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Cherokee By Choice.

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Cherokee Office of Economic Development Unveils Be Pro Be Proud Georgia Initiative aimed at building awareness and pride for in-demand skilled professions



CHEROKEE COUNTY (July 23, 2020) | The Cherokee Office of Economic Development (COED) today announced the launch of Be Pro Be Proud Georgia – an initiative to bring a new generation of pride, progress, and professionals to Cherokee, metro Atlanta, and Georgia’s skilled workforce. To ensure proper social distancing as outlined by the Governor’s Executive Order and other safety

measures, today’s event featured two launch events that brought together leaders representing industry, education, and government.

Be Pro Be Proud Georgia seeks to create a path toward a career in the skilled professions, which fulfills the needs of Georgia’s industry. Georgia’s workforce is facing a significant challenge. Over 47 percent of Georgia’s skilled professionals are over the age of 45 and nearing retirement. This initiative sparks interest in the essential skilled trades by providing students with a fun, interactive experience in the Be Pro Be Proud

Mobile Workforce Workshop. The impressive 40-foot rig features simulations of Georgia's most in-demand skilled professions – all powered by the latest industry-driven technology. While visiting, students will learn about the Be Pro Be Proud Georgia website that connects high-demand careers, the education needed, and area employers who hire for those positions.

Be Pro Be Proud Georgia is the state's first mobile workforce workshop of its kind, providing students with an interactive, hands-on tour of the region's most in-demand technical careers. Simulated stations utilize the latest industry-driven technology highlighting careers in Commercial Truck Driving, Health Care, Plumbing, Welding, Robotics, as well as an off-board Skills Challenge.

"Be Pro Be Proud opens up the door for students to see the pathway to success," said Technical College System of Georgia Commissioner Greg Dozier.

Along with the mobile workshop, the newly launched beprobeproudga.org website promotes 13 skilled professions with 10 percent or more growth potential and links to training and area industries who are hiring within these professions. Students can "Join the Movement" on beprobeproudga.org, which connects students with education and career opportunities.

As part of the Cherokee By Choice (CBC) public/private partnership aimed at promoting economic growth, COED continues to spearhead talent development through workforce initiatives such as the promotion of local jobs on cherokeega.org, the Cherokee Career Expo, high school internships, and Be Pro Be Proud Georgia – the most ambitious initiative to date.

"Be Pro Be Proud is a gamechanger for changing perceptions of the skilled professions and instilling a sense of pride in these essential careers," said Cherokee By Choice Chairman Mark Goddard. "We are excited to share this awareness campaign with the public and get the interactive experience in front of students, parents, and educators."

Initially launched in March 2016 by the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Industries of Arkansas, the Be Pro Be Proud initiative continues to expand its nationwide footprint. With the addition of Georgia, Be Pro Be Proud is positioned to reduce the skilled trade job gap while educating students about career fields that are essential to Georgia's economic growth. South Carolina has also signed on to the Be Pro Be Proud movement and has plans to launch later this year.

"By combining best-in-class content and engaging simulated experiences, Be Pro Be Proud places students in a position – perhaps for the first time – to imagine themselves in high-skill, high-wage, high-demand positions this effort promotes," said Andrew Parker, Executive Director of Be Pro Be Proud Arkansas. We are thrilled that the Cherokee Office of Economic Development has joined us as our first licensee, and we

look forward to working with them and their partners to bring a new generation of professionals to the state of Georgia.”

In partnership with the Cherokee County School District, the Be Pro Be Proud Georgia initiative launching today will kick-off its inaugural tour by traveling to Cherokee schools first, then scale the initiative to the region and beyond.

“We are proud to partner with the Cherokee Office of Economic Development to expand opportunities in the skilled professions and are excited about the opportunity to get Be Pro Be Proud into our schools,” said Cherokee County School District Superintendent Dr. Brian Hightower.”

Launched and headquartered in Cherokee County, Be Pro Be Proud Georgia will serve as an engaging training tool and resource center for metro Atlanta and the state of Georgia. To scale the initiative, COED is establishing a steering committee representing leaders from government, non-profits, and private industry.

“The most important thing that Be Pro Be Proud Georgia can do is inspire the next generation of builders, doers, growers, and makers,” said Georgia Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Chris Clark. “We need to inspire students about the different paths to success, and innovative solutions like Be Pro Be Proud can make that a reality.”

COED partnered with experiential marketing agency BeSpoke Sports & Entertainment to build the 40-foot custom trailer towed with a truck provided by Shottenkirk Dodge, Chrysler, Jeep, Ram of Canton. Award-winning Advertising Agency Stone Ward assisted on overall design and the Be Pro Be Proud Georgia website. The Construction Education Foundation of Georgia (CEFGA) also announced their support of Be Pro Be Proud Georgia today.

Georgia native Scott Callaway, who brings over four years of experience as the Tour Manager of Arkansas’ Be Pro Be Proud initiative, will oversee daily operations in his new role as Tour Manager of Be Pro Be Proud Georgia.

“Be Pro Be Proud is a movement that will have ripple effects across our region,” said COED Chairman Marshall Day. “We look forward to sharing this highly-interactive training and educational workshop with Cherokee and partners from around the state.”

To ensure the safety of students, educators, and volunteers, the open-air mobile workforce workshop has been equipped with appropriate safety measures such as proper social distancing and enhanced sanitization. COED is also working with Arkansas Be Pro Be Proud on a virtual component should schools return to digital learning.

For more information about Be Pro Be Proud Georgia, visit beprobeproudga.org.

Be Pro Be Proud Georgia Promo Video

Click [here](#) to watch the promo video.



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About the Cherokee Office of Economic Development
COED is Cherokee's leading organization for business and film recruitment, and industry retention and expansion. For more information, visit www.cherokeega.org.