

**Task Force on Higher Education Remediation, Retention, and Graduation Rates
and
ALC Higher Education Subcommittee**

**Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2008
10:00 AM**

Task Force members in attendance: Rep. Johnnie Roebuck, Rep. Bill Abernathy, Sen. Dave Bisbee, Dr. Chip Ates, Dr. Ken James, Ms. Robin Bryant, Dr. Ed Franklin, Dr. Karen Hodges, Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Mr. David Ray, Mr. Daniel Marzoni II

ALC Higher Education Subcommittee members in attendance: Sen. Dave Bisbee, Sen. Bobby Glover, Rep. Bill Abernathy, Rep. Stephanie Flowers

Non-Committee Members in attendance: Senators Terry Smith, Jimmy Jeffress, Steve Bryles and Representatives John Lowery, Betty Pickett, Ray Kidd, Donna Hutchinson and Nancy Blount

Rep. Roebuck-Chair, called the meeting to order.

State Representative John Lowery, District 6 was recognized to introduce Mr. Claiborne Deming. Mr. Deming has been the President and CEO of Murphy Oil Corporation since 1994. He was a member of the Arkansas State Board of Education from 1999-2002 and is currently the President of the El Dorado Education Foundation. Murphy Oil Corporation could be located anywhere in the U.S., but Mr. Deming has been instrumental in keeping Murphy Oil in El Dorado, Arkansas. As others have discussed the fact that education is tied to economic development, Mr. Deming and the Murphy Oil Corporation have acted on the knowledge that education and economic development go hand in hand.

Mr. Claiborne P. Deming, President and CEO, Murphy Oil Corp.

The El Dorado Education Foundation was founded in 1996. It established and funded three academic chairs in El Dorado School District for Math, Science, and Foreign Language. It has awarded over \$571,000 in award money since its inception. Evidence shows that El Dorado test scores have improved. Enrollment of 5th-12th grade students in foreign language courses has increased by 150% in the last 5 years and the number of advanced placement courses offered is unparalleled in South Arkansas.

The Murphy Education Program was launched in 1997. It provides financial incentives for excellence in standardized test. Over \$9000 was awarded the first year. Since inception over \$930,000 has been awarded to high achieving students. AP teachers receive monetary awards based on their students' AP test scores.

The El Dorado promise was announced on January 22, 2007. Murphy Oil will fund the program with \$50 million pledged over 10 years. Mr. Deming gave an overview of the timing of the El Dorado

Exhibit C

Promise, what makes it possible, and how eligibility is determined. The program pays tuition only, not room and board. There is no requirement for the graduate to come back to El Dorado.

In 2007, 75% of the graduating class in El Dorado went to college compared to 60% in 2006. Approximately 89% of these students returned to college for their second semester in Spring of 2008. Mr. Deming gave a breakdown of the colleges attended by the 2007 El Dorado graduates. He stated that the work the Task Force is doing to encourage high school graduates to go to college and stay in college to get a degree is immensely important.

Mr. Deming entertained questions from the committee.

Ms. Maria Haley, Executive Director, Arkansas Economic Development Commission(AEDC)

Ms. Haley explained the governor's five economic development goals. She also went over the global growth categories and the results of the target industry study for the state of Arkansas. The target areas identified will require a well trained and well educated workforce. Arkansas's workforce is the most important key to sustained economic development.

Ms. Haley stated that there is a disconnect between education and what the needs are in industry and manufacturing in the state. The type of degrees Arkansans are earning are not the type of degrees needed most in Arkansas to enable growth. She gave many examples of companies around the state that express a need for skilled workers. Arkansas companies are recruiting out of state because they can't find the skilled employees in Arkansas. Some degrees needed in Arkansas are in education, biological science, computer information science, engineering, and mathematics to name a few.

Ms. Haley stated that the latest Newsweek reported that foreign students and immigrants account for almost 50% of science researchers in the United States. In 2006 40% of all doctorate degrees were earned by foreign and immigrant students. By the year 2010 75% of all science doctorate degrees will be awarded to foreign students in the United States. The majority of them will take their degrees and go back to help develop their own country.

Ms. Haley spoke briefly on the per capita income. In 2007 the U.S. per capita personal income was \$38,611. The 2007 Arkansas per capita personal income was \$30,600. The average per capita income for jobs created by AEDC in 2007 was \$32,379.

Arkansas must have the education capabilities to attract the best companies. One way to do this is to meet the needs of industries and businesses that are currently in the state and the new ones relocating to our state.

Ms. Haley entertained questions from the committee.

Dr. Steve Floyd, Deputy Director, Arkansas Department of Higher Education

Dr. Floyd stated that ADHE was asked to determine what states have restricted admittance policies to public institutions and what are the standards. ADHE started with a survey of all SHEEO agencies and then the staff researched the web pages of the agencies that did not respond to the survey. Dr. Floyd presented the results of that information and answered questions from the committee. A copy of the results is located on the Task Force website.

Adjourned