

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SKILLS FOR RHODE ISLAND'S FUTURE AWARDED \$1.5 MILLION FROM
AMERICAN STUDENT ASSISTANCE TO EXPAND THE PREPARERI INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

PROVIDENCE, RI – Skills for Rhode Island's Future (SkillsRI) will receive a 3-year, \$1.5 million grant from American Student Assistance® (ASA) to expand the PrepareRI High School Internship Program. The grant will allow SkillsRI to place additional students into paid internships this summer and to hire 3 career-readiness coaches to work with students year-round from high-need districts to help them gain the skills, knowledge, and expertise needed for their postsecondary success.

Governor Gina M. Raimondo announced the grant at SkillsRI's annual PrepareRI Internship Employer Engagement Breakfast today at Citizens Bank Corporate Campus in Johnston. "I'm thrilled that PrepareRI will be receiving a \$1.5 million grant from American Student Assistance. This critical funding will allow an additional 100 high school students to participate in PrepareRI's work readiness training and paid internship program this summer. We are on a mission to improve career readiness for all Rhode Islanders, and this grant will propel our work forward."

Jean Eddy, President and CEO of ASA®, addressed the audience of nearly 140 employer guests to stress the importance of working together to help students achieve their education and career goals. "At ASA we believe that students should explore and experiment with different career paths early in their education journey so they can uncover their own interests and abilities, and the PrepareRI internship program does exactly that. We are committed to this initiative and proud to fund its expansion so that more Rhode Island students can benefit from summer internships and year-round career preparedness activities."

Nina Pande, Executive Director of Skills for Rhode Island's Future, thanked Jean and the ASA board of directors for their partnership. "Thanks to the support of American Student Assistance, we will be able to increase the number of PrepareRI student interns from 326 last summer to 425 students this year. These meaningful opportunities will help students gain valuable, hands-on experience and prepare them to achieve success in their future careers."

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About Skills for Rhode Island's Future and the PrepareRI High School Internship Program

Skills for Rhode Island's Future (SkillsRI) is a nonprofit organization that breaks down barriers to economic opportunity by connecting unemployed and underemployed Rhode Islanders to jobs with socially responsible, civic-minded employers. SkillsRI administers the PrepareRI High School Internship Program, which creates meaningful and rigorous work-based learning opportunities for public high school students in Rhode Island to learn and apply academic, technical, and professional skills and experience to the world of work. This year SkillsRI will place 425 PrepareRI high school students into paid internships with more than 75 employer partners to gain meaningful work experience and begin building professional networks. Learn more at www.skillsforri.com.

About American Student Assistance

American Student Assistance® (ASA) is a national nonprofit committed to helping kids know themselves, know their options, and make informed choices to achieve their education and career goals. ASA® has a 60-year legacy of working directly with students to increase their access to higher education through loans and financial education. ASA has turned its experience into impactful solutions for kids in middle, high school, and beyond to help them pursue their dreams. To learn more about ASA, visit www.asa.org/about-us.