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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Virginia Department of Energy

Washington Building / 8th Floor

1100 Bank Street

Richmond, Virginia 23219-3638

(804) 692-3200 FAX (804) 692-3237

www.energy.virginia.gov

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Contact: Tarah Kesterson

(276) 356-3405

tarah.kesterson@energy.virginia.gov

Wellmore Coal Company Takes Home Virginia Governor's Cup at 35th Mine Rescue and Safety Competition

~Alden Resources Placed Second in Mine Rescue Competition~

Wise, VA – Wellmore Coal Company took top honors in the 35th annual Virginia Governor's Cup Mine Rescue and Safety Contest held Wednesday, June 1st and Thursday, June 2nd. The competition was held on the campus of University of Virginia's College at Wise. The rescue and safety contests were co-hosted by the Virginia Department of Energy (Virginia Energy) and the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association.

The mine rescue teams competed to conduct rescue and recovery operations in a staged mine disaster scenario laid out in the university's David J. Prior Convocation Center. Team members donned full mine rescue gear, including oxygen breathing apparatus, to determine underground mine conditions, construct ventilation controls and locate and extract accident "victims".

The teams were judged on their thoroughness in recording mine conditions on a map as they advanced into the "mine" and their ability to identify and respond to hazards that could endanger the team or trapped miners.

"While this is a friendly competition, it is crucial to honing the skills of our very important and unique mine rescue teams," said Virginia Energy Director of Coal Programs Randy Moore. "These teams are our first responders to underground coal mining emergencies and we want to make sure they are prepared to respond and help coal miners that may find themselves in harm's way."

Individual coal miners also competed in the bench and preshift competitions. The preshift competition is designed for mine foreman and judges their ability to identify and rid the coal mine of any problems. Foreman do this check before the beginning of each shift to ensure the safety of their crews.

The bench competition has miners looking for problems in the breathing gear their team uses. Competitors need to quickly identify discrepancies that could put their teammates at risk if it causes the pack to not properly function.

Winners of the 35th Virginia Governor's Cup Mine Rescue and Safety Competition included:

Virginia Governor's Cup Winner: Wellmore Coal Company

2nd Place Team: Alden Resources

Bench 1st Place: BG4: Casey Mooneyhan, Alpha Met Resources, Paramount Contura team

Bench 2nd Place: BG4: Robby Middleton, Alpha Met Resources, Paramount Contura team

Preshift 1st Place: Joey Sykes, Alpha Met Resources, Paramount Contura team

Preshift 2nd Place: Frankie Moore, Alpha Met Resources, Paramount Contura team

Virginia Governor's Cup Teams: Alden Resources, Coronado Buchanan Minerals Black Team, Coronado Buchanan Minerals Black Team, Alpha Met Resources Paramount Contura team, Virginia Small Operators Mine Rescue and Wellmore Coal Company.



Pictured (L to R): Shannon Sutherland, Barbara Altizer with the Metallurgical Coal Producers Association, Caleb Scheoff, Anthony Lester, Shannon Moore, Brandon Rasnick, Will Altizer, Ricky Allen, Jordan Curry and Randy Moore with Virginia Energy.