

**Governor Otter's Summit on Work-based Learning:  
Educating in the Age of Agility: The Governor's Conference on the Future of Work  
J.R. Simplot Headquarters, 1099 W Front Street, Boise, ID 83702  
Tuesday, September 11, 2018  
Speaking: 2:15-2:30 pm local time**

Thank you, Governor Otter, and the Idaho team for inviting me to speak today. It's my great pleasure to be in Idaho. I also want to thank:

- Wendi Secrist, Executive Director of the Idaho Workforce Development Council;
- And Dana Westgren and all of our friends at the National Governors Association.

My name is David Etwiler and I'm CEO of the Siemens Foundation which means I get to run a nonprofit for a company with more than 50,000 employees in the US that are serving world through the early detection and treatment of life-threatening diseases, by manufacturing light-rail cars and high speed electric locomotives that safely and cleanly move millions to and from their families each day, by developing the manufacturing software that enabled the Mars rover to make its mission, and the list goes on and on.

And **we're** proud to partner with NGA to support states like Idaho in expanding work-based learning for young adults, especially in occupations in science, technology, engineering and math. We launched our workforce development programming in the summer of 2015,

committing to a multi-year, multi-million dollar investment in America's next generation STEM workforce, targeting those careers requiring more than a high school diploma less than a four-year degree and strong technical skills. These STEM technical pathways are accessible for most students, provide limitless opportunity, and support our regional economies. It's a win-win for all of us at a critical time in our country's history. We simply must continue to fulfill our promise to one another of opportunity for all.

We're all here to talk about building a highly skilled workforce, particularly through work-based learning. So, I'd be remiss not to wish everyone a happy belated Labor Day! It's an important recognition of the value of workers to our communities and our country. Honoring workers means providing them with economic opportunity to build a secure future for themselves and their families and that starts with good jobs and training for the skills they need to fill those jobs.

It's what motivates us at the Siemens Foundation to invest in states like Idaho to expand work-based learning that brings students, education and work closer together. With your work, the dynamic Northwest corridor is getting even stronger. Washington and Montana were part of the first cohort of states in the NGA Work-based Learning Academy that we fund. I know that states and governors would never compete with one another but, in all seriousness, the spirit of 'coop-etition' in this corner of the country benefits all of us. We're thrilled that three years after NGA launched this project, we've gone from working

with six states to 17! And, today we're looking forward to learning from you.

As the philanthropic arm of a major digital, manufacturing and energy company here in the U.S., I'm often asked why is Siemens investing in work-based learning and the next generation of workers?

Well, when we talked with our board about the importance of work-based learning to provide economic and educational opportunities to America's young people, they got it. As business leaders at Siemens, they understand the value of work-based learning first hand. From apprenticeships to community college partnerships, Siemens invests in strategies that address its talent needs and strengthen the talent pipeline for others in the sector—and in its communities.

And as a German company, Siemens' roots run deep in apprenticeships. In Germany, Siemens has 10,000 people participating in its apprenticeship program each year. And, it was those experiences, the particular assets Siemens brings to the table, and our awareness of the challenges many young adults face in the classroom and the workplace, that led us to focus our investments in closing the opportunity gap for young adults in STEM middle-skill careers.

The gap between where too many young adults find themselves today and the opportunities possible with STEM middle-skill jobs is simply too wide for us to

accept. And, it's an area where we think the Siemens Foundation can and is making a difference. So, here we are, working with states like you to stand in the gap.

But, when it comes to work-based learning in this country, there is something many of my colleagues at Siemens companies simply don't understand – why don't more young people pursue it? Why don't more schools offer it? And, why don't more employers participate in it? Those are hard questions to grapple with for my German colleagues who perceive work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, as a normal, even prestigious, part of the education continuum, particularly during the transition from school to work.

They're hard questions to answer. Especially when we know that work-based learning provides the closest connection possible between a student and a real work experience. It helps students gain an appreciation for the workplace and develop essential professional skills like critical thinking, personal interaction, and being on time. It builds the increasingly important network between potential employees and employers. And, it contributes to a student's academics by reinforcing what's learned in the classroom and providing a context in which to apply those lessons.

Work-based learning represents all of the key principles we know are essential to a successful career development strategy: public and private partnership engagement; locally driven training to match demand; and

contextualizing education within an exciting job a young person can envision themselves in.

But far too often, work-based learning gets isolated to a lucky few, if it happens at all. Or to an apprenticeship, which is terrific but limited in terms of availability.

So we decided to work with NGA to find out how we could scale effective models at the state level. To see how those models could be integrated into a state's education and training system to provide work-based learning opportunities to more students. To see how we can change the trend from the exception to the rule.

In this state, where job growth is on the rise and the labor market continues to tighten, it's more important than ever to plan for the future of Idaho's workforce. When companies are choosing their next location, a skilled labor pool is always at the top of the list. And, with friendly competition from surrounding states and others across the country, Idaho can't afford to sit on the sidelines.

Thanks to Governor Otter's leadership, you're tackling this challenge head on. You've developed an impressive work-based learning continuum to guide local education and business leaders who want to get engaged and find the right starting place for their communities. And, you're also participating in another project with our partners at Advance CTE to discover the best way to communicate with students and their parents about the value of career and technical education. This year as part of this project

with Advance, Idaho is creating messaging templates to be used in districts across the state – in rural, suburban and urban communities, to help them better communicate about CTE. So not only are you building quality programming, you're preparing your local leaders to attract new participants.

For business leaders across the state, I'd like to leave you with the reminder that you are essential to Idaho's success in this endeavor. We need you to open your doors for an internship or an apprenticeship; engage with educators about your skills needs and provide your insight into the talent demands of the future; provide equipment and resources that mimic the workplace for students; and mentor today's young people to be the leaders of tomorrow.

At the Siemens Foundation, we're excited about the future. And, we can't wait to see how Idaho continues to bring all of the pieces together to build a dynamic next generation workforce for this great state.

Thanks for having me.

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