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Rep. Taylor Announces Unique Entrepreneurial Program for Area Teachers

ASHEVILLE – Western North Carolina Representative Charles Taylor announced today that teachers in the 11th Congressional District are taking part in a revolutionary program designed to change the way that both teachers and their students think about their future.

The K-12 Pilot Group Technology Transfer and Entrepreneurial Workshop supplements the new National Content Standards for Entrepreneurial Education. It is a unique program that provides teachers in WNC with skills to identify, nurture, and cultivate the spirit of entrepreneurialism in their students.

“It is critical that we teach our children how to be successful in a world that is changing,” said Congressman Taylor. “The mountains are home to some of the smartest and most imaginative children in this country. The goal is to ensure that these students will grow-up and start local businesses that will help this region thrive.”

The workshop was sponsored by the WNC Center for Technology Commercialization (WNCCTC), The Institute at Biltmore, Education and Research Services, the Department of Public Instruction, and the Spiro Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership at Clemson University. The WNCCTC was created in June, 2004 through an appropriation secured by Rep. Taylor to develop a project with the U.S. Department of Energy and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Ten teachers from six Local Education Agencies attended the two-day workshop. It was such a success that a follow-up meeting is already planned for next spring. At the end of the workshop, four teachers were selected in a random drawing to receive an all-expense paid trip, including the cost of a substitute teacher, to the 22nd Annual Entrepreneurship Education FORUM, held in November in San Antonio, Texas. Rhonda Cuthbertson and Michelle Gilmore from Madison County High School, Brenda Cogdill of Tuscola High School and Rebecca Hopper from East Rutherford High School will attend The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education’s conference in San Antonio. The trips are being sponsored by the WNCCTC and include everything from travel expenses and meals, to the cost of a substitute teacher.

WNCTTC has been working with Education and Research Services to bring numerous opportunities aimed at entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial education to the region. “We know that teachers work very hard with limited resources,” said Dr. Max Lennon, president of Education and Research Services “That is why we wanted to offer these educators the opportunity to travel to this national conference, worry-free.”

“We have excellent educators in Western North Carolina, who deserve the best training opportunities available,” said Rep. Taylor. “Ultimately, all comes back to benefit the students in the classroom, as well as the entire community.”