

**Remarks for David Etwiler, CEO Siemens Foundation
Policy Academy on Scaling Work-Based Learning
National Institute on Scaling Work-Based Learning**

The Grand Hotel, Point Clear, AL

To be delivered during the Achievements and Lessons Learned Through NGA's Policy Academy session on the morning of Tuesday, April 9th, 2019 at 9:15 am local time.

Thank you for that introduction, Rachael. You and the NGA team have done a terrific job with the Work-based Learning Policy Academy and in supporting our state partners. We so appreciate the opportunity to work with you and the NGA team to reach our shared vision – high-quality work-based learning opportunities for young adults across the country!

My thanks as well to the Alabama state team and Governor Ivey for hosting us. We're excited to enjoy the beautiful weather and scenery of Point Clear and appreciate the opportunity to be here.

I'd also like to thank each of you for being here and for contributing your time and expertise to this important project. Your commitment to your states and to the next generation of workers is inspiring and essential. We at the Siemens Foundation couldn't be more excited to be working with you.

Not too long ago, in May of 2015, the Siemens Foundation board approved not only our workforce development program – the STEM Middle-Skill Initiative – they also approved our partnership with the National Governors Association's Center for Best Practices and this project. We're thrilled that within four years, we've gone from working with six states to 17 states and a territory on building more opportunities for young people to access quality work-based learning experiences. While we're close to wrapping up this phase of the academy, we still have so much to learn from each of your states about your efforts to expand and integrate high-quality work-based learning for every young person in your state.

When we talked with our board about the importance of work-based learning to providing economic and educational opportunities to America's young people, they got it. As business leaders at Siemens, they understand the value of work-based learning first hand. From apprenticeships to community college partnerships, Siemens invests in strategies that address its talent needs and strengthen the talent pipeline for others in the sector—and in its communities.

As a German company, Siemens' roots run deep in apprenticeships. In Germany, Siemens has 10,000 people participating in its apprenticeship program each year. And, it was those experiences, the particular assets Siemens can bring to the table, and our awareness of the challenges many young adults face

in the classroom and the workplace, that led us to focus our investments in closing the opportunity gap for young adults in STEM middle-skill careers.

The gap between where too many young adults find themselves today and the opportunities possible with STEM middle-skill jobs is simply too wide for us to accept. And, it's an area where we think the Siemens Foundation can make a difference. So, here we are.

But, when it comes to work-based learning in this country, there is something many of my colleagues at Siemens companies simply don't understand – why don't more young people pursue it? Why don't more schools offer it? And, why don't more employers participate in it? Those are hard questions to grapple with for my German colleagues who perceive work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, as a normal, even prestigious, part of the educational experience, particularly during the transition from school to work.

They're hard questions to answer. Especially when we know that high-quality work-based learning provides the closest connection between a student and a real work experience. It helps students gain an appreciation for the workplace and develop critical skills like punctuality and critical thinking. It builds the increasingly important network between potential employees and employers. And, it contributes to a student's academics by reinforcing what's learned in the classroom and providing a context in which to apply those lessons.

But far too often, work-based learning gets isolated to career and technical education, if it happens at all. Or to an apprenticeship, which is terrific but limited in terms of availability.

So we decided to work with NGA to find out how we could scale effective models at the state level. To see how those models could be integrated into a state's education and training system to provide work-based learning opportunities to more students. To see how we can change the trend from the exception to the rule.

And now, more than ever, it's important that we get this right. And, we couldn't have a better partner in that effort than NGA.

We're looking forward to amplifying the things we've learned through our work with your states over the past three and a half years to help other states across the country take the next step in expanding work-based learning. I think it's safe to say you're part of a movement, one that really matters to preparing the next generation of talent for the digital jobs of the future...and the present. Nothing can spark learning and innovation like the combination of traditional learning and hands-on experience in the workplace. And, it's more important than ever for employers to embrace the innovative spirit of the incoming workforce and the

benefit that can provide to their people and products. It's a win-win experience in an ever-evolving labor market.

As I close, I'd like to encourage you to be tenacious, and turn your energy and plans into real action. Because that's what it takes to create substantial, lasting change. It takes persistent conversations with your governors, agency heads, legislators, educators, industry leaders, parents and students. And, remember that a lot of small victories can add up to an indelible transformation. So, stay focused, stay determined, stay tenacious. We can't wait to see how your persistence pays off for today's students and tomorrow's workers.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of the conference.