

## Cross-REL Event: Postsecondary Readiness in Rural Communities

*July 25, 2016  
Nashville, TN  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. CST*

### Agenda

**About this Event:** This free, one-day conference sponsored by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Appalachia, REL Northwest, and REL Mid-Atlantic will spotlight innovative projects and research to improve teaching and learning in rural school settings. Researchers, practitioners, and students will share their knowledge and experiences about issues and strategies for improving postsecondary readiness in rural schools.

**8:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Registration**

**9:00 – 9:45 a.m.**

**Opening Plenary Session**

#### **Welcome and Overview of the Conference:**

- Dr. Patricia Kannapel, Director, Appalachia
- Dr. Teresa Duncan, Director, REL Mid-Atlantic
- Dr. Chris Mazzeo, Director, REL Northwest

#### **Keynote Address:**

**A Personal Perspective on Postsecondary Readiness in Rural Communities.** Dr. Aaron Thompson, Executive Vice President of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, will share his story of growing up in a rural Appalachian community and how it shaped his career and life trajectory. He will also spotlight research on preparing rural students for their future.

**9:45 – 10:00 a.m.**

**Break**

**10:00 – 11:15 a.m.**

**Breakout Session #1**

**Dual Enrollment Programs in Rural Kentucky and Oregon: Participation, Challenges, and Opportunities:** The session will share research from REL Appalachia and REL Northwest on dual enrollment/dual credit programs in Kentucky and Oregon; information on a dual credit program expansion in rural Oregon; and the student perspective on dual credit experiences, benefits, and challenges. Presenters will facilitate a discussion with the audience of policy and practice implications.

**Facilitator:** Dr. Chris Mazzeo, Director, REL Northwest

- **Researchers:**
  - Dr. Chad Lochmiller, Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, Indiana University
  - Dr. Patricia Kannapel, Director, REL Appalachia
  - Dr. Ashley Pierson, Senior Researcher, REL Northwest
- **Practitioner:** Ms. Jennell Ives, Standards and Instructional Support, Education Program Specialist, Oregon Department of Education
- **Student:** Ms. Taryn Syck, Pike County Central High School, KY

**West Virginia Simulated Workplace Program:** This session will examine West Virginia's Simulated Workplace approach to career and technical education (CTE), including a history and overview of the program, REL Appalachia technical support, profile of a Simulated Workplace classroom, lessons learned and successes, and ideas for replicating the program in other states. Via video, West Virginia students will share their personal experiences in a Simulated Workplace environment.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Lydotta Taylor, The EdVenture Group/REL Appalachia
- **Researchers:**
  - Dr. Laura Holian, Associate Director, Insight Policy Research/REL Appalachia
- **Practitioners:**
  - Dr. Kathy D'Antoni, Chief Career & Technical Education Officer, West Virginia Department of Education
  - Mr. Doug Sands, United Technical Center, Clarksburg, WV
- **Student:** Simulated Workplace video

### **Addressing Challenges to Postsecondary transitions through K-12/Higher Education**

**Collaboration:** This session will present findings of a recent research review on challenges facing rural Appalachian students in enrolling and persisting in college, followed by a description and related research on a pilot collaboration between a rural Appalachian Ohio high school and regional university to offer a college success course. A college student from rural Appalachia will share his experience and facilitate a discussion about how to support students in overcoming challenges to enrolling and persisting in college.

- **Facilitator:** Mr. Nate Hixson, REL Mid-Atlantic
- **Researchers:**
  - Dr. Michael Flory, Senior Research Scientist, CNA
  - Dr. Shane Shope, Professor, Morehead State University, KY
- **Practitioner:** Dr. John Roush, Professor, Southern State Community College, OH
- **Student:** Mr. Cameron Wright, Student, Yale University; Gap Year Intern, Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (KVEC)

**11:15 – 11:45 a.m.**

**Lunch**

*Provided by CNA*

**11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**

**Luncheon Plenary Session**

**A Policy Perspective on Postsecondary Readiness in Rural Communities:** A panel of representatives from various education and business sectors will discuss policies that shape postsecondary readiness programs and supports.

- **Facilitator:** Ms. Liza Cordeiro, REL Appalachia
- **Panel Members:**
  - **Higher Education:** Dr. Aaron Thompson, KY Council on Postsecondary Education
  - **CTE K-12:** Dr. Kathy D’Antoni, West Virginia Department of Education
  - **K-12 Education:** Ms. Jennell Ives, Oregon Department of Education
  - **Business Community:** Dr. Wendy Oliver, Thrivist
  - **Student:** Mr. Cameron Wright, Student intern, Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative

**12:45 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Breakout Session #2**

**Measuring Postsecondary Readiness:** This session will review current measures of postsecondary readiness, address challenges faced by postsecondary institutions related to these measures, and provide a college student’s perspective on how the measures used as part of her college transition experience aligned with the readiness skills she needed to make the transition to college.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Patricia Kannapel, REL Appalachia
- **Researcher:** Dr. Daniel Showalter, Professor, Eastern Mennonite University
- **Practitioner:** Ms. Brittney Joiner Jones, Western Kentucky University Dual Credit Program Coordinator
- **Student:** Ms. Megan Benchley, Student, Misericordia University, Dallas, PA

**Learn, Earn, and Return: College and Career Readiness in Northeast Tennessee:** This session will explore how the Northeast Tennessee College and Career Consortium supports students in Appalachian eastern Tennessee in transitioning from high school to college, share results of an evaluation of the program’s effectiveness, and provide the perspective of an Appalachian high school student on the supports students need as they transition to college.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Chris Mazzeo, REL Northwest

- **Researchers:** Ms. Juliana Pearson, Associate Research Analyst; Mr. Christopher Sun, Research Analyst, CNA
- **Practitioners:** Ms. Vivian Franklin, Dr. Nancy Dishner, Niswonger Foundation
- **Student:** Ms. Stacie Fugate, Hazard High School, KY

**Barriers to College Enrollment and Persistence among Rural Students:** This session will review findings from studies of barriers to college enrollment and persistence among rural students in Pennsylvania and Oregon, share perspectives of a superintendent in rural Southwest Virginia, and provide a rural high school student's view on barriers to college enrollment and persistence.

- **Facilitator:** Mr. Nate Hixson, REL Mid-Atlantic
- **Researchers:** Dr. Ashley Pierson, REL Northwest; Dr. Jerry Johnson, Professor, Department of Teacher Education and Educational Leadership, University of West Florida
- **Practitioner:** Dr. Tom Brewster, Superintendent, Pulaski County Public Schools, VA
- **Student:** Ms. Mary Beth Hall, Pike County Central High School, KY

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

### Closing Plenary Session

**A Student Perspective on Postsecondary Readiness in Rural Communities:** The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence Student Voice Team will share highlights of a student investigation into inequities that make postsecondary transitions difficult for Kentucky youth, and discuss how that work evolved into student-led policy, advocacy, and collaboration with the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative's (KVEC) Student Senate. Members of the Student Voice Team and KVEC Student Senate will lead a group discussion about incorporating student voice into research, policy, and practice around postsecondary readiness in rural communities.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Lu Young, Principal Research Scientist, REL Appalachia
- **Prichard Committee Student Voice Team:** Mr. Andrew Brennan, Student, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and National Field Director, Student Voice; Mr. Gentry Fitch, Student, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- **KVEC Student Senate:** Ms. Stacie Fugate, Ms. Mary Beth Hall, Ms. Taryn Syck, and Mr. Cameron Wright