

# Going Global

How Vision Shared Will Help West Virginia Become a Global Economic Competitor



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*“Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.”*

*–Sir Winston Churchill*

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thank you to those who continue to join Vision Shared in the climb to economic prosperity for West Virginians. We are reaching for the stars and daring to push West Virginia beyond all expectations.

Special thanks to the many supporters without whom Vision Shared would not exist.

- The Governor, Legislature, the State of West Virginia and its many leaders who continue to partner with Vision Shared, a commitment that has transcended administrations and politics.
- The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation for seeing the value and potential in the work Vision Shared volunteers do every day for West Virginia.
- The Vision Shared Board of Directors who give their time, energy and resources to lead this organization and foster a spirit of collaboration.
- The benefactors who contribute resources that Vision Shared needs to support our activities as we strive to strengthen West Virginia’s economy.
- Our strategic partners, who share in our commitment to progress and work with us to transform communities and promote progressive government.
- Vision Shared volunteers who are the lifeblood, the driving force of everything we do to improve the quality of life and make West Virginia a global economic competitor.

**[www.visionshared.com](http://www.visionshared.com)**

*"The past is a great place and I don't want to erase it or to regret it, but I don't want to be its prisoner either."*

*—Mick Jagger*

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## PREFACE

West Virginia is competing on the world's economic stage, but we are not a headliner — yet.

We are home to a host of foreign companies. Our international exports are on the rise, more than doubling between 2002 and 2009, according to the International Trade Commission. West Virginia mines more coal than some of the top-producing countries in the world. And in today's knowledge-based economy, our research universities are pushing to increase West Virginia's global reach.

The Mountain State is poised to become a vibrant international economic engine, and Vision Shared wants to help this state surpass its potential. As West Virginia enters a new decade, Vision Shared is charging into the future with a renewed sense of purpose. We are embracing our organizational history, championing our successes to date and taking the bold step of charting a new work plan for the coming years.

It has been 10 years since business, labor and government joined together and created Vision Shared, a collaborative effort to combat West Virginia's long-standing economic development challenges. Vision Shared burst out of the gate with a never-before-seen ability to forge consensus between historically opposing forces, and the result was a critical transformation in the state's ailing worker's compensation system. Since that early success, Vision Shared leaders have worked on a host of policy issues ranging from medical liability and tax reform to health care and business development. At the same time, our volunteers have given the state progressive research and recommendations to help communities embrace the knowledge-based "New Economy" using creative and sustainable development concepts.

Now, it's time for Vision Shared to step into the spotlight and charge forward in those areas most critical for West Virginia's economy: **Entrepreneurship, Education, Workforce Development and Research/Commercialization**. West Virginia can and will become a global economic power if we are able to achieve noticeable gains in each of these four pillars of economic development.

West Virginia is unique. It is a state with distinct regions, each facing its own growth challenges. Vision Shared is not looking for a one-size-fits-all solution to accelerating economic progress; rather, we hope to give the state and its communities the right tools to make those decisions that will promote growth and economic diversity.

***Our mission is to strengthen the economy, transform communities, promote progressive government and improve the quality of life for all West Virginians.***

*"Only those who risk going too far will find out how far one can go."  
—TS Eliot*

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## **WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

In 2000, Atlanta-based Market Street Services partnered with the West Virginia Council for Community and Economic Development to coordinate a comprehensive, inclusive planning process that resulted in the development of a seminal strategy for competitive enhancement and statewide growth. In much simpler terms, they created Vision Shared.

At its core, this strategy involved business and labor leaders working together to accelerate positive economic changes. This new approach to addressing the state's economic competitiveness was called "West Virginia: A Vision Shared" and organized its activities into four principal goal areas: **Intellectual Infrastructure in the 21st Century, New Economy: New Challenges and New Solutions, Results-Based Government: Planning for the Future and Building Bridges and Empowering Citizens.**

Each focus area recruited a host of volunteers who tackled a wide variety of issues for several years. They started with workers' compensation and later expanded to examine early childhood education, entrepreneurship, sustainable development, taxation, government operations, creative community development, technology resources, nonprofit capacity, health care, our state's image and a variety of other topics. In total, more than 1,000 West Virginians have volunteered for Vision Shared since its inception.

In 2006, Vision Shared leaders decided it was time for this movement, which existed somewhat under the umbrella of state government, to become a freestanding, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization —Vision Shared Inc. — with continued financial support from the State of West Virginia, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and private donors.

The Vision Shared founders established this organization with a long-term vision of West Virginia's future. They wanted to create a future where the following statement was true:

***West Virginia's strong commitment to future generations has created a vibrant and diverse economy balancing quality jobs and the state's irreplaceable natural beauty. West Virginia has a highly skilled and educated work force, is a leader in innovation and offers an excellent quality of life for all residents.***

This vision statement remains extremely appropriate for West Virginia and for Vision Shared's continued operation as we evolve to start 2011 with new goals and action steps.

*"Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision."  
–Dr. Henry Kissinger*

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Some of the state's most powerful and influential leaders populate the Vision Shared Board of Directors. They represent nearly all sectors of West Virginia's economy, embodying the original tenets of Vision Shared's business-labor collaboration.

## **Vision Shared Board of Directors:**

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**Mike Basile** – *Spilman, Thomas & Battle*



**Ralph Bean** – *Steptoe & Johnson*



**Becky Ceperley, chairman** – *The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation*



**Laura Ellis** – *BB&T*



**Edward George** – *Robinson & McElwee*



**William P. (Pat) Getty** – *The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation*



**Kelley Goes** – *WV Department of Commerce*



**Tom Heywood** – *Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love*



**Jeff James** – *Mythology Marketing*



**Lloyd Jackson** – *Jackson Gas*



**Stephen Kopp** – *Marshall University*



**Russ Lorince** – *WVU Research Corp.*



**Gayle Manchin** – *WV Board of Education*



**Clarence E. Martin** – *Martin & Seibert*



**Wayne Morgan** – *WV-American Water*



**Kenny Perdue** – *WV AFL-CIO*



**Don Rigby** – *RED Partnership*



**Scott Rotruck** – *Chesapeake Energy*



**Judy Sjostedt** – *Parkersburg Area Community Foundation*



**Rick Slater** – *Dixon Hughes*



**L. Newton Thomas** – *ITT Carbon Industries (retired)*



**Steve White** – *ACT Foundation*

*"Research is creating new knowledge."  
-Neil Armstrong*

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## **THE IMPORTANCE OF POLICY RESEARCH**

When Vision Shared leaders turned the organization into a 501(c)3 corporation, they added a new component to its operations. Based on input and support from the West Virginia Roundtable, the Benedum Foundation, Vision Shared stakeholders and many others who recognized the need for a policy institute in West Virginia that can identify long-term issues and opportunities for the state, Vision Shared created an independent subdivision in 2006.



**IMAGINE WEST VIRGINIA** is a results-based policy institute that is funded by Vision Shared but is overseen by an independent Board of Governors comprising West Virginians and friends of the Mountain State known for their exceptional accomplishment and deep dedication to the best interests of our state.

In April 2008, IMAGINE released its first policy declaration, "Coal: Energy, the Environment and West Virginia. Leadership for West Virginia and Beyond." The report has been received favorably by both energy and environment sectors, and it has been featured in a series of presentations by the West Virginia Coal Forum. IMAGINE's second report, "Right and Smart: Advancing Early Child Development in West Virginia," was released in January 2009. In spring 2009, the West Virginia Legislature approved new standards for early child education and development that were part of the recommendations in the Imagine report.

### **IMAGINE WEST VIRGINIA Board of Governors**

**Curtis H. Barnette**, *Bethlehem Steel Corp (retired)*  
**Ralph H. Baxter Jr.**, *Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe*  
**W. Marston Becker**, *West Virginia Media Corp.*  
**Gov. Gaston Caperton**, *The College Board*  
**Becky Ceperley**, *Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation*  
**Henry Louis Gates Jr.**, *Harvard University*  
**William P. (Pat) Getty**, *Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation*  
**Thomas A. Heywood**, *Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love*  
**Chairman Admiral T. Joseph Lopez**, *USN (retired)*  
**C. Peter Magrath**, *SUNY-Binghamton*  
**Kenneth Perdue**, *West Virginia AFL-CIO*  
**Vice-Chairman A. Michael Perry**, *Bank One West Virginia (retired)*  
**Sally Richardson**, *WVU Institute for Health Policy Research*  
**Robert Simpson Jr.**, *Dixon Hughes*  
**L. Newton Thomas**, *ITT Carbon Industries (retired)*  
**Craig Underwood**, *Underwood Partners*

[www.imaginewestvirginia.com](http://www.imaginewestvirginia.com)

*“Money alone cannot build character or transform evil into good. It cries for full partnership with leaders of character and good will who value good tools in the creation and enlargement of life for Man.”*

*–Sebastian S. Kresge*

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## **STRATEGIC PARTNERS**

Vision Shared prides itself on its ability to collaborate effectively with others. The strategic partners listed below have a special relationship with Vision Shared. We participate in each other’s activities and Vision Shared provides as much support to them as we are able because these partners have goals that are closely aligned with our mission.

### **TechConnect West Virginia**

Formerly the Vision Shared Technology Based Economic Development Team, TechConnect now is a free-standing nonprofit organization that operates based on three core principles: technology drives state and national growth; technology based economic development provides more jobs and higher-paying jobs; and higher-paying jobs fuel the state’s economy in every sector.



### **Create West Virginia**

The Vision Shared Creative Communities Team established the Create WV movement when it launched the inaugural Create WV conference in 2007. Since then, the movement has grown to include community based training programs and continued annual statewide conferences. Create WV is designed to help West Virginia communities transform and reshape for the future and is working towards becoming its own nonprofit organization.



### **Generation West Virginia**

Generation West Virginia is a statewide consortium of local organizations made up of residents ages 21 to 45 who want to help West Virginia retain and attract young talent. GenWV holds an annual statewide young leadership conference, works with government leaders and promotes educational and service projects through its local chapters. Vision Shared provides some technical support and financial management services to Generation West Virginia.



*“Be courageous! Whatever setbacks America has encountered, it has always emerged as a stronger and more prosperous nation.... Be brave as your fathers before you. Have faith and go forward!”*

*–Thomas Edison*

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## **REFLECT, REGROUP AND RECHARGE**

After 10 years of hard work, Vision Shared leaders decided it was time to take stock in our accomplishments and look inward to ensure that we are making the highest and best use of our resources and providing optimal value to the state of West Virginia.

The original Vision Shared goal areas involved a long list of far-reaching topics such as educational attainment, worker training, research and development, economic diversity, capital formation, entrepreneurship, government reform, infrastructure development, healthy citizens, regional cooperation, image improvement, government reform, economic incentives, land-use planning, leadership development, increasing nonprofit capacity and regional cooperation.

The Vision Shared leadership recognized that one organization cannot and should not try to be everything to everybody. Vision Shared has a unique role to play in West Virginia’s economic development strategy, and we must be disciplined and focused to achieve optimal results.

Vision Shared’s year-long internal reorganization began with the Program and Performance Audit Committee, a subdivision of the Board of Directors. The members of this committee are responsible for producing our annual Performance Measures Report which tracks roughly 50 different measures of West Virginia’s economic progress (the latest report is available at [www.visionshared.com](http://www.visionshared.com)). The committee selected 14 of those measures as key targets for Vision Shared’s future work because success in those measures indicate healthy, diverse, growing economies. Those measures are:

- Percentage of Grade 4 Public School Students at or Above Proficient Level in Reading
- Percentage of Grade 8 Public School Students at or Above Proficient Level in Mathematics
- Percent of Persons Age 25 Years-plus with Associate Degree
- Registered Apprenticeship Training Completions per 1,000 Workers
- Patents Issued Per Million Workers
- Federal Obligations R&D Obligations as Percent of GSP
- Academic R&D Expenditures as Share of GSP
- Academic Patents Granted per \$1 million of R&D Expenditures
- Venture Capital Investment per Worker
- Total State Business Tax Collections as % of GSP
- State and Local Government Taxes Paid as % of Total Personal Income
- Workers Compensation Index Rates
- Health Insurance Coverage — Persons Under 65 with Employer Coverage
- Health Insurance Coverage — Persons Under 65 with Any Coverage

During a combined meeting of the Program and Performance Audit Committee and the Vision Shared Executive Committee, board members reviewed those measures and grouped them into four categories: **Entrepreneurship, Education, Workforce Development and Research/Commercialization**. The Board of Directors ultimately approved those four pillars as Vision Shared’s new areas of focus with a specific goal for each category.

Next, Vision Shared invited volunteers and stakeholders to offer their suggestions on how we can help West Virginia achieve gains in the new goal areas. The Board of Directors reviewed all the feedback we received and assembled them into a new strategic plan that will guide our operations for the next several years.



This does not mean we are abandoning our previous work; instead, we will fold our previous successes and ongoing projects into our new committee structure.

Our Sustainable Development Team, for example, put that concept on the map in West Virginia with the issuance of its white paper in spring 2008. We have reached a stage where sustainability should be – and will be – infused in everything we do at Vision Shared. Our operations and volunteer activities will keep sustainable development in mind as we work toward achieving gains in our four new goal areas.

Another previous Vision Shared project that will continue involves our work in building the state’s nonprofit capacity. Vision Shared partnered with the Ross Foundation on a research project about the state’s nonprofit sector, and we will be bringing the results of the Ross Foundation’s exemplary work to the public soon. In the health care arena, Vision Shared likely will continue to partner with other organizations when appropriate.

Vision Shared’s new goal areas already have been validated by top economic analysts, including the firm whose original research led to the creation of Vision Shared 10 years ago. When Market Street Services founder and CEO, J. Mac Holladay spoke at the 2010 West Virginia Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting and Business Summit, he listed several target areas that could help the state make substantial economic gains, including small business/entrepreneurship, research/commercialization, student achievement and workforce competitiveness. Clearly, then, Vision Shared is on the right track with its new plan for growing West Virginia’s economy.



**J. Mac Holladay**

Holladay and many other stakeholders have cited the greatest achievement of Vision Shared as creating a platform for people from different backgrounds and with divergent points of view to unite around shared values. Vision Shared has helped to bring various public

and private stakeholders together, initiating dialogue and forging partnerships that previously have not existed, and that kind of collaboration will remain a critical component to our future work.

Andy Warhol once said, “They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.” No truer words could apply to Vision Shared’s role in changing the Mountain State. Now is the time for West Virginia to soar into an economic future that is brighter than many imagine possible. Vision Shared can be the fist that grabs the opportunity for progress and works to create a new West Virginia.

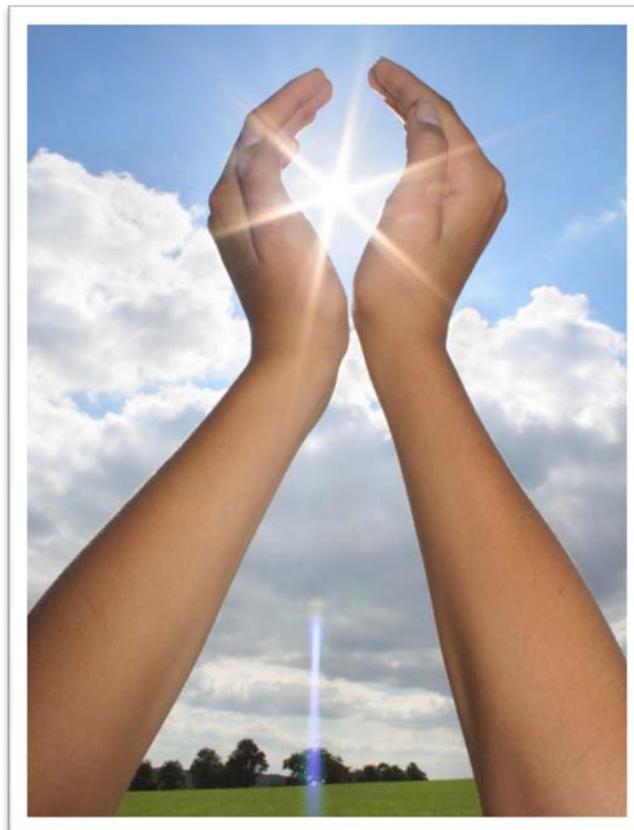
## **Vision Shared Goals for West Virginia’s Future:**

**GOAL 1: ENTREPRENEURSHIP — By 2015, West Virginia ranks first in the nation in the percentage of residents who start a business.**

**GOAL 2: EDUCATION — By 2020, West Virginia ranks first in the United States for reading and math scores of grade 4 and grade 8 students.**

**GOAL 3: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT — By 2020, West Virginia ranks among the top 20% internationally for the percentage of adults with an associate’s degree or higher.**

**GOAL 4: RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION — By 2020, West Virginia ranks among the top 25% of the U.S. in the percentage of its workforce employed in private sector, high-tech industries.**



*“Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.”*

*–George Patton*

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## **NEW COMMITTEE ACTION PLANS**

The hallmark of Vision Shared’s success since inception is its strong volunteer network.

Passionate West Virginians have donated thousands of hours in the last 10 years. They have provided a roadmap for entrepreneurial growth, offered ideas to help the state capture more federal funding and worked with partners to develop a database dedicated solely to West Virginia’s nonprofit sector (public release of this project is pending).

Vision Shared volunteers have helped to improve the health and wellness of our citizens, and they have examined the way this state delivers health care. We also have incubated new organizations and helped them grow and succeed in areas such as technology based economic development and promoting the interests of West Virginia’s young talent.

In this new era of operation, Vision Shared’s committee structure will operate with the same values and practices that has made our organization successful since inception.

Stakeholders from all sides of an issue are welcome at the Vision Shared table. Our success comes from assembling people who may disagree, but they are able to put their individual issues aside and work together on a sustainable solution. We promote a respectful environment that is conducive to problem-solving and consensus-building.

The action plans on the pages that follow will serve as a guide for our committees. The Board of Directors will not limit the committees only to the work listed, but these activities are highlighted as principle steps in helping West Virginia’s economy advance.

Our volunteers will continue to have the flexibility they always have enjoyed to ask the Board of Directors to expand our scope of work to meet West Virginia’s challenges as they arise. We will balance that flexibility with the discipline required to make gains and achieve results in our goal areas. By working together to meet this state’s needs during a time of economic transition, West Virginia can and will become a global economic competitor.



# ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMITTEE

**GOAL: By 2015, West Virginia ranks first in the nation in the percentage of residents who start a business.**

## **Start-up Activities:**

- Review the Vision Shared Entrepreneurship Team’s Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Development in West Virginia plus other relevant background materials.
- Explore reviving the Young Entrepreneurs Support Network (YESNetwork)
- Review current legislation related to entrepreneurial growth.
- Review the current entrepreneurship activities available in the state.
- Determine barriers to entrepreneurship in West Virginia.
- Recruit other entrepreneurship committee members.

## **Action Steps for the Remainder of Year 1:**

- Explore/pursue legislation allowing entrepreneurial growth to happen.
- Study successful entrepreneurship programs or tools (i.e. low-interest loan programs, education/curriculum in schools, employee-stock ownership partnership creation) across the nation and analyze applicability to West Virginia.
- Analyze curriculum and encourage coordinate entrepreneurship education from public school to higher education (include all apprenticeship/certificate programs, not just community and technical colleges and four-year schools).
- Educate the public on entrepreneurship as a career option via a media and education campaign. Remove the mystery of starting a business. Celebrate successful entrepreneurs.
- Conduct a survey to understand the challenges of small business owners.
- Build an entrepreneurship feedback panel.

## **Action Steps for Years 2-3:**

- Implement entrepreneurial training programs in schools, K-12 or higher.
- Increase availability of capital for start-ups possibly by passing legislation to change our tax structure or establish funds for start-ups or promote the development of additional/expanded community development financial institutions.
- Encourage state government to assign a statewide entrepreneurship “czar.”



# EDUCATION COMMITTEE

**GOAL: By 2020, West Virginia ranks first in the United States for reading and math scores of grade 4 and grade 8 students.**

## **Start-Up Activities:**

- Meet with state education leaders to discuss aligning the state’s educational standards to meet the Vision Shared goals, i.e. establish a partnership with the Dept. of Education/Board of Education to increase their standards. Include union leaders, parents, students, legislative education leaders, Higher Education Policy Commission, Council for Community and Technical Colleges, Education Alliance, etc.
- Understand where we are and why (include vulnerabilities, health, etc., of parents and kids); determine reasons we are behind.
- Ask for representation of all stakeholders/players to participate in committee, from students to policymakers.
- Develop a system that supports social needs of children and their educational needs.
- Look at international success models/global leaders.
- Bring in leaders from successful models or send us there.

## **Action Steps for the Remainder of Year 1:**

- Collaborate with the new Early Childhood Advisory Council (formerly PIECES)
- Embark on a media campaign to persuade the public that: 1) the education system in West Virginia and the United States is in crisis; 2) failure is not an option; 3) West Virginians must develop, for the sake of their children, a self-expectation of becoming educated AND being able to work. Coordinate the media campaign with local sessions built on public and private local partnerships.
- Abandon a one-size-fits-all policy – look at other indicators of success in schools rather than just test scores.
- Read research and recommendations that already exist.

## **Action Steps for Years 2-3:**

- Increase funding for education programs.
- Develop a marketing campaign to promote and encourage higher educational attainment (to overcome cultural/family challenges to becoming educated or combat the argument, “If you become educated, you’ll leave us.”)
- Re-examine the Vision Shared goal language for education to see whether it remains the right goal.
- Develop and fund early childhood programs to help them success in school/life.
- Examine year-round schools or charter schools.
- Take a holistic look at solving education problems (social issues), such as the Geoffrey Canada model.
- Focus on promoting the school as the community center.

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**GOAL: By 2020, West Virginia ranks among the top 20% internationally for the percentage of adults with an associate's degree or higher.**

## **Start-up Activities:**

- Examine how graduation rates and drop-out rates are calculated for secondary and higher ed.
- Examine the National Governor's Association program, "Complete to Compete" and develop a model appropriate for West Virginia.
- Acknowledge "non-degree" programs as a path to good jobs/careers.

## **Action Steps for the Remainder of Year 1:**

- Develop an inventory of all existing workforce development programs.
- Look at what kind of support systems students need to keep them from dropping out or to be successful (i.e. social support, level of high school remedial skills affecting success in college).
- Examine just what goes on during the two years of an associate's degree. Push for practical skills (business math and business writing), then get industry to the table to talk about how structure of two-year degree programs can improve.
- Promote cooperative efforts among workforce investment boards, community and technical colleges and K-12 to model best practices and avoid duplication.
- Analyze performance of workforce investment boards and push for more accountability.

## **Action Steps for Years 2-3:**

- Confirmation of programmatic alignment of available jobs.
- Build a plan to address what has been learned during the first year of the committee's work.
- Develop solutions for financial barriers for post-secondary education (two-year, four-year, etc.)
- Develop transition programs from high school to college, i.e. College 101 – a college-readiness class statewide, in all schools.
- Promote a better correlation between what the workforce needs versus what colleges and universities are producing (perhaps via forums between business leaders and academia to produce graduates the workforce actually needs).



# RESEARCH AND COMMERCIALIZATION COMMITTEE

**GOAL: By 2020, West Virginia ranks among the top 25% of the U.S. in the percentage of its workforce employed in private sector, high-tech industries.**

## **Start-up Activities:**

- Coordinate Vision Shared Activities with TechConnect, Create WV and other organizations.
- Review the Blueprint for Technology-Based Economic Development in West Virginia.
- In addition to the Blueprint for, review what has been accomplished in this area.

## **Action Steps for the Remainder of Year 1:**

- Review best policy options and develop an advocacy agenda with TechConnect.
- Sell the TechConnect Blueprint and Vision Shared advocacy agenda for commercialization.

## **Action Steps for Years 2-3:**

- Sell the Blueprint even more as state entities learn to compete for federal money in a post-earmark environment.
- Get the State of West Virginia to invest in the “Innovation Economy.”
- Examine whether the Vision Shared goal has the correct metric attached to it.

