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## **GOOGLE BRINGS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY INITIATIVE, GROW WITH GOOGLE, TO RHODE ISLAND**

*Google Events Aim to Create Skilled Workforce of the Future in Rhode Island*

**Rhode Island - May 8, 2019** -- Today, Google announced that it is coming to cities and towns throughout Rhode Island as part of the tech company's Grow with Google initiative to help create economic opportunity in communities across the United States. Google will kickstart this work locally by hosting free, one-day events in two libraries to help job seekers, small business owners, students, educators and entrepreneurs improve their digital skills.

"Small businesses and entrepreneurs are the backbone of our economy. We need to do everything we can to provide them the data and tools they need to succeed," said Rhode Island Secretary of State Nellie M. Gorbea.

Rhode Island tour dates, cities and locations include:

**Wednesday, May 29 - Providence**

- Providence Public Library  
150 Empire St. Providence, RI
- 10:00am-5:00pm

**Friday, May 31 - Newport**

- Newport Public Library  
300 Spring St. Newport, RI
- 9:30am-4:30pm

"Rhode Island has a long history as a center for industry and higher education. By bringing the 'Grow with Google' tour to the state, we are building upon the work that local libraries have already begun to develop a skilled workforce that can meet the needs of Rhode Island's growing economy," said Erica Swanson, Google's Head of Community Engagement.

In recognition that libraries are increasingly centers for digital skills learning, Grow with Google plans to visit libraries in every state, partnering with them to deliver digital skills trainings directly to jobseekers and small businesses in their community. We will also train library staff and nonprofit leaders on a range of Grow with Google's free tools and curriculum they can use on a daily basis.

Google staff will lead hands-on workshops about online marketing for small businesses, search engine optimization, email basics and coding. Attendees can also sign up for one-on-one training with Google staff, and tour demo booths to learn more about Google's free products for learners and small businesses. Attendees are welcome to drop in for a few sessions or stay all day.

Google is partnering with community organizations like the Center for Women and Enterprise - Rhode Island, Discover Newport, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, Newport Public Library, Providence Public Library, Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Women's Resource Center and Workforce

Partnership of Greater Rhode Island. Following the Grow with Google event, Google will explore ongoing partnership opportunities with area organizations to help with job training and developing digital skills.

Google launched Grow with Google in October of 2017. The American initiative draws on Google's 20-year history of building products, platforms, and services that help people and businesses grow. Through this initiative, Google aims to help everyone across America – those who make up the workforce of today and those who will drive the workforce of tomorrow – access the best of Google's training and tools to grow their skills, careers, and businesses.

"Providence Public Library (PPL) is excited to partner with Google to bring "Grow with Google" to Providence," said Jack Martin, Providence Public Library Executive Director. "Strong digital skills are critical in this high-tech age and specifically for those seeking economic advancement. PPL is continually focused on offering high-impact technology education and workforce development to members of our community, as well as broad opportunities to bridge the digital divide."

"The Newport Public Library seeks at all times to be a center of lifelong learning," said Joe Lougue, Director of the Newport Public Library. "As we celebrate our 150th year of service to the community, we are reminded that innovation alone does not ensure equity of access. This is the value of making common cause with Grow with Google. By helping small business owners, those who seek to learn or sharpen necessary skills, people who are new to technical advancements, or those who are simply curious, the Grow with Google initiative blends perfectly with the Library's mission. This is a golden opportunity for all of us to grow."

Specifically, Grow with Google aims to help address the skills gap by preparing Americans for middle-skill jobs, positions that require some skills but not four year degrees. According to the National Middle Skills Initiative, middle skills jobs account to 52% of the Rhode Island labor force. A recent study by Burning Glass and Capital One found that more than 8 in 10 middle-skill jobs (82%) require digital skills. Overall, middle-skill jobs average \$20 per hour.

In their 2017 Economic Impact Report, Google announced that 3,400 businesses in Rhode Island generated \$356 million in economic activity by using Google's search and advertising tools. The full report details Google's economic impact state-by-state, and features the stories of businesses fueling that growth, creating job opportunities, and transforming their communities.

According to the American Library Association, nearly three-quarters of public libraries assist their patrons with job applications and interviewing skills, 90% help their patrons learn basic digital skills, and just under half provide access and assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start a business of their own.

To learn more about the free event and to register, visit [g.co/GrowRhodeIsland](http://g.co/GrowRhodeIsland). Space will be limited; so please register in advance.

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