

NEWS RELEASE

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ONLINE MENTORS HELP STUDENTS PREPARE FOR GRADUATION WV eMentoring explores college and career options

Charleston, W.Va. - Many may think mentors must work with students face-to-face, but advancements in technology have made it possible to make a difference from the comfort of your home or office. *WV eMentoring* is breaking geographic barriers to provide students with quality mentors from career fields that interest students.

The Education Alliance launched *WV eMentoring* in January, 2011. The program pairs the traditional mentoring concept with online activities that keep students engaged and help volunteers get involved without taking time away from work. Through the *WV eMentoring* process, students learn about the courses they need to take in high school in order to pursue their career goals and create a personalized career profile and plan for education after high school.

WV eMentoring reached more than 200 students in four schools across the state, including Calhoun County Middle/High School, Capital High School, Huntington High School, and Pocahontas County High School during the 2010-2011 school year. According to survey data students completed at the end of their mentoring experience, ninety-one percent of students indicated that they understood the importance of relevant high school course work and eighty-six percent understood the importance of education after high school.

"With *WV eMentoring*, students have a better understanding of what to expect after high school. By being introduced to concepts through the program and their mentors, they can be better prepared for their futures," Robert Sheets, a Pocahontas County High School teacher, said. "I find myself in a position to provide a valuable resource to a prospective college student – an ear to listen, an objective sounding board for their ideas," said Jaye Ike, a WV eMentor from Marshall University. "The program, thus far, has been rewarding for me."

"The Education Alliance is very grateful to the Benedum Foundation, Frontier Communications, and the Community and Technical College System of West Virginia for making the *WV eMentoring* program possible, free of charge, available to so many West Virginia students" said Dr. Patricia Kusimo, president/CEO of The Education Alliance.

The Education Alliance is looking for business professionals who can devote about 15 minutes per week for 10 weeks to help high school students better understand their college and career options. Volunteers are needed from a variety of career fields. If you would like to volunteer, register online at www.wvmentoring.org. Potential WV eMentors may also contact the WV eMentoring Program Director, Jessica Wintz at (304) 342-7849 or jessica@educationalliance.org. Currently there are more than 240 registered mentors from approximately 90 organizations across West Virginia.

The Education Alliance is West Virginia's premier statewide, nonprofit research and K-12 public education fund. Its demonstration projects, issue-based research and partnerships with schools, businesses, community groups and other nonprofits cohesively achieve The Education Alliance mission—*College and career readiness for all West Virginia students.*

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