

## Second Annual Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference



The Second Annual Appalachian Ohio State of the Region Conference, held June 4 in the Margaret M Walter Hall at Ohio University, opened with 195 in attendance. The event was presented by the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs with support from the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Panels included discussions on reducing the environmental and community impacts of shale oil and gas development, ensuring that workforce training is adequate to put Ohioans to work in this industry, capturing and deploying wealth for more sustainable businesses and industry, and determining where the opportunities are for Ohio to capitalize on the full value chain throughout eastern Ohio. Keynote speakers included IHS-Global Insight Managing Director Brendan O’Neill who discussed the economic and community impacts of shale gas development on the state and nation. Chesapeake Energy’s Vice President of Corporate Development and State Government Relations Scott Rotruck, who encouraged communities to discuss and plan for the impacts of unconventional oil and gas development. Chesapeake currently has 600 Ohio residents on its payroll and Mr. Rotruck mentioned that Chesapeake tries to hire locally. Additional speakers included Doug O’Brien, the Acting Under Secretary for USDA Rural Development, and Jeannette Tamayo, the Chicago Regional Director of the US Economic Development Administration.

The regional showcase event brought together area business professionals, local government officials, and economic development professionals to examine the economic, environmental, and community impacts related to the development of shale gas, including the short and long-term impacts on businesses and local governments in our region.