "We're grateful to have many of the Center's partners here today. Your guidance is having an indelible mark on people's lives and careers," added Schulz.

The IT Center of Excellence, which is located at Allegany College of Maryland, is led by ACM Workforce Development Director Autumn Becker. Prior to this fourth round of funding, the Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence has received \$536,952 in EARN grant funds since 2014.

With additional dedicated EARN funding, the IT Center of Excellence expects to train over 300 people within the next two years using a newly developed training program that meets the collective training needs of its 12 industry partners.

Becker credits the IT Center of Excellence's success to the active involvement of 12 industry partners, convened

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regularly by Exclamation Labs Founder and CEO Jonathan Hutcherson. “From offering IT internships and identifying employees for worker training to supporting initiatives like today’s Tech at the Gap, our employer partners been an incredible asset,” explained Becker.

The Center was highlighted in a report to the Maryland State Legislature this past spring. The program boasts an economic impact 19% higher other EARN-supported initiatives, demonstrating a return on investment of \$22.58 for each EARN grant dollar.

“We can account for 17 employee promotions (with promotional wage increases of 15-20%) that can be largely attributed to participation in EARN grant-funded training courses,” stated IBM’s Charlotte Clark in the Center’s 2018 Annual Report to DLLR.

As the Western Maryland IT Center of Excellence continues to connect IT employers and employees, assist economic development efforts in attracting and retaining IT businesses and build a world-class workforce, it welcomes additional employers and stakeholders.

Additional information is available at allegany.edu/itce or by contacting Center Director Autumn Becker at abecker@allegany.edu or 301-784-5434.

ABOUT ALLEGANY COLLEGE OF MARYLAND

Ranked among the top 20 community and technical colleges in the country by the Brookings Institution, Allegany College of Maryland (ACM) offers world-class education in a caring environment that transforms lives, strengthens communities and celebrates life-long learning. Serving more than 3,000 credit and 7,000 continuing education and workforce students annually, ACM offers over 80 associate degree, certificate, and letters of recognition programs at affordable rates. To learn more, visit allegany.edu or call 301-784-5000.