



APPalachian Prosperity Project

*A Collaborative Model for Advancing Education, Health,
& Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia*

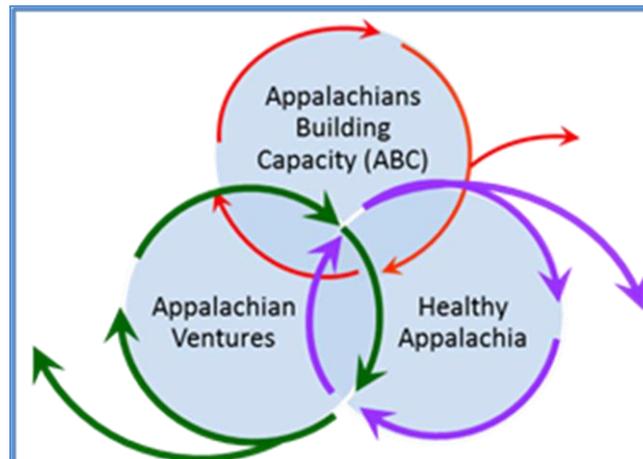
*Annual Report
FY2014*



Southwest Virginia Economic Development Partnership: *Appalachian Prosperity Project*

UVa's Report to the Commonwealth, FY14

The *Appalachian Prosperity Project* (APP) is a collaborative partnership among the University of Virginia (UVa), UVa's College at Wise (UVa-Wise), the Virginia Coalfield Coalition (comprised of Planning Districts 1 & 2), the private sector, and the Commonwealth. This partnership uses a systems approach to simultaneously advance the inextricably linked fields of education (*Appalachians Building Capacity*), health (*Healthy Appalachia Institute*), and prosperity (*Appalachian Ventures*).



Appalachian Prosperity Project

Whether APP is bringing world-class executive education to Coalfield business leaders, piloting an innovative early language literacy intervention, or providing a bridge for engineering education, this multi-faceted partnership produces results. The partnership is unique and powerful because it widely encompasses disparate stakeholders while remaining coordinated and focused. APP views issues from many perspectives by convening public, private, and government agencies that are not often at the same table. APP provides the infrastructure to transform those conversations into initiatives today while maintaining a long-term commitment to the overall mission.

This mutually beneficial alliance applies academic rigor to UVa's outreach projects, expands student experiences, encourages the exchange of ideas, and creates new knowledge which will inform future community- and university-based shared research and partner activities.

APP is an inspiring reflection of the spirit of the region's people, who value trust, self-determination, and perseverance. The vision is to ensure regional collaboration, generate new ideas, and establish a process to engage the social, economic, and scientific issues that exist at the interface of health, education, prosperity, and Appalachian culture. Our collective mission is to position the region in the global economy while honoring its traditions and culture, using local assets, engagement by all partners, and true collaboration. (Website: www.APPProject.org)

Leaders in the Coalfields are focused on transforming their historically extractive-based economy from one centered mainly on tobacco, coal, and timber to one built on information technology, education, health care, and energy. To attract companies, local leaders recognize that they must have an educated workforce, business acumen, and widespread access to medical care.

The *Appalachian Prosperity Project* builds on a formal commitment made in 2007 by UVa to the Commonwealth of Virginia to help stimulate economic development in Southwest Virginia. The initiative resides in UVa's Office of Strategic Initiatives; however, UVa-Wise is a critical and influential local presence. It serves as a translator, bridging the geographic distance between partners and opening the door to relationships that would otherwise not exist. The Virginia Coalfield Coalition is leveraging the resources of APP to attain their regional economic development goals.

A unique aspect of this partnership is its foundation in a systems approach. This brings a diversity of organizations to the table to collectively solve problems. Virtually every school at the University is substantively involved, including Engineering, Architecture, Business, Education, Nursing, and Medicine. Scores of regional partners are engaged from the public and private sectors. Representatives from health, education, and business are involved in every initiative, since all play a role in tackling the intractable issues in Southwest Virginia.

The University's role is to listen to the needs of communities and their citizens, initiate conversations, support strategic planning, provide innovation and evidence-based research and evaluation, and collect and analyze data. The Coalfield community identifies challenges, infuses cultural understanding and history, sets the vision and strategic direction, and selects priorities. All partners are givers and receivers of knowledge; together they incubate ideas, generate resources, develop programs, lead, and execute projects. APP has three co-directors,

representing UVa, UVa-Wise, and the Virginia Coalfield Coalition. Decision-making is shared and each partner is fully consulted before any actions are taken.

Each of the interdigitated foci – education, health, and business – has a signature project that serves as a thematic guide for activities. In health, it is APP's *Healthy Appalachia Institute* (HAI), created to energize a regional public, private, and government coalition that addresses the region's health disparities. An example of successful shared decision-making is the creation of *A Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity* (<http://www.healthyappalachia.org/our-health-blueprint>), a community-developed, detailed roadmap for a healthier population, with specific goals and outcomes. Similar exercises have included the creation of the *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia*, the *Blueprint for Attracting and Sustaining Advanced Manufacturing in Southwest Virginia*, and *Prescription Drug Abuse in Southwest Virginia* (<http://aproject.org/reports.html>).

These blueprints demonstrate to external funders and supporters that there is a vision for the region and important early groundwork has been accomplished. Since completion in 2009, the health blueprint has helped the region secure funding, develop regional health statistic data to measure progress, initiate an annual research symposium, mandate insurance coverage for telemedicine, and expand the number of telemedicine sites within the region.

APP's *Appalachian Ventures* encompasses our initiatives to foster a robust economy. APP has offered management training through UVa's globally-ranked Darden business program, with faculty traveling to the region and working directly with managers from the private and public sector. This allowed employers to build management capacity for their workforce, which is often promoted from within, and which has limited local professional development opportunities available.

Appalachian Ventures convened over sixty community organizations, business interests, and environmental groups as part of the Clinch River Valley Initiative (<http://clinchriverva.com/>) and the larger regional cultural heritage efforts, including The Crooked Road, 'Round the Mountain and Heartwood, to leverage the natural assets in the area and spur related startups. Five action groups are currently working on issues such as connecting downtown revitalization efforts with the Clinch River, developing river access points and trails, and enhancing water quality.

APP's *Appalachians Building Capacity* (ABC) is building an educated workforce through innovative early language and literacy programs. Faculty members create successful evidence-based intervention models and infants and toddlers gain skills that enable them to enter

kindergarten ready to learn to read. ABC also teams with the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium (SWVPEC) to improve the knowledge base and teaching capacity for traditional American history in the region.

FY14 HIGHLIGHTS

FUNDING

- Over the past five years UVa has helped secure over \$11.7 million in new funding to bring programs and services to the residents of Southwest Virginia. This includes funding for creating *UVa's Cancer Center Without Walls* to extend UVa Health System resources into the region, downtown revitalization efforts in the Town of Appalachia, community development for the Town of Cleveland, and advancing the Clinch River Valley Initiative to bring new economies to the region.

RECOGNITION

- APP was selected for the 2014 *Excellence in Government Award for Community Enhancement* by the Wilder School at Virginia Commonwealth University.
- APP was recognized at the *2020 Regional Leaders Summit* in May 2014 for working in the areas of health, education and economic development. Over 400 community leaders participated in the summit.
- Shannon Blevins, Director of Economic Development at UVa-Wise, received the 2014 *President's Award* from the Virginia Technology Council for her work with the *Blueprint for Attracting and Sustaining Advanced Manufacturing in Southwest Virginia*.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS AND RESEARCH

During FY13 APP created a research center under the leadership of Suzanne Moomaw, a faculty member in the School of Architecture. The center provides evidence-based research to Planning Districts 1 and 2 to guide community economic development strategy, inform priorities, assess impact, and create a compelling asset-based narrative that helps attract new jobs to the region. The center's goals are to:

1. serve as an academic anchor that will encourage APP scholarly research;
2. establish clear guidelines for working in Southwest Virginia with community partners;

3. encourage projects that deliver immediate impact and align with the principal goal of job creation.

The following are the center's accomplishments this fiscal year:

- Launch of the *Brown Bag Lunch Series* for 2013-14 highlighted partnerships with faculty and community members. More than 100 people attended a series of five discussions held in the Curry School of Education, School of Nursing, Center for the Liberal Arts, Architecture School and the School of Medicine. Brown Bag lunch series for 2014-2015 planning is underway.
- Partnership with the Town of Appalachia to improve its economic resilience through downtown revitalization, town visibility, and recreational opportunities. This includes trail design, website development, housing audit and Powell River Park and Recreational Area design.
- Partnership with the Town of Grundy to develop a new teen center. A team of faculty and students worked with community leaders and citizens to develop several design strategies for rebuilding the teen center. Fundraising and final design decisions will be made this fall.
- Seed funding for faculty and students at UVa and UVa-Wise through the *Venture Grants Initiative*. Five grants were awarded in the 2013-14 academic year for research and practice in literacy, health, technology, education, and economic development.
- Assessment of three small towns (Appalachia, Pound, and Big Stone Gap) to determine strategies to enhance the regional presence of all three towns. This research will be presented in the region this fall at the *Small Communities Design Institute* at UVa-Wise.

HEALTH

- To address the unique challenges faced by cancer patients in rural areas, communities and organizations throughout Appalachia and Southwest Virginia are partnering with the University of Virginia Cancer Center to advance a virtual hospital — ***UVa's Cancer Center Without Walls***. This effort is designed to better provide patients with advanced cancer care and clinical trials close to home.

Funding for the center comes from an 18-month, \$965,000 grant awarded by the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission. Funding began Jan. 1, 2013.

Because of the rural nature of Virginia's tobacco regions, many citizens do not have access to clinical trials and specialists available at NCI-designated cancer centers, such as the UVa Cancer Center. In this effort, the virtual cancer center takes full advantage of the extensive broadband network in Southwest Virginia to expand telemedicine initiatives and increase access. While the region has excellent cancer physicians and centers, this partnership with UVa facilitates two key objectives:

- **Increase access to advanced care and clinical research:** UVa is collaborating with local healthcare providers, health systems and organizations to increase the number of patients with access to screening, education, and advanced cancer care (including genetic evaluation). One example: UVa will collaborate with local health systems to expand telemedicine opportunities for breast and cervical cancer screenings.
 - **Bring advanced cancer care and clinical research close to home:** UVa is working with the region's medical centers to train healthcare providers and develop a structure that improves access to advanced care and clinical trials.
- A National Cancer Institute study identified five geographical clusters in the United States with elevated levels of cervical cancer morbidity and mortality; one cluster is in far Southwest Virginia. The UVa Health System, the Healthy Appalachia Institute, and the Virginia Department of Health have continued their partnership championing cervical cancer screenings in the region. A newly created **video-colposcopy program** has already provided over 200 women with a telemedicine connection to specialty care. It has also resulted in colposcopy training for five nurse practitioners in the area, increasing the number of local health care providers qualified to perform this procedure by a factor of five. Plans are underway to expand the video-colposcopy pilot to three more sites as an avenue to developing a robust, nurse practitioner-guided network throughout Southwest Virginia.

- In addition to cervical cancer screening, UVa continues to be active in helping to reduce mortality from breast cancer by providing over 1,000 mammograms to women in Southwest Virginia over the last four years. UVa's mobile mammography van is able to serve women even in the most remote areas of the Coalfields which have extremely limited access to specialty care.
- The University of Virginia Office of Telemedicine continues to provide specialty clinical services and health education throughout Southwest Virginia using an extensive network of telemedicine sites. There are now **more than 30 active telemedicine sites** in the region, with a substantial growth in providing child and family psychiatric resources. In 2014, the Office of Telemedicine continued their partnership with the Virginia Center for Diabetes Education to offer certified patient education in the region as well as develop an endocrine clinic with Buchanan General Hospital.
- With support from the Tobacco Commission, UVa updated the aging technology at three sites to establish what is emerging as a secure state-of-the-art high definition network. Three **new clinics** were offered in Southwest Virginia in FY14 – one for cystic fibrosis in Saltville, one for wound and ostomy patients in Wise, and one for screening for diabetic retinopathy in Grundy. Additionally, a network of sites for psychiatry was introduced to the region. The program's active pediatric telemedicine program continued its partnership with Care Connection for Children.
- Through Tobacco Commission support and the commitment of the UVa Health System, a **new mobile mammography van** has been purchased that will bring digital tomosynthesis to the women of the Coalfields by creating a state of the art, 3-dimensional image of the breast to further enhance early detection of disease.
- The UVa Center for Telehealth, Office of Telemedicine and HAI partnered with the New College Institute to offer the first telehealth certification program in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The **Southside Telehealth Training and Resource (STAR) Center** is a premier training program that provides basic competencies in state-of-the-art technologies and clinical protocols. Topics include an overview of videoconferencing technology and medical devices used in the clinical setting, installation and operation of remote patient monitoring equipment in the home setting, and the roles and

responsibilities of telehealth staff. Successful completion of the program results in a certificate from the National School of Applied Telehealth as either a Telemedicine Clinical Presenter/Technology Professional or Telehealth Coordinator /Technology Professional. Over 280 health professionals were trained in 2014.

- The **Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity**, developed in 2009 in partnership with the Southwest Virginia Health Authority, outlined 20 goals and objectives, with timeframes divided into three timeline categories: Near (0-2 years), Intermediate (3-9 years), and Long-term (10+ years). The Blueprint also outlined strategic goal categories (e.g., overall health, health-related economic developments, etc.) and organizational goal categories, including development funding, advocacy and operations. The Blueprint has galvanized the region into action, increasing awareness and progress toward improving population health.

The Blueprint is guiding the efforts of many public and private entities, including the Healthy Appalachia Institute. HAI developed and published a Progress Report 2011 (<http://www.healthyappalachia.org/our-health-blueprint>) outlining the many ongoing success stories.

One of the critical elements of the strategic blueprint is to expand fitness and outdoor recreation in the region. In partnership with over 20 regional health, cultural, natural resource, environmental, and planning organizations, APP is leading the development of the **Health is Right Outside** outdoor recreation plan that will encourage residents and organizations to leverage the region's natural assets to adopt healthier lifestyles. The national initiative, *County Health Rankings & Roadmaps*, is supporting the plan's development. Several focus groups and open forums were conducted in 2013, and completion of the *Health is Right Outside* strategic plan is anticipated for Fall of 2014.

- To leverage the work of the Healthy Appalachia Institute, as well as expand fitness opportunities for both UVA-Wise and surrounding communities, a new 11,000 square foot addition to the C. Bascom Slemple Student Center's existing fitness center and renovation of the 5,833 square foot Fred B. Greear Gymnasium were funded by a generous gift from the Richard and Leslie Gilliam Foundation. The **Winston Ely Health and Wellness Center** will be open to the community with a monthly membership fee.

The center will make Health and Wellness a priority on campus by creating a new exercise area, a multipurpose room for yoga, dance, a conference room with telehealth capabilities for individual and group health advising and education, new locker rooms, and a dining outlet with healthy food options. The center will house the offices of HAI and allow for community-based outreach focusing on prevention, education, fitness and wellness opportunities.

- The **State Street Project: Health Across Borders** is a collaborative effort between the Tennessee Institute of Public Health and the Healthy Appalachia Institute, with their respective institutions, East Tennessee State University and UVA-Wise. The first State Street event, held in Bristol TN/VA on June 12, 2014, brought together over 150 community leaders from Southwest Virginia and Northeast Tennessee. Presentations focused on health data and statistics of the region and how multi-sector groups including economic development, health care, and education can join collaboratively to improve health in the region.
- In partnership with Smart Beginnings Southwest Virginia, HAI sponsored an **early childhood summit** focusing on health and wellness in March 2014. The summit drew 121 attendees, almost doubling the attendance from the previous year.
- Since 2006, the **Healthy Appalachia Institute Fellowship Program** has mentored 32 students who have a strong interest in solving health care challenges in the region. More than 80% of the students are now in medical school, graduate nursing education, or are practicing health care professionals. Several are still completing their undergraduate education.
 - In 2013, four undergraduate students were selected to complete a research fellowship in Southwest Virginia. *UVA's Cancer Center Without Walls* initiative supported two fellows' research on cancer in the region. Each fellow presented their research findings at conferences both locally and nationally, including the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges Southeast Regional Undergraduate Research Conference, UVA-Wise Undergraduate Research Symposium, and Southern Psychological Association Annual Meeting. One fellow was also invited to present to the UVA-Wise College Board.

- In 2014, two undergraduate students were selected to each complete a research fellowship in Southwest Virginia. One student will focus on “Drinking Water Sources and the Importance of Water Treatment in Central Appalachia” and the other will explore “Physical Activity and Depressive Symptoms Among Children in Central Appalachia.”
- A 2014 Research Fellow with UVa’s Office of Telemedicine is based in Southwest Virginia and is completing a project on the “Management of High Risk Pregnancies in Southwest Virginia.”
- **Med-Match**, a pilot program launched in FY2014, pairs UVa medical school students with UVa-Wise students interested in medical school. UVa students assist the undergraduates with navigating the medical school application process, including MCAT preparation, personal statements and interview preparation. Six UVa-Wise students participated in FY2014. In FY2015, the program will be expanded to include group workshops and mock interviews.
- Last year, UVa-Wise and UVa secured funding for a full-time staff member to support the growth and success of HAI. The **Healthy Appalachia Institute Program Manager** began in April 2014. Additionally, a 2014 summer intern works assisting the manager with event planning and office duties.

EDUCATION

CENTER FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS

- UVa, UVa-Wise, and the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium (SVPEC), comprised of 16 school systems, continue to work together to improve knowledge of traditional American history on the part of the region’s teachers and children. This year saw the completion of the final four federal “**Teaching American History**” grants, each of which has totaled approximately \$1 million, as well as joint proposals by UVa and SVPEC to extend such work in the region in other subject areas. Brief descriptions of these projects follow:
- The final year of the “**My History Partner**” grant has generated powerful data on two fronts: improved teacher performance resulting from ongoing analysis of tapes of

classroom teaching in the region, and initial use of a new observational instrument, “PATH” (Protocol for Assessing the Teaching of History), which captures teachers’ success at conveying accurate historical knowledge to their pupils. Participating entities in addition to the Center for the Liberal Arts and SVPEC included UVa’s Miller Center for Public Affairs, Corcoran Department of History, School of Engineering and Applied Science, Curry School of Education, School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS), and the Center for the Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning. Under the auspices of this grant, 30 history teachers from the Southwest Virginia region participated in workshops, credit courses, and field experiences in FY14, including 9 teachers representing 5 of the 8 counties of the Coalfield region, including Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell and Tazewell counties. Total FY14 expenditures in the region from this grant were \$20,695.

- Teachers from the region continue to attend professional development activities at UVa. This year teachers came from Pulaski and Washington counties to attend sessions on the history of American religion and an introduction to Islam.
- UVa, SVPEC, and UVa-Wise collaborated on a proposal to offer a series of 24 courses to 360 K-12 teachers in Southwest Virginia. The goals of the project are to: improve teachers’ content knowledge, scientific data collection and analysis skills; teach Earth Science through inquiry-based approaches using innovative instructional techniques; advance pedagogical knowledge; integrate technology into instruction; and increase the number of endorsed Earth Science teachers. This “**Innovative Technologies in Earth Science Education in Southwest Virginia**” National Science Foundation proposal is pending, with a budget of \$1,999,902.
- SVPEC and CLA received a \$1,500 grant to contribute a substantial evidence-based practices component to the **Celebration of Success Conference** on July 24, 2014 at the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon. This “best practices” conference was designed to showcase and disseminate the progress of K-12 teachers in the nineteen divisions of Region 7 towards addressing urgent needs of the area’s children. Curry Professor Frackson Mumba and CLA Director Victor Luftig were speakers at the conference.

JEFFERSON PUBLIC CITIZENS ACADEMIC-BASED PUBLIC SERVICE

- UVA's Jefferson Public Citizens (JPC), a comprehensive academic public service program that integrates students' service and research, funded a student project in FY14 that focused on developing designs for the **Grundy Youth Center**. The ground-breaking project establishes a unique educational model: undergraduate architecture students work collaboratively with a Southwestern Virginia community to design and build a public community center that facilitates support for at-risk teens.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity*, published in 2012, promotes entrepreneurial activity by inspiring collective action, impacting policies, fostering regional networks, building on region's assets, and seeking new investments. The Blueprint was cited by Virginia's Rural Jobs Council as a model for the state and APP, through Appalachian Ventures, led/is leading several initiatives. The FY 14 implementation activities include:

- Hosted the second annual **Opportunity Summit** that attracted 57 potential entrepreneurs.
- Launched the "**Entrepreneurship Challenge**," a business plan competition sponsored by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and supported by the mySWVAopportunity Steering Team (formerly known as the Entrepreneurship Blueprint Steering Team). More than \$30,000 in business investment grants from Virginia Community Capital was awarded to new and expanding entrepreneurial ventures. Twenty-one contestants participated in the competition and six were awarded prizes. Eight out of the eleven who completed the program opened their business in Southwest Virginia
- Launched the **UVa-Wise Cup**, a business concept competition for UVa students. The first place winner represented UVa-Wise in the UVa Cup on November 22, 2013 in Charlottesville.

- Published a collection of short stories entitled “**Success in Southwest Virginia – Entrepreneurs Find Opportunity.**”
- Engaged the **Collegiate Entrepreneurs Organization** (CEO), a student entrepreneurship club on the UVa-Wise campus, in a consulting project with a local non-profit. The project focused on developing a social media strategy for the non-profit and improving the organization’s operational plan.
- Published the ***Blueprint for Sustaining and Attracting Advanced Manufacturing in Southwest Virginia***, in partnership with the Southwest Virginia Technology Council. The blueprint identifies strategies that will serve as a comprehensive plan to develop educational pathways and talent pipeline, enhance the manufacturing ecosystem, encourage innovation and promote the region as a hub for advanced manufacturing.

PLACE-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CLINCH RIVER VALLEY INITIATIVE

- The **Clinch River Valley Initiative** (CRVI) is a multi-partner effort to build local economies in Southwest Virginia by leveraging the natural assets of the Clinch River. Website: www.clinchriverva.com.
- **Five action groups** have been formed to address key areas:
 - Downtown Revitalization
 - Clinch River State Park
 - Water Quality
 - Environmental Education
 - Downtown Revitalization and Entrepreneurship
- The UVA Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN), which coordinates and facilitates CRVI, continues to update the comprehensive **Clinch River Valley Initiative map**, <http://worldmap.harvard.edu/maps/clinch>.
- Monthly CRVI Steering Committee meetings were held to help guide the future direction of the Initiative with this 25 member consensus-based Committee as well as quarterly

CRVI member meetings. Action Group meetings take place in each of the five CRVI Action Groups, which each have volunteer chairs or co-chairs facilitating the groups. Continued planning for CRVI around fundraising, potential CRVI incorporation, coordination and communication, marketing and logo development and other efforts are taking place at the Steering Committee level. The **CRVI Action Plan** can be viewed at <http://clinchriverva.com/clinch-river-action-groups/>.

- A Financial Committee was created at the May 28, 2014 meeting by the Steering Committee. This group, made up of Action Group chairs, will review and manage the CRVI master budget, help write grants, and oversee short- and long- term financial planning.
- A **Clinch River Resolution of Support** has been circulated and adopted by many regional organizations and elected officials. A copy of the Resolution and the 34 current signatories (which are being continually updated) may be found at the website: <http://clinchriverva.com/resolution-of-support/>.
- Planning is underway for a **Clinch River Ecological Center** by an active committee including many members of the CRVI Steering Committee.
- The **Youth Coalition Oral History Float Trip** was held over the weekend of July 19, 2013. Plans are still developing for a 2014 Youth Coalition activity.
- CRVI Action Group **accomplishments**:
 - The Downtown Revitalization Action Group has been looking into ways in which the river can be leveraged as an economic resource. In an effort to form a regional identity to help market the area the **Clinch River Tourism Guide** was developed and will be distributed to businesses and tourist centers in the region. The mySWVAopportunity Steering Committee continues to provide resources for emerging entrepreneurs in a Clinch River Valley community. There is an upcoming training series this fall offered by People, Inc. with locations throughout Southwest Virginia. The training will include an awards competition providing cash for businesses.
 - The Town of Cleveland received a **\$799,880 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Grant** from DHCD.

- The Water Quality Action Group organized two **river clean-ups** in spring 2014 and removed 0.71 tons of trash with the help of 31 volunteers. Citizens brought 4.1 tons of household hazardous waste to four collections events. This group provided educational outreach and water quality literacy information at five local festivals. The group recruited students at Emory & Henry and King College to assist with conducting water quality gap analysis for portions of the watershed lacking adequate data. The group plans to hire a “RiverKeeper” to promote events, clean ups and overall awareness of water quality of the Clinch River. The yearlong CRVI Office of Surface Mining (OSM)/Americorps VISTA position and 10-week Summer Associate position have each been filled to help build capacity with CRVI and water quality.
- The Access Points, Trails and Campgrounds Action Group has installed kiosks and signs in St Paul, Dungannon and Cleveland. The **Public Access Points Best Practices** document, developed and distributed by the Action Group and the CRVI Steering Committee, continues to be used effectively by localities, communities, and organizations during the development of access points along the river. The three sites for access points that are moving forward are Old Castlewood, Cleveland and Buffalo. Other sites will be considered for additional access points throughout each county.
- The 2nd Annual **Clinch River Environmental Education Symposium** was held on March 23, 2014. The event boasted 9 speakers and about 100 participants, more than the inaugural year. The Action Group plans to continue this annual event in 2015.

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