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Contact : Cassie Barlow, SOCHE, (937) 258-8890 | cassie.barlow@soche.org

Strategic Ohio Council for Higher Education and Greater Cincinnati Collegiate Connection combine forces for stronger support to Higher Education and Workforce Development

Dayton, Ohio (May 5, 2025) – The SOCHE consortium, made up of 23 colleges and universities across Ohio and is about to become stronger by merging with GC3's 15 colleges and universities. The merger will be official on July 1, 2025. This merger will result in a stronger workforce initiative that builds upon SOCHE and GC3's efforts in developing the next generation of leaders. Through the merger, SOCHE will maintain a strong presence in the Cincinnati Region through trade associations, chambers, Business Advisory Councils, and higher education gatherings.

The conversation between the SOCHE and GC3 at the board level began almost a year ago and started from a place of mutual interest. Dr. Rodney Loper, President of Gods Bible College and GC3 board chair said "I'm excited GC3 will live on through SOCHE. GC3's relationships in Cincinnati are crucial for our students and employers. We look forward to growing these relationships as a merged entity. GC3's work aligns perfectly with the mission of SOCHE and will grow and evolve over time."

Dr. Michael Frandsen, SOCHE's board chair and president of Wittenberg University said, Clark, "SOCHE adds tremendous value to the workforce by leveraging higher education talent in our region to ensure its prosperity. This is a win-win merger for both organizations, creating a synergy of resources under SOCHE's workforce programs that will further develop the current and future generations of talent in Ohio."

"I'm excited about what SOCHE and GC3 can achieve together for Ohio! Our focus will remain the same moving forward, to work together to innovate in higher education for the betterment of our students, faculty and staff, to develop the best faculty and staff in the nation and to build Ohio's next generation of leaders through strong work-based learning initiatives." said SOCHE President Dr. Cassie Barlow. "

The Greater Cincinnati Collegiate Connection taps the collective power of 15 higher education institutions in Greater Cincinnati (Art Academy of Cincinnati, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Gateway Community & Technical College, God's Bible School & College, Good Samaritan College of Nursing and Health Science, Hebrew Union College, Miami University, Mount St Joseph University, Northern Kentucky University, The Chatfield Edge, The Christ College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Thomas More University, University of Cincinnati, Wilmington College, Xavier University) to strengthen every aspect of our regional

economy, culture and quality of life. Representing the region's largest workforce of more than 18,000 education professionals, Consortium members deliver more than \$2 billion in annual economic impact to Greater Cincinnati. Through cross-registration and other programs, GC3 members serve more than 138,000 students and their families, helping every student – of every age, ability and aspiration – discover the spark that drives their personal success and achievement. The GC3's collaborative network of professors, instructors and administrators represents one of the nation's most accomplished and knowledgeable collections of subject experts and thought leaders, and serves as a leading voice on higher education trends and issues in Greater Cincinnati and around the U.S.

A leader for higher collaboration and formed in 1967, SOCHE is guided by 23 college and universities members and has become the trusted and recognized regional leader for higher ed collaboration, working with colleges and universities to transform their communities and economies through the education, employment, and engagement of nearly 200,000 students in southwest Ohio. SOCHE is home to the Aerospace Professional Development Center (APDC), and Defense Associated Graduate Student Innovators (DAGSI), and SOCHEIntern, to name a few. For more information about SOCHE and all its products, visit <http://www.soche.org>.