



For Immediate Release

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**BridgeValley Community and Technical College Offers New
One of a Kind Neurodiversity Pathfinders Pilot Program in
West Virginia**

(South Charleston, W. VA) - BridgeValley Community and Technical College (BridgeValley), as part of the RISE Learning Institute and Center for Career Connections, will be offering a new pilot program, 'Neurodiversity Pathfinders', providing educational, advocacy, and access services to neurodivergent students at BridgeValley pursuing their choice of degrees and/ or certificates.

Neurodiversity Pathfinders, designed according to the social justice and intersectionality models of disability, provides neurodivergent students with educational opportunities for strengths-based self-knowledge. The program has four areas of focus, including self-advocacy, self-regulation, social interaction, and executive functioning, which increases personal ability to access academics, campus services, and community and career options.

"We were drawn to this type of program to somewhat address a need in the community to help those on the spectrum. We aim to help these students be successful in their studies and ultimately in their life endeavors, while celebrating the individual's unique qualities and abilities." said James Goodwin, Director of College-Wide Engagement.

Advocacy and access services of the program for neurodiversity students include a face-to-face small cohort class for the fall semester (Skills for Navigating College and Career), regular meetings with a trained peer mentor, known as a Pathfinders Assistant, supported communication with faculty and advisors, and supported access to services and programs.

Credit classes, usually transferable, will be taken by Pathfinders with their cohort each semester for a total of five semesters, with topics in areas such as skills for navigating college and career, self and community advocacy,

occupational wellness, interpersonal communication and more.

For more information about Neurodiversity, contact:

Spencer Poling, Director of Accessibility Services

spencer.poling@bridgevalley.edu or 304.205.6725

Or you may contact the Department of College-Wide Engagement:

Natalie Sigmon, Executive Assistant natalie.sigmon@bridgevalley.edu

James Goodwin, Director of College-Wide Initiatives

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About BridgeValley Community and Technical College

BridgeValley Community and Technical College promotes student success, prepares a skilled workforce, and builds tomorrow's leaders by providing access to quality higher education. BridgeValley Community and Technical College will be the college of opportunity for a diverse learner population, offering leading-edge technology, innovative ideas, and dynamic service to our students and our communities. BridgeValley Community and Technical College serves a six-county region including Fayette, Raleigh, Nicholas, Clay, Putnam and Kanawha counties. The college operates two campuses in Montgomery and South Charleston, along with the addition of the new Advanced Technology Center. BridgeValley Community and Technical College is a public institution of higher education independently accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges and a member of the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia.

For more information about BridgeValley Community and Technical College financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education and events, call (304) 205-6600 or; or check the College's website:

<http://www.bridgevalley.edu>

