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Business-Education Partnership -

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COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

George Allen
Governor

January 8, 1998

TO: The Honorable George Allen
Governor of Virginia
and
Members of the General Assembly

Section 2.1-51.21:2 of the Code of Virginia requests that the Secretary of Education and the Secretary of Commerce and Trade present a report to the General Assembly regarding private sector and education partnership programs. Therefore, we have the honor of submitting herewith the 1997 Report of the Virginia Business-Education Partnership with regard to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly H. Sgro
Secretary of Education

Robert J. Stolle
Secretary of Commerce and Trade

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Becky
Madame

1997 Report to the General Assembly on Business-Education Partnerships

The Virginia Business-Education Partnership (VBEP) strives to improve Virginia's public schools by expanding business participation and involvement in public education, and by promoting the formation of partnerships among businesses, civic groups, churches, parents, other community organizations, and public schools. With the guidance of a 20-member Advisory Council, VBEP actively promotes the development of successful business-education partnerships and recognizes outstanding partnerships and outstanding education reformers that are producing results which have a real, positive impact on student academic achievement. VBEP also builds business-education partnerships and promotes increased academic achievement through VBEP's oversight of the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative.

Program Development and Overarching Themes

Preparing high school graduates both academically and for the work world is critical to the future of our Commonwealth. We need to ensure that graduating seniors from Virginia's public schools are prepared to succeed in making both a good life and a good living for themselves. Students need rigorous academic preparation and exposure to a variety of career opportunities in order to make wise decisions concerning their futures. In addition, if Virginia's students are well-prepared for college and for entering the workforce, economic development in the Commonwealth naturally receives a boost. When considering possible location sites, businesses always look favorably on states which have talented students who have received a quality education. Improving student academic achievement and increasing economic development in Virginia have also been Governor Allen's top priorities. With these important purposes in mind, VBEP is promoting four overarching statewide themes that we have found to be particularly effective avenues for promoting business-education partnerships. These themes are:

- Voluntary, After-School "Apprenticeships" (or employment experiences) for high school students to give these students work experience;
- True, Full-fledged Mentoring Programs for students at all levels;
- Scholarships for At-Risk Students; and
- Public-Private Partnerships for New Alternative Education Programs and Settings, particularly for students who have been chronic disciplinary problems in the regular classroom.

Voluntary After-School "Apprenticeships" (or employment experiences) allow students to gain work experience in many different occupations and professions. These are not necessarily formal registered apprenticeships but can also be any sort of substantive after-school work experiences of a significant duration that operate like laboratories of work-based learning (similar to a laboratory that might accompany a chemistry class). These work-based experiences also complement academic and vocational/technical education courses a student takes during the regular school day, show the student the relevance of his classes to making a living, give the

student work experience, teach some job skills and a good work ethic, and put some money in the student's wallet. A student might also receive academic credit for this after-school employment experience. VBEP encourages work-based learning that does not take time away from instruction in core academic courses during the regular school day so as to ensure that students graduate with a solid foundation in the basics -- including the ability to read with high comprehension, write clearly and correctly, do basic mathematical computations, and have at least a basic understanding in science, history, and government.

True, Full-fledged Mentoring Programs enable students to receive academic tutoring and to see a variety of jobs from the perspective of someone who also shows a personal interest in them. VBEP is interested in mentoring programs that involve more than merely shadowing someone on the job occasionally, being tutored at school once a month, or going to an occasional baseball game. True, full-fledged mentoring programs involve mentors who acts as "big brothers" or "big sisters," who lets their students accompany them frequently on the job, who help their students with academic work, and who take an interest in their students off the job and outside of school, too.

Scholarships for Postsecondary Education and Training are good ways for businesses which have especially demanding work schedules to get involved with education. Businesses and firms that may not be able to allow much time for their employees to mentor can fund scholarships that are available to at-risk students who stay in school, graduate, stay free of drugs, and otherwise stay out of trouble with the law. These scholarships can then be used to fund a student's postsecondary education and training at a technical/proprietary school, community college, or four-year college or university -- whatever further education the student chooses to prepare for the world of work and the career of the student's choice.

Public-Private Partnerships for Alternative Education Services address the school safety and discipline issues which affect the education of all of our students. VBEP promotes partnerships between public schools and businesses, community/civic organizations, foundations, or other groups in the private sector that provide new alternative education programs and settings to students, particularly those who are at risk of not completing school because they are chronic disciplinary problems in the regular classroom. VBEP is most interested in initiatives that place emphasis on providing strong discipline, teaching the basic academic courses, and providing good job skills so as to help students in the program become employable and productive citizens.

The Advisory Council to the Virginia Business-Education Partnership

The Governor's Advisory Council to the Virginia Business-Education Partnership is appointed by the Governor to support and advise VBEP on policy issues and program development. The Advisory Council, which is composed of 20 business, community, and education leaders, is chaired by Gary R. Thomson, a businessman and partner at Goodman & Company's Colonial Heights office. The Vice-Chairperson is Brenda C. Duda, a teacher at Hickory High School in Chesapeake.

The Council meets frequently (generally in Richmond) to plan and advise on VBEP's partnership initiatives. In order to enhance the Council members' understanding of partnership initiatives and to accommodate the fact that members represent areas from all across the state, Council meetings are sometimes held on the road. For example, the June 1997 Council meeting was held in Virginia Beach so that Council members could see first-hand the partnership between the Making a Difference Foundation and a local public high school. The Making a Difference Foundation works with public schools throughout the Hampton Roads area to provide mentoring and tutoring to hundreds of students. In addition, the Foundation offers PSAT and SAT preparation for struggling students, as well as college placement assistance, scholarships, and assistance at finding jobs. This partnership also has an outreach effort targeting Hispanic students who may need tutoring in learning English as a second language. The Council met in Richmond several times during 1997, including a meeting in April at the conclusion of Virginia's first statewide school-to-work conference, which was organized by VBEP.

Helping Build Business-Education Partnerships and Increase Public Awareness While Serving as a Resource Center

VBEP worked hard in 1997 to encourage and assist in the development of more business-education partnerships. In Mecklenburg County, VBEP Executive Director Randolph A. Beales worked with former Virginia Chamber of Commerce Chairperson Jean E. Clary to help Ms. Clary and other local businesspeople to build the Mecklenburg Business-Education Partnership. Mr. Beales has made numerous trips to Mecklenburg County to meet with Mrs. Clary and other local business leaders. In May 1997, Mr. Beales and Virginia Secretary of Education Beverly H. Sgro spoke at the kickoff luncheon for the establishment of the Partnership. The Mecklenburg Business-Education Partnership has also received two school-to-work subgrants from VBEP's Virginia School-to-Work Initiative, described later in this report.

Mr. Beales also provided technical assistance directly to the Charlotte County Business-Education Partnership and the Giles County Partnerships for Excellence to help them build and expand their partnerships. The VBEP Advisory Council visited the Charlotte Business-Education Partnership in September 1996, and Mr. Beales gave the keynote address at the Giles County Partnership's kickoff of its school-to-work initiative in November 1996. Both of these partnerships have also received school-to-work grants from VBEP.

The Executive Director also promoted partnership initiatives through numerous speaking engagements. For example, Mr. Beales and the coordinators of two local business-education partnerships (and school-to-work subgrant recipients) gave a presentation on building partnerships and school-to-work initiatives at the annual Virginia High Schools That Work/Tech Prep statewide conference held in Roanoke in August 1997. Mr. Beales also once again helped Ukrop's Supermarkets celebrate its partnership with schools in the Richmond metropolitan area. Ukrop's has worked with the schools in numerous ways, including a public relations effort and poster contest to encourage good student nutrition. Mr. Beales helped Ukrop's executives and many others select the winning posters for the awards this year and highlight Ukrop's partnership with the schools.

VBEP established and then expanded its world wide web homepage to include more information than ever before about VBEP and its programs, including the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative. The nomination form for the 1997 Governor's Partnerships in Education Awards was available on-line, as was the most recent Application for School-to-Work Subgrants for Local Partnerships in Virginia. Plans are already underway to expand the homepage further in 1998 so that it serves as an even more valuable resource and information clearinghouse for those interested in business-education partnerships in Virginia.

This year, the VBEP staff completed a study for the General Assembly (as directed by House Joint Resolution 651) of ways to continue to increase business participation in apprenticeship programs, mentoring programs, and other school-to-work initiatives in Virginia. In conjunction with the preparation of that study, VBEP conducted numerous meetings that included Department of Labor & Industry Commissioner Theron J. Bell; Assistant Tax Commissioner Robert Megna and staff from the Virginia Department of Taxation; Dr. Kay B. Brown, Career Connections Specialist for the Office of Vocational and Adult Education Services at the Department of Education; Maggie Wilson, Director of the Neighborhood Assistance Program of the Department of Social Services; Nancy L. Jakubec, Director of the Office of Cooperative Programs in the Department of Labor and Industry; Lisa J. George from the Office of Tax Policy in the Department of Taxation; Jennifer A. Peterlin, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner of Labor; and Virginia Apprenticeship Council Chairman James Hughes.

Also in conjunction with the study, VBEP, the Apprenticeship Council, and the Department of Labor and Industry surveyed large and small businesses (including businesses currently participating in Virginia's registered apprenticeship programs and businesspeople involved in other Virginia school-to-work initiatives as well) to learn what they value most from participation in apprenticeship programs and other school-to-work initiatives. The surveys were also intended to learn more about obstacles that prevent or discourage businesses from either being more involved in these initiatives or from getting involved in them initially.

In addition, in the spring of 1997, VBEP distributed a survey on exemplary practices and exemplary business-education partnerships around the state to learn more about existing business-education partnerships, as well as what exemplary practices are used across the state to involve partners and benefit students. The survey was sent to approximately 2,500 businesspeople, educators, community organizations, and other interested groups and individuals. The completed surveys which we received back have given us some excellent information to place in the resource manual for business-education partnerships and school-to-work initiatives. This information will also be combined with other partnership materials (including the results of other related surveys) and then gathered and entered on the homepage for VBEP so that groups that want to start or expand partnerships can have ready access to this information via the Internet.

Developing a Resource Manual for Business-Education Partnerships

In March 1997, VBEP submitted an application to Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon for Virginia to be the site of a technical assistance workshop at which educators and businesspeople gather to develop a state school-to-work and business-education partnership resource manual. In April 1997 we were notified that Virginia had been selected as one of the workshop sites. In December, the two-day workshop took place in Richmond and involved approximately twenty stakeholders in business-education partnerships and school-to-work, including current subgrantees, businesspeople, and representatives of higher education. This workshop is serving as a springboard for developing new technical assistance materials for local school-to-work initiatives in Virginia, as well as for use by VBEP and local partnerships that want to start or further expand school-to-work initiatives and business-education partnerships. The manual will support VBEP's information clearinghouse efforts and also support the dissemination of standards of excellence for effective business-education partnerships and school-to-work initiatives.

In conjunction with preparation of Virginia's application for a School-to-Work Implementation Grant (discussed further below), VBEP asked Dawn Krusemark of the American Federation of Teachers, along with Anne Heald and Cynthia Miller of the Center for Learning and Competitiveness, to provide technical assistance for VBEP and Virginia's School-to-Work Initiative in order to help advance Virginia's school-to-work and business-education partnership efforts and also to help Virginia in submitting to the National School-to-Work Office a strong school-to-work implementation grant application that complements Virginia's Standards of Learning. On August 5 and 6, Ms. Heald, Ms. Krusemark, and Ms. Miller met in Richmond with dozens of education, business, and community leaders active in school-to-work and education policy. Ms. Heald and Ms. Krusemark returned to Richmond on August 14 to meet again with the VBEP staff and the VBEP Advisory Council to discuss specific strategies for expanding the role of business-education partnerships in Virginia and further building on Virginia's School-to-Work Initiative. Ms. Heald and Ms. Krusemark returned a third time on September 16 to meet with the VBEP staff and VBEP Advisory Council to offer additional recommendations.

First Statewide School-to-Work Conference

On April 28 nearly 400 educators, parents, businesspeople, students, legislators and other citizens attended Virginia's first statewide school-to-work conference. Numerous prominent Virginia and national business leaders and educators, representing many different perspectives, spoke at the conference. Among the speakers and panelists at the conference were Virginia Secretary of Education Beverly H. Sgro, National School-to-Work Office Associate Director Lois Ann Porter, Virginia Manufacturers Association President John W. ("Mac") MacIlroy, State Board of Education President Michelle Easton, Former Circuit City CEO (and former State Board of Education member) Alan L. Wurtzel, National Coalition for Advanced Manufacturing President Leo Reddy, Powhatan High School Teacher (and former State Board of Education member) R. Lee Ware, and numerous Virginia recipients of school-to-work subgrants. The

conference allowed VBEP to promote the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative further and explore the best practices for implementing school-to-work in Virginia and replicating existing school-to-work initiatives in Virginia that have already been successful. Numerous attendees left the conference excited to start or further expand school-to-work initiatives and other business-education partnerships.

The Governor's Partnerships in Education Awards

VBEP not only promotes but also recognizes partnership initiatives throughout the Commonwealth through the annual Governor's Partnerships in Education Awards. Each year numerous partnerships from across the Commonwealth are nominated for these awards, which recognize excellence in partnership practices designed to improve students' academic achievement through bold education reform initiatives. This year, special emphasis was again given to partnerships promoting mentoring programs, after-school apprenticeships, scholarships for deserving students from at-risk backgrounds, public-private partnerships for providing alternative education programs (particularly for students who are chronic disciplinary problems in the regular classroom), and other partnerships that promote bold education reforms that make a strong difference in students' lives. Governor Allen presented the 1996 Awards in a special ceremony and reception, hosted by the Governor and Mrs. Allen at the Governor's Mansion on January 28, 1997. The 1997 Awards were recently presented to the winners by the Governor in another special ceremony and reception on December 8. The 1997 Awards went to 11 partnerships from throughout the Commonwealth. (See Appendix A for a list and description of the 1997 award winners.)

Governor's Champions in Education Awards

In the spring of 1997, VBEP administered the first annual Governor's Champions in Education Awards competition. These awards recognize outstanding teachers, parents, principals, and other citizens who have promoted bold education reforms or gone above and beyond the call of duty in making a real difference in helping young people improve their academic achievement in school. The eight winners, selected by a review committee from among many impressive nominations, were announced in September 1997. Governor Allen personally presented the Awards to the winners at the December 8 ceremony and reception at which the Governor also recognized the Partnerships in Education Awards winners. The winners each also received a monetary award from private funds that served as a sort of merit bonus for a job well-done.

The Virginia School-to-Work Initiative

The Virginia School-to-Work Initiative, which is closely related to Virginia's overall effort to promote business-education partnerships that support Virginia's overall education reforms, is administered by the Virginia Business-Education Partnership. Through applications signed by the Governor and the Secretary of Education, VBEP has now sought and received more than \$1.4 million in federal School-to-Work Development Grant funding (including

approximately \$550,000 sought and received in 1997 alone). The majority of these federal funds have been distributed in 68 subgrants to help develop local school-to-work initiatives in localities across the Commonwealth, as noted further below. In addition, VBEP has awarded \$150,000 in 16 state school-to-work transition grants, including 9 grants made in July 1997. Both the state grants and the federal subgrants are discussed further below.

Applying for Federal School-to-Work Implementation Funding. At the end of 1997, VBEP completed and submitted Virginia's application for a federal School-to-Work Opportunities State Implementation Grant, fulfilling Governor Allen's promise that Virginia would apply for those funds before he left office and well before the May 31, 1998 due date for this grant application. The application requests \$33.6 million over four years -- the maximum federal school-to-work implementation funding that is most likely available to Virginia based on a May 8, 1997 letter from National School-to-Work Director J.D. Hoyer. Since Virginia is continuing to receive School-to-Work Development Grant funds (and a state is ineligible for these Development Grant funds once it receives implementation funding), Virginia is likely to receive at least as much (or more) total school-to-work dollars by the year 2001 as other states of similar size.

Creation of a State School-to-Work Advisory Committee. To assist VBEP with the completion and submission of Virginia's School-to-Work Implementation Grant application, as well as the ongoing implementation of the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative in coordination with Virginia's overall education reform efforts, the Secretary of Education appointed a State School-to-Work Advisory Committee in August. The Advisory Committee consists of all members of the VBEP Advisory Council (which had previously served as the school-to-work advisory group), as well as 24 other representatives of all the partners and stakeholders in the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative. The Advisory Committee includes businesspeople, teachers, parents, local school-to-work coordinators, local school administrators, students, and representatives from the Board of Education, local school boards, the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia, vocational education, Tech Prep, High Schools That Work, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities, the General Assembly (members of both the House of Delegates and the Senate from both parties), the Governor's Employment and Training Department, the Department of Rehabilitative Services, businesses and business organizations, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, local chambers of commerce, organized labor, and the Virginia Employment Commission.

The Advisory Committee met for the first time on September 25, and met again on October 21, November 6, and November 20 to discuss and edit drafts of Virginia's Implementation Grant application. The Advisory Committee will continue to meet regularly in 1998.

Administering Grants for Virginia Localities. Since 1995, VBEP has awarded a total of 84 grants for local school-to-work initiatives across Virginia using state and federal school-to-work funds. At the start of 1997, VBEP was administering 16 of these grants. When Virginia received an additional \$256,669 in federal school-to-work development funds in February 1997, we then immediately announced and began a new competition to award subgrants, which

resulted in the award of \$228,139 in new subgrants to 18 local partnerships across the state. Three additional initiatives received no new funds, but were awarded a continuation grant of their previously unexpended funds. Virginia received its most recent Development Grant of \$293,336 in September 1997 and awarded \$212,560 through 18 additional subgrants in November 1997 following this latest subgrant competition.

In addition to the dozens of federal school-to-work subgrants, VBEP has administered 16 grants in Virginia localities using funds appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly for the Virginia School-to-Work Transition Grants Program. The General Assembly appropriated \$75,000 for fiscal year 1996-97 and an additional \$75,000 for fiscal year 1997-98 to encourage localities to get involved further with school-to-work and begin to develop their own local initiatives. We are very appreciative of this state funding from the Virginia General Assembly as it is the first state money appropriated for the school-to-work program established under Virginia's new school-to-work statute. In July 1997, we again awarded the full \$75,000 appropriation for the current fiscal year to nine local public schools to plan and implement school-to-work initiatives which complement and supplement the subgrant initiatives that we have awarded through the federal school-to-work funds.

Applications for all of these grants and subgrants are sent to educators, businesspeople, legislators, and other citizens interested in school-to-work all over Virginia. Among those groups who received applications are: all local school division superintendents, all public school principals, all vocational directors, all community college presidents, all High Schools That Work site coordinators, all local chambers of commerce, all members of the Virginia General Assembly, and everyone who has ever received or applied for a school-to-work grant or requested an application. Subgrant recipients are selected by a review committee that includes at least one businessperson, a public high school teacher, a parent active in the PTA, and VBEP's Executive Director.

In order to ensure that local partnerships get good advice and input from educators, parents, businesspeople, and other interested citizens, each subgrantee of the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative is asked to establish a local school-to-work advisory committee consisting of businesspeople, educators, parents, and also preferably some students. At least half of the committee members must be businesspeople or other employers from the private sector -- whether from a large corporation, the "mom-and-pop" business down the street, a local nonprofit group or foundation, or any other employer from the private sector.

Our office also works diligently on a host of activities to evaluate the progress of subgrant recipients and provide technical assistance to help partnerships meet their goals. Those activities include, but are not limited to, periodic written progress reports from subgrantees; site visits to subgrantees that usually include VBEP's Executive Director; kickoff events for school-to-work initiatives; regular telephone contact with subgrantees to answer questions and provide technical assistance; and meetings and roundtable discussions of representatives of all Virginia School-to-Work Initiative subgrantees. Most subgrantees have made excellent progress over the past year at involving and benefitting more students in school-to-work initiatives.

In conducting site visits, the Executive Director has frequently invited state legislators along on these visits so that they can see first-hand the work being done by local business-education partnerships and school-to-work initiatives. Mr. Beales has also presented Virginia's school-to-work and other business-education partnership efforts to other interested individuals and groups in 1997, including the Education Subcommittee of the Virginia House of Delegates Appropriations Committee and the Options for Students Subcommittee of the Virginia Commission on the Future of Public Education.

As local partnerships demonstrate that they are particularly effective and greatly benefit students, VBEP is offering them opportunities to provide assistance to other local partnerships. For example, early in 1997 VBEP awarded a grant to the Making a Difference Foundation -- a current Virginia School-to-Work Initiative subgrantee that has consistently met and exceeded every goal it has set for itself in its subgrant applications. We awarded this additional grant so that the Making a Difference Foundation could provide technical assistance to others and help replicate its highly successful partnership in other Virginia localities.

Challenge Grants. Of the successful applicants for school-to-work grants who requested funds from VBEP for scholarships for postsecondary education and training for at-risk students, all received funding on a challenge grant basis. Up until recently, each grantee received \$2 of federal or state school-to-work funding for every \$1 the grantee raised in private funds for scholarships. Starting with our most recent round of school-to-work subgrants, VBEP is matching private local funds one-for-one. This encourages the applicants to involve more businesses in their efforts, resulting in stronger partnerships and a stronger basis for sustaining the partnership well after federal and state school-to-work seed money has been expended.

Future Goals

1998 should be a very busy and productive year for VBEP. Along with the annual Governor's Partnerships in Education Awards, VBEP will also continue to coordinate the Governor's Champions in Education Awards. We will continue expanding the VBEP homepage on the world wide web, and plan also to complete and distribute a business-education partnerships and school-to-work resource manual for localities. We will continue promoting VBEP's four overarching themes while building on them through numerous other projects related to the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative. We will seek to involve more businesses than ever in setting up mentoring programs, funding scholarships, establishing after-school employment experiences for students, and developing other public-private partnerships that improve student academic achievement and make our schools better and safer places for our children to learn.

Continued support for the new, more rigorous Standards of Learning in English, math, science, and history is also among VBEP's priorities for 1998. These Standards of Learning are crucial to preparing students for the future and, therefore, to helping spur further economic development in Virginia. VBEP is in an excellent position to serve as a clearinghouse for ideas and resources on how to involve community organizations, parents, and businesses in supporting

these high new standards and helping to challenge Virginia's students to be the best. The Virginia Business-Education Partnership looks forward to working to improve education in Virginia over the coming year as we seek to continue building strong business-education partnerships and continue expanding the Virginia School-to-Work Initiative. In so doing, we will benefit students, parents, and schools while also benefitting Virginia businesses and helping Virginia's economic development.

Appendix A

The 1997 Governor's Partnerships in Education Awards Winners

The Virginia Award

This award recognizes an exceptional partnership to improve education that is statewide or multi-regional in nature, encompassing a significant portion of Virginia and/or involving statewide organizations.

Virginia Power Volunteer-Education Partnership

Virginia Power has shown a strong commitment to improving schools and student achievement through partnerships with many public schools across Virginia. The numerous Virginia Power employee volunteers involved in this partnership provide support to Virginia's students in a variety of ways. They mentor students, provide supplementary classroom instruction, and make school facility improvements. In addition, Virginia Power has created an educational grants program that encourages schools to develop innovative ways to improve student achievement.

The Community Action Award

This award recognizes efforts that involve a community coalition or an umbrella organization of businesses, parents, churches, civic groups, community organizations, and/or institutions of higher education that are working together to improve the public schools in a particular community or region.

In-Agape Family Life and Education Center, Inc. with Newport News & Hampton Area Schools

The In-Agape Family Life and Education Center, Inc. is partnering with the Newport News, Hampton, Williamsburg, and other Tidewater area school systems and area businesses to provide support to suspended and expelled students so that these students can keep up with their studies, improve their behavior, and learn about careers while they are out of school. Through efforts like its "Stay Up While You Are Out" Program, In-Agape pairs suspended and expelled students with mentors, provides daily academic support to help students stay up with their schoolwork, and also coordinates work-based learning experiences ranging from welding to assisting in a dental lab. Of the 305 short-term suspended students with whom In-Agape worked with in 1996-97, only eight have been suspended again following participation in this program. Numerous local businesses and churches participate in this partnership to help these young people get a better education, obtain some job skills, and improve their behavior, as do students from Hampton University who help tutor the students.

The Local Partnership Awards

These awards recognize outstanding local partnerships between schools and businesses, churches, civic groups, or other community organizations around Virginia.

Alexandria Seaport Foundation and the Secondary Training Education Program (STEP) of T.C. Williams High School

The partnership between the Alexandria Seaport Foundation and the Secondary Training Education Program (STEP) of the City of Alexandria Public Schools provides at-risk students with work-based learning and one-on-one mentoring. The Alexandria Seaport Foundation uses after-school boatbuilding and on-the-water experiences to show STEP students the practical applications of the math they learn in the classroom -- particularly geometry. Students also learn the importance of workplace skills such as communication, punctuality, and responsibility. Foundation volunteers also serve as tutors and mentors for STEP students. In addition to the boatbuilding program, the Alexandria Seaport Foundation provides scholarships for postsecondary education and training to some of their best students who graduate from high school while remaining drug-free and otherwise out of trouble with the law.

The Giles County Partnerships For Excellence Foundation, Inc. with Giles County Public Schools

The Giles County Partnerships for Excellence Foundation, Inc. brings together educators and businesspeople to better prepare high school students in the Giles County Public Schools for the workplace. The partnership provides students with work-based learning experiences, mentoring, and scholarships for postsecondary education and training. The partnership also helps high school seniors prepare for job interviews and awards mini-grants to classroom teachers. Already, the partnership has awarded \$21,000 in scholarships for postsecondary education and training to numerous students who have successfully completed after-school employment experiences, graduated from high school, remained drug-free, and stayed out of trouble with the law.

The Jefferson Area Summer Health Care Institute with the Albemarle, Charlottesville, and Surrounding Counties' Public School Systems

The University of Virginia School of Nursing, through a partnership involving the Blue Ridge Area Health Education Center, the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center, Piedmont Virginia Community College, Martha Jefferson Hospital, and the Albemarle, Charlottesville, and surrounding school systems, provides high school juniors and seniors from rural areas the opportunity to spend time alongside medical professionals at work, learn more about medical careers, and connect these experiences with their academic coursework through classroom instruction. After these students have participated in this summer program, the partnership helps link those who are particularly

interested in pursuing medical careers with mentorships and assistance with college applications and with financial aid.

Partners Today, Leaders Tomorrow with Stanley Elementary School in Page County

Wampler Foods, Inc. (Alma Plant), Farmers & Merchants Bank of Stanley, and Page Memorial Hospital work in partnership with Stanley Elementary School to improve student achievement and encourage increased parental involvement in the education of the Stanley Elementary students. The partnership has been instrumental in creating a strong mentoring program and two school-based enterprises (a post office and a savings bank) that provide students with practical, “real world” applications for the academic knowledge they are gaining in the classroom. The efforts of these partners have resulted in a significant improvement in both the academic performance and attendance of students at Stanley Elementary School.

The Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA with the Newport News Public Schools

Since 1993, the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA and the Newport News Public Schools have worked together through an initiative that uses physical education activities, such as swimming and aerobics, as a way of meeting the educational needs of students with mental disabilities. The YMCA provides these students with recreational facilities, materials, and staff instructional support to help them develop skills that will prepare them for life beyond school.

Graham-White Industries/Cooper Industries/Okuma America/ Machine Tool Systems/Salem Tools with Arnold R. Burton Technology Center in Roanoke County

This partnership involving several Roanoke area industries and the Arnold R. Burton Technology Center has benefitted many students by improving their academic achievement and helping them to gain the necessary skills to succeed in a demanding workplace. These industries have partnered to ensure that the Arnold R. Burton Technology Center has the most up-to-date precision machining technology available to teach students interested in careers in precision machining. By addressing an important need of local industry, this partnership has not only improved the education and employment opportunities of Roanoke Valley students, but it has also facilitated economic growth in the area by improving students’ training opportunities in precision machining.

The George Mason University Institute for the Arts with Hunters Woods Elementary School

Hunters Woods Elementary School and the George Mason University Institute of the Arts have worked together to encourage high academic achievement by applying the Virginia Standards of Learning to the creation and production of an annual original opera.

By heavily involving students in the development of the story line, the composition of an original musical score, and the actual staging of the opera, this partnership emphasizes the importance and relevance of core academic subjects while also exposing students to the arts.

The Fort Story 11th Transportation Battalion with John B. Dey Elementary School in Virginia Beach

Since 1986, the Fort Story 11th Transportation Battalion has partnered with the John B. Dey Elementary School to provide volunteers who assist the school in a variety of capacities throughout the year. The soldiers serve as role models, providing students with extensive mentoring and tutoring. They also volunteer at numerous school events and activities and even help kindergartners and first graders through the first day of school.

The Horizon Award

This award recognizes a new (no more than two years old) school, community, or statewide partnership that is already clearly helping students and that demonstrates significant commitment by the partners to the schools and young people in the area -- as well as great promise for future positive impact on young people.

Park Place Discovery Outreach Station with James Monroe Elementary School

The Park Place Discovery Outreach Station has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the academic performance of at-risk students from James Monroe Elementary School in Norfolk. This partnership provides at-risk students with a one-to-one relationship with a caring adult who encourages high academic achievement through extensive tutoring and who serves as a mentor and role model for the student. This past summer the Park Place Discovery Outreach Station also started a new program for preschoolers who will soon attend James Monroe Elementary School to ensure that these children are prepared for elementary school.