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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Higher education officials working to build a brighter future for WVU Tech**

CHARLESTON, WV – The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission (Commission) hosted an organizational session of the West Virginia University Institute of Technology (WVU Tech) Transition Steering Committee on Wednesday, January 25, 2012. The Committee, which was recently formed to review and implement the WVU Tech Revitalization Study mandated by Senate Bill 486, includes representation from the Commission, West Virginia University (WVU), and WVU Tech. The purpose of the Committee is to provide guidance and support in strengthening the institution's mission by creating new opportunities to "recruit, retain, and rebuild," a major focus of Carolyn Long, WVU Tech's newly appointed Campus Executive Officer.

During Wednesday's informational session, the Committee elected to hold its initial meeting in March on the campus of WVU Tech. In preparation for this meeting, subcommittees are being formed and will focus on strategic areas such as academics and facilities. The subcommittees will work independently to gather information for presentation to the full Committee at the March meeting. Details regarding the initial meeting will be released to the public and filed with the Secretary of State. Members of the campus community, the media, and the general public will be invited and encouraged to attend.

In the coming weeks, the Commission and WVU Tech will release an online survey to solicit feedback regarding ideas and strategies to assist WVU Tech in meeting the needs of today's students and providing a highly skilled workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow. Once

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released, the survey link will be prominently displayed on the main websites for both the Commission ([www.hepc.wvnet.edu](http://www.hepc.wvnet.edu)) and WVU Tech ([www.wvutech.edu](http://www.wvutech.edu)).

Prior to the March meeting, progress will be made on campus under the leadership of Long with assistance from the institution's faculty, staff, and students. Consistent with a recommendation in the WVU Tech Revitalization Study, wireless internet will be installed in campus residence halls. Long said, "This increased connectivity will provide needed access to research and related academic information with ease and convenience." In addition to wireless internet, the institution is working on a plan to create a Student Success Center, which will be housed on campus in an existing facility. Dr. Paul Hill, the Commission's Interim Chancellor, said "The creation of this type of student-based service is critical in order to increase the institution's graduation and retention rates. On behalf of the Commission, I am a firm supporter of this project and look forward to reviewing the forthcoming plan."

The implementation of the WVU Tech Revitalization Study will continue in late spring or early summer when WVU will address an on-going safety issue with the demolition of a vacant building that previously served as a dormitory. The demolition of this building will create additional green space in the short term and provide opportunities for campus growth in the long term.

David Hendrickson, the Commission's Chairman, applauded Long and members of the campus community for embracing the WVU Tech Revitalization Study and finding ways to immediately improve the Montgomery campus. He said, "WVU Tech remains a committed and important member of the state's higher education community. The Commission is looking forward to working with the WVU Tech Transition Steering Committee and the entire campus community to build a brighter future – a future complete with increased academic performance, updated campus facilities, and strong partnerships with local, regional, and statewide entities." Long added, "We recognize that WVU Tech is not the only state institution facing financial challenges and we are not asking the Governor or the Legislature to divert funding from other institutions or important projects. Rather, we are making great progress and will continue working with the Commission, WVU, and the newly formed Committee to revitalize WVU Tech. On behalf of the institution, we are thankful for the commitment to and support of our campus."

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**MEDIA NOTE:** A membership listing for the West Virginia University Institute of Technology (WVU Tech) Transition Steering Committee is attached.

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