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From: Mary Ellen Miller

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maryellen@marketingmel.com

423-335-7267

**Boones Creek Extension Campus TCAT Cuts Ribbon
First-of-its-kind Washington County Facility to Train High School Students,
Adults for Skilled Trade Careers**

(Boones Creek, Tenn.) — The first Tennessee College of Applied Technology extension campus in Washington County hosted a ribbon cutting Friday, March 22. Elected dignitaries and school officials from across the region turned out for the event that featured students who have been studying skilled trades since last fall. The former Boones Creek Elementary School, located just off I-26 at exit 17 on Christian Church Road, whom many will remember as a “round” school built in the 70’s, opened to students September 5. The new campus features four instructional spaces: Nursing, Industrial Electricity, Cosmetology, and Building Construction Technology. While the nursing program is for adult learners, students in the other three programs can start learning at the high school level.

David Hicks, President of TCAT, has been on the job since July 2022. “I have enjoyed this work so much. I feel it is truly changing people’s lives.” Hicks said he is thrilled to see the construction progress. “This will get students started early on a career path. These are great fields. Our responsibility goes beyond just training students. We also tirelessly work to secure jobs for our students when they graduate.”

Hicks said the property was transferred from Washington County Schools to Washington County and then to the State of Tennessee. The state allocated \$19 million for the new Boones Creek TCAT. “We are very appreciative of the legislators, the governor and the board of regents for all they have done to make this a reality,” he said.

Washington County Mayor Joe Grandy said, “This facility has been in the works for over four years. We have long anticipated bringing construction related courses to help our students in the CTE program with career opportunities and to provide a workforce for our local construction trades.” Grandy said he was thrilled to see the transition of the former school. “They demolished the round building from the 70s and were able to retain and remodel the building from the 90s with 12 classrooms and a small gymnasium.”

“Washington County Schools recognizes the importance of career and technical education and the critical role it plays in fostering a talented and highly skilled workforce to meet the evolving needs of our local and regional industries,” said Washington County Schools Superintendent Jerry Boyd.

“For our students, the TCAT Elizabethton Boones Creek Extension Campus will widen the pathway toward a career that will enable more WCS students access to postsecondary opportunities equipping them with industry specific skills in order to become highly competent and competitive in our region’s workforce. By investing in our high school students' futures, we empower our students to unlock incredible opportunities to realize a lifetime of success, build fulfilling careers, and contribute meaningfully to our community's growth and prosperity. The collaboration and continued partnership between the TCAT Elizabethton, the Washington County officials, and WCS educators to create and sustain this center for workforce development in our community significantly expands future-focused opportunities for our students during and after high school,” Boyd said.

Hicks said the Boones Creek TCAT hired instructors for this school year. The program provides dual enrollment offerings for local county and city schools as well as adult enrollment.

“Johnson City Schools recognizes the importance of career and technical education (CTE) and our partnership with TCAT-Elizabethton/Boones Creek Extension Campus demonstrates a commitment to preparing our students for success in the local, regional, state and national workforce,” said Johnson City Schools Superintendent Dr. Steven Barnett.

“By providing access to postsecondary opportunities through the extension campus, more Johnson City Schools’ students will have the chance to acquire industry-specific skills. This, in turn, enhances their competitiveness in the job market and equips them to contribute meaningfully to the growth and prosperity of our community,” Barnett said.

The front of the facility features an administrative area and student common area. A stand-alone 2nd building, , will hold two more programs including Diesel Technology and Heavy Equipment Operator. The new building will be ready for classes in May of 2025. Additionally, the new building will include a large training center for area businesses and industry.

“We have people employed to work with existing business and industry for workforce training,” Hicks said. “That will enable local business and industry to come in and train onsite if they do not have training space at their location,” Hicks said.

There are 58 local Career and Technical Education high school students who take part in a dual enrollment block schedule. Sixty-nine adult learners are enrolled at the Boones Creek TCAT. Hicks said nursing, which requires students to be 18 and up, accounts for the majority of the adult learners.

The TCAT, whose main campus is in Elizabethton, serves five counties in Northeast Tenn. GRC Construction Services of Kingsport is the General Contractor for the Boones Creek Extension Campus TCAT.

For more information on how to enroll please visit <https://tcatelizabethton.edu/> or email admissions@tcatelizabethton.edu.

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