

PRESS RELEASE:

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Business and Industry Leads in Espousing Career Development as Central Focus of American Education

Washington, DC, February 23, 2016 – The U.S. Chamber of Commerce hosted a meeting at its Hall of Flags chamber on February 22, "Reviving the American Dream by Using Career Development to Prepare All Young Adults for Career Success." This sold-out meeting in the 250-seat Hall of Flags assembled a host of major business organizations, industry leaders, national education organizations, and career counseling organizations. The purpose was to generate a whole series of measures to build an "Action Plan" designed to buttress career success for all students to the new main of American education.

Most notable was the leadership being provided by business and industry at this meeting. In addition to speakers from the U.S. Chamber Foundation, the speakers included Chip Blankenship, CEO of GE Appliances, former MI Governor, John Engler, President of The Business Roundtable, Leo Reddy, Chair and CEO of the industry-led Manufacturing Skill Standards Council, Jeannine Kunz, Director of Professional Development, SME, Crystal Bridgeman, Senior Director of Workforce Development, Siemens Foundation, David Reile, President of the National Career Development Association, and Chauncey Lennon, Head of Workforce Development, Siemens Foundation. Bill Symonds, Director of Global Pathways Institute at Arizona State University, moderated the meeting.

All expressed concern over the lack of alignment between the needs of the nation's employers and the shortage of students with the right skills and credentials. Mr. Blankenship explained the challenges in finding well-prepared production workers and Governor Engler called for a paradigm shift to give much higher priority to industry certifications.

Mr. Reddy described this February 22 convening as "A powerful first step in beginning an employer-led conversation about re-directing American education towards the goal of ensuring that ALL students secure productive employment in their chosen career pathways as efficiently and cost effectively as possible." He called for a new cohort of highly skilled, certified career development coordinators in all 21,000 high schools in the U.S. to help all students develop personalized education and career plans to prepare them for career success.

Mr. Reddy also circulated a paper, [Why a National Convening on the Value of Career Development](#) that provides a powerful case for re-directing American education towards giving highest priority to career success for all students. Mr. Reddy drafted this paper in cooperation with Prof. Scott Solberg, Boston University School of Education.

For press interview with Mr. Reddy, please contact Dina Igoe (see contact info above).

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