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HAGERSTOWN STUDENTS TEST FOR WORK READY COMMUNITY

Muncie, IN — Wayne County is making big gains in its efforts to become a certified Work Ready Community through ACT. ACT launched its national Certified Work Ready Communities (CWRC) initiative in 2011. In June 2013, ACT began accepting applications directly from counties interested in participating, where there was not a statewide ACT CWRC program in place. Wayne County and other counties in Eastern Indiana took advantage of this opportunity. One of the goals of this initiative is to test a county's emerging workforce, which include those in high school or post-secondary.

The Economic Development Corporation of Wayne County (EDC of Wayne County), who leads the CWRC initiative for Wayne County, sponsored WorkKeys testing for Nettle Creek Schools to test their junior and senior high school students from Hagerstown High School on March 16th. More than 115 students tested.

"Nettle Creek Schools have been interested in testing their students since day one of this proposed initiative," said Valerie Shaffer, President of EDC of Wayne County. "They have a heart for bettering their students and their student's contributions to the local workforce. We were happy to sponsor this organization and its students."

Dr. Bill Doering, Superintendent of Nettle Creek School Corporation, expands. "Nettle Creek School Corporation is continuously looking for innovative ways to better meet the needs of our students. The students who participated in the WorkKeys assessment will very soon be leaving us as graduates. Thanks to the cooperation between the Wayne County Work Ready Initiative, Nettle Creek School Corporation, WorkOne, and the Economic Development Corporation of Wayne County, our graduates will have a valuable high school diploma along with a unique Work Ready credential that will open opportunities for them whether graduates are college bound or headed for careers in the community or the military."

Participants are leveraging the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC™) through WorkKeys assessment testing to measure and close the skills gap—and build common frameworks that link, align and match a county's workforce development efforts. To date, 451 Wayne County residents have attained a NCRC. The Wayne County CWRC initiative is currently at 42 percent of its overall goals.

Eastern Indiana is the only area of the state that has counties involved in this initiative. Active and live counties include Delaware, Randolph, Rush, and Wayne Counties. Fayette and Henry Counties have also been accepted into the program and are in the training process. Currently, there are more than 80 Eastern Indiana employers supporting this initiative. For more information about ACT Certified Work Ready Communities and Wayne County status, please visit <http://workreadycommunities.org/IN/177>.

ABOUT: Alliance for Strategic Growth, Inc. (ASG), recognized for its leadership and expertise, exists to support sustainable economic prosperity in Eastern Indiana through the development and implementation of collaborative initiatives that empower the regional workforce to meet the demands of the global economy. The corporation is a not-profit, public/private partnership that serves as the Workforce Investment Board for 8 WorkOne offices in Eastern Indiana, including Blackford, Delaware, Fayette, Henry, Jay, Randolph, Rush, Wayne and Union counties. Eastern Indiana WorkOne offices (www.work-one.org) assist thousands of job seekers and employers every year through a variety of employment and job readiness services. For more information on ASG, visit www.asgcorp.org.

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