

October 19, 2006 Murtha to Speak at Bentworth High School Congressman to kick off The Challenge Program, Inc. Expansion to Washington County

For Immediate Release

Oct. 19, 2006

Murtha to Speak at Bentworth High School Congressman to kick off The Challenge Program, Inc. Expansion to Washington County

Bentleyville, PA - U. S. Representative John P. Murtha will kick off expansion of The Challenge Program, Inc., into Washington County at an orientation assembly for students at Bentworth High School on October 19 at 11:00 a.m.

The Challenge Program, Inc., a regional non-profit organization designed to provide high school students with incentives for success, has been introduced to more than 46,250 students and checks totaling \$139,000 have been presented to 456 high school students since the program's inception in 2003.

The program partners with local businesses to educate students on entrepreneurship while also motivating them to excel in the classroom and in their communities. Sophomore, junior, and senior high school students who excel in the areas of Most Improved Academically, Best Attendance, Community Service, and Best Overall GPA will receive an award in the amount of \$250 for his or her efforts. The total amount of awards in each school totals \$3,000.

Dan Perkins, President and CEO of MTS Technologies in Johnstown, Pa., founder of The Challenge Program, Inc. and Walt Kitonis, President and CEO of Progeny Systems located in Charleroi, Pa., will also address the students. Progeny Systems will serve as the business ambassador for both Bentworth and Charleroi high schools. The Manassas, Va. based high-tech business specializes in electronic systems development for the Department of Defense and commercial business.

The Challenge Program is being supported by area businesses, including several defense contractors that Murtha helped to attract to the area.

"I often get credit for attracting the new jobs in these companies, but their impact goes well beyond the obvious as they participate in vital community initiatives such as the Challenge Program, which has such a benefit for high school students," Murtha said.

Murtha, Kitonis and Perkins will be joined on stage by representatives of Advanced Acoustic Concepts, BAE Systems, Trident Systems, MTS Technologies, Argon ST, Planning Systems, Inc. and Parametric Technology Corporation, who are among the defense contractors serving as business ambassadors for The Challenge Program, Inc. in Fayette and Greene counties.

"We are pleased to introduce The Challenge Program, Inc. to Washington County schools and we are grateful to Progeny Systems for making it possible. Next year, we look forward to expanding the program even further to reach high schools throughout the county," said Perkins.

"The program makes a positive impact. Grades and attendance have improved in participating

schools and students have had the opportunity to gain an understanding of local businesses and employment opportunities."

For additional information, contact Barbara Grandinetti, Executive Director, The Challenge Program, Inc. at 814.533.7403.

The Challenge Program, Inc. is designed to provide students with incentives for success. The program partners with businesses to educate students on entrepreneurship while also motivating them to excel in the classroom and their communities. Students are rewarded with \$250 for their excellence in community service, school attendance, most improved grade point average, and highest G.P.A.