



Eastern-in-the-News



ENTREPRENEURSHIP EVENT AT LANDES CENTER OFFERS CAREER INSIGHTS

Moorefield — May 3 — More than 120 high school students from each of six Potomac Highlands counties gave an enthusiastic response to three young entrepreneurs and a business development banker who, from their personal and professional experiences, provided insights into entrepreneurship as a career choice.



18-year old Wesley Davis, who runs his own free range egg farm in Mason County, offered three basic tips for entrepreneurial success. “Don’t be afraid to keep on learning, always challenge yourself, and when you fall, fall forward,” he said, meaning, “learn from your mistakes.”

During the Entrepreneurship Event 2013 at the Landes Art Center in Petersburg April 25, the speakers all agreed on some basic elements that make a successful entrepreneur: passion for the venture; ongoing self-challenge; the willingness to take calculated risks; continual learning; the ability to build relationships; developing creative marketing approaches; and understanding how to manage money.

Eastern WV Community and Technical College hosted the event for students in Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties that make up the college’s six-county service district.



Ashley Brosh-Anderson, owner/manager of Kaposy’s Great Room in Petersburg, offered three basic tips when choosing entrepreneurship as a career. “Learn to manage money, develop creative marketing approaches and build lasting relationships with your customers.”

“The goal of this event is to inform high school students of a potential career pathway through entrepreneurship,” noted Eastern’s President Terrell, who serves as co-chair of the Potomac Highlands Economic Development and Education Partnership, a co-sponsor of the event.

“There’s more opportunity for entrepreneurship now than ever before,” said Mona Ridder, executive director of the Mineral County Development Authority. “And education is the key — it’s everything.”

“Most of the growth job growth in West Virginia in the next ten years is going to come from entrepreneurship,” emphasized Ed Fisher, executive director of the Grant County Development Authority. “The key to success for students is to

learn how to develop a business plan and how to run a business after doing the proper research.”



A former marketing executive at Discovery Communications, Chris Wood has built two businesses of his own and is working on a third. He advised young entrepreneurs to “take your business concept from a small idea to as big as you can imagine it,” and warned them, “I’ve never worked harder than when I worked for myself.”

“This is a great opportunity for students to be exposed to entrepreneurial success stories, and how those successes create opportunities to live and work in the region that you grew up in,” said Shawn Dilly, director of the South Branch Career and Technical Center, and chair of the Potomac Highlands District Consortium that is also co-sponsoring the event.

“And that’s an important part of where the economy needs to go for people to stay in the Potomac Highlands

region.”



As the Business Development Officer at Pendleton Community Bank, Luke Kesner provides entrepreneurs with information they need for serious business loan consideration. He spoke at the Entrepreneurship Event April 25.

“There’s ample opportunity for entrepreneurship in our county, particularly in retail,” said Les Shoemaker, Jr., executive director of the **Hampshire County** Development Authority. Research data shows that “several millions of dollars in general merchandise sales are going outside the county.

“There are just not enough businesses in our county,” he pointed out, “and our economy is not as diverse as it should be.”

“It’s a wonderful thing, a great opportunity for kids in high school,” said Kim Ruddle, the Pendleton County Economic and Community Development Authority administrator.

“Anything that we can do to assist our students to do either continue their education or prepare for the workforce is for the best benefit of the overall region,” agreed Mallie Combs–Snyder, executive director of the Hardy County Rural Development Authority (RDA).

“I truly believe that the future of the Potomac Highlands Region is based on its entrepreneurship,” said Anne Jones, executive director of the Tucker County Development Authority. “And the West Virginia Spirit “Montani Semper Libri” makes this the best place to be an entrepreneur.”

In the Potomac Highlands particularly, “There may also be entrepreneurial opportunities for working as suppliers or support mechanisms for existing, major regional industries,” noted Les Shoemaker.

Mineral County’s Mona Ridder summed it up. “Many people have said that small business is the backbone of our economy, and I agree with that. Small business is where it's at.

“If you have a talent, whatever it might be, you need to develop it,” she emphasized, “because you may be able to develop that into a business.”



Charles ‘Chuck’ Terrell, president of Eastern WV Community and Technical College, offers introductory remarks for the college’s Entrepreneurship Event 2013 at the Landes Art Center in Petersburg April 25. After listening to all the presentations, he emphasized to the students, “The journey begins with you.”

“And I would like to compliment Eastern on

taking a leadership role in this effort,” added Combs-Snyder.

For more information about Eastern’s financial aid opportunities, programs of study, workforce training and community education, call toll free: 877-982-2322; or check the College’s website: “www.easternwv.edu”.

Serving the residents of Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, Pendleton and Tucker counties, and fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College is a comprehensive and equal opportunity community and technical college bringing the resources and assets of Education That Works to the families, communities and employers of the Potomac Highlands.