

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Contact: Emily Schoen

(304) 342-7849

[emily@educationalliance.org](mailto:emily@educationalliance.org)

**American Electric Power (AEP) Foundation Supports Student Mentoring  
*The Education Alliance Uses Technology to Link Students with Career Mentors***

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The AEP Foundation generously donated \$78,500 to The Education Alliance to support its *WV eMentoring* program, [www.wvmentoring.org](http://www.wvmentoring.org). *WV eMentoring* is a volunteer-driven web-based program that helps high school students explore careers and options for education after high school. The Education Alliance launched *WV eMentoring* in spring 2011 with more than 200 students in four high schools across the state.

*WV eMentoring* pairs the traditional mentoring concept with online activities that keep students engaged and help volunteers get involved without taking time away from work.

“Internet based mentoring is breaking geographic boundaries to allow students to connect business mentors” said Dr. Patricia Kusimo, president/CEO of The Education Alliance. “Research shows students with career goals are more likely to complete their education, have higher self-esteem and more positive attitudes about their future and what they are learning.”

“This donation from the AEP Foundation will allow The Education Alliance to further expand the *WV eMentoring* program across the state. Their generosity is making it possible to bring *WV eMentoring* to high schools completely free of charge so more students can participate” said Jessica Wintz, The Education Alliance’s *WV eMentoring* Program Director.

“Several of our employees at Appalachian Power served as mentors during the first year of *WV eMentoring*,” said Jeri Matheney, Appalachian Power communications director. “We learned how easy it is to be a mentor through this program. More important, we saw first-hand that online mentoring can work. On behalf of the AEP Foundation, we’re honored to be a part of bringing this initiative statewide.”

AEP is one of the nation's largest electricity companies which services Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. AEP and its regional utilities have historically emphasized corporate giving that helps local initiatives. In 2005, the AEP Foundation was created to support and play an active role in the communities where they are based. The Foundation generally considers requests of \$25,000 or more, and funds multi-year project commitments in communities served by AEP's regional utilities or where they have major facilities. The AEP Foundation supports four focus areas – education, the environment, human services, and arts/culture. More information about the AEP Foundation is available at [www.aep.com](http://www.aep.com).

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