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West Virginia to be showcased during 2nd Annual National Entrepreneurship Week

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Leaders of Vision Shared Inc. and the Advantage Valley Entrepreneurship Development System (EDS) Collaborative today announced that West Virginia will be one of five states showcased during the National Entrepreneurship Week Summit being sponsored by Cisco Systems. Taking turns sharing the spotlight and airing live web broadcasting will be Washington, D.C., New York, California and Nebraska. West Virginia's programming will air on February 29 live from the third annual Entrepreneurship Day at the Capitol in Charleston, W.Va.

Designed to celebrate and support the concept of entrepreneurship, the Summit is but one component of this year's activities planned around the celebration of National Entrepreneurship Week taking place from February 23 through March 1. With a host of events planned throughout the Mountain State, Entrepreneurship Week West Virginia will coincide with this national observance.

Governor Manchin will kick off Entrepreneurship Week West Virginia 2008 at a press event on Friday, February 22 in conjunction with a Dreamquest workshop. (Dreamquest is West Virginia's high school business plan competition and an initiative of the West Virginia Department of Education.) Other events throughout the week will include Boy Scouts Entrepreneurship Badge Day, workshops at colleges and universities and the launch of West Virginia's first Young Entrepreneurs Support (YES) Network, Friday, February 27.

"We believe in the economic power of a workforce that will strive to make jobs instead of take jobs in West Virginia," states Steve Roberts, West Virginia Chamber of Commerce President and Vision Shared volunteer. "Research indicates that more than 70% of young Americans envision starting a business or working for themselves, but without appropriate mentoring and coaching, these energetic ideas fade," Roberts explains.

Putting forth the challenge to "Participate in the Inspiration," Entrepreneurship Week West Virginia 2008 is designed to:

- Inspire partner events and locally hosted activities in communities and schools across the state where organizations and individuals plan their own meetings, business plan competitions, guest lectures, workshops and local forums.
- Inform, excite and connect youth interested in exploring their entrepreneurial potential in partnership with teachers, mentors and other interested individuals.
- Ensure that the underlying message of Entrepreneurship Week West Virginia is one that resonates with people of all ages, of all ethnic backgrounds and from all walks of life. It is a celebration and an acknowledgement of what has made America great from the start.

Vision Shared's Entrepreneurship Team has served as a member of the Advantage Valley Entrepreneurship Development System (EDS) Collaborative since its inception upon receipt of a \$2 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Other partners include the Ashland Area Innovation Center, the Center for Economic Options, the Charleston Area Alliance, the West Virginia Department of Education Entrepreneurship Program and the West Virginia Small Business Development Centers.

participate in the inspiration

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