



## Verizon Foundation gives \$635K to Ark. nonprofits

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**The Associated Press**

(AP) — LITTLE ROCK, Ark. - The Verizon Foundation announced Friday it will give \$635,000 to four Arkansas nonprofit groups to help improve education in the state.

The foundation is the philanthropic arm of Verizon Wireless, which acquired Little Rock-based Alltel Corp. in January. The company announced the grants Monday at a ceremony at Little Rock's Central High School.

The grants include \$500,000 that will benefit schools in the Delta. Those grants will create a Jobs for America's Graduates programs in the Forrest City, Earle and Lee County school districts and the implementation of leadership and technology training at three Delta high schools.

The Jobs for America's Graduates-also known as JAG-is a national program designed to keep at-risk students in school and help those students find careers or enroll in college.

"Through the Verizon Foundation's valuable support, JAG will be able to continue its important mission of reaching out to at-risk youth and taking the necessary steps to ensure that they stay in school and receive the guidance and training needed to expand their options and have a better quality of life," said Bill Walker Jr., the director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, which oversees local JAG programs.

The leadership and technology program, known as One Economy, will implement its Digital Connectors program, in which students will receive technology and leadership training, and will then volunteer in their communities.

"With Verizon's support, young people in Arkansas will learn to use technology to improve their lives and lead in their communities," said Rey Ramsey, One Economy's chief executive officer.

The grants also include \$100,000 to improve technology at Little Rock Central High School and \$35,000 to the Department of Education.