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For Immediate Release

**FCC ANNOUNCES INITIATIVE TO INCREASE
INTERN AND EARLY CAREER STAFF DIVERSITY**

WASHINGTON, September 10, 2020—In a joint effort by FCC Commissioner Geoffrey Starks and FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, the Commission has created the Early Career Staff Diversity Initiative to advance equitable opportunities for underrepresented undergraduate, graduate, and law school students.

Internships at the Commission provide students with valuable experience and connections, and often lead to employment at the FCC or elsewhere in the communications sector. For the last several years, however, the Commission has only offered voluntary, unpaid internships. As a result, otherwise qualified students may decline to pursue these opportunities, including students from underrepresented communities.

Because the communications sector impacts every American's ability to access affordable and reliable communications, its employees should reflect our country's diversity. The Early Career Staff Diversity Initiative has the following components:

- Beginning in January 2021, the FCC will provide a select number of paid internships to law, graduate, or undergraduate students each semester and summer. These internships should create opportunities for students who may otherwise be financially unable to participate in unpaid internships at the FCC.
- The FCC will invest additional resources to recruit students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other Minority Serving Institutions to increase the diversity of the applicant pool for the Commission's internship, Attorney Honors, and Honors Engineering programs.
- The FCC will increase recruitment efforts with affinity groups, such as chapters of the National Black Law Students Association and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, to increase awareness about available internship and career opportunities.

These efforts seek to diversify the talent among Commission staff at the earliest stages of their careers and ultimately increase diversity in the communications sector overall. Additionally, through this initiative, the FCC joins many other public and private institutions that have committed resources to create a more diverse workforce.

“For far too many students, traveling to and living in Washington to work an unpaid internship is simply financially out of reach,” said Commissioner Starks. “Because my office deeply values the internship program, I brought a plan to Chairman Pai to ensure all students, no matter their income, can contribute to our agency through a paid internship program, and the

Chairman worked with me to solidify today's announcement. Additionally, I am thrilled that we will be devoting more resources to increase recruitment from HBCUs and other Minority Serving Institutions for our internship, attorney honors, and honors engineering programs. Students and graduates of these schools are already making impactful contributions in this space. It's time to increase our efforts to diversify our applicant pools so our policy decisions better reflect the needs of our diverse country."

"Promoting diversity in the tech and telecom sectors has been an important priority for me as Chairman. That's why I moved quickly to re-charter the agency's Advisory Committee on Diversity and Digital Empowerment, which has explored ways to promote opportunities for those from underserved communities," said Chairman Pai. "Everyone should be able to benefit from internships at the Commission. Aside from the job itself, an internship can create career opportunities down the road, both at the FCC and elsewhere. Establishing a paid internship program will help students who would otherwise have to forego an internship due to financial constraints. And targeted outreach will ensure that more students from diverse backgrounds can participate, which benefits the FCC and the communications sector as a whole. I want to thank Commissioner Starks for his leadership on this initiative, and I look forward to continue working with him to get the program up and running."

Additional details, including how to apply, will be made available this fall. To learn more about FCC jobs and internships, visit: <https://www.fcc.gov/about-fcc/jobs-internships>.

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