

### FIRST ENERGY FOUNDATION GRANT

The Forum applied for the **First Energy Foundation Workforce Grant** back in December 2020. The grant allows us to purchase 10 creation kits that can be "rented" to businesses to capture the photos and videos needed to create a **Virtual Reality Career Snapshot**, which would allow for quicker experience creation and complies with CDC guidelines. We're glad to announce that we have received this funding!



We want to take a moment and thank the **First Energy Foundation** and their staff that made this possible. These funds will open up many possibilities and help create numerous Career Snapshots for our partnering school districts.

Have a company/industry students want to see and explore? Feel free to email with your thoughts and ideas. We look forward to this initiative creating more business partners and opportunities for our students in the Forum!

### BUSINESS OUTREACH STRATEGY

The Forum, along with the **Economic Growth Connection**, has created a strategic outreach plan to guide the Forum's outreach the next few months. This plan will utilize the hundreds of contacts through the COVID-19 Working Capital Access (CWCA) and the Westmoreland CARES grant programs, while also targeting new school districts for the Forum. These programs have given the Forum and the Economic Growth Connection an incredible opportunity to make connections with our business leaders in Westmoreland County.



Economic Growth Connection

### PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The Forum would like to take a moment to thank Mike Storms and **Elliott Group** for being gracious partners for our pilot program of Virtual Career Mentoring. They have graciously volunteered to participate in this program and stepped up to the plate, as they have in previous Forum opportunities like Companies in the Classroom. Mike Storms and Elliott Group are prime examples of how businesses can be involved in our school districts and make a difference in their communities. Thank you!



### CAREER JOURNEY VIDEO SERIES

The Forum has partnered with the **Consortium for Public Education** to help create **Career Journeys**, a video series focused on giving students a chance to explore careers by having informal conversations with people in a wide array of occupations spanning industries.

To view more Career Journeys videos, along with supplemental materials for educators to help students explore careers, visit the Consortium for Public Education's website [HERE](#).



Jordan Jasper

Marketing Coordinator  
Polyconcept North America

## DIGITAL FOUNDRY GROUND BREAKING

Economic Growth Connection, in partnership with Penn State New Kensington and the Richard King Mellon Foundation recently had a virtual ground breaking for their most recent initiative in the Northern Tier of Westmoreland County, The Digital Foundry.

The Digital Foundry is a first of its kind space focusing on the education and practical application of Industry 4.0 concepts. This lab will be the place for business, industry, entrepreneurs, students and makers to explore modern digital tools and manufacturing techniques. To learn more about this project, you can [watch this digital ground breaking here](#).



**PennState**  
New Kensington

Richard  
King  
Mellon  
Foundation



## VIRTUAL CAREER MENTORING



Virtual Career Mentoring is another Consortium for Public Education initiative (approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education) that they have asked the Forum to pilot for them. Given the current uncertainty around schools being held in-person, if students will be allowed out of the building for existing work-based learning experiences, and whether or not businesses can work with students in-person, there is a substantial need for a variation on the work-based learning experience to be offered in a virtual environment. Even when health and safety are not barriers, many students lack transportation and/or access to professionals within their communities and would benefit from virtual career mentoring experiences. This opportunity will give our students and school districts the opportunity to meet the Industry-Based Learning Indicators. This experience consists of 6 one-hour mentoring sessions with professionals that will share their experiences in their industry, promote exploration of a field of interest and increase students' exposure to jobs, careers, and adult role models in the workplace. At the end, students will complete a representation of what they have learned from the professionals in a written, audio recorded, or video recorded reflection or another project that demonstrates what they have learned has impacted their plans for the future. Our pilot program is in the works, starting with Jeannette City School District and Elliott Group. We plan to record these sessions and make them available to the Forum's participating school districts.

## THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS!



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