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## GCP and RITE Join Forces

### *Creating better opportunities to build the region's IT talent pipeline*

**CLEVELAND - January 10, 2019** – Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) and RITE have joined forces to leverage current programming and gain synergies toward a shared vision of addressing information technology workforce challenges in Northeast Ohio. This integrated structure will support the workforce in Northeast Ohio, CIO engagement in economic development, as well as innovation and commercialization in the region.

“Building the IT talent pipeline is a priority for GCP and our members,” said Joe Roman, president and CEO of GCP, “This unified structure is a great opportunity to create more aligned operations for RITE and GCP including our technology segment OHTec. Continued collaboration and joint initiatives leverage our resources and are key to addressing IT talent gaps.”

RITE has been building traction and providing value to regional employers, educators and students with long-standing fiscal and administrative support over the years from Lorain County Community College (LCCC), the original convener of regional employers around IT skills needs. Recognizing the importance of employer engagement, GCP is investing in the growth of RITE and as such will provide the administrative and operational backbone services for its next stage of growth. RITE's long-standing executive director Courtney DeOreo will join the GCP team and continue the leadership of RITE. LCCC will remain an important strategic partner as part of a robust ecosystem of partnerships RITE has been nurturing and engaging since its inception.

In December 2017, both RITE and GCP adopted new strategic plans to guide the work of the two respective organizations over the next several years. RITE has developed *Shaping the Future of the IT Workforce*, a strategic plan that is focused on a shared regional vision for a diverse, highly-skilled industry-responsive IT workforce. GCP has made workforce initiatives a significant part of its *Forward CLE* strategic plan and will continue programming, events and other projects in the IT sector through its technology segment OHTec.

The integration is an important step for both organizations. As part of its strategic goals, GCP seeks to establish deep competency in the area of tech workforce development. RITE has nine years of history as the unifying force and platform for collective action among employers, educators and economic/workforce development IT talent development, coupled with dynamic programming and strong brand recognition for that work. Working in unison, GCP and RITE will build regional capacity on mutually aligned workforce strategies.

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“Local employers and their projected needs drive all of RITE’s work to address IT talent shortages and skills gaps across all industry sectors,” said Bill Blausey, Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Eaton, and Chair of the RITE Regional Leadership Board. “Deepening the partnership between RITE and GCP will further drive the industry-led transformation of the region’s talent development system.”

“As founding members of RITE’s original employer-led Board, GCP and OHTec have helped RITE build long-standing employer partnerships and develop industry-responsive programming”, said Courtney DeOreo, Executive Director of RITE. “Through a unified organizational structure, we are poised to make a greater impact – with employers at the helm - in building an IT workforce that Northeast Ohio employers need.”

The partnership will create a tech community focal point that will efficiently mobilize business community leadership and resources necessary to increase the scale of impact of workforce, technology and innovation efforts to improve the economic vitality in the region.

### **About Greater Cleveland Partnership**

With more than 11,000 members, the Greater Cleveland Partnership (GCP) is one of the largest metropolitan chambers of commerce in the nation. GCP is focused on driving the economic vitality of the region through building a strong and thriving climate for the broad business community, including small businesses, middle-market companies and large corporations.

### **About RITE**

RITE is the leading industry-driven IT workforce alliance in Northeast Ohio dedicated to building a diverse, highly skilled IT talent pipeline needed by Northeast Ohio employers. Through its unique model of industry leadership, regional cross-sector collaboration, and dynamic programming, RITE is shaping the future of the IT workforce in Northeast Ohio. Established in 2009, RITE has engaged over 100 employers, more than 25 strategic alliances and program partners, eight institutions of higher education, and over 149 high schools – impacting nearly 4,000 students.