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**PATRICK COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION AND AVERETT
UNIVERSITY TO PROVIDE SCHOLARSHIPS TO COUNTY STUDENTS**

Averett University, in partnership with the Patrick County Education Foundation, announced today that it will offer financial aid packages that will meet 100% of need for 10 Patrick County High School graduates per year. The financial assistance will be provided through Averett grants and scholarships as well as state and federal aid programs.

Foundation Chairman and former Virginia Governor Gerald Baliles expressed his delight in such a significant commitment to Patrick County and the Foundation by Averett University, "I believe that by combining the Averett University scholarships, existing financial assistance sources, and the Foundation's need-based scholarships, we will be able to make a college education possible for many more residents per year."

Averett University President, Dr. Richard Pfau stated, "This agreement represents an exciting opportunity for the young people of Patrick County as well as for Averett. I shall look forward to the arrival on campus of the first students."

Averett University has additionally agreed to work with the Foundation to host students on campus for group and individual visitations, overnight stays, on campus SAT preparation seminars, and on site financial workshops for Patrick students and parents.

"The addition of Averett University as a major partner in our College Access Program represents a significant step in the Foundation's efforts to offer quality educational opportunities with a variety of career choices", stated Foundation Executive Director, Jerry Hughes.

The College Access Program is one measure in a three-pronged Foundation approach to elevate the County's economic outlook and to explore new economic opportunities. The Foundation's objectives include increasing access to higher education and in its first full year were successful in identifying over \$450,000 in financial aid and provided over \$17,000 in need-based scholarships.

In addition to the College Access Program, the Foundation recently announced an initiative to increase the number of adult residents receiving a GED through the Patrick County Public Schools' Adult Education program. The Foundation also plans to announce its first workforce initiative within the next 60 days.

For more information about the Patrick County Education Foundation or its programs, please call Jerry Hughes, Executive Director, at (276) 694-6542