



VIEWS & VISIONS

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Regional Visioning: Focus on the Opportunities

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Pat Getty is the president and a trustee of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, which serves southwestern Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In West Virginia, Mr. Getty is a member of the board of Vision Shared, Inc., a state-wide economic development initiative, a member of the governing board of Imagine West Virginia, an independent policy research institute, and a member of the Early Childhood Advisory Council's Research and Data Committee.

In Pittsburgh, he is co-chair of Power of 32, a 32-county, four-state regional visioning project, and serves on the Boards of the Allegheny Conference for Community Development; Vibrant Pittsburgh; The Technology Collaborative; and the Allegheny County Parks Foundation. He also serves on the Policy Committee of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

Mr. Getty, a Pittsburgh native, is a graduate of Trinity College and Georgetown University Law School. He practiced law with Meyer, Unkovic & Scott from 1970 until becoming president of the Benedum Foundation in January 1999.

A graduate of Leadership Pittsburgh, Mr. Getty was a founding board member and past chair of the Fund for the Advancement of the Minorities Through Education, Inc. and a past board member and chair of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania. He is a past board member of Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania, and current co-chair of its Public Policy Committee.

Regional visioning is a form of civic engagement that has occurred in many places, here and abroad. *Vision Shared*, West Virginia's economic development endeavor now in its twelfth year, began as a visioning project, and continues to involve public participation.

In the last several years, 10 counties in northern West Virginia have participated in one of the largest multi-state regional visioning exercises ever undertaken. *Power of 32* joins 15 counties in southwestern Pennsylvania, five in eastern Ohio, and two in western Maryland with 10 in north central West Virginia and the Northern Panhandle – an economic region of 17,380 square miles and 4.1 million people.

During 2010, in 156 "Community Conversations" held in every one of the 32 counties, several thousand diverse citizens offered their perspectives on the region's strengths and challenges, and their hopes for its brightest future. The message was clear: if the region is to thrive, citizens, leaders, business, education and government must work together on common issues and not be stymied by political and parochial boundaries.

Six "issue teams" – Economy, Education, Environment, Government, People & Community, and Transportation & Infrastructure – worked over many months to distill public input and develop aspirational yet achievable goals, policy initiatives and projects. In order to be included in the regional agenda, a project had to address a challenge or opportunity shared by the region, had to offer the likelihood that a regional approach would be most effective and had to have a champion – an entity or group committed to achieving that goal and executing that project.

The 14-project regional agenda was announced in November 2011:

- An early stage fund-of-funds to support business start-ups.
- A site development fund to more effectively compete for business relocations and expansions.
- A "STEAM" network across the region's K-12 schools to enhance student creativity and learning through more effective integration of science, math, arts and technology.
- A career education project that coordinates curricula between high school and higher education based on employer needs, beginning with the energy sector.
- An Ohio River headwaters committee to develop sound policies for use and protection of the region's water.
- A regional air quality improvement strategy (the "Breathe Project," led by the Heinz Endowments).
- A cross-sector initiative to promote environmentally responsible development of shale gas.
- Enhanced collaboration among elected officials at all levels of government, including a regional Congressional Caucus.
- A data bank of proven concepts and initiatives to help local governments be more cost effective.
- A comprehensive regional trail network to promote recreational opportunities and rural community and economic development related to trails.
- Maximized use of alternative fuels for all forms of transportation.
- A regional intermodal freight transportation plan.
- A real-time regional advanced technology traveler information system.
- A collaboration to improve regional success at competing for research, development, and deployment funding.



Action on the 14 projects will be coordinated by an implementation committee, chaired by West Virginia University President Jim Clements. He is joined on the 16-person committee by West Virginians Scott Rotruck of Chesapeake Energy, Jim Hunt of the Clarksburg City Council and Bill Wilmoth of Steptoe and Johnson in Wheeling, as well as Greg Babe, CEO of Bayer Corporation, a New Martinsville native and WVU graduate. Other West Virginians played leadership roles in developing the regional agenda, including Susie Nelson of the Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley, Anne Barth of TechConnect West Virginia and Kathy D'Antoni of the West Virginia Department of Education.

The key to success will be the willingness of leaders from all sectors to differentiate between those issues where competition within the region makes sense, and those issues where it is more advantageous to collaborate and compete in the global economy as a region – and of course, where collaboration is the right option, to work past boundaries to do so effectively. If we can focus on the opportunities where collaboration is the right answer, and build upon the energy and wisdom which

the region's citizens brought to the civic engagement and planning phases of Power of 32, the benefits not only to northern West Virginia, but to the entire state, can be extremely significant.

To learn more about Power of 32, visit www.powerof32.org. 

CONTRIBUTING TO THE VITALITY OF OUR COMMUNITIES



Thomas A. Heywood
Charleston, WV

Tom was recently elected as a trustee of the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He serves as president of Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation and is chairman of the board of directors of several organizations, including the Kanawha County Library Foundation,

Thomas Health System, Inc., Mountaineer Capital Independent Advisory Committee and the Financial Education Foundation. In addition, he is vice chairman of the board of Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College and sits on the executive committee of the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, Imagine West Virginia, Vision Shared, Inc., the West Virginia Roundtable and West Virginia University Hospitals, Inc. He is secretary of the Martha Gaines and Russell Wehrle Memorial Foundation, the West Virginia Cycling Foundation, Worldwide Workshop for Children's Media, Technology and Learning Foundation and West Virginia Venture Connection, Inc. Tom also is a member of the board of directors of the Herscher Foundation, Laurel Management Company, Mid-Atlantic Technology & Innovation Center and The Mountain Company.

He also sits on the steering committee of the West Virginia Leadership Conference, is chairman of the Council on Philanthropy and is chairman of the government affairs committee of the West Virginia Manufacturers Association.