

PRESS RELEASE

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EDTalks® Address “Recruiting WV’s Youth for Our Future”
The Education Alliance Brings Together Business, Education, and Student Leaders

Charleston, WV – Today, more than 100 students, business, and education leaders participated in the Education Alliance 2022 EDTalks® event at BridgeValley’s South Charleston campus. The event featured three inspiring leaders who helped showcase all that West Virginia has to offer tomorrow’s leaders. Each of the EDTalk® speakers had a unique perspective regarding this issue.

Mikayla Dent, founder and owner of Ooh La Lucy, kicked off the conversation by sharing her self-made success story of launching the boutique of her dreams in Charleston, WV. Next, 2022 West Virginia Teacher of the Year, Brian Casto, spoke on his admiration of West Virginia and his passion for teaching.

Keynote speaker and national champion Marshall University Head Soccer Coach, Chris Grassie, took the stage to talk about his experiences in recruiting young people to the mountain state. Grassie spoke with goal-oriented enthusiasm, much like he demonstrated in 2020 when leading his team to the national championship. EDTalks® attendees engaged in small group discussions to identify action steps based on the speakers’ presentations.

“We all know that creating a robust talent pipeline is key to our state’s future,” said Dr. Amelia Courts, President and CEO of The Education Alliance. “That is why we must start younger to ensure our K12 students see a bright future for themselves here in the Mountain State,” said Courts. “I am extremely grateful to our three speakers and all of our sponsors for their support to help make today’s EDTalks a success.”

In addition to business and education leaders, high school students from across the state also joined the EDTalks® conversation as a kick-off to their 4-week, paid summer internships at Appalachian Power, Toyota WV, and WV American Water. The interns learned from the dynamic lineup of speakers and participated in constructive discussions following the event.

Coach Grassie also showed appreciation for the EDTalks event. “It was an honor to participate in the 2022 EDTalks,” said Grassie. “I am excited about our state’s positive momentum and hope that we can continue to work together to show more young people a bright future in West Virginia.”

For more information on EDTalks, visit EducationAlliance.org/EDTalks or contact The Education Alliance at 304-342-7850. Sponsors for the EDTalks include: AT&T; Bowles Rice; Dow, Toyota WV, WV American Water and Jackson Kelly PLLC. Pictures of the event can be found [here](#).

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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. For more information, visit educationalliance.org.