



The Alliance for Excellent Education Presents  
A Briefing on

## **The Economic Benefits of Reducing the Dropout Rate in the Nation's Largest Metropolitan Areas: A Boom to Businesses**

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 ♦ 9:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Washington Court Hotel, Ballroom  
525 New Jersey Ave, NW, Washington, DC

### **Speaker Biographies**

#### **Jamie Fasteau**

*Vice President, Federal Advocacy, Alliance for Excellent Education*

Jamie Fasteau joined the Alliance for Excellent Education in January 2007. Prior to coming to the Alliance, she served as legislative assistant for Senator Patty Murray (WA) on education and issues affecting children and families. Before working for Senator Murray, Ms. Fasteau was the senior lobbyist at the National PTA, working on implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, school vouchers, education funding, and parental involvement in schools. She previously worked as the government relations manager for the American Association of University Women working on education, civil rights, reproductive rights, and women's issues. Ms. Fasteau started her career in Washington as the legislative director of the United States Student Association, representing millions of college students on access to higher education, student financial aid, and civil rights issues.

#### **Timothy P. Nadreau**

*Research Economist, Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.*

Tim Nadreau joined Economic Modeling Specialists Inc. (EMSI) in January 2006 while working toward his master's degree in applied economics. While his specialty is in abstract and linear algebras, his consulting work has focused largely on cluster theory, human capital, and international trade. Mr. Nadreau's thesis research at the University of Idaho focuses on the public investment and benefit/cost analysis of postsecondary education.

Mr. Nadreau was awarded the coveted Iddings fellowship for his work on optimal public investments and tuition levels for community and technical colleges. He has also done work revolving around agricultural policies and regional development. Prior to becoming a consultant with EMSI, Mr. Nadreau received a bachelor's degree in theoretical mathematics from the University of Idaho.

**Alma J. Powell**

*Chairwoman, America's Promise Alliance*

Alma Powell sits on boards of several educational, cultural, charitable, and civic organizations. Currently, she is chairwoman of the board of America's Promise Alliance, whose mission is to mobilize people from every sector of American life to build the character and competence of youth. Mrs. Powell also chairs the advisory board for the Pew Center for Civic Change.

From 1989 to 2000, Mrs. Powell served as chairwoman of the National Council of the Best Friends Foundation, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of young girls. In addition to her many service-minded activities, she is author to two children's books, *My Little Wagon* and *America's Promise*, both of which were launched in 2003 with great success.

Mrs. Powell is the recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Human Letters from Emerson College, an Honorary Doctor of Humanities from Shenandoah University, and the Civic Change Award from the Pew Partnership for Civic Change. She has also been honored by *Washingtonian* magazine as Washingtonian of the Year and is the recipient of the Leadership Award from the Women's Center in Virginia.

Alma and Colin Powell were married in 1962. Mrs. Powell spent the next thirty-three years raising a family and accompanying her husband on his various military assignments in the United States and overseas. While her husband was stationed at the Pentagon, she served as the Army liaison to the National Red Cross as part of a team of volunteer consultants from the military services. During General Powell's tenure as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, she was the advisor to the Red Cross of the Military District of Washington. Most recently, during her husband's tenure as the sixty-fifth secretary of state, Mrs. Powell served as the honorary president of the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide. She also sat on the advisory board of the Hospitality and Information Service and was an honorary member of the Department of State Fine Arts Committee.

Mrs. Powell was born and raised in Birmingham, Alabama. She graduated from Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, and went on to study speech pathology and audiology at Emerson College in Boston. After completing her degree, she worked as the staff audiologist for the Boston Guild for the Hard of Hearing.

**Edward B. Rust, Jr.**

*Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, State Farm Insurance®*

Ed Rust serves as chairman of the board and chief executive officer of State Farm Insurance® and its principal affiliates, and is nationally recognized as a leader of business community efforts to improve the quality of education in the United States.

Mr. Rust is vice chairman of Business Roundtable and cochairman of the Business Coalition for Student Achievement. He serves on the boards of America's Promise Alliance; James B. Hunt, Jr., Institute for Educational Leadership; and Achieve, Inc. He is former chairman of the Business-Higher Education Forum and Business Roundtable's Education Initiative. He served on the National (Glenn) Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century and on the No Child Left Behind Commission.

For more than seven years, Mr. Rust served as cochair of Business Roundtable. He is also a past chairman of American Enterprise Institute, Financial Services Roundtable, National Alliance of Business, and Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Mr. Rust currently serves as a trustee of the Conference Board and of Illinois Wesleyan University. He is also a member of the boards of directors of Caterpillar, Inc., Helmerich and Payne, Inc., and McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Mr. Rust joined State Farm Insurance® in 1975 at the company's regional office in Dallas, Texas. He became president and chief executive officer in 1985 and was elected chairman of the board two years later. Mr. Rust earned an undergraduate degree from Illinois Wesleyan. He also holds juris doctor and master of business degrees from Southern Methodist University.

### **Tara Tucci**

*Research and Policy Associate, Alliance for Excellent Education*

Tara Tucci joined the Alliance for Excellent Education in September 2008 as a research and policy assistant. In her current role as research and policy associate, Ms. Tucci manages and contributes to many aspects of the Alliance's policy and grant work, while also leading its quantitative analysis work.

Previously, while earning a master's degree in public policy and management at the H. John Heinz III College at Carnegie Mellon University, she worked as a research assistant for the Project on Teacher Quality for the Pennsylvania State Board of Education. There, she focused on secondary students' access to advanced course work as well as Pennsylvania's teacher preparation practices and teacher labor market trends. In addition, she served as a research intern with Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Economic Development and as a geographic information systems intern with the City of Pittsburgh's Department of City Planning.

Ms. Tucci holds a BA in sociology from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio and is currently a fellow with the Institute for Educational Leadership's Education Policy Fellowship program.

### **Bob Wise**

*President, Alliance for Excellent Education*

Bob Wise is president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and former governor of West Virginia. He is author of the book *Raising the Grade: How High School Reform Can Save Our Youth and Our Nation* and chair of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Under Governor Wise's leadership, the Alliance continues to build its reputation as a respected authority on high school policy by advocating for reform in America's secondary education system and working to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared for college, careers, and to be contributing members of society.

Since joining the Alliance in February 2005, Governor Wise has become a sought-after speaker and advisor on education issues. He has advised the U.S. Department of Education, White House Transition Team, and frequently testifies before the U.S. Congress. Governor Wise has appeared on national television and radio programs such as *Lou Dobbs Tonight* (CNN), the *Charlie Rose Show* (PBS), the *Diane Rehm Show* (NPR), and *Washington Journal* (C-SPAN), among others.

As governor of West Virginia from 2001 to 2005, he fought for and signed legislation to fund the PROMISE Scholarship program and created the Governor's Helpline for Safer Schools. During his

administration, West Virginia saw a significant increase in the number of students completing high school and entering college. From 1983 to 2001, Governor Wise served in the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 2<sup>nd</sup> District of West Virginia, where he aggressively worked to preserve federal financial aid for students to attend college.

Governor Wise serves on the board of directors of the Public Education Network and C-Change; and is an advisory committee member for several organizations including, the Springboard Project, Campaign for Educational Equity, Editorial Projects in Education, the National High School Center, the Bay Area Coalition for Equitable Schools, and the Moffitt Cancer Center. Governor Wise earned a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a JD from Tulane University School of Law.