



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GISCI Announces Highlands County, Florida as a GISCI Endorsing Employer

Des Plaines, IL (October 18, 2022)



The GISCI is pleased to announce Highlands County, Florida as an organization designated as a GISCI Endorsing Employer. Located in South Central Florida, Highlands County, population 106,000, is a predominately rural county with three municipalities (Avon Park, Lake Placid, and the county seat of Sebring). As a small rural county, Highlands also has a small but fast-growing GIS service run by a two-person GIS Team consisting of Carley Fitzgerald, GISP - GIS Manager and John Miley - GIS Tech 2. Highlands County has a unique set of demographic circumstances with almost 40% of the population over the age of 65. Having GIS staff that is well versed in their field and aware of best practices has been beneficial numerous times. Most notably, during the COVID-19 pandemic when GIS was integral to providing information to emergency managers and administration for vulnerable populations in our community. When asked why the GISCI Endorsing Employer designation was important, Carley said: “The Employer Endorsement Program highlights our commitment to professional development and enables our future growth.” She went on to say: “This is an amazing development for Highlands County Board of County Commissioners as well as the citizens and visitors of our County. As an employer we are excited to welcome new opportunities and partnerships in the GIS space and as a member of the community we serve - we are reassured that the County is dedicated to upholding best practices and continual professional development.”

The GISCI is pleased to announce Highlands County as the first government organization to receive the GISCI Endorsing Employer designation.

The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) has created the GISCI Endorsing Employer Designation Program to help increase the value of GISP Certification for our primary stakeholders, and to help facilitate the growth of the GISP Program within the geospatial community. The GISCI will grant the GISCI Endorsing Employer Designation to organizations that meet the criteria established by the GISCI as supportive of GIS Professionals and the GISP Certification process by way of internal activities, programs, and policies. The designation is not only a commitment to GISP Certification for staff, but also to upholding the ideals of the GIS Certification Institute.

The GISCI Endorsing Employer Designation is available to all organizations (public, private/commercial) with exception of GISCI member organizations. Organizations seeking the designation must submit a formal application listing the criteria met as verified by the organization's HR representative. A review committee will evaluate each application and if the organization meets the criteria, the committee will forward the application to the GISCI Board of Directors for approval. Each approved GISCI Endorsing Employer will last for three (3) years, provide the organization with permission to display their organization logo on our website and provide permission to display the GISCI Endorsing Employer designation on their website. There is no cost to obtain this designation. A list of GISCI Endorsing Organizations can be found on the GISCI website at: <https://www.gisci.org/Employers/GISCI-Endorsing-Employer/GISCI-Endorsing-Organizations>

About GISCI The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) is a non-profit organization that promotes the advancement of proficient GIS professionals through its international GISP® (Certified GIS Professional) certification program. The Institute fosters rigorous professional and ethical standards, community engagement, and professional mentoring within the GIS industry. GISCI's member organizations include the American Association of Geographers (AAG), National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC), University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS), and the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA).

More information about the GISCI is available at www.gisci.org and <https://factorinc.com/>

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