

'Jobs of tomorrow don't exist today'

Jeff Kimball, president and CEO of L. Robert Kimball and Associates, worries about the forecasted "shortage" of American-born scientists and engineers.

Although the federal government promises to address this issue by doubling federal funding of research in the next five years and training more than 100,000 scientists and engineers in the next four years, Kimball believes that the true starting point in developing future scientists and engineers is to raise awareness about the opportunities that exist in these fields.

"Our goal is twofold," said Kimball. "To raise awareness about the careers in architecture, engineering and technology that are available, (and) to make students aware of the opportunities that exist locally in these careers."

One of the mediums Kimball utilizes to relay this message is The Challenge Program Inc., a nonprofit organization whose dual mission is to incentivize students for academic excellence and to build business-education partnerships.

As the business ambassador to Central Cambria High School, Ebensburg, a participant in The Challenge Program, Kimball speaks to students twice annually - at an orientation assembly in the fall and an awards assembly in the spring.

At these assemblies, representatives from Kimball inform students about the range of job opportunities that exist within their home communities.

"We use examples from our staff to show the students that they can stay in the region and have successful careers," Kimball said. "(Our company) offers a number of careers. We need

people in accounting, marketing, human resources

- not just in the sciences."

Kimball said that the company chose to partner with The Challenge Program Inc.

because its four award categories - Most Community Service, Best Attendance, Highest GPA, and Most Improved - highlight one of the company's core values: Discipline.

"It shows us that you are willing to put forth extra effort and be committed to your goals and personal growth," he said.

Above all, Kimball hopes to emphasize to students that no matter which career fields they are interested in today, they need to be aware of changing employment trends and emerging fields of study.

"Students need to think beyond the present," Kimball said. "Many of the jobs of tomorrow don't exist today. We stress (to students) that they need to work hard to get a good education. Think of what it could do for the region if they came back after being educated in these fields."



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