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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Polk State College announces Cybersecurity Registered Apprenticeship Program in partnership with Florida Department of Education

Wednesday, September 16, 2026 – Polk State College announced on Wednesday that it is revitalizing its registered apprenticeship program in cybersecurity in partnership with the Florida Department of Education.

Commissioner of Education Dr. Henry Mack and members of the State Board of Education joined Polk State President Anastasios Kamoutsas for the announcement as the College hosted the Board on the Winter Haven Campus for its monthly meeting.

“Commissioner Mack’s experience in Florida colleges, workforce alignment, and federal apprenticeship policy – as well as the Board’s continued support of high-quality career pathways – makes this the right moment to rebuild a cybersecurity apprenticeship,” Kamoutsas said. “Cybersecurity and information security analyst roles are both high-wage and high-demand in Florida. Together, we are ensuring that Florida can grow its own highly skilled cybersecurity workforce.”

Nationally, the occupation is projected to grow 21% from 2025 to 2035, much faster than the average growth of other occupations. In Polk County, information security analysts appear on CareerSource Polk’s 2025–2026 Regional Demand Occupations List, with nearly 900 annual job openings.

“Polk State is doing the hard work of rebuilding a registered apprenticeship that employers can trust and that communities need. That is workforce education at its best,” Dr. Mack said. “By revitalizing this registered apprenticeship, Polk State is connecting classroom instruction with paid on-the-job training and portable credentials. That model works for students, for employers, and for the security of our state. I am proud to support this effort.”

At Polk State, apprentices will train in computer forensics, system security, and ethical hacking. They will receive paid, structured on-the-job training under experienced professionals, paired with related technical instruction and industry credentials.

The College will partner closely with local employers and municipalities to train their workforce and strengthen cybersecurity efforts across the region.

Chandra Hall, Human Resources and Organizational Development Director for the City of Haines City, spoke about the importance of this registered apprenticeship program for the city’s cybersecurity and IT workforce.

“Jeremiah Anhalt, who went through this registered apprenticeship program previously at Polk State, was recently promoted to Director of Technology Management, while Shemar Mais in our Technology Management Department is looking forward to participating in the program now,” said Hall, who added that she is also a proud Polk State alumna. “This partnership will provide valuable opportunities for our employees, strengthen our workforce, and increase cybersecurity for our city.”



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About Polk State College

Located in Polk County, Florida, and established in 1964, Polk State College is a multi-campus institution serving more than 14,000 students with Bachelor of Applied Science, Bachelor of Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Science degrees, as well as 9,000 individuals in a wide range of certificate and workforce training programs. The College also operates three charter high schools.

Polk State's advantages include small class sizes; hands-on learning; dedicated faculty; day and night classes; online options; affordable tuition; excellent financial aid; and a diverse community and vibrant student life, including fine arts opportunities, clubs, and intercollegiate athletics.