KYLE AND ANN FORT NAMED COMMUNITY COLLEGE 
“BENEFACTORS OF THE YEAR”

[Washington, D.C.] Dr. Kyle and Ann Fort of Lewisburg, WV, were honored as 2008 “Benefactors of the Year” by the Council for Resource Development (CRD) at an awards dinner held at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. on Friday, Nov. 7.

CRD, the national organization of community college advancement professionals, presents this annual award to individuals who have shown extraordinary leadership in development efforts for community colleges around the nation. Winners are selected in each of the organization’s 10 regions. The Forts received the award in Region 3, which encompasses eight Mid-Atlantic states.

Dr. and Mrs. Fort were recognized for their leadership and generosity in the campaign to acquire and renovate a building on the campus of the former Greenbrier Women’s College to serve as a new home for the Greenbrier Valley Campus of New River Community and Technical College.

In addition, the Forts were acknowledged for their tremendous efforts and leadership to create and build a scholarship program to support students
attending the Greenbrier Valley Campus. Without their efforts, many students would not be able to attend college.

“Back in 1994, the Forts became concerned that there was an accessible and affordable institution of higher learning to serve students in the Greenbrier Valley,” stated William J. Loope, Director of Institutional Advancement and Workforce Education for New River Community and Technical College. “The closest four-year public institution of higher learning was almost two hours away, and the community college was operating out of borrowed space in the former gymnasium of the Greenbrier Military School on the campus of the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine.”

The Forts dedicated themselves to changing that situation, Loope explained. They were instrumental in securing a 45,000 square-foot building from the State of West Virginia. The building, Greenbrier Hall, had been acquired by the state when the Greenbrier Women’s College closed in the early 1970s. By the early 1990s it was no longer being used and sat empty and decaying.

“The Forts formed a foundation to support the community college and raised more than $6 million to remodel, equip and staff that facility for the college. It is now one of the most beautiful buildings in the community,” Loope said. “The Forts would quickly point out that the members of the College Foundation together are responsible for the success of the projects undertaken to support the college. The commitment of the board members to ensure the viability of the college was overwhelming.”

In 2003 the Greenbrier Community College became the Greenbrier Campus of New River Community and Technical College, a multi-campus institution with administrative offices in Beckley. The Greenbrier Valley Campus now serves close to 1,000 students annually and has an endowment in excess of $1 million for scholarships.

“It is rare to find benefactors with the amazing combination of leadership, vision, dedication and tenacity that Kyle and Ann Fort have demonstrated time
and time again,” commented Dr. Ted D. Spring, president of New River. “They continue to raise funds and friends for the college and make great personal sacrifices of their time and financial resources to support the college and her students. Without these two outstanding community servants, New River Community and Technical College would not have the wonderful facilities in Lewisburg that the students enjoy today and more importantly, many of our students from the region would not have been able to attend the college without scholarship support. Because of the Forts and others who have made substantial contributions, the future of New River and her students is very bright.”

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