

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Sarah Halstead, President
Create WV Board of Directors
1-619-865-5132, sarah@createwv.org

GUBERNATORIAL EVENT TO LIVE-STREAM FROM U OF C

Interactive April 5 roundtable to give public chance to question candidates

CHARLESTON, WV -- Booth Goodwin and Sen. Jeff Kessler will each be featured separately at the Create West Virginia Gubernatorial Roundtable, to take place from 7 p.m. through 9 p.m. Tuesday, April 5, at the University of Charleston's Geary Auditorium, at 2300 MacCorkle Avenue SE, in Charleston.

Live-streaming makes the event accessible to anyone with a device that can connect with the Internet.

Senate President Bill Cole, Republican candidate for governor, and Jim Justice, also a candidate for the Democratic nomination, declined the invitation from Create West Virginia, a non-partisan, non-profit organization that supports economic and community development based on Innovation Economy principles.

An Innovation Economy is one based on knowledge, technology, entrepreneurship, and an attitude of creating solutions to problems through invention and improving systems and products.

"Communities that can recover from daunting circumstances are those that are strong in five areas," explained Sarah Halstead, Create WV's board president. "Resilient communities are diverse, they employ a wide range of education programs that engage the entire community, they have a culture that encourages taking calculated business risks, they recognize and seek to improve their community assets including their built environment and outdoor recreation potential, and they can access and use technology."

"This roundtable is an unprecedented opportunity for gubernatorial candidates to engage with the public through new media," Halstead continued. "These candidates may put their plans forward for leading our state through this turbulent period of transition. It is not a debate," she emphasized. "It's more like a job interview, with the public posing questions that the candidates can prepare for."

Halstead said that Create West Virginia will gather questions from many organizations representing every demographic and interest group in the state. Organizations and individuals are invited to pose three questions in writing by 5 p.m. Friday, March 12, to info@createwv.org.

A Create West Virginia team will curate and organize the questions, and present them in advance to the candidates, who are being asked to answer using an Innovation Economy context. Also, each candidate has been invited to make a five-minute introductory presentation outlining his approach to stimulating the economy within the pillars of diversity, education, entrepreneurship, quality of place, and technology.

The candidates will also field questions from the live audience, and from viewers wherever they may be via social media during the two-hour event.

“This event is totally, adamantly non-partisan,” Halstead said. “Create West Virginia does not endorse any candidate or party. We are only interested in seeing that the public has an opportunity to see how each candidate thinks when it comes to critically important economic and social trends.

“The world is full-on into the Innovation Age. The best leader for our state will be one who is most open to new insights in this rapidly changing global environment, and can navigate change rather than resist it.”

The event will be free and open to the public, but tickets, available at www.eventbrite.com/e/wv-gubernatorialroundtable/ are recommended.

Create West Virginia is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support the development of creative communities, companies and centers of learning that thrive in the global economy. It is an outgrowth of Vision Shared, a volunteer-led program initiated by Governor Cecil Underwood. Learn more at createwv.org. ##

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