



NEWS RELEASE

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WOODROW WILSON NEWARK SUMMIT TO GATHER LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL EDUCATION EXPERTS *Policymakers, Educators to Focus on Reforms that Prepare High-Need Students for College, Careers*

PRINCETON, N.J. (Feb. 21, 2012) – A day-long session hosted by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation at the Newark Club on Tuesday, February 28 will gather nationally noted experts to discuss the need for greater college and career readiness among high-need high school students and to examine the promise and the risk that current initiatives—including Newark projects—are experiencing.

The Woodrow Wilson Foundation's Summit on College and Career Readiness will feature Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary of the Employment and Training Administration at the United States Department of Labor and former Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, as keynote speaker. John Merrow, noted education journalist and public television commentator (*The PBS NewsHour, The Merrow Report*), will moderate. Event funders include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Victoria Foundation.

The summit, which begins at 8:30 a.m., will focus on the following topics:

- programs that speed up and enrich academic experience for underrepresented students, particularly those who may be a grade level or more behind;
- ways in which colleges and high-need high schools can truly partner to help students, given the very different structures and systems that can impede their collaboration;
- supports in and beyond high school that both strengthen students' academic preparation and help them develop personal skills to succeed; and
- methods for creating sustainable, school-wide change to promote achievement for all students.

For additional details, an agenda is available on request from Kristen Vogt at vogt@woodrow.org.

Participants are expected to include educators, funders, researchers, and policymakers both from the Newark area and from as far away as California, Kentucky, and Mississippi. Representatives from Newark Mayor Cory Booker's office and from the State of New Jersey Department of Education are expected to attend, along with a number of education leaders who are currently heading or overseeing initiatives to strengthen college readiness.

Since 2003 the Woodrow Wilson Foundation has developed 20 small early college high schools nationwide, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to help high-need students prepare for college and careers. In 2009, Woodrow Wilson partnered with Rutgers University, Essex County College and the Newark Public Schools to launch the Newark Early College High School (NECHS). The school continues to add one grade level a year to become a 6th-12th grade school. Woodrow Wilson support thus far has helped to cement the partnership between the city, the school district, the local public postsecondary institutions (including the addition of NJIT as a partner), local foundations, and the community. To date, NECHS students are outperforming the regional and district averages on standardized tests.

“Our greatest challenge to widespread college and career readiness is gathering the collective will to create for underserved students the type of schools more affluent students take for granted,” said Robert J. Baird, Vice President for School-University Partnerships at the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. “Even if a small number of urban and rural high schools in districts across the country were capable of providing the academic and ultimately economic ‘boost’ typical of our best public and private schools, the nation would experience a sea-change in opportunity and greater equity between the haves and have-nots.”

To learn more about the summit or to register, contact Kristen Vogt at vogt@woodrow.org or (609) 452-7007 x115.

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (www.woodrow.org) identifies and develops the best minds for the nation’s most important challenges. In these areas of challenge, the Foundation awards fellowships to enrich human resources, works to improve public policy, and assists organizations and institutions in enhancing practice in the U.S. and abroad.