



The Freedom Institute
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For Immediate Release

April XX, 2025

Freedom Institute of Collier County Receives \$1M AI Grant to Become Florida's First High School Offering AI Certifications

Naples, FL – The Freedom Institute of Collier County has been awarded a \$1 million grant to establish Florida's first high school-level Artificial Intelligence (AI) certifications program. This groundbreaking initiative will empower students to gain industry-recognized credentials in AI, preparing them for success in the rapidly evolving technology landscape.

The grant was secured through an application to The Dekko Foundation. The funding will enable the Freedom Institute to develop a comprehensive AI curriculum, provide professional development for educators, and offer students hands-on experience with AI tools and ethical considerations.

Christopher Marker, CEO and Chief Learning Officer of the Freedom Institute, expressed his enthusiasm about the program's potential, "This grant allows us to offer our students a unique opportunity to gain valuable skills that will set them apart in the workforce. By providing AI certifications, we are equipping our students with the tools they need to succeed in a technology-driven world."

The Freedom Institute's personalized learning model, which combines homeschooling flexibility with professional teacher support, has already proven successful in preparing students for college and career success. The addition of AI certifications will further enhance the institute's offerings and provide students with a competitive edge in the job market.

Freedom's inaugural Executive Director of Programs and Artificial Intelligence Dr. Nathan Poteet said, "This new program will allow The Freedom Institute to blend personalized learning with professional teacher support and introducing cutting-edge AI credentials, we are not just preparing students for college and careers—we are equipping them with critical thinking skills to lead in a rapidly evolving world."

For more information about the Freedom Institute's AI certification program and enrollment opportunities, visit www.freedominstitute.net or call 239-427-1776.

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About Freedom Institute of Collier County:

Freedom Institute is a 9th to 12th grade private educational institution serving students across Collier County and beyond. The Institute's high school model uniquely supports homeschool families while offering structured academic programming tailored to meet students' individual learning needs.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

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Poteet Appointed AI Director at Freedom Institute of Collier County

Naples, FL – The Freedom Institute of Collier County is appointing Dr. Nathan Poteet as its inaugural Executive Director of Programs and Artificial Intelligence. In this newly created role, he will lead the integration of artificial intelligence into the institute’s innovative curriculum, enhancing student engagement and preparing them for the future workforce.

Dr. Poteet brings more than 12 years of experience in education, having served as a teacher and administrator within Collier County public schools. He played a pivotal role in improving student achievement at Highlands Elementary and Lake Trafford Elementary, elevating both institutions from a “C” to an “A” grade. He holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Liberty University and is certified in Educational Leadership K-12, Exceptional Student Education K-12, Elementary Education K-6, and Physical Education K-12. He co-founded Freedom as its inaugural Principal and Director of Programs. He has helped grow and elevate Freedom to its current successful model.

In his new role, he will oversee the development and implementation of AI-powered resources that aim to advance students' communication, creativity, and STEAM skills. This initiative is part of the institute's broader mission to equip students with critical thinking abilities necessary to navigate and thrive in an increasingly digital world, including understanding the ethics of AI use.

"We are thrilled to have Dr. Poteet lead our AI initiatives," said Christopher Marker, CEO of The Freedom Institute. "His extensive background in education and artificial intelligence and his commitment to personalized learning align perfectly with our vision to provide students with the tools they need for lifelong success and financial independence."

The Freedom Institute continues to offer a tailored educational experience that combines traditional academics with practical skills, preparing students for success in both college and their future careers.

"This new program will all The Freedom Institute to blend personalized learning with professional teacher support and introducing cutting-edge AI credentials, we are not just preparing students for college and careers—we are equipping them with critical thinking skills to lead in a rapidly evolving world," Poteet said.

For more information about The Freedom Institute and its programs, visit www.freedominstitute.net or contact 239-427-1776.

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