

# Reaching Higher: The Challenge Program and Range Resources

Investing in the communities where employees live and work is a top priority for Marcellus shale driller Range Resources. Civic engagement programs that the company sponsors are designed to have long-term sustainable positive impacts on organizations tied to the oil and gas industry and the communities where Range operates. Over the last several years, Range has donated nearly \$10 million to nonprofit and civic organizations. One of those groups is The Challenge Program in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Like Range, The Challenge Program is focused on a long-term investment in the community: workforce development. Their mission revolves around building sustainable Business and Education partnerships while introducing students to careers in southwestern Pennsylvania. One of the primary goals of The Challenge Program is to motivate students to develop the solid work habits required to succeed in school and in their future careers. But as anyone who's ever faced a group of high school students knows, motivating teenagers to do their best work is not always easy. The Challenge Program addresses this issue by taking their message directly into local high schools with a series of high energy assembly-style presentations, and by awarding high-performing students with a well-proven incentive: cash. Students compete in five different categories: Attendance; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Community Service; Academic Improvement; and Academic Excellence. Winners in each category typically receive \$200.

Maria Campieri is the Development Manager at The Challenge Program and has seen firsthand the energy industry's impact on the region's future workforce. "We are really proud of our relationships with business partners like Range Resources and local school districts. These partnerships grow stronger each year and help us inspire and motivate our high school students. We are now in our fourteenth year of operation and have reached over 465,000 students throughout Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and Maryland, along with distributing over \$3 million dollars to students who have worked hard to reach higher and achieve more."

Range's Christina Colalillo works closely with The Challenge Program throughout the school year. "The program creates a unique opportunity for us to reach students who attend school in the communities where Range operates. In partnership with The Challenge Program, employees visit with



*The Challenge Program's Maria Campieri and Range Resources' Christina Colalillo & Kydis Sanders visit students from Acella High School*

the students to discuss how excelling in areas like STEM, performing community service and having great attendance in school will help prepare them for the real world. We also educate them about the career opportunities offered at Range, right here at home!"

In April, Range participated in The Challenge Program-sponsored Polytechnic Career Awareness Event at Canon-McMillan High School. The focus was on local career opportunities that do not require a traditional four year degree in areas like manufacturing, skilled trades, health care and energy.

In addition to helping to plan the event, Range employees participated in a career-focused panel discussion, and later fielded questions about the natural gas industry from students, parents and educators.

"It's truly inspiring and very fun to work with the students who participate in The Challenge Program," says Christina.



*Polytechnic Career Awareness Event at Canon-McMillan High School*

And The Challenge Program organizers say that support from companies like Range Resources is critical. "In Washington County, Range Resources is a driving force helping to sustain our program and mission," says Campieri. "Range Resources values the importance of educating our future workforce and community involvement. The future of our region's workforce is dependent on business and education partnerships."

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