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For Immediate Release:

April 13, 2016

Thaddeus Stevens College Secures National Science Foundation Grant

Lancaster, PA: (April 13, 2016) Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology (TSCT) has been awarded a National Science Foundation grant of \$198,518 for project entitled “Skilled Women Get STEM Jobs”. It is aimed at helping diversify the workforce in three high-demand career fields where women are now severely under-represented: Machine Tool and Computer Aided Manufacturing Technology, Electrical Technology, and Water & Environmental Technology. This three year is the first- ever awarded by National Science Foundation to the College.

“**Skilled Women Get STEM Jobs**” will be implemented over three years from September 2016 to August 2019 and will build a high school to college pipeline to

- encourage female high school students to enroll in college programs that offer solid job prospects,
- engage the enrolled students through an informal group mentoring program and internship opportunities, and
- facilitate their entry into the workforce by ensuring their familiarity with industries and job opportunities.

TSCT will use the National Science Foundation(NSF) grant to partner with 11 high schools in Lancaster and York counties, raising awareness among their female juniors and seniors about the well-paying jobs for technicians in machine tool and computer-aided manufacturing, the electrical industry, and the water and environmental technology field. The three programs of study were chosen because of workforce shortages in these career fields.

The problem is, few women choose STEM careers. According to a report by Institute for Women’s Policy Research, in Pennsylvania, men are 2.2 times more likely to work in STEM occupations than are women. Female students at partner high schools will receive STEM career information, be invited to tour area companies and Stevens College and learn during hands-on cross-disciplinary immersion workshops.

Skilled worker shortages and lack of gender diversity in technician-level science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields are state, national, and international problems.

Having more women in the STEM workforce, especially in advanced manufacturing, will help narrow the male-female wage gap and help reduce workforce shortages

In the US, women generally earn only 78 cents for every dollar earned by men, according to the US Department of Labor. In Lancaster County, where Thaddeus Stevens College is located, the pay gap is even wider: Women here earn only 59 cents for every dollar men earn, according to an article by Tim Stuhldreher of *LNP*. An associate's degree in a nontraditional STEM field can be a great pay equalizer for women. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce found that 63% of associate degree holders in STEM jobs earn more than bachelor's degrees holders in non-STEM occupations.

Katie Surra, Stevens College's Water and Environmental Technology instructor, will lead the project. Assisting her will be two other Stevens College instructors, Brian Kochan, Electrical Technology instructor and Alex Surra, Machine Technology instructor; as well as Dr. Nanette Marcum-Dietrich of Millersville University.

"We are very excited to receive our first NSF grant," commented Dr. William Griscom, Thaddeus Stevens College president. "The grant will support our mission and strategic goals by increasing the number of women enrolling in our technical programs."

Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology educates Pennsylvania's economically and socially disadvantaged as well as other qualified students for skilled employment in a diverse ever-changing workforce and for full effective participation as citizens. Founded in 1905 by bequest of US Congressman Thaddeus Stevens, Thaddeus Stevens College today has approximately 1000 male and female students from 56 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties who are enrolled in one of 20 associate degree programs, 3 certificates, or 2 short-term courses. Annually 90% or more of the College's graduates get jobs in their fields. For the fourth consecutive time, the Aspen Institute, and independent college rating organization, has named Thaddeus Stevens College as one of the top 150 two-year colleges in the nation and the top two-year technical college in Pennsylvania.

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