

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

*July 25, 2016*  
*Renaissance Nashville Hotel*  
*611 Commerce St.*  
*Nashville, TN, 37203*  
*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 (Music City Ballroom)**

**9:00 – 9:45 a.m.**

**Opening Plenary Session (Music City Ballroom)**

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

- Dr. Patricia Kannapel, Director, Appalachia
- Mr. Nate Hixson, Senior Manager, 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 (Belmont Room 1):** 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:** Sydney Abrams, University of Kentucky, Lexington; Shelby Abrams, University of Kentucky, Lexington

**West Virginia Simulated Workplace Program (Belmont Room 2):** 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, Director, Insight Policy Research/REL Appalachia
- **Practitioners:**
  - Dr. Sherri Nash, Executive Director, Career & Technical Education Office, 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 (Belmont Room 3):** 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 student from rural Appalachia will share her 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:** Ms. Amanda Wahlstedt, Knox Central High School, Barbourville, KY; Wellesley College 2020; Prichard Committee, Student Voice Team

**11:15 – 11:45 a.m.**

**Lunch (Music City Ballroom)**

*Provided by CNA*

**11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.**

**Luncheon Plenary Session (Music City Ballroom)**

**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. Sherri Nash, West Virginia Department of Education
  - **K-12 Education:** Ms. Jennell Ives, Oregon Department of Education
  - **Business Community:** Dr. Wendy Oliver, Thrivist
  - **Students:** Mr. Andrew Brennen, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and National Field Director, Student Voice; Mr. Gentry Fitch, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

**12:45 – 2:00 p.m.**

**Breakout Session #2**

**Measuring Postsecondary Readiness (Belmont Room 1):** 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 he needed to make the transition to college.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Patricia Kannapel, REL Appalachia
- **Researcher:** Dr. Daniel Showalter, Professor, Eastern Mennonite University
- **Practitioner:** Ms. Brittney Sholar, Western Kentucky University Dual Credit Program Coordinator
- **Student:** Mr. Gentry Fitch, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

**Learn, Earn, and Return: College and Career Readiness in Northeast Tennessee (Belmont Room 2):** 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:** Mr. Todd Skelton, Niswonger Foundation Scholar

**Barriers to College Enrollment and Persistence among Rural Students (Belmont Room 3):** 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 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:** Mr. Tim Abrams, Superintendent, Henry County Schools, KY
- **Student:** Ms. Megan Brenchley, Misericordia University, Dallas, PA

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

**Closing Plenary Session (Music City Ballroom)**

**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.

- **Facilitator:** Dr. Lu Young, Principal Research Scientist, REL Appalachia
- **Prichard Committee Student Voice Team:** Mr. Andrew Brennen, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and National Field Director, Student Voice; Mr. Gentry Fitch, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill