NEWS RELEASE

Building the future

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In recognition of National Skilled Trades Day, Ferguson and Explore the Trades announced the latest recipients of the “Explore The Trades Skills Lab, Built by Ferguson” equipment grants. The program, which provides middle and high school students with tools and equipment, aligns with our shared goal of educating and training the next generation of skilled trades professionals.

“The national conversation around the importance of the skilled trades and technical education has reached a fever pitch this year,” noted Kate Cinnamo, Executive Director of Explore The Trades. “Trade education programs in communities around the nation are bringing the next generation to these industries. Our partnership with Ferguson has allowed school districts to build skilled trades labs that enable their students to thrive. It’s so encouraging to see students discover the trades, develop a passion for them and know that those skill sets will benefit them in careers after high school graduation.”

This year, 12 schools have been selected to receive grants to build new or refurbish existing plumbing and HVAC labs. These grants are estimated to benefit over 1,000 students in the upcoming school year. Since its inception in 2021, this dynamic program has delivered plumbing and HVAC equipment to 26 schools, impacting over 2,000 students nationwide and paving the way for their future careers.

“We are proud of our partnership with Explore The Trades, and it’s incredible to see our shared vision of creating a

sustainable pipeline for the skilled trades taking shape," shared Melissa Hazelwood, Director of Social Impact at Ferguson. "The recent uptick in interest for trades careers, coupled with significant investments in our country's infrastructure, emphasizes the need for expanded learning and training opportunities. Our joint efforts go beyond merely equipping students with tools; we are laying the groundwork for their lifelong careers.

2023-24 Recipients:

- Appomattox County High School – HVAC (Virginia)
- Bemidji High School – HVAC (Minnesota)
- Callaway High School – HVAC (Georgia)
- Gateway Regional – HVAC (New Jersey)
- Ivy Academy – HVAC (Tennessee)
- Lebanon County Career and Technology Center – Plumbing (Pennsylvania)
- Mayfair Elementary and Middle School – Plumbing (Pennsylvania)
- Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center – HVAC (Missouri)
- Raymore-Peculiar Public School Foundation – HVAC (Missouri)
- Saginaw Career Complex – HVAC (Michigan)
- Thomas J. Corcoran High School – HVAC (New York)
- Woodruff Career and Technical Center – HVAC (Illinois)