

AFCOM Potomac Chapter Turning COVID Tragedy into Educational Opportunity

Through the Wendy Darling Scholarship Fund, AFCOM Potomac will continue to donate and support NOVA Community College Youth



Virginia, Ashburn, Apr 6, 2021 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - [AFCOM Potomac](#), an organization supporting the advancement of Data Center and IT Infrastructure professionals, today announced they have created a new scholarship for the [NOVA Community College \(NVCC\) Data Center Operations Management](#) class. The Wendy Darling Scholarship Fund honors Potomac Chapter Board Member Stuart Dyer's mother, who passed away in October 2020 from COVID-19. Since 2016 AFCOM Potomac has been supporting the NVCC program, and they are pleased to increase support, continuing the dedication to the advancement of students pursuing careers in the Data Center Industry.

"AFCOM's mission is to provide educational advancement opportunities to its members, and we extend that mission to up-and-coming experts in this community by supporting their academic growth," said [Stuart Dyer](#), Global Data Center Strategy and Planning, IBM, and AFCOM Potomac Chapter Director of Scholarships & Internships. "Losing my mother to this terrible pandemic, at the young age of 60, was an

enormous and tragic loss. My mother always put my education first, and it was extremely important to her that I finished college. To be able to establish an AFCOM Scholarship in her honor is something that would make her proud, and I am honored that the AFCOM Board has made this gesture of kindness.”

TJ Ciccone, Vice President of Critical Operations at STACK INFRASTRUCTURE, runs the certification program supported by the Wendy Darling Scholarship Fund. The NVCC Data Center Operations (DCO) class addresses the significant demand for skilled and certified employees in data center operations. The first community college program of its kind, the DCO curriculum prepares students for entry-level positions as technicians, operators, and technologists in data centers and companies that support the industry. The DCO program is in Northern Virginia, the birthplace of the internet, leaving graduates optimally positioned to find full-time employment quickly.

“The data center industry has typically been staffed by word of mouth, tradespeople, or veterans from the Naval Nuclear industry,” Ciccone shared. “The NOVA DCO program expands on this talent pool by potentially opening a career path to students with a myriad of diverse backgrounds. The Wendy Darling Scholarship Fund helps to advance this mission.”

AFCOM will continue supporting students from the region, helping them get entrance into the growing data center industry, and filling the need for talent in Northern Virginia. If you are interested in helping grow the Wendy Darling Scholarship, please donate at <https://potomacafcom.webstarts.com/wendy-darling.html>

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ABOUT AFCOM POTOMAC

We support the states of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia for individuals (members and non-members) who wish to learn about, participate in, and network with the Data Center Community. AFCOM advances through education, networking, and guidance the professional development of individuals and the organizations they serve in the field of data center and IT infrastructure management

AFCOM instituted internships and scholarships in 2017 after noticing the scarcity of new engineering talent coming into the data center business. Each year since AFCOM has engaged and expanded its dedication to the education and training of qualified professionals. For chapter membership information, contact Dave Mulholland President of AFCOM Potomac at DaveBMulholland@Eaton.com.

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