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(BPRW) Comcast Announces \$1 Million Commitment to Per Scholas to Combat the Tech Opportunity Gap Across the U.S.

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(Black PR Wire) PHILADELPHIA--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))-- Comcast NBCUniversal today announced a \$1 million commitment to national tech training nonprofit [Per Scholas](#) to scale its remote operations and train 1,000 learners — 87% of whom are people of color, 30% women, and 60% with no degree beyond high school — for in-demand technology jobs. The partnership will enable Per Scholas to provide tuition-free training remotely to diverse talent in 10 U.S. markets, with programs in IT support, software engineering, cybersecurity, and cloud support.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20201203005672/en/>

At a time when millions of Americans have been laid off or furloughed due to COVID-related circumstances, this partnership with Comcast will help Per Scholas keep up with growing demand for its programs and train individuals for promising careers in technology. In addition to a comprehensive, market-driven curriculum, learners from Atlanta, Baltimore, Greater Boston, Chicago, Denver, Detroit, the National Capital Region, Newark, Philadelphia, and New York will also receive career support services, financial coaching, technology toolkits, and networking opportunities with a variety of Fortune 500 hiring partners.

“At Per Scholas, we know that a thriving workforce starts with equitable access to education, which is why we’ve dedicated the last 25 years to training diverse talent that is traditionally underrepresented in the tech field,” said Plinio Ayala, President and CEO of Per Scholas. “In light of COVID-19 and the accelerated shift to remote work that we’re seeing, expanding this work is more important than ever – and we’d be unable to do so without the help of incredible partners like Comcast. This investment will allow us to expand across the U.S. and adapt our training models to meet changing employer needs. We could not be more excited to have Comcast’s support in this essential expansion initiative.”

In addition to creating 1,000 accessible careers in technology, Comcast NBCUniversal’s partnership will power an ambitious expansion of Per Scholas training sites in Philadelphia and Chicago. With Comcast as a founding champion partner in Philadelphia, the nonprofit will be able to enroll 100 highly skilled, tech-savvy adults to train for tech careers. In the growing tech hub of Chicago, Comcast’s support as a founding partner will enable Per Scholas to enroll 80 individuals to access tech careers.

In New York, Comcast NBCUniversal will also support Per Scholas’ Tech Career Exploration program in 20 high schools throughout the city. Through this interactive curriculum, teachers will be trained to assist students as they explore careers in IT support, computer networking, and cybersecurity.

“Today’s workforce training programs need to keep pace with an economy dramatically changed by COVID-19. Per Scholas’ work to prepare diverse learners for careers in technology has never been more critical and we are proud to launch this significant new partnership by supporting training centers in 10 cities, including Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York,” said Dalila Wilson-Scott, Executive Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Comcast. “By providing tuition-free training remotely to underrepresented communities, Per Scholas shares our commitment to an equitable and diverse tech sector, ensuring that more people have equal access to the education and training needed to succeed.”

Comcast will also become a leading voice and sponsor for Diverse by Design (DxD) in 2021 – a national conversation series led by Per Scholas that focuses on increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the technology workforce across the U.S. Since its launch in 2016, DxD has engaged more than 800 leaders over seven conferences. Looking ahead, Comcast NBCUniversal employees will engage in a variety of volunteer opportunities to foster tech careers for young adults and adult learners.

Comcast has long been committed to addressing digital inequities so that all Americans have the opportunity to succeed in an increasingly digital world. Since 2011, its low-income, high-speed broadband adoption program, Internet Essentials, has connected more than 8 million Americans to the Internet at home. Beyond connectivity, Comcast is also focused on providing digital skills training to young people and to upskilling adults with the aim of improving economic mobility. Comcast’s investment in Per Scholas is part of the company’s multi-year \$100 million

commitment to fight injustice and inequality and will help address the tech opportunity gap across the U.S.

“My training at Per Scholas has changed the entire trajectory of my life,” says Davida Garner, a recent Per Scholas Philadelphia graduate. “I am now pursuing a career in IT as a technical support analyst. In the year since I graduated from Per Scholas, I have noticed that my professional confidence has gone up and I am able to learn more quickly, as I have a solid foundation in IT. Where I am now, will allow me to further my career and also pass down my knowledge to those coming behind me.”

On average, approximately 85% of students accepted into Per Scholas will go on to graduate, 80% of graduates will secure employment at an average wage of at least \$20 an hour, and 75% will retain employment beyond one year in the IT field. Historically, alumni will also make roughly three times more in their first job after graduation than their pre-training wage.

To learn more about Per Scholas, visit perscholas.org.

About Per Scholas

Per Scholas is a national organization that has been advancing economic mobility for 25 years. Through rigorous training, professional development and robust employer connections, we prepare individuals traditionally underrepresented in technology for high-growth careers in the industry. We partner with leading employers to build more diverse talent pools, directly connecting our graduates to new career opportunities with leading employers, from Fortune 500 companies to innovative startups. With campuses in 14 cities, Per Scholas has trained more than 12,000 individuals in tech skills, building bridges to careers in technology. To learn more, please visit <https://perscholas.org/>.

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