

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2014

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Education Alliance Receives Benedum Foundation Award for STEM Project

Charleston, W.Va. – This afternoon, Governor Earl Ray Tomblin convened members of the Governor’s STEM Council to begin the work of enhancing Math and Science education beyond the classroom. The Governor clearly understands the need for a West Virginia workforce that is prepared for current and future STEM-skilled jobs.

“It is critical for us to prepare our students, today, for the jobs of tomorrow by increasing interest in science, technology, engineering and math,” Gov. Tomblin said. “Throughout the next five years, economic development opportunities in our state will require a strategic expansion of STEM workforce availability.”

The Education Alliance is pleased to announce the award of a \$140,000 grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to enable us to work with business and industry leaders to develop the STEM Works project. By collaborating with the Governor’s STEM Commission, key business leaders and other ongoing STEM initiatives, the STEM Works project will make a serious contribution to developing a pipeline of students that are ready to work for our state’s future.

The STEM Works project will address three main objectives: 1) create a network of six to eight school-business partnerships to advance STEM education and workplace learning experiences; 2) launch a multi-media communication plan promoting STEM careers; and 3) host a web-based resource center for school business partnerships.

"This effort is a great step forward in the partnership between business and education. The STEM focus digs deep into the skills and knowledge that industry requires of the education system" said Dr. Jim Denova, Vice President of the Benedum Foundation.

“With an increase in Marcellus and Utica shale drilling as well as growing opportunities in technology fields, West Virginia is experiencing an increase in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) related jobs,” said Dr. Amelia Courts, president and chief executive officer of The Education Alliance. “The Education Alliance’s STEM Works project will touch thousands of educators, families and students across the state as we promote the importance of being ‘workforce ready’ in communities across the state.”

STEM-related jobs are considered high wage/high skill and help drive our state's innovation and competitiveness by generating new ideas, new companies and new industries. Through the STEM Works project, The Education Alliance will engage, inform and connect students and their families with specific STEM career pathways as well as the types of STEM proficiencies and skills that they will need to attain those jobs. The project has the capacity to serve 3,000 sixth through twelfth grade West Virginia public school students.

For more information on the STEM Works project, visit EducationAlliance.org/STEM or contact Lisa Ketchum at 304-342-7850 or lisa@educationalliance.org.

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



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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.

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