

## Imagine West Virginia

**R**ick Remish, Executive Director, Imagine West Virginia, spoke on the origins of Imagine West Virginia and introduced Tom Heywood, Bowles, Rice, McDavid, Graff, & Love, who described *Imagine West Virginia* to the West Virginia Mining Symposium.

The Imagine West Virginia's Board of Governors is a diverse, strong team whose sole interest is to advocate progressive policy thinking on complex issues for the benefits of West Virginia and its leadership. The mission is: Imagine West Virginia is an independent, objective policy research and development entity dedicated to identifying and researching bold policy issues and publishing policy recommendations that have the potential to significantly improve the lives of West Virginians.

In April 2009, Imagine West Virginia released its policy recommendations *Coal: Energy, the Environment, and West Virginia*.



**Rick Remish**

During the time it will take the world to develop and fully deploy renewable energy sources, there will be no choice but to use coal; it will continue to be a major source of energy, both in the United States and internationally. Advanced research and development aimed at producing environmentally acceptable, safer, and more efficient mining and uses of coal must continue to occur. West Virginia's abundant coal supplies

can be mined and used to help counter foreign oil dependency, meet increased long term energy growth demands, and improve national energy security.

If coal is to fulfill its potential, the adverse environmental impacts of safe coal extraction, utilization, and management must be mitigated. The extent of coal's use in the coming decades likely will depend upon the extents to which carbon emissions can be controlled, which in turn represents a most promising platform on which to build more innovative economic opportunities. Obviously, external factors will dictate the future of West Virginia coal and the future of coal will be significantly influenced by federal and state actions following debate about what types of greenhouse gas regulation will be imposed. Everyone needs to be prepared.

West Virginia should become a globally recognized leader in technologically advanced, envi-



**Tom Heywood**

ronmentally responsible, safe coal production and use. The Imagine report contains a number of strategic actions and policy recommendations.

Research and development must be carefully considered by strengthening coal related research, promoting expertise in mining safety and remediation, and building greater advanced coal technology capabilities.

There must be emphasis on

training by developing the next generation of coal leadership and training tomorrow's coal related workforce.

Business can be expanded by fostering new coal related business enterprises. Collaboration can be carried out by engaging in a more strategic regional collaborative initiative, establishing a coalition for global efforts in coal, and participating in effective organizations that advance coal. Policy can be made by creating an independent energy advisory/forecasting body.

Assessing the landscape, Imagine West Virginia will focus on short and long term activities to soundly, thoughtfully turn its recommendations into action.

**For more information, contact Rick Remish, Imagine West Virginia, 304-293-5551, ext. 38; [imaginewestvirginia@vision-shared.com](mailto:imaginewestvirginia@vision-shared.com), or [www.imaginewestvirginia.com](http://www.imaginewestvirginia.com).**