PNC Bank Expands PartnerUp® Career Pathway Initiative To High Schoolers In New Markets

Upskilling Program, New Education Benefit through Guild to Offer Direct, Debt-Free Route to In-Demand Careers

PITTSBURGH, Oct. 6, 2022 /PRNewswire/ -- PartnerUp®, a PNC Bank-led initiative aimed at steering high school graduates into well-paying careers in high-growth industries, is moving into Cleveland and Birmingham, Alabama, after a successful five-year run with Pittsburgh area school students and local employers. Also, this week PNC launched a new career development and tuition benefit available to its employees nationwide.

"With PartnerUp's expansion, we're working with more employers and local education partners to provide local high school graduates with the skills needed to land entry-level careers in high-demand industries like healthcare and financial services, without the burden of student loan debt," said Vicki Henn, PNC chief human resources officer. "As a talent-focused company, we're committed to investing in impactful skills development programs and educational initiatives that help drive career growth and economic opportunity in the communities we serve."

Since PartnerUp's inception in 2018, PNC Bank has partnered with 30 schools and 16 employers to offer more than 6,000 high school students the opportunity to secure a more direct, debt-free route to in-demand careers. PNC's effort to extend the career development program to more high schoolers comes as employers across the country continue to grapple with worker shortages in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In today's labor market, it's more important than ever that employers challenge our thinking on the experiences and qualifications needed for available jobs, and our roles as leaders in developing talent," said Brianna McMeekin, PNC talent program manager. "With this expansion into new markets, PartnerUp is giving more employers the opportunity to invest and build a pipeline of talent from local high schools, where we're creating content to match career education standards and offering real pathways to success for students, post-graduation."

PartnerUp's push into the Cleveland and Birmingham regions builds on the company's multi-year effort to develop a scalable career pathway program that could be replicated and deployed in additional communities across its footprint. Throughout the school year, the multi-session program offers students in-school curriculum and career development resources, such as resume writing, interview coaching and employer recruitment events to help prepare graduates to go straight into the workforce.

Since 2018, PNC Bank has offered more than 100 PartnerUp graduates diverse roles at the financial services company, and 87 have accepted and started their career paths with the company. Other graduates of the program have landed at partner companies.

For Neylienid Quinones, a recent graduate of Cleveland's John Marshall School of Civic & Business Leadership, the hands-on training, networking resources and career coaching offered through PartnerUp has turned into a life-changing opportunity. The 18-year-old recently landed an entry-level position with PNC's Talent Recruitment team, after successfully completing the program's curriculum. Quinones is one of more than 30 Cleveland Metropolitan School District seniors who received job offers from PNC or other employer partners participating in the PartnerUp program.

"It was an eye opener," she said. "I was looking for a job, but I wasn't expecting to get such a big job. I was working in fast food at the time and thinking I would try to go into retail. But instead, I had the opportunity to go from fast food to a career on my second job."

PartnerUp is one of two career development initiatives the company has invested in to help meet increased demand for skilled workers throughout its footprint. In partnership with Guild, PNC recently introduced an education benefit available to the company's 62,000 employees after 90 days of employment.

The new benefit gives full-time and part-time employees access to a best-in-class education experience that includes a curated catalog of tuition-covered professional certificates, college prep courses, and associate and bachelor's degrees to help advance career mobility. Fully funded, partially funded and reimbursement options are available.

"We're honored to partner with PNC to bring career opportunities to its workforce," said Natalie McCullough, Guild president and chief commercial officer. "As a leading financial services organization, PNC is supporting career mobility in high-demand areas such as data science and cybersecurity and taking an intentional approach to create career pathways for its existing employees."

About PartnerUp
PartnerUp is an in-school, employer-facilitated program designed to prepare students to graduate from high school to a promising career. PartnerUp helps students position themselves to successfully embrace the job opportunities that await them by guiding them in building their resumes, sharpening their interviewing techniques and developing power skills. For more information, visit https://pnc.foleon.com/students/partnerup/.

About Guild
Guild's Career Opportunity Platform enables forward-thinking employers to invest in their employees, unlocking life-changing opportunities for personal and professional growth through education and learning programs, career development and one-on-one coaching. For more information, visit https://www.guildeducation.com/.

About PNC Bank
PNC Bank, N.A., is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking including a full range of lending products; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit www.pnc.com.

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