

The Delaware Business Roundtable, Inc.

1201 Orange Street, Suite 1010 • Wilmington, Delaware 19801
(302) 655-2673 • Fax (302) 655-4374

The Delaware Business Roundtable Commits \$400,000 to the Vision Network of Districts and Schools

Six districts and 21 public schools benefit from intensive training to accelerate student achievement.

Wilmington, Delaware, July 8, 2008 – Leaders of member companies in the Delaware Business Roundtable pledged \$400,000 to continue to support the Vision Network, which now includes six districts and 21 schools throughout the state. The Network was established in late 2007 to begin implementing the recommendations of Vision 2015, Delaware’s nationally acclaimed plan for world-class schools.

“I want to thank the Delaware Business Roundtable once again for demonstrating its commitment to public education in a tangible and meaningful way,” said Marvin N. Schoenhals, Chairman of WSFS Bank and Chair of Vision 2015. “Last year’s generous contribution helped launch the Vision Network in four districts and ten schools. Now, just a year later, we are working with twice as many schools serving more than 14,000 students. And that’s what really matters. It’s our students who will reap the greatest benefit as school leaders and classroom educators focus everything they do on student achievement.”

Dr. Sondra Shippen, head of the Kuumba Academy public charter school in Wilmington, echoed Schoenhals’ sentiments when talking about what participating in the Vision Network has meant to her staff. “Through the Vision Network training, the faculty at Kuumba Academy gained a much deeper understanding of how to read and interpret achievement data,” said Dr. Shippen. “We identified mathematics as the area most in need of improvement and now focus all school activities on math. Even arts and social studies teachers are incorporating math into their teaching strategies.”

Newly-pledged funds from the Roundtable will support the following:

- On-going operations of the **Vision Network**, through which district staff and school leadership teams benefit from intensive training focused on student performance.
- Continuing **evaluation of the Vision Network** to ensure the effectiveness of the training. The American Institutes for Research, an independent evaluation firm, will continue its evaluation for a second year.

The Vision 2015 Oversight Committee of the Delaware Business Roundtable made the funding recommendations. Members of the committee include senior executives from AAA Mid-Atlantic, AstraZeneca, Bank of America, CAI, DuPont, JPMorgan Chase, PNC Bank-Delaware, and WSFS Bank.

“There is no investment more critical to Delaware than one that improves our schools and promotes educational excellence,” said Ernie Dianastasis, Managing Director, CAI, and Chair of the Delaware Business Roundtable. “The investment of the business community in the Vision Network demonstrates our commitment to the future of every Delaware child, as well as the future of Delaware’s economy.”

In 2007, the Delaware Business Roundtable's initial commitment to Vision 2015 included support for several Year One projects: the launch of the Vision Network and an independent evaluation of the Network's progress; Delaware Stars for Early Success, Delaware's quality rating system for early childhood providers; the establishment of the Delaware Virtual School; the gubernatorial candidates' debate on public education; and an independent cost efficiency analysis of the state's \$1.65 billion K-12 public education budget conducted for the Governor's LEAD Committee. These investment priorities align tightly with Vision 2015 recommendations.

The Delaware Business Roundtable and the Rodel Foundation of Delaware are the principal private sector investors in Vision 2015, Delaware's plan to make public schools among the best in the world. Additional public and private partners that support the Vision Network include the Delaware Department of Education, University of Delaware, Delaware State Education Association, Delaware Public Policy Institute, and Delaware Community Foundation.

###

About the Delaware Business Roundtable

The Delaware Business Roundtable (DBRT) is a non-profit organization comprised of approximately 40 CEOs whose companies are headquartered or have a significant base of operations in Delaware. The DBRT focuses on key initiatives that will improve the quality of life for their members' employee base and the citizens of Delaware and the surrounding region. Improving public education – specifically through Vision 2015 – is one of the DBRT's top initiatives. Delaware Business Roundtable members include: AAA Mid-Atlantic, Alfred I. du Pont Hospital for Children, Artesian Water Co., Inc., AstraZeneca, Bank of America Card Services, Barclays, Bayhealth Medical Center, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware, CAI, Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, Christiana Care Health System, Citibank, N.A., Citizens Bank, Colonial Parking Inc., DaimlerChrysler Corporation, Delaware Community Foundation, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, Delaware State University, Delaware Technical & Community College, Delmarva Power, Dover Downs, DuPont, EDiS Company, General Motors Corporation, George & Lynch, Inc., The Glenmede Trust Company N.A., Hercules Incorporated, I.G. Burton, Inc., Lyons Companies, McConnell Development Inc., Nationwide Financial Network, PNC Bank, University of Delaware, Valero Energy, Verizon Delaware, Inc., Willis Auto Group, Inc., WSFS Bank, and Wilmington Trust Company.

About Vision 2015

Vision 2015 is a collaborative effort by education, government, business and civic leaders throughout Delaware to provide a world-class public education to each and every student in Delaware. A broad-based, 28-person Steering Committee led the development of Vision 2015. Current efforts are directed by the Vision 2015 Implementation Team, a subgroup of the Steering Committee, which includes: Chair Marvin N. Schoenhals, Chairman, WSFS Bank; H. Raye Jones Avery, director of the Christina Cultural Arts Center; Kevin Carson, Superintendent, Woodbridge School District; Cynthia DiPinto, WolfBlock Public Strategies; Paul A. Herdman, President and CEO, Rodel Foundation of Delaware; Daniel Rich, Provost, University of Delaware; John H. Taylor, Jr., Executive Director, Delaware Public Policy Institute, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce; Howard Weinberg, Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association; and Valerie A. Woodruff, Delaware Secretary of Education.