

PRESS RELEASE

Emily Pratt, The Education Alliance
304-590-0461
emily@educationalliance.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 19, 2014

Brian Muys, APUS
703-268-1143
bmuys@apus.edu

EDTalks Event Provides Insight On How Education And Jobs Connect To West Virginia's Future

Charles Town, W.Va. – On Thursday, June 19, 2014, approximately 100 business, education and legislative leaders attended The Education Alliance's *EDTalks: Connecting Education, Jobs and Our Future* event at American Public University System (APUS). EDTalks is an education-based speaker series that promotes innovative discussion and big ideas on strengthening public education.

"As we think about the tremendous economic opportunities and challenges facing our state, the connection between jobs and education is obvious. Engaging our communities in this conversation is mission critical to our success," said Dr. Amelia Courts, president and chief executive officer of The Education Alliance. "The Education Alliance is excited to be part of the positive momentum and energy in the eastern panhandle as business, education and community leaders work together to strengthen the pipeline to future jobs in West Virginia."

The EDTalks event featured three speakers: the Honorable Joe Manchin, III, United States Senator, Erin Sponaugle, 2014 West Virginia Teacher of the Year, and Dr. Wallace E. Boston, president and chief executive officer of American Public University System. They each shared innovative ideas from their unique perspectives on how we can better connect education, jobs and our state's future.

According to Senator Manchin "There is no better investment than education, plain and simple. The future of West Virginia and the country will be shaped by the commitments we make to educating our children today. It was an honor to attend this event and discuss ways we can continue raising standards for education to ensure that our students are equipped with the experience, knowledge and skillsets they need to be competitive in an ever-growing global marketplace. The sooner our students recognize that a quality education is their key to a higher quality of life, the more successful the Mountain State and the United States will be."

"As the cost of higher education continues to increase, it is increasingly important that universities like APUS offer affordable programs and work collaboratively with employers to define the most important skills needed for the 21st century worker to succeed in the workplace," said Dr. Boston. "Otherwise, evolving technology developments have the real potential to outpace our ongoing efforts to ensure that our curriculum fully meets the diverse needs of our students."

EDTalks are being held across West Virginia to provide a lively series of networking and education events designed to engage business, education, and community leaders in public education issues. Each program will feature compelling presentations by cutting-edge speakers, professionals, and advocates along with ample time for conversation and networking.

This event was sponsored by the City of Charles Town, the City of Ranson, and American Public University System. To view the video recordings of the Charles Town EDTalks or for more information, visit EducationAlliance.org/EDTalks or contact The Education Alliance at 866-314-KIDS.

About The Education Alliance

Founded in July 1983 as the first statewide public education fund in the nation, The Education Alliance is a private-sector initiative to help businesses understand the importance of financially and resourcefully supporting the state's public schools and to give business a voice in public education that advances policies and practices to continually improve public school student achievement in West Virginia.

###