

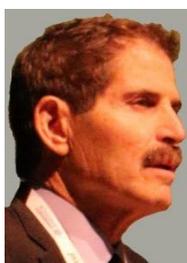


OPPORTUNITY AMERICA

## CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION TAKING IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

In April 2016, Opportunity America partnered with the Milton Hershey School in Hershey, Pennsylvania to host a conference on career and technical education. The discussion centered on how educators and employers are working together to translate cutting-edge thinking about career education into practice on the ground in schools across the country.

Featured speakers included Pennsylvania congressmen Charlie Dent and Glenn Thompson along with Fox Business Network investigative reporter John Stossel.



John Stossel



Rep. Glenn Thompson



Rep. Charlie Dent

*"We need to stop treating CTE like a third cousin or a crazy uncle and put it on par with other types of education. Fifteen-year-old kids are waking up every day uninspired to go to school – they're good at hands-on learning but struggle with book learning. We've left these children behind, and I'm proud to say Congress is addressing the problem."* – **Rep. Glenn Thompson**

Another session featured Milton Hershey School president Pete Gurt and Hershey Entertainment & Resorts president and CEO Bill Simpson discussing the partnership they've developed to insure that all MHS students have the opportunity to pursue internships, including working at Hershey resorts in every department from housecleaning to marketing.



Bill Simpson

*"Our students are more engaged because they're learning in the real world from people other than their classroom teachers . . . Supervisors at Hershey and other workplaces treat our students like any other employee, and there's significant learning that comes from that in a logical, natural way."* – **Pete Gurt**  
president, Milton Hershey School



Pete Gurt

A third session brought together leading CTE experts from across the country.

*"MHS has been doing career education for over 100 years, but there's a new revolution taking*

*place across the land – educators reawakening to the value of preparing young people for careers. We’ve brought together some of the most distinguished and influential people in the field to think about what this revolution means and where it’s heading.” – **Tamar Jacoby** president, Opportunity America*



*“It’s not a choice between academic and technical learning. It’s about creating a pathway that opens options. You see the same thing at every school: students working on a complicated technical problem – engineering or aerospace or something else – and they tell you, ‘Now we understand why we need to learn math . . . . Instead of having English, math and social studies, now we have media arts, engineering and technology!’ It’s a fun way to learn.”*

– **Nancy Hoffman** vice president for program and talent development, Jobs for the Future

*“The goal is to help young people begin to visualize their future selves and then act on that . . . . Work-based learning is key, and it’s a continuum of activities – from job shadowing all the way to apprenticeship. What’s critical is that students do real work, not just watch work or do make-believe work.”* – **James R. Stone III** director, National Research Center for Career and Technical Education

*“I see a deep sense of hopelessness in a lot of young people in our two urban high schools, and CTE can be an antidote – it can provide hope and identity. Students are always asking, ‘Why do I have to do this? Why do I have to know this?’ Connecting them to work is part of how you answer that – it helps kids see that they matter and can be effective in the world.”*

– **Laura Shubilla** founder, Building 21

*“We keep talking about career and technical education in isolation from everything else. We need to make it an integral part of the larger K-12 and postsecondary system, and one of the biggest challenges is finding the ROI for employers. We won’t scale work-based learning through the good will of companies alone . . . . We need to design CTE pathways for all students – this is not a CTE initiative, it’s a high school transformation initiative.”*

– **Gary Hoachlander** president, ConnectED

**Breakout working groups.** The afternoon was devoted to breakout working groups: a series of private, small-group sessions that brought together practitioners from the front lines of the career-education movement – teachers, principals and administrators working to implement the big ideas driving the CTE revolution. Educators shared their experience with others fighting similar battles in other cities and states. A handful of leading CTE scholars and researchers helped to facilitate the conversation.

Among the schools and companies represented: IBM’s P-TECH; Con Edison’s Energy Tech High School; Cardinal Manufacturing; Safran Aerospace; the Butler, Ohio Technology and Career Development Schools; High School District 214 in suburban Chicago; Madison County High School in Florida; San Diego Unified School District and the Urban Assembly in New York City.

***Please click here to watch a video of the event.***