

## National literacy group to visit PCEF in Stuart

The Patrick County Education Foundation (PCEF) will host representatives of the National Commission on Adult Literacy on Thursday, March 15, "to explore the experiences and success of the foundation and its partners in addressing adult literacy," according to a PCEF news release.

The meeting will be held at the foundation's offices at 105 Stonewall Court in Stuart.

Five of the commission's 22 members will participate in the session, which will include interviews with GED recipients, Patrick County leaders, and the region's adult education service providers.

The objectives are to observe how civic and government agencies have worked together to improve educational outcomes; to explore ways private and public funds have been used to increase access to education and to raise awareness of its importance; and to learn how the success of the PCEF and its partners in improving critical education indicators can be replicated around the country, the news release states.

The independent blue-ribbon commission was launched by Dollar General Corporation and the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) in October 2006. The Dollar General Corporation is the lead supporter of the initiative with a \$1 million donation.

The commission is chaired by Dollar General Chairman and CEO David Perdue and is composed of a former governor, Fortune 500 CEOs, former congressional and cabinet members, and other influential business, education, literacy and public policy leaders.

"The commission's charge is to examine all components of the nation's adult literacy enterprise to make recommendations on how to effectively chart a productive and comprehensive future course for adult education and literacy service in America," the news release states. "Its challenge is to bring about informed federal and state public policy changes, motivate more extensive involvement by the business community, and move the adult education and literacy system out of the shadows into the education mainstream. The commis-

sion's primary goal is to increase American economic vitality and competitiveness, civic engagement, and quality of life—all essential to maintaining a democratic society and this nation as a world leader."

The visit to the PCEF is one of three national site visits planned by the commission to give commissioners an opportunity to see "exemplary adult literacy programs in action," the news release states. Other visits planned by the commission are to Louisville, Kentucky, and Seattle, Washington.

A series of research papers will be developed as part of the initiative and some are expected to be published at the end of the study in 2008. The major outcome of the commission's work will be "a highly visible national report complete with analysis and strategically directed recommendations for the business, literacy, education and philanthropic commu-

nities and for federal and state government," the news release states.

The Patrick County Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit created in 2001 as "an economic development initiative to provide leadership and programming to raise education attainment levels in rural Patrick County," the news release states.

At that time, educational attainment levels in Patrick County were near the bottom among Virginia's rural counties.

"The foundation and its partners have been successful in its nearly six years of operation in guiding the county toward significant increases in college attendance, adults with a high school diploma and workforce training participation," the news release states. "That success has helped attract the commission's attention and led to its selection as one of the commissioners' three national site visits."