NEWS RELEASE

Education and Industry Experts Address the Growing Tech Skills Gap at SXSWedu

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DeVry University hosts panel of thought leaders, offering solutions to fill demand for tech skills in today's workforce

AUSTIN, Texas--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Yesterday evening, DeVry University hosted a panel at the SXSWedu national education conference in Austin, Texas. The session, titled, "The Tech Skills Gap: What Can Employers & Educators Do?" explored the growing technology skills gap and solutions to bridge it from the perspectives of an employer, educator and a tech entrepreneur.

Panelists included:

- Moderator **Alexandra Levit,** chair of the Career Advisory Board and journalist for Mashable and The New York Times
- **Randi Zuckerberg**, founder and CEO of Zuckerberg Media and The New York Times bestselling author
- **Robert Paul**, president of DeVry University
- **Sara Ley,** digital learning and technology leader at General Electric (GE)

The panel discussed the results of a study released earlier this week from the Career Advisory Board on the growing technology skills gap. The research found:

- Only 11 percent of organizations believe higher education is very effective in meeting the skill needs of their organization
- More than half (57 percent) agree it is common for job applicants to lack skills in technology that are important for success

In addition to a shortage of the hard tech skills – such as computer programming or web design – the research discovered a broader concern among employers over the lack of applied tech skills. Applied tech skills refer to individuals understanding how to use technology for the benefit of an organization. In fact, 77 percent of respondents said a company's competitive advantage lies in using applied tech

skills to solve problems, and they desire a workforce well-equipped with the proper skills to do so. These findings around the market demand for both applied and hard tech skills became a focal point for the panel discussion.

“Traditionally, degree programs with a focus on technology tended to have a hard tech skill slant needed within a particular industry,” said Robert Paul, president of DeVry University. “We know that it’s imperative to broaden our approach, which is why DeVry embeds applied technology at the core of our curriculum, so our students can understand how to leverage technology, connecting people, process, data and devices to solve real-world business problems.”

“It’s vital for students to learn the skills needed to succeed in the always-evolving tech industry,” said Randi Zuckerberg, CEO of Zuckerberg Media and advocate for tech education at an early age. “In order to achieve this, educators and employers must come together and start a dialogue on how to make an impact and create curriculums that translate to the technology skills required in today’s workforce.”

One such example was discussed by GE’s Sara Ley. In order to upskill its current workforce, GE partners with educators, like DeVry University, to provide training and degree opportunities to meet the skill needs of its business as part of GE’s “BrilliantYOU” educational offering. On the educator side, DeVry develops and updates its degree programs and boot camps with input from industry leaders to help prepare students upon graduation.

Solutions to Closing the Tech Skills Gap

In addition to better collaboration between employers and educators, the panel also explored solutions to help close the tech skills gap:

- **Dedicated industry advisory boards for educators** – educators and industry advisors should create consistent touch points, digging into the curriculum and understanding what updates need to be reflected to meet today’s business demands.
- **Evolving toward a vision of “anytime, anywhere” education for students** – educators and employers should converge onsite and online learning opportunities, to both provide convenience and flexibility for today’s student, but also model how technology is used in business. DeVry, for example, developed connected-classroom technology in partnership with Cisco, at campuses across the country. The extended classrooms allow students to take part in active learning sessions and interact, in real time, with one professor while at different campus locations - an experience that mirrors the way employees interact in today’s workplace.
- **Provide students and employees access to the latest technologies** – one of the most effective ways to learn is through experience. Students and employees should have access to some of the latest technologies, simply for the purpose of experimentation, ideation and learning. The more you engage, the more comfortable you are with the medium.

“We’re taking the tech skills gap head-on and doing our part to prepare students,” Paul said. “Stronger collaboration between employer partners, along with embedding technology in our curriculum, is a great start. There is certainly a lot more work to be done among educators and employees, and we look forward to building upon these solutions.”

For more information about DeVry University, visit: devry.edu.

About DeVry University

DeVry University's mission is to foster student learning through high-quality, career-oriented education integrating technology, business, science and the arts. Founded in 1931, the university offers undergraduate and graduate programs onsite and online within its five distinguished colleges of study: Business & Management, Engineering & Information Sciences, Health Sciences, Liberal Arts & Sciences, and Media Arts & Technology. The university is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission (HLC, www.hlcommission.org).

With locations across the U.S., DeVry University is one of the largest private-sector universities in North America. The university is a part of DeVry Education Group (NYSE: DV), a global provider of educational services. To learn more about DeVry University, visit devry.edu.

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