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Programs to help schools

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TRENTON - A collection of area business leaders yesterday announced plans to try to help Trenton's schools through internships and other programs.

The Trenton Public Education Foundation started one journalism internship program last month and has plans for other programs, including a banking and business education program in conjunction with Commerce Bank, said foundation President Pamela Pruitt.

Along with ETS, the foundation is also involved in organizing an April 29 appearance by Princeton University professor Cornel West at Trenton Central High School.

"I think he can relate to the children and they can relate, more importantly, to him," Pruitt said of West.

Two of the foundation's main goals are to provide valuable experiences for city schoolchildren and to change the negative image of city schools as dangerous and low achieving.

Among the companies or institutions represented on the foundation board are Capital Health System, Princeton University, the Trenton Thunder and The Times of Trenton. Pruitt is a vice president for WIMG/Morris Broadcasting.

The foundation plans a June fund-raiser for the Last Hour Scholarship Fund, which provides expense money to Trenton students on college scholarship.

The foundation also plans to add a Trenton district parent and teacher to its board in the near future and "find ways to involve the parents in their children's education on a much more consistent basis," Pruitt said.

Foundation members are interested in working with Trenton's Daylight/Twilight alternative high school in a capacity to be determined and also want to establish development programs for Trenton teachers.

"Anything that is going to support student achievement and enrichment, we're delighted to see," said district spokeswoman Gene Wesley.