

The *Education*  
**alliance**  
Business and Community for Public Schools

2005 Annual Report



# Chairman & President's Message

In preparation for this year's annual report, we gave serious thought to the message we wanted to share with you. As a partner in our quest to promote public K-12 education in West Virginia, you provide the support that keeps our programs strong and growing. Your generosity provides greatly needed programming and promotes a better quality of education for our students.

We take great pride in our resolve to practice stewardship by using your resources wisely. A recent poll conducted by RMS Strategies, Inc. indicated that nearly all (97%) of the respondents assign an "excellent" or "good" rating to the ease of understanding our research. We hope you also find our research worthy of reading

So few times in life do we have the option of being a part of something larger than ourselves. We possess the energy and dedication to deliver quality academic programs and be an integral part of West Virginia schools - if you use the power to invest! We hope you enjoy reading this year's annual report.



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Dr. Hazel Palmer  
President/CEO



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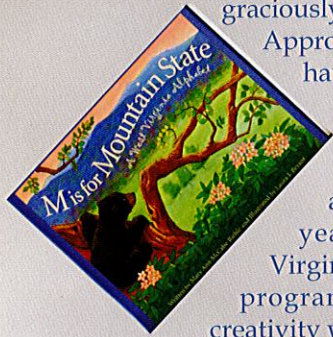
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# Family Literacy

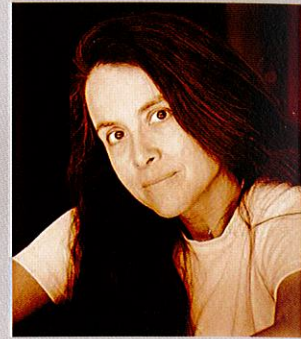
The Education Alliance sponsors a statewide Family Literacy program. Read Aloud is an important part of this program, fostering a lifelong love of reading by promoting the pleasures and benefits derived from reading aloud. In a highly recognized program that started in 1992, trained volunteers across the Mountain State visit schools, often on a weekly basis, to read aloud to students and discuss the stories being read.

Read To Me! Day was held on November 18, 2004, graciously sponsored by Equitable Resources.



Approximately 169 schools participated by having over 2,000 volunteers read to nearly 40,000 children throughout the state! A special book, M is for Mountain State, was provided to all participating schools. This past year, 91% of the counties in West Virginia supported a special read-aloud program in schools and libraries. The creativity was overwhelming.

The Education Alliance once again continued its partnership with the West Virginia Book Festival and co-sponsored the event held on October 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. It was the responsibility of The Education Alliance to provide a nationally recognized keynote speaker on children's literature and several break-out sessions addressing family literacy, reaching out to reluctant and resistant readers and reading aloud to young people. The Education Alliance was pleased to host nationally acclaimed author Naomi Nye who offered a workshop and a free book signing of her new book.



Naomi Nye



## Partnerships In Education

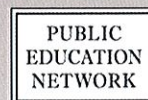
Results-based partnerships across the state made a positive impact on student achievement, school improvement and/or overall educational experiences. Partnerships were built on clearly defined goals and measurements for success. Results included significant increases in attendance, improved GPAs and test scores, reading acceleration and expansion of after-school and mentoring programs.

For example, West Milford Elementary School and its partners, Dominion and the YMCA, identified the attendance rate as an area for improvement in light of the West Virginia policy that sets the minimally acceptable attendance rate at 90%. By April, the average attendance was 94.2%.

In another example, Central Elementary School and West Virginia Wesleyan College identified reading as their focus. After the first semester, the third grade reading level had increased by an entire grade level and the fourth grade had advanced from a mean grade level of third grade, third quarter to fourth grade, second quarter.

Improving the academic, social and physical well-being of students continues to be a top priority for business and school partnerships across the country. In recognition of successful partnership efforts, The Council for Corporate & School Partnerships awarded Brookhaven Elementary School and Monongalia Health Systems \$10,000 to further the efforts of their partnerships.

A total of 16 schools participated in Results-Based Partnerships during the 2004 - 2005 school year. The Education Alliance hopes to add a mentoring partnership model, which will allow participating schools to hire a part-time liaison to coordinate the local school/business partnership activities and provide funds to purchase a limited amount of resources for tutoring and mentoring, including bus transportation for students who have no other way to get home when partnership activities take place after school.



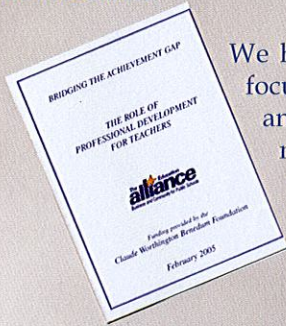
Proud Member of the Public Education Network



# Research

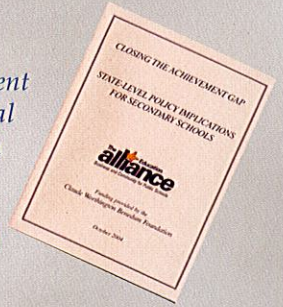
"Work 24 hours a day to assist us; we need the data," was the response of one on-line subscriber to The Education Alliance's research publications!

During the past year, The Education Alliance commissioned RMS Strategies to conduct a third-party evaluation of its research efforts by surveying those who receive research and research summaries via email. Feedback was obtained on readership, content value, confidence of information and areas for improvement. Seven out of ten survey respondents had reviewed the research and nearly six in ten passed the information along to others. Nearly all (97%) assigned an "excellent" or "good" rating to the ease of understanding our research.



We had an excellent response to our focus on closing the achievement gap and it led to the publication of two more research summaries: *Closing the Achievement Gap: State-level Policy Implications for Secondary*

*Schools, and Closing the Achievement Gap: The Role of Professional Development for Teachers.* Both publications were cited by other organizations looking at high school education and professional development issues.



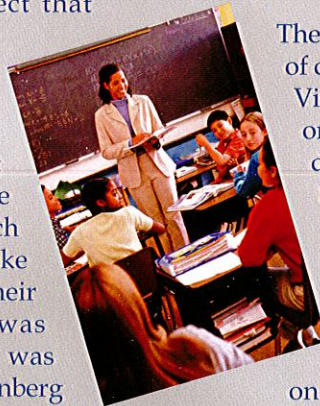
Survey respondents lauded the Student Voice research. Based on that kind of feedback, the Alliance is piloting focus groups with middle school students and conducting surveys of middle and high school students about the issues raised in the Student Voice research. Over 1,300 high school students and 440 middle school students, as well as over 160 high school teachers and 40 middle school teachers, have participated so far. This project will continue to assure that the data base is sufficiently large.

Customer satisfaction is important. If there is an area you feel we should research or a research summary that would be useful, please let us know.



# Teaching Quality

Conducting a statewide grassroots project that influences public opinion and results in policy changes seems impossible. The Education Alliance is proud to help prove that such a project can be implemented and be successful! It all started in 2002 when West Virginia became one of five national sites to take part in the Teaching Quality Initiative, which emphasized the need for communities to take responsibility for the quality of teaching in their school system. This three-year project was managed by The Education Alliance, which was supported by a three-year grant from the Annenberg Foundation through the Public Education Network.



The project culminated on May 26, 2005 in a meeting of community representatives from throughout West Virginia to form specific state-level recommendations on the topics that had emerged from grassroots input during the prior three years. After keynote speeches by Governor Joe Manchin III and Public Education Network President Wendy Puriefoy, participants worked in facilitated discussion groups. Stakeholders from 43 of the state's 55 counties were involved in this statewide project. The publication on Teaching Quality can be found on our website at [www.educationalliance.org](http://www.educationalliance.org).

# Mini-Grants and Family Involvement Grants

Mini-Grants for Classroom Projects provide funds up to \$500 that assist teachers as well as students to be more creative and innovative in their learning process. During the 2004-2005 school year, we awarded 102 grants to teachers in 38 counties. Proud sponsors for last year include Columbia Gas Transmission, Toyota Motor Manufacturing of West Virginia, Huntington Foundation and the West Virginia Humanities Council.



With help from the Dow Chemical Company, The Education Alliance has provided teachers

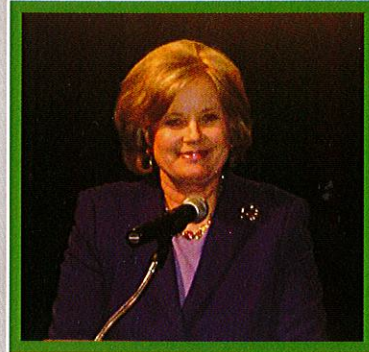
and parents the opportunity to become more involved and more creative in classrooms around the state. The Family Involvement Grant is provided as a means to get parents more involved in their child's education and to increase collaboration among families, school personnel and the community. These grants, which award up to \$1,000, focus on parents who are not involved in school activities and/or social functions due to time constraints, geography or socioeconomic conditions.



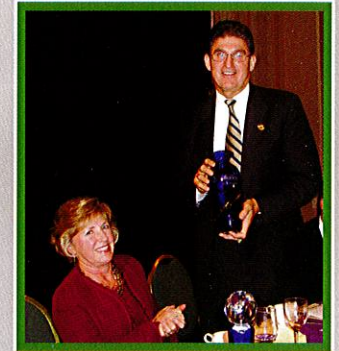


# Events and Activities

## 2004 Annual Dinner



Over 200 business and community leaders enjoyed the 2004 Annual Dinner held on December 1, 2004. Mrs. Sharon Percy Rockefeller was the keynote speaker for this event and was introduced by her good friend, Governor Joe Manchin III. Verizon was the gold sponsor and Appalachian Power was the silver sponsor for this annual fundraising event for education in West Virginia.



## 7th Annual Pumpkin Drop



Over 600 students participated in the seventh annual Capital City Pumpkin Drop, which was held October 21, 2004, at the Capitol Complex in Charleston. This event has been proudly sponsored by Bayer CropScience since 1997.

The entries, which totaled a record 100 this year, were from 28 different schools in 12 counties. Representatives from the West Virginia University College of Engineering and Mineral Resources judged the entries. A total of 30 pumpkins survived the three-story drop. Winners were: 1<sup>st</sup> place - Central Elementary School in Kanawha County, 2<sup>nd</sup> place - Oak Hill High School in Fayette County and 3<sup>rd</sup> place - Doddridge County High School in Doddridge County.



## 2005 Graduates of Distinction

The 2005 Graduates of Distinction are Lawson and Jeanne Hamilton from Lewisburg. The luncheon, held on June 7, 2005 at the Charleston Marriott, annually honors two or three graduates of the





# Contributors

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West Virginia University Foundation, Inc.

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*The Education Alliance's auditor, Gray, Griffith & Mays, A.C., has issued an unqualified opinion on the financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2005. The complete audited financial statements may be found on our website at [www.educationalalliance.org](http://www.educationalalliance.org) and are available upon request.*

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## **Leaders Circle (\$25,000 - \$99,000)**

Columbia Gas Transmission  
Lawson & Jeanne Hamilton  
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WV Coal Association, Inc.

## **In-Kind Contributions**

Blenko Glass Co.  
Kay Casto & Chaney, PLLC  
The State Journal

