



FOR RELEASE: July 11, 2018

CONTACT: Sarah Boggess: (518) 479-7084, sboggess@sprucepublicaffairs.com

Passport for Good Awarded Statewide Software Contract to Capture Student and Community Engagement

Passport for Good, a software solution that captures community engagement for organizations, was selected by the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) as an approved vendor to provide its service to public school districts across New York State.

The service is available to New York State public school districts effective July 1, 2018. The cooperative bid was managed by the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison (OCM) BOCES and authorizes BOCES' member school districts to use the Passport for Good service. The company's mobile application is free for students, but this approval by the OCM BOCES allows districts to purchase a subscription as a shared service through their BOCES Regional Information Center and to be reimbursed through state aid for using the community engagement software. New York State has more than 700 public school districts serving approximately 2.6 million students.

Passport for Good is the first and only software in its category statewide to be awarded this contract.

"This is critically important recognition that measuring and valuing student and community engagement is important in K-12 public education," said Gayle Farman, founder and president of the company. "It will allow school districts in New York State to improve their programs to engage students in their local communities and to promote positive citizenship. I look forward to quantifying the tangible impact that these students have on their communities."

Farman said that the Passport for Good platform captures a wide range of verified community experience – including internships -- and provides comprehensive data on the positive impact of those experiences on students, the school, and the community. The service automates manual paper systems, saving time for students, teachers and administrators and providing an easy way to monitor requirements. "The organizations are able to generate reports that showcase authentic individual and collective experiences outside of the classroom and helps schools to better share resources that were previously in silos. It also helps the students to reflect on their experiences and document their service and skills for college admissions officers and prospective employers," Farman said. "And of course, the service benefits non-profit organizations that are in need of community support."

Passport for Good has been working with several school districts in the Capital Region, including Albany, Ballston Spa, Bethlehem, and North Colonie. “In three short months, select groups of our students from elementary through high school captured more than 13,000 community service hours, and more than 100 seniors stood proudly at graduation wearing honor cords for community service. The senior class of 2018 accounted for 8,132 of the 13,000 total community service hours! Passport for Good will be rapidly expanded during the 2018-19 school year as part of the fabric of our culture of fostering positive student and community engagement,” said Kaweeda G. Adams, superintendent of the Albany City School District.

Passport for Good has been affiliated with the Emerging Ventures Ecosystem at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute since 2015. Esther Vargas, director of the Emerging Ventures Ecosystem said “Passport for Good’s use will promote the value of meaningful learning outside the classroom, and will provide schools with important data they have never had before so that they can continue to make a greater and more measurable impact on their communities.”

Farman is preparing her company for rapid expansion in New York State and beyond, and will be marketing its product to K-12 public schools, private schools, colleges and corporations. Farman will be visible with her team at several upcoming conferences, including the Council of School Superintendents in Saratoga Springs in September, the School Administrators Association of New York State in Lake Placid in October, the New York State School Boards Association in New York City in October, and the New York State School Counselors Association in Lake George in November.

“The company has been enjoying quiet success at several Capital Region schools and we are getting ready to share our story on a larger stage and serving many more individuals and organizations,” Farman said. “Our goal is for everyone to feel engaged -- whether they are serving for five hours or 50 hours -- and that they understand that their service matters and is important. There is growing interest in community engagement, and in conducting and tracking those engagement efforts in a smart, data-driven way.”

About Passport For Good

[Passport for Good](http://www.passportforgood.com) offers a first-in-class, subscription-based Software as a Service (SaaS) to address the growing challenge faced by schools, corporations and the criminal justice system to track time spent by individuals and groups performing community service activities. The robust tracking system and mobile application assists non-profit organizations by allowing them to communicate their needs. It also centralizes data, automates the community service experience, and aggregates data across individuals and events to allow organizations to demonstrate community impact and to enhance linkages between service learning, skill development, and academic and career exploration. Prototyped by students at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, it is now powered by a full team of senior software engineers. The company was formed in 2016 by Gayle Farman of Slingerlands, NY. For more information, visit www.passportforgood.com.

About BOCES

In 1948, the New York State Legislature created BOCES to provide shared educational programs and services to school districts within the state. Today there are 37 BOCES that are partnering with nearly all of the state’s school districts to help meet students’ evolving educational needs through cost-effective and relevant programs. BOCES membership is not currently available to the “Big Five” city school districts of New York City, Buffalo, Rochester, Yonkers, and Syracuse.

###