

How Growth Companies Can Connect with Regional Universities

High growth companies in the National Capital Region have access to a plethora of dynamic universities. On Nov. 23, the NVTC Small Business and Entrepreneur Committee brought together a panel of university representatives to discuss the resources they provide and the opportunities that exist to tap into their expertise and the skilled workforce they are developing.

In addition to moderator John B. Casey, managing director of Venture Mentors LLC, panelists consisted of Derick Maggard, executive director of Apex Systems Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the Virginia Tech Pamplin College of Business; Tom Russo, assistant vice president for industry and corporate research at The George Washington University; and James W. Wolfe, entrepreneur in residence and assistant professor of management of the School of Business at George Mason University.

The panelists discussed why rapid growth companies would want to connect with universities in the region, sharing that the institutions provide access to talent; programs, education and support; and research and IP. In addition, they advised growth company executives to engage with universities to help grow/scale their company through events on campus and volunteer work; have a student adopt the company as a project; and to reach out to talent through the “social graph” of the university.

The panelists also answered audience questions, and shared tips on training and technical assistance for small businesses; industry collaboration and research with universities; student-run initiatives; alumni engagement and development office outreach; and more.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe Addresses NVTC Board, Discusses Legislative Agenda



▲ From left: NVTC Board Member Jeff Novak of AOL, NVTC President and CEO Bobbie Kilberg and Gov. Terry McAuliffe at the NVTC Board meeting on Nov. 10, 2015 at LMI in McLean.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe addressed the NVTC Board of Directors at LMI in McLean on Nov. 10. The governor discussed Virginia’s economic strengths, his legislative priorities, including data, cybersecurity, transportation and workforce initiatives, and future projects he will introduce.

The governor began by giving “the lay of the land,” stating that Virginia’s economy is strong with 4.3 percent unemployment and the largest budget surplus in the Commonwealth’s history. He highlighted his efforts to bring strategic investments to the Commonwealth to help grow and diversify the New Virginia Economy in the face of federal government cutbacks.

Gov. McAuliffe cited education as one of his top priorities, asserting its importance in economic development and job creation. He explained the need to make strategic investments tying K-12 education to workforce demand in key industries, particularly cybersecurity, data analytics and biotechnology and personalized medicine, including the Inova Center for Personalized Health. He also highlighted his program to credential Virginians in high-demand sectors to meet the immediate needs of Virginia’s companies, which don’t always require a four-year degree.

According to the McAuliffe, there are 30,000 jobs open in Virginia and 17,000 are cyber positions. As a result, the Commonwealth is forfeiting \$3 billion in wages each year. In addition, more than 65 percent of open cyber

positions do not require a four year degree, so students at the K-12 and community college level should be encouraged to consider these careers, he said. “I want us to be the cyber capital,” Gov. McAuliffe said.

Gov. McAuliffe also discussed the need to make strategic investments to address Virginia’s transportation needs, particularly traffic and Dulles Airport. He also shared details about the recent successful restructuring at The Port of Virginia, which resulted in a \$16.1 million profit. Virginia’s port, he said, is crucial to the Commonwealth’s international trade, which makes up 30 percent of the economy.

In addition, Gov. McAuliffe seeks to collaborate with Virginia’s neighbors in DC and Maryland in order to pitch the region overseas, he said, gaining recognition and major investments from other countries.

The meeting ended with a question and answer session, in which Gov. McAuliffe discussed his support of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal and the extension of sales tax abatements for data centers; his plan for a pipeline in Virginia; and protecting Virginia’s infrastructure and physical assets.

NVTC Task Force Recognized for VA Efforts

On Dec. 1, U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner was joined by U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Robert McDonald at a reception at the U.S. Capitol to thank NVTC