

THE EDUCATION ALLIANCE



Advancing the Legacy

2012 ANNUAL REPORT
July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

Message from the Chairman of the Board and President/CEO



Friends,

Imagine a West Virginia where students complete high school prepared for a career or educational opportunities after high school. Instead of prison overcrowding grabbing the headlines, envision a West Virginia focused upon satisfying the increasing demand for post-secondary education. West Virginia's teen pregnancy rate has become one of the lowest in the nation, and prescription drug abuse has plummeted. Companies are vying for the opportunity to build their plants, and to locate or relocate their headquarters here in almost heaven, West Virginia.

Is this an impossible dream or not too distant reality? The Education Alliance believes the latter. The West Virginia we want is within our reach, but we must all have the determination to act in ways that clearly put students and their educational needs first. This will mean changes, both large and small. Everyone in the learning equation will need to embrace some change. All of us must be determined to do whatever it takes to improve student outcomes if our imagined West Virginia is to become a reality.

The Education Alliance is proud to present a sampling of its work in this Annual Report that reflects our commitment to such change. As proud as we are of this work, we understand that it will require more than just one organization to achieve our vision for the State. This report highlights accomplishments made possible by the efforts of many — student-centered funders, caring educators, tenacious mentors, courageous policymakers, and responsible students and their families. Our desire is to stand beside all of these forces on the frontlines of education supporting, encouraging, and challenging them to continue splendid work that will make the imagined West Virginia a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Thomas".

Jim Thomas
Chairman of the Board

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia S. Kusimo".

Patricia S. Kusimo, Ph.D.
President/CEO



What is the Education Alliance?

The Education Alliance is a nonprofit research and K-12 local education fund.

Vision

Every West Virginia public school student graduates ready to begin a career or pursue additional education and training.

Mission

The Education Alliance is an independent voice, earnest advocate, and statewide participant that advances policies and practices to continually improve public school student achievement in West Virginia.

Values

We want to initiate important dialogues that value open, data-based evaluations of educational issues or problems. We believe in the worth of all West Virginia children; believe each and every child deserves a quality education; and support educators and having the tools and skills necessary to engage students in their own success.

- Honesty, truthfulness, and **integrity**;
- **Credibility** through objectivity (research and fact-based);
- **Respect** for all education stakeholders, regardless of background, opinions, or organization of origin;
- Commitment to excellence through **quality**, success, and achievement;
- **Effective leadership** and professionalism;
- **Learning** through education and experience;
- **Results-oriented** based on sound data and metrics.



Why The Education Alliance?

In West Virginia, one out of every four 9th grade students will not complete high school within four years, and some never do.

This statistic is the Call to Action for The Education Alliance. Imagine a West Virginia where high school completion rates and SAT/ ACT scores continuously increase. Research shows that this could lead to lower prison populations, decreasing unemployment and significantly lower substance abuse rates.

Jim Thomas, who began his term as chair of the board of directors for the Education Alliance this year, believes that it matters. "Education must simply be **more** of a priority in our State," he said.

Thomas, an attorney at Jackson Kelly PLLC cited the SEEDS Program at Wayne High School as a prime example of how The Education Alliance supports the importance of education. "Wayne is a rural high school that is now one of the nation's leaders in educating students in math and science. That's transformation."

The Education Alliance's vision - that every West Virginia public school student graduates ready to begin a career or pursue additional education—can spread that transformation to the communities of West Virginia. **That's why we are here.**



Frontline Network

Communities Unite for High School Success.

A Program of The Education Alliance

The Frontline Network for High School Completion provides communities and schools research-based guidance and support to develop strategies that will improve high school completion rates and decrease dropout rates.



Respect
Learning
***“We know the school, the county,
and the history, and we all really
care about the students.”***

Jan Nichols, Doddridge County Attendance
Director and Frontline Network coordinator

Effective Leadership
In Doddridge County, where fewer than 100 students graduate from high school each year, the success or failure of every student counts.

“Let’s say three or four students drop out a year,” said Dropout Prevention Coordinator, Jan Nichols. “In ten years, that means 30-40 people in Doddridge County don’t have a high school diploma. Our community just can’t support that from an economic standpoint.”

Nichols and a team of adults who are graduates of Doddridge County High School followed The Education Alliance’s guide for community dialogue and began to draft a dropout prevention plan.

“We’ve established partnerships with community organizations and their directors are asking when we’re going to be meeting again,” she said. “AmeriCorps on the Frontline members will enhance our efforts in the next year as well.”

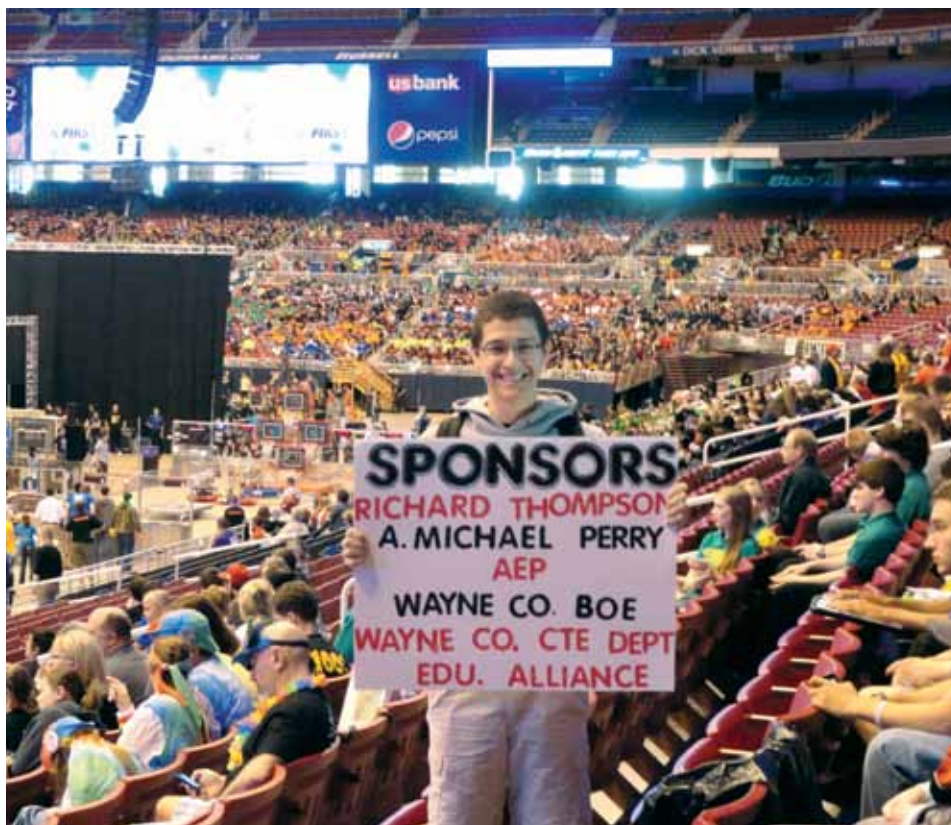
Nichols told a story about a recent drop-out, who called and asked if she could come back to school. “I told her of course she could come back,” said Nichols, who calls students who have dropped out regularly to encourage their return to school.

Nichols notes that in the past year, the Doddridge County Frontline Network has learned much from The Education Alliance, and she praises the local Dropout Prevention Committee’s work. “We followed the Alliance guide for a community dialogue and things went very well,” she says. “We’ve established partnerships with community organizations and their directors are asking when we’re going to be meeting again, so that’s a good sign.”



SEEDS, which stands for Student Educational & Economic Development Success, is a professional development tool for public school principals.

Good high school principals are education entrepreneurs who embrace risk to improve their schools. Imagine what happens when effective administrators are well supported. The Education Alliance's SEEDS program gave principals up to \$50,000 for a school initiative, along with expert guidance from an educational consultant and a successful business.



Learning

“Our vision is to build partnerships between our school and various elementary and middle schools to develop high school mentors for the younger students in engineering and robotics. We planted the seeds, and we will be there as it continues to grow.”

Sara Stapleton, Principal and SEEDS Principal,
Wayne High School,

Results-based

At Wayne County High School, Principal Sara Stapleton decided that SEEDs funding could enhance a new program at her school. “We had high expectations for what we termed Project Lead the Way (PLTW), a combined curriculum for math and engineering to complement our robotics program,” she said. “The positive change is beyond our greatest imagining.”

She recalls one student whose life was changed through participation in the robotics project. His grades were poor despite test scores that were on par with average students at his grade level. After 6 weeks in the program, his attitude and performance at school improved. He went on to compete in a science event in St. Louis, and began studies at West Virginia University this fall.

“Our vision is to build partnerships between our school and various elementary and middle schools to develop high school mentors for the younger students in engineering and robotics. We planted this seed, and we will be there as it continues to grow,” said Stapleton.

The success of the SEEDS grant led to five students receiving scholarships, another high school in Wayne County implementing PLTW, and many of the local elementary and middle schools initiating robotics programs. Stapleton is awed and humbled by the way her own school’s vision has rippled into new programs and achievements in other schools.



Walk the Talk pairs caring business mentors with at-risk students at five West Virginia high schools. Mentors stay with the same group of students for every year of the high-school experience.

“I just don’t know how some of these kids make it.”

Anne Brown, Walk the Talk volunteer mentor,
Wheeling Park High School

Anne Brown just wanted to make a difference in her community. A long-time AT & T employee, Brown heard about Walk the Talk more than four years ago. AT & T is a major financial supporter of The Education Alliance, and encourages employees to volunteer.





Brown watched two young women walk across the stage at graduation to accept their high school diplomas. Both students were considered high-risk. "One of them was 7 months pregnant, but she didn't drop out," said Brown. "Now she's a stay-at-home mom in a stable relationship, and she's certified as a daycare worker in West Virginia." The young woman plans to return to work once her baby is a few years old.

Brown goes out of her way to stay in touch with her students, even after they graduate. She recently helped a former student move into a new apartment. They also text regularly, and go out to eat a couple of times a month. "This young woman doesn't really have a support system," said Brown. "I just don't think we realize what some kids face every day."

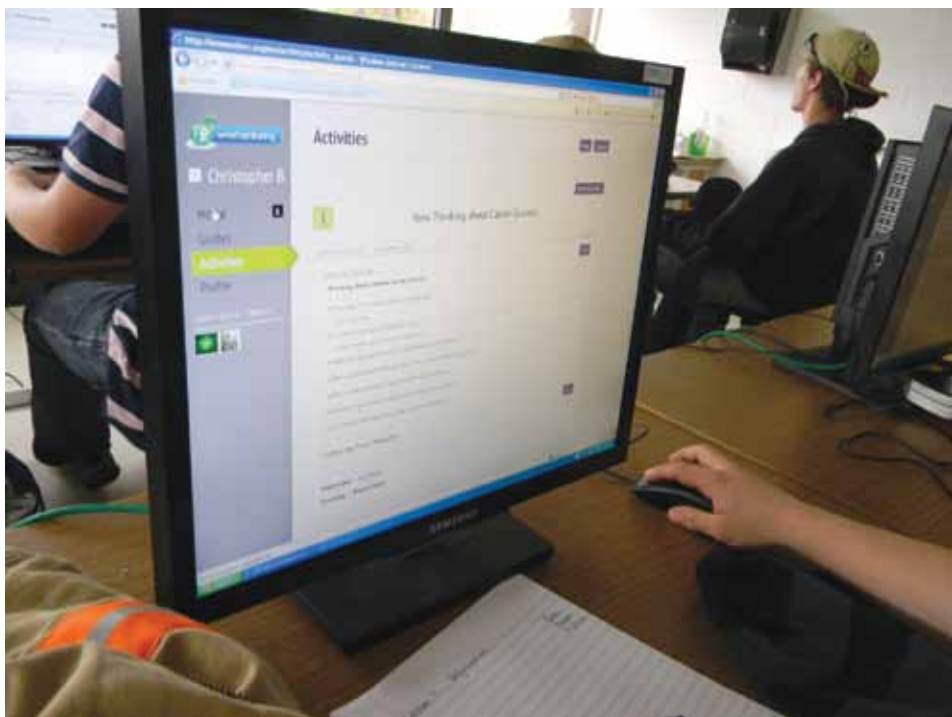
Because of Walk the Talk 26 at-risk students graduated from high school this year. Each will earn \$200,000 more over the course of their lifetime than students who drop out of school. These 26 students will add more than \$5.2 million dollars to West Virginia's economy.



One email a week can make a difference in a student's life. The Education Alliance's WV eMentoring program has grown in the past year to reach more than 500 students in 14 West Virginia counties.

“When one student succeeds, it encourages other students.”

Nick Culicerto, teacher,
WV Academy of Careers and Technology





When Nick Culicerto's principal handed him a WV eMentoring brochure in early 2012, the young teacher decided to give the program a try. One student's story stands out.

"One young man talked a great deal about how his mentor helped him figure out what to do with his life after high school," he said. Future goals and how to achieve them became a part of the young man's everyday conversation with teachers and fellow students.

Prior to his involvement with his mentor, the young man was considered a high-risk student. "He not only went on to graduate, he's now in the U.S. Army Reserve and is able to support his child," said Culicerto.

Exposure to responsible adults, he noted, can make a difference and other students noticed, too. "We look forward to building on what we learned from the WV eMentoring program next year," said school principal, Charles Pack. "We believe it can make a difference."

To date over 800 West Virginia students have had the opportunity to receive career guidance from mentors who share their interests.

Learning

Annual Dinner

The memory of a little boy she had to leave behind still drives former First Lady Laura Bush to do everything she can to help underprivileged children get an education.

Integrity

Effective Leadership





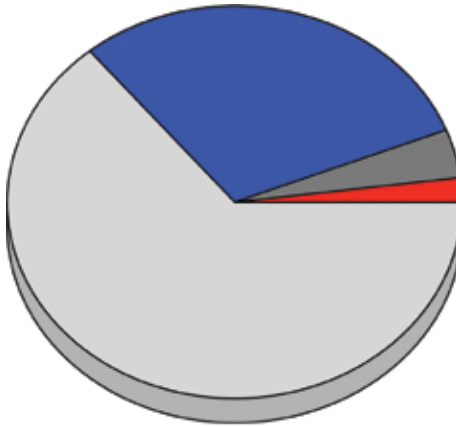
In the 1960s, she took her second grade class on a field trip to a Texas amusement park. The last child she picked up, a boy, answered the door in his underwear. She had to leave him on the doorstep because she couldn't get his mother to come to the door and give permission for her son to travel with his class.

The former First Lady shared this story at last year's annual dinner. We feel that it's important to share it because it highlights the reason why The Education Alliance exists.

Laura Bush's experience as a young educator is why we are here. We want West Virginia's children to succeed, because when they do, **so do we all.**

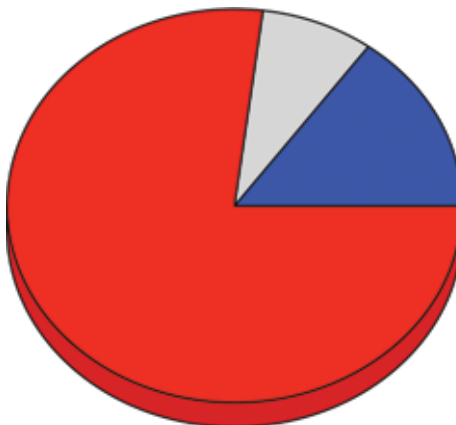


Total Revenue and Support



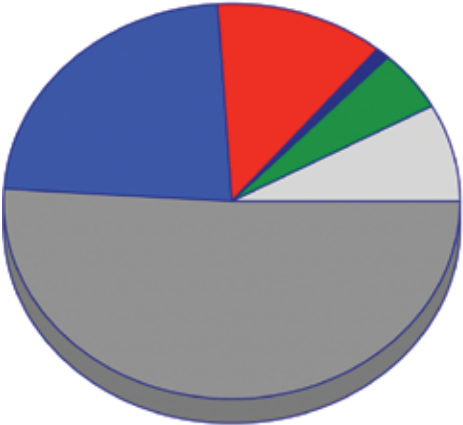
- Gifts and Grants = 64%
- Special Events = 30%
- Investment Income = 4%
- Other Income = 2%

Total Expenses



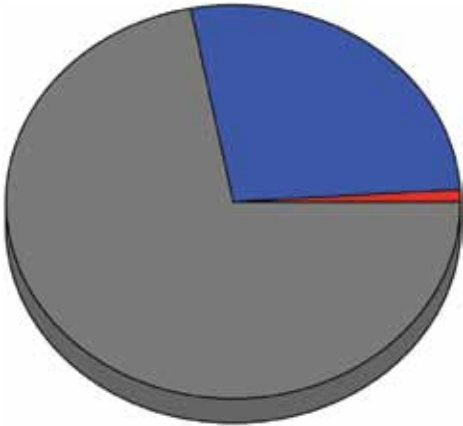
- Programs = 77%
- General Operating/New Program Development = 8%
- Outreach/Fundraising = 15%

Sources of Funds



- Corporations/Corporate Foundations = 51%
- Foundations = 23%
- Fundraising Events = 12%
- Interest Income = 1%
- Government Grants = 5%
- Individuals = 8%

Distribution of Revenue



- Designated = 72%
- Undesignated = 27%
- Gifts In-Kind = 1%

Credibility *Effective Leadership*

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Integrity





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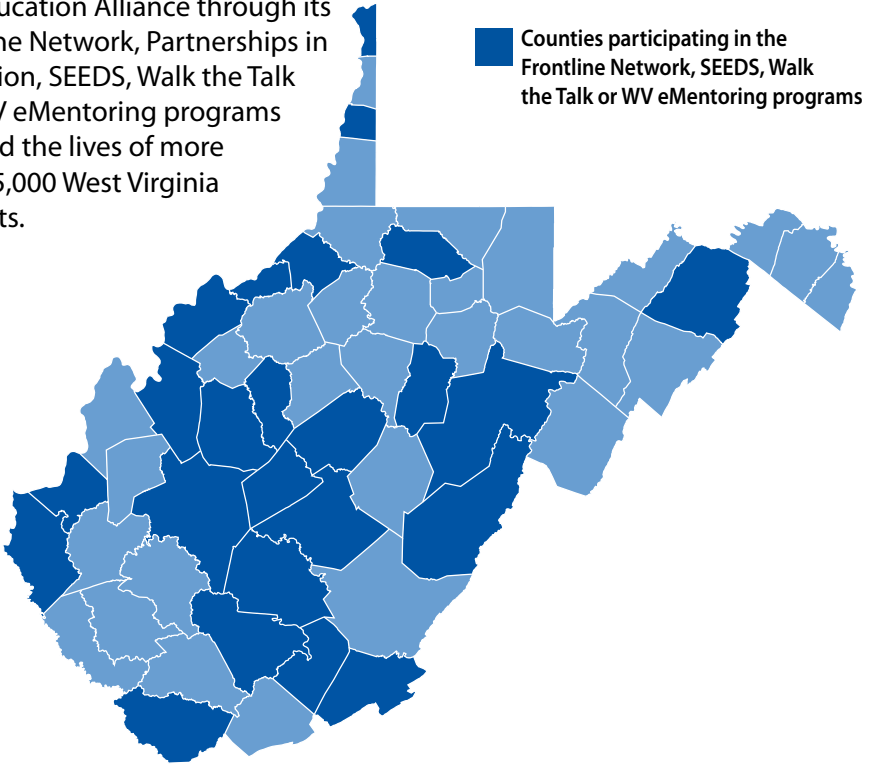
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Herchiel Sims Jr

L. Newton Thomas Jr.

We're in Your Community

The Education Alliance through its Frontline Network, Partnerships in Education, SEEDS, Walk the Talk and WV eMentoring programs touched the lives of more than 25,000 West Virginia students.



The Education Alliance's Partnerships in Education program is available to all 55 counties. The Partnerships in Education program is designed to nurture and strengthen existing partnerships that support college and career readiness.

