



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Brian Bolyard

brian.bolyard@BridgeValley.edu

304.205-6767

BridgeValley Community and Technical College will host young women from local middle schools at the annual *Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day* on February 23rd and 24th

South Charleston, W.Va. — BridgeValley Community and Technical College will host 200 young women from around the area to discover a variety of career possibilities in the engineering field. The WV Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day event increases awareness of STEM professions, and celebrates past and present engineering achievements of women. The aim is to let young ladies know about their vast options in STEM careers and to provide them the knowledge to start laying the foundation for reaching those goals now.

"At BridgeValley we see more young women entering STEM fields every year, and they are some of our most accomplished students," said Melissa Thompson, Outreach Director of BridgeValley Community and Technical College. "I really believe events like Girl Day are having a positive impact in attracting young women to technical careers, which is great for West Virginia's future."

BridgeValley is pleased to welcome Leah Curry, President, Toyota Motor Manufacturing West Virginia to be this year's Keynote Speaker on February 23rd. In November 2015, Curry was recognized by Automotive News as one of the Top 100 Women in the Automotive Industry. In February 2013, Curry was selected by the Manufacturing Institute as one of 122 women recognized with the Manufacturing STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering and Production) award for their excellence and leadership in manufacturing.

Friday, February 24th, students from George Washington High School's Introduction into STEM Class will lead the middle school in a NASA classroom project. This activity challenges students to learn about basic aircraft design and explore the effects of weight and balance on the flight characteristics of a model glider. Students use science process skills to construct and fly a glider made from a foam food tray.

This year's event will expand to a two-day event to accommodate the growing demand for STEM-related education. Last year, BridgeValley began a partnership with Pierpont Community and Technical College to offer an Introduce a Girl Event at I-79 Technology Park in the northern part of West Virginia. The colleges will continue their collaboration by holding the second Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day in Fairmont on March 29th.

BridgeValley will produce this event with support from TransCanada Corporation; DOW, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, West Virginia, Inc.; Potesta & Associates, Inc.; Terracon ZMM Architects & Engineers; HDR, Inc.; Bayer CropScience; West Virginia Society of Professional Engineers; and Chick-Fil-A Southridge.

Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day is a nationally recognized event held annually on the Thursday of National Engineers Week. The National Engineers Week Foundation, a formal coalition of more than 100 professional societies, major corporations and government agencies, is dedicated to ensuring a diverse and well-educated future engineering workforce by increasing understanding of, and interest in engineering and technology careers among young students and by promoting pre-college literacy in math and science. For more information visit www.eweek.org.

###