

PRESS RELEASE



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Contact: Robert Nomberg

Robert@virginialearns.org

BUSINESS LEADERS AND EDUCATORS LAUNCH VIRGINIA LEARNS, NONPROFIT EDUCATION FOUNDATION FOCUSED SOLELY ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION INNOVATION IN THE COMMONWEALTH

*Virginia Learns will advance the goal of an innovative, equitable
public education system in Virginia*

RICHMOND, VA – Today more than a dozen of Virginia’s foremost business and education leaders announced the launch of Virginia Learns, the Commonwealth’s first K-12 public education foundation created through a joint collaboration between the business and education communities. Virginia Learns aims to transform the Commonwealth’s K-12 public education system by advocating for and supporting initiatives that prepare today’s students for future workforce demands and expectations. The foundation will focus its activities on fostering learning innovation in public schools and aligning curricula to prepare students for real-world workforce demands.

“Prior to the launch of Virginia Learns, there was no dedicated channel for businesses in the Commonwealth to directly support K-12 public education. By having business leaders and educators in lockstep, we feel that this foundation can capture a holistic picture of what Virginia students, families, communities and businesses need to thrive in this present age and into the future,” said Dr. Robert Nomberg, President and CEO of Virginia Learns.

“Virginia Learns provides a necessary, nonpartisan voice for K-12 education in the Commonwealth. Whether you are a member of the business community or an educator, we can all agree that every Virginia public school student should receive an education that prepares them for the 21st century world and workforce – regardless of their income, race, or zip code,” said John Asbury, Chair of Virginia Learns Governing Board and CEO of Atlantic Union Bank.

As part of its commitment to supporting what works in the classroom, Virginia Learns is partnering with the Commonwealth Learning Partnership, a collective of more than forty state

and local education organizations, membership groups, schools of education, and individual educators who share the mission of upskilling Virginia’s educator workforce and preparing students for post-academic success.

“The simple slogan we use within the Commonwealth Learning Partnership is ‘We are better together.’ With that in mind, our collective is excited to work with Virginia Learns to advance the mission of a supported educator workforce. Taking the *Profile of a Virginia Graduate* from vision to practice requires collaboration among all stakeholders, and Virginia Learns will be the linchpin that connects our different communities,” said Gena Keller, Executive Director for the Commonwealth Learning Partnership.

The Governing Board of Virginia Learns is comprised of some of the Commonwealth’s most respected business leaders, including:

- John Asbury, CEO, Atlantic Union Bank and Chair of Virginia Learns Board
- Ed Baine, President, Dominion Energy Virginia
- Gil Bland, President, Giljoy Group, Secretary of Virginia Learns Board
- Sharon Dabney-Wooldridge, President and CEO, Kleane Kare
- Elena Edwards, CEO, North America Region, Allianz Partners
- Rob Estes, President and CEO, Estes Express
- Barbara Johnson, Attorney, BLJohnsonLaw PLLC and Potter & Murdock, PC
- Tom McInerney, President and CEO, Genworth
- Jeff Ricketts, President and CEO, Anthem
- Lisa Roday, President and CEO, Firelce Solutions
- Rob Spilman, President and CEO, Bassett Furniture
- Fred Thompson, Chief Administrative Officer, Thompson Hospitality
- Jim Ukrop, Co-Founder, NRV
- Mike Wassmer, President | Card, Capital One

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[Virginia Learns](#) is a nonprofit and statewide education operating foundation. We are the Commonwealth’s platform for bringing together education, business, and community leaders with the shared goal of a more modern and equitable Virginia public education system.