WV CAREER COLLABORATIVE
BUILDING CONNECTIONS, BUILDING WORKFORCE

WV CAREER COLLABORATIVE NEWSLETTER

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WV educators visit the Bowden Fish Hatchery and Stonewall Jackson Dam

Exploring North Central West Virginia's STEM Opportunities

WV educators visit Bionic Tire

In late June, educators from middle and high schools across North Central West Virginia spent three days exploring STEM career opportunities and connecting with regional employers and higher education partners.

Throughout the experience, participants toured the campuses of Fairmont State University and Glenville State University, visited the Bowden Fish Hatchery and Stonewall Jackson Dam, and participated in industry site visits to Bionic Tire, Aurora Flight Sciences, Fairmont State University's Aviation Center of Excellence, and Flying W Plastics. The experience gave educators firsthand insight into innovative industries and STEM careers available in West Virginia. They also gained resources and connections to help students explore local career pathways.

Special thanks to the participating educators and industry and community partners who shared their expertise and helped strengthen the connection between education and workforce development.

A block of rooms is being held at the Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites Fairmont. Be sure to mention the "Fairmont State Conference" to get the special rate when booking your room.

HELP SHAPE OUR 2027 CO-CONFERENCE

What should we be talking about at this year's co-conference? Please complete this survey to share your ideas! Your input will help us build a co-conference that truly reflects the needs, interests, and opportunities of our two networks.

Welcome New Participants and Cohorts!

As we begin the third year of our grant, please join us in welcoming our new WVCC Power Up Interns, Faculty Workers, and Work-Based Learning Coordinators!

Over the next eight months, our interns will complete Power Skills Training while participating in industry partnership and work-based learning development activities: **Michaela Dobbins**, Glenville State University, Biology Major; **Nima Shahab Shahmir**, Bachelor of Science in Information Systems, WVU Tech and Master of Fine Arts in User Experience Design, Maryland Institute College of Art; **Makayla Moore**, Glenville State University, Environmental Science Major; **Liam Good**, Fairmont State University, Computer Science Major; **Shalana Lane**, Fairmont State University, Forensic Science Major; **Riley Elkins**, Fairmont State University, Computer Science Major; **Ethan Miller**, Fairmont State University, Forensic Science Major; returning intern **Bruce Williams**, Glenville State University, History & Political Science Major; and returning intern **Kadence Riggle**, Fairmont State University, Criminal Justice and Psychology Major.

Our Faculty Workers will actively engage local and regional industries to improve their university's connectedness and build new opportunities for students and other jobseekers in the region in STEM industries: **Kristy Henson**, Assistant Professor of Forensic Science, Fairmont State University; **Leann DiAndreth-Elkins**, Assistant Professor of Special Education, Fairmont State University; and **Anne (Margi) Coyle**, Associate Professor of Biology, Glenville State University.

Our Work-Based Learning Coordinators will work to build strong partnerships between local high schools and universities, students, regional industry partners, and our communities: **Constance Eli**, Preston County; **Amanda White**, Calhoun County; **Barry Payton**, Clay County; **Evlyn McLean**, Upshur County; and **Stacy Ward**, Taylor County.

We're excited to welcome this new group and look forward to the contributions they'll make.

From STEM Ideas to Startups: The Path to Entrepreneurship

Innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration were on full display during *The Path to Entrepreneurship in STEM* seminar on July 16, 2026. Participants learned from experienced entrepreneurs and business leaders about turning STEM ideas into successful businesses in Appalachia. Sessions covered entrepreneurship, business fundamentals, networking, and the opportunities and challenges of launching a business in rural communities, along with a panel featuring real-world success stories. The seminar provided practical strategies, valuable connections, and inspiration to advance innovation and entrepreneurship across WV. Thank you to everyone who contributed to a day focused on strengthening our region's entrepreneurial ecosystem and supporting the next generation of STEM innovators!

Monongalia County Networking Event:

Join WVCC and the WVU Innovation Corporation for a county networking event that brings together education, industry, and community.

Date: October 29, 2026
Time: 5pm-7pm
Location: WVU Innovation Corporation; 781 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Morgantown

Scan the QR Code to register or visit www.wvcareercollab.org to learn about upcoming events.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS: Calhoun-Gilmer Career Center and Federal Correctional Institute Gilmer

A WVCC Networking Event held at the Calhoun-Gilmer Career Center (CGCC) on March 11, 2026, helped spark a new partnership between CGCC and Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Gilmer. Two representatives from FCI Gilmer attended the event, leading to conversations about opportunities to connect the career center and correctional facility.

That initial connection quickly turned into action. On May 26, FCI Gilmer held an information session at CGCC to explore training and career opportunities.

Today, FCI Gilmer has gained accreditation through CGCC for Vocational Training Concrete and Overlay, Polished Concrete, and Floor Coverings. FCI Gilmer also offers Vocational Training Welding Technology and Vocational Training Culinary Arts. This partnership is a great example of how bringing community, education, and workforce partners together can create new opportunities and strengthen the regional workforce pipeline.

An example of work completed by inmates utilizing the vocational training they received.

Still Available Through WVCC

Looking for opportunities to strengthen STEM education, workforce connections, and career readiness? Several WVCC resources are still available to educators, students, and jobseekers:

- **PLTW Scholarships** – Support for WV schools interested in launching Project Lead The Way programs, including training, program fees, classroom supplies, and assistance with long-term sustainability.
- **Curriculum Mini-Grants** – Funding to support innovative STEM curriculum and classroom initiatives.
- **Work-Based Learning Coordinator Support** – Opportunities for educators and partners to strengthen work-based learning connections for students in grades 5–12.
- **Faculty Worker Opportunities** – Opportunities for FSU and GSU faculty to connect with regional employers and gain firsthand industry experience that can inform teaching, curriculum, and workforce connections.

Interested in getting involved or learning more? Visit the WV Career Collaborative website, www.wvcareercollab.org, or contact the WVCC team to explore available resources and opportunities.