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**Glasgow Schools Tackle IT Skills Gap with Cisco  
Networking Academy Programme**

*11 City Schools to Offer Specialised Vocational Training*

GLASGOW, Scotland, May 24 2006 – Cisco Systems® announced today that pupils in Glasgow aged 14 and older are set to gain the skills needed to kick-start a career in information communication technology (ICT) through the rollout of Cisco® Networking Academy programmes in 11 of the city’s schools, including those in some of its most disadvantaged areas. Starting August 2006, the new courses and advanced learning resources of the ICT Vocational Training Programme will be delivered by Cisco and the Govan Initiative on behalf of the Glasgow City Council. The programme demonstrates a determination not only to improve the prospects of school-leavers, but also to tackle Scotland’s burgeoning ICT-skills shortage, which threatens to damage the nation’s long-term global competitiveness.

Steven Purcell, the Glasgow City Council leader, said: "Our partnership with Cisco Systems has already achieved tremendous results, helping the long-term unemployed in the East End to find high-value jobs through dedicated training at their academy in Parkhead. Extending this partnership to our schools will enhance our ability to provide the best vocational training to young people. Glasgow is enjoying an economic boom, with more jobs than ever before and record levels of investment. I'm determined that as many Glaswegians as possible can have their share of that success and look forward to working with Cisco Systems to train the next generation of ICT professionals."

Paul Wingate, business development manager for Cisco Systems, said: "With Scotland facing a serious productivity crunch, we need to ensure that young people living in

disadvantaged areas are not denied the opportunity to contribute to – and share in – our national economic success. The Cisco Networking Academy courses will deliver core computing skills for a wide range of modern career choices, as well as help students increase their chances of securing well-paid and sustainable jobs in ICT, if they wish. While this model has previously been deployed in other Cisco Networking Academy programmes in Scotland, offering it to younger, school-age students will help tackle our pressing socioeconomic challenges at their root.”

Extending the highly successful model developed by Cisco and the Govan Initiative at South-West Glasgow’s Hill’s Trust Academy, the rollout directly addresses some of the long-standing education and employability challenges that are endemic in parts of the city. Evidence from the Scottish Executive indicates the proportion of young people living in these disadvantaged areas who are not in employment, education or training is around 30 per cent, compared to 22 per cent in Glasgow as a whole and 16 per cent across Scotland.

Damien Yeates, chief executive of the Govan Initiative, commented: “The work being done in Govan has been a resounding success, in terms of helping individuals lift themselves out of the poverty cycle. Since 2002, 92 per cent of Hill’s Trust Academy students have achieved a Level 2/3 (SCQF 5/6) qualification, with two in every three going on to gain employment in IT and related sectors. For the price of dropping their least-favoured standard grade subject, students in the 11 new Cisco Networking Academy programmes can gain a recognised vocational certification.”

John Kane, the head of vocational training, Glasgow City Council, said: “The city council is striving to lift young people out of the arbitrary cycle of training, retraining and continuing displacement. This initiative represents a real opportunity to achieve some tangible outcomes, by targeting vocational training at sectors where there is a genuine shortage of skilled individuals. The positive input of the private sector – not just in terms of jobs, but also work experience and engagement with educators – will ensure that students entering the world of work are better prepared and better informed.”

The Networking Academy programmes offer a broad curriculum that delivers industry-recognised qualifications, including associate-level Cisco CCNA® certification courses as well as HP IT Essentials 1 and Panduit Networking Infrastructure Essentials. These courses represent a number of options for students, covering everything from exposure to PC hardware and operating systems, to network design and engineering skills.

The Cisco Networking Academy programme is a public-private partnership between Cisco Systems, governments, education institutions, nongovernmental organizations and industry, created to teach technology and telecommunications skills. It consists of more than 11,000 academies worldwide, with 32,000 instructors working with 1.9 million students. Currently, 23,000 students participating in the programme are based in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

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### **About Cisco Systems**

Cisco Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: CSCO), is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. Information about Cisco can be found at <http://www.cisco.com>. For ongoing news, please go to <http://newsroom.cisco.com>. Cisco equipment in Europe is supplied by Cisco Systems International BV, a wholly owned subsidiary of Cisco Systems, Inc.

### **About the Cisco Networking Academy Programme**

The Cisco Networking Academy programme is a comprehensive online programme that provides students with the Internet technology skills essential in a global economy. The Networking Academy curriculum delivers Web-based content, online assessment, student performance tracking, hands-on labs, instructor training and support, and preparation for industry-standard certifications.

Launched in October 1997 with 64 educational institutions in seven U.S. states, the Networking Academy programme has spread to more than 150 countries. Since its inception, more than 1.9 million students have enrolled in more than 11,000 Networking

Academy programmes located in high schools, technical schools, colleges, universities, and community-based organizations.

### **About the Govan Initiative**

Govan Initiative Ltd. is a local economic development company tasked with regenerating the economy of the Greater Govan area, creating a place where people want to live, learn, work, invest and visit. In doing so, it works with other agencies, local residents and business communities, to deliver a wide range of high quality, accessible initiatives. Since 1995, the company has been accredited by Scottish Quality Management Systems (SQMS) and Investors in People (IIP). In 2005 the company won the Quality Scotland Foundation's Award for Business Excellence (SME) for the second time having first won it in 1997 and was a Finalist for the European Quality Award in 1999. 2006 sees Govan Initiative represent Scotland yet again at a European level.

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