



Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia

April 2012





Network Operation Center (NOC) for OnePartner's datacenter located in Duffield, Virginia.

Southwest Virginia

A region so rich in natural beauty, natural resources, a creative class of musicians and artists, and a network of sophisticated technology is a playground for budding entrepreneurs.

This is Southwest Virginia!

It is a place where one can find a desirable quality of life and opportunities limited only by the imagination.

The **Entrepreneurship Blueprint** is a strategy born of the region. Read on to learn how this region is harvesting entrepreneurial talent as a key economic development strategy. Engage with us as we continue the pursuit to . . .

Build the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem and develop a culture of entrepreneurship.

Grow entrepreneurs and nurture new ventures.

Promote the region as a vibrant entrepreneurship hub.

Southwest Virginia is home to business owners and young professionals including:

Front Cover:

Jacob Somervell, Associate Professor of Computer Science, UVa-Wise

Jody Lewis, Owner, G2K Games

Molly Slemp Accompanied by Tyler Hughes, Performing at Heartwood

Chad Baker, Owner, Baker Construction Company

Jeanette Easterling, Pilot, Alpha Natural Resources

Preface

Innovation has long been a part of the traditions of Central Appalachia and the Coalfields of Southwest Virginia. Whether it is in the creation of small businesses, the invention of new technologies, or determined, hard work leading to successful enterprises, the spirit of entrepreneurship has always been vital to the region's economy.

Entrepreneurship is the necessary stream of new ideas, new investment and risk taking that feeds innovation and regional economic prosperity. Entrepreneurship in Southwest Virginia is many things: it supports ecotourism, manufacturing, creative cultural activities, energy, education, non-profits and broadband infrastructure, resulting in inspired people, ideas, jobs and industries.

There has never been a better time for the region of Southwest Virginia to focus on entrepreneurship as a key economic development strategy. Significant investments throughout the area in broadband technology, research facilities and a host of downtown revitalization and asset-based initiatives make Southwest Virginia fertile ground for budding and expanding entrepreneurial ventures.

Fostering economic vitality requires a bold, carefully coordinated, broad effort. The *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia* represents the work of many remarkable people throughout Southwest Virginia and the Commonwealth who think that the opportunities for Southwest Virginia far outweigh the challenges. It is one of several developed for the region addressing regional needs and opportunities. It is fashioned after the nationally recognized *Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity* sponsored by the Southwest Virginia Health Authority in 2009.

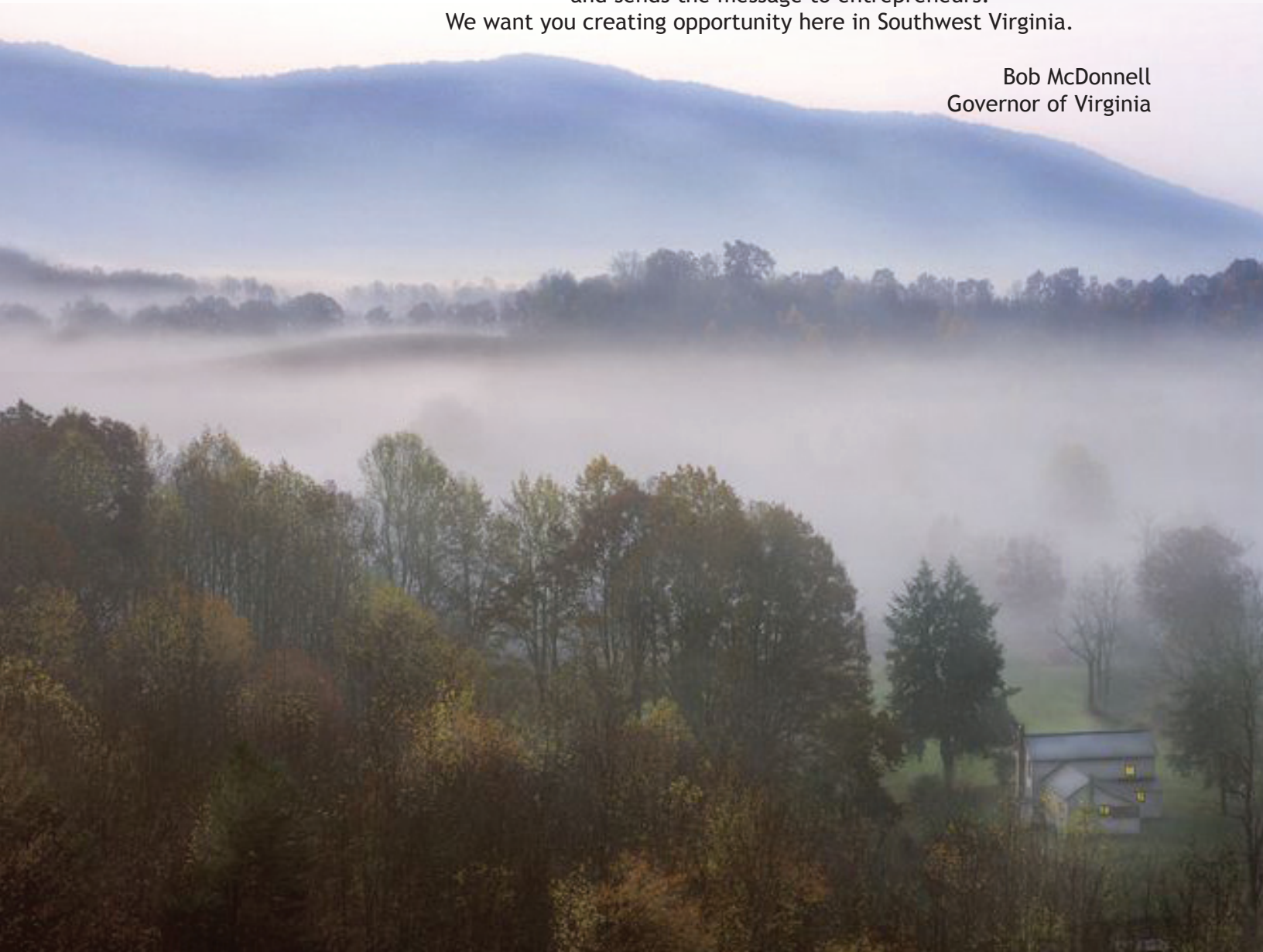
This Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth seeks boldly to spur our spirit of entrepreneurship, a spirit that runs deep in these mountains. It is designed to inspire collective action, impact policy, foster regional networks, promote diversity, build on our remarkable assets and seek new investment. We invite you to join in fostering a healthier, more prosperous population in Southwest Virginia and beyond.



Mountain Rose Vineyard, a family-owned winery located in Wise, Virginia, planted its first vines in 1996 on reclaimed mine land. Abundant in minerals, this special soil gives their award-winning wines beautiful rich colors and intense fruity flavors and aromas.

Virginia has a community of entrepreneurial individuals who,
in spite of the very real risk of failure,
put their energy, sweat and savings
into **creating opportunities** for themselves and others.
I declared 2012 'The Year of the Entrepreneur' in Virginia to recognize these individuals,
to study why they're successful in Virginia and
to inspire others in Virginia and around the world
to turn **big ideas** into reality here in the Commonwealth.
Southwest Virginia has an already thriving community
of entrepreneurs and the infrastructure and available resources
for more to **succeed** and swell their ranks.
As our local partners can attest, in Virginia we recognize
that in order to get people back to work,
we need to maintain a **business-friendly climate**
and to tell our story to make sure
that when great ideas **move forward** and turn into jobs
we're ready for them here. The Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth
and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia
sets the right priorities for **future growth**
and sends the message to entrepreneurs:
We want you creating opportunity here in Southwest Virginia.

Bob McDonnell
Governor of Virginia





Tim C. Cox

Virginia Coalfield Coalition



The Virginia Coalfield Coalition is an economic development partnership led by the Lenowisco and Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commissions.



Appalachian Prosperity Project

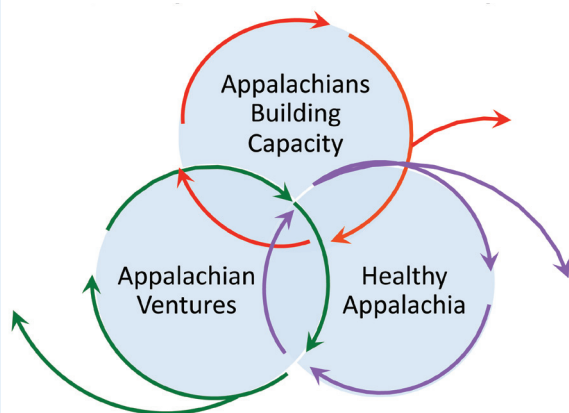
The Appalachian Prosperity Project (APP) is a collaborative partnership among the University of Virginia, UVA's College at Wise, the Virginia Coalfield Coalition, the private sector, and the Commonwealth to advance education, health, and economic prosperity in Southwest Virginia.

Appalachian Ventures, a key program of APP, seeks to increase prosperity and diversify the economy through entrepreneurship, increased management capacity, and thoughtful development of place-based assets.

www.APPProject.org

Appalachian Prosperity Project

Education + Health + Entrepreneurship
Jobs for a New Economy



The Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia is an **exciting** community-based initiative, supported by the Virginia Coalfield Coalition and Appalachian Ventures, to promote entrepreneurial **growth** and economic **prosperity** in Southwest Virginia. It will mobilize existing and emerging economic development efforts to create a thriving entrepreneurial community that will accelerate progress for both new and established ventures.

Blueprint Goals

- serve as a comprehensive plan to define priorities and guide actions;
- leverage existing programs and resources;
- fill identified gaps and capitalizes upon current strengths;
- leverage the expertise and experience of local and regional business leaders and citizens;
- demonstrate vision and collaboration;
- enhance chances for successful funding; and
- support unique regional activities and niche markets such as sustainable farming, local food networks, energy, innovation clusters, research centers, health care, technology, tourism, culture and outdoor recreation, arts, and others.

Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia

Vision

Southwest Virginia has a robust environment for entrepreneurship that retains and attracts talent, capital and ideas.

Mission

The Virginia Coalfield Coalition, through Appalachian Ventures, seeks to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in Southwest Virginia by fostering, creating and enhancing opportunities for entrepreneurship through collaborative partnerships.

Values and Guiding Principles

The entrepreneurial blueprint is built upon guiding principles that reinforce the unique heritage and values of the region. Recognizing that entrepreneurship is crucial to economic prosperity, particularly in rural regions, the blueprint:

- embraces individual talents, interests and risks;
- shows profound respect for our extraordinary natural resources and rich cultural heritage;
- recognizes that health, wellness, prosperity and education are all integrated; and
- commits to the creation of new business ideas, resources and opportunities.

“With strong institutions
of higher education,
and a tradition that supports
independence and
strong communities,
Southwest Virginia has a
good foundation
to become a hub
for greater innovation
and entrepreneurship.”

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator - Virginia

Entrepreneurship - An Answer to Regional Challenges

Historically, the economy of Southwest Virginia has lagged behind the broader economic development of the Commonwealth and the nation. This plight is not unusual for many rural areas across America. Although being nestled in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains brings advantages of outdoor adventure and recreation along with a unique culture, location also makes physical access to the outside world difficult. Despite the broadband super-highway opening up markets for the region's businesses, historical reliance on one or two industries, low levels of education, limited access to healthcare and a lack of a large consumer base create hurdles for the region to overcome.

Expanding our horizons and addressing the current barriers requires transformational change. The Entrepreneurship Blueprint offers just that – a roadmap for true transformational change.

The Small Business Administration indicates that small businesses in America represent 67% of jobs creation in the last 17 years. Small businesses created in rural regions contribute significantly to the stability of the region's economy, and if successful, stay and grow in the community in which they originated. The ecosystems created to support entrepreneurial ventures are attractive to creative professionals and these environments help to retain the region's youth in their hometowns/regions.

The Coalfield region is making tremendous progress by strategically investing in asset-based development and leveraging resources to promote entrepreneurship. There are five exciting initiatives currently underway. Each has a unique opportunity to bolster the region's economy by aligning regional, permanent assets with the passion of local citizens.

“At the heart of most regional economies
are the **innovative** capabilities
of small businesses
and their entrepreneurial leaders. In fact,
entrepreneurship is the **life blood**
of most efforts
to stimulate and **nurture**
local economies.”

David J. Prior
Chancellor, 2005-2012
The University of Virginia's College at Wise

Current Asset-Based Initiatives



The Crooked Road: Virginia's Music Heritage Trail celebrates the unique musical and cultural heritage of Southwest Virginia and enables visitors to experience authentic mountain music in the region where it was born. The 330 mile route passes a multitude of music venues where mountain music is an integral part of daily life.

www.thecrookedroad.org

The Heartwood Center is the gateway to Southwest Virginia's craft, music, food and local culture. Formed by a coalition of artisans, economic development groups, state government and regional communities, Heartwood showcases the region's cultural and natural assets and celebrates a region that is authentic, distinctive, and alive!

www.heartwoodvirginia.org

Spearhead Trails, also known as the "Adventure Playground of the East", is a multi-use trail system within far Southwest Virginia that includes equestrian trails, hiking, biking, off-highway vehicles and blueways. The natural beauty of the region, with its unmatched vistas, offers an endless variety of adventures for all ages and skill levels.

www.spearheadtrails.com



'Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable economic development of the region's communities by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational and entrepreneurial opportunities. Serving the 19 counties and four cities of Southwest Virginia, this craft advocacy organization seeks to help the region fulfill its potential as a nationally recognized arts and crafts tourism destination.

www.roundthemountain.org

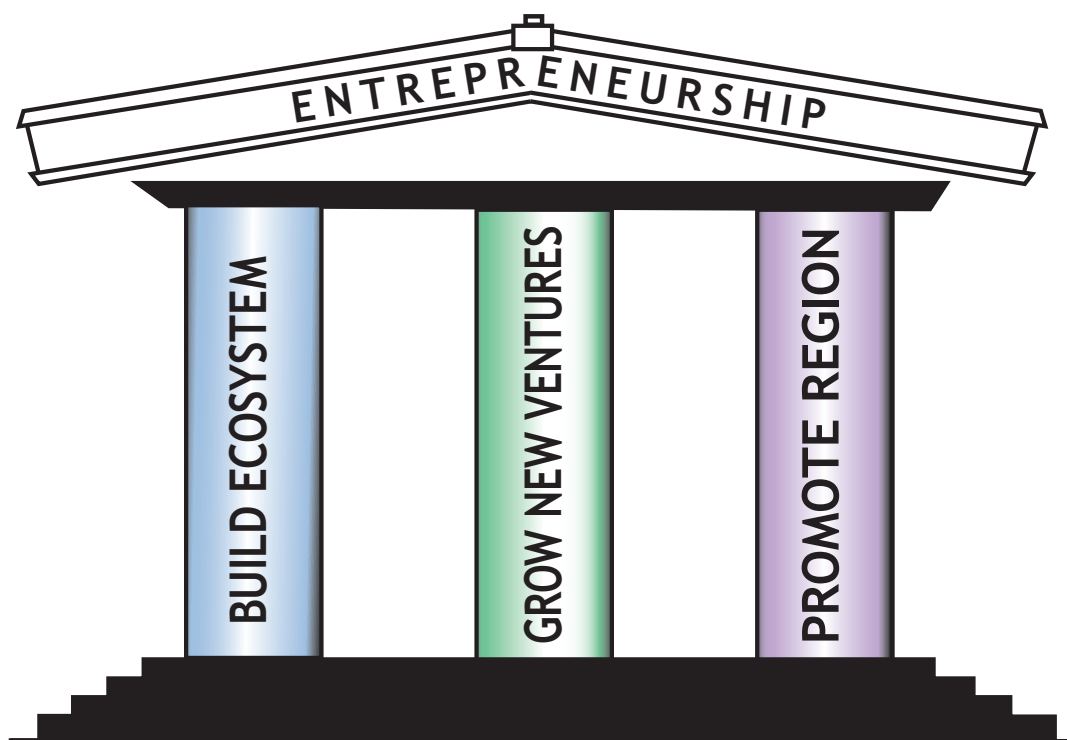
The Clinch River Valley Initiative is an innovative, pioneering and collaborative effort to build local economies in the Coalfields of Southwest Virginia, focusing on the Clinch River Valley—one of the most biodiverse river systems in North America. This grassroots effort is connecting downtown revitalization, outdoor recreation, entrepreneurship and environmental education along the Clinch River. The effort builds upon the unique cultural and ecological assets of the Clinch River to distinguish and create new possibilities in the communities along the Clinch as distinctive cultural and ecological areas, particularly around environmental education and entrepreneurship opportunities. Building on a vision for the Clinch River Valley, five action groups are developing action plans for five goal areas defined by the Initiative.

www.clinchriverva.com

The Entrepreneurial Spirit - Strategies to Help it Soar

These existing programs provide the foundation for a fertile culture of entrepreneurship. Additional entrepreneurship strategies will build upon this passion, leveraging new and existing resources, increasing youth engagement and enhancing entrepreneurial networks. The blueprint will empower communities in Southwest Virginia to:

- build the entrepreneurial ecosystem;
- grow entrepreneurship and new ventures; and
- promote the region as a vibrant entrepreneurial hub.



“Almost seventy percent of the jobs in Virginia are small-business jobs. If we want to **grow** our economy, we have to do more to **support** small businesses and entrepreneurs. Southwest Virginia has a great story to tell, and many positive assets to draw upon. I am confident that the Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia will help **empower** the private sector, **create** opportunity and produce more jobs for the region.”

Bill Bolling
Lieutenant Governor of Virginia

Strategy #1

Build the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Capitalize upon the existing skills, knowledge and resources of regional business experts, community leaders and economic development agencies

Take Action:

- Leverage the regional portal “myswva.org” to develop a one-stop business resource for entrepreneurs. Create on-line business resource kits for new and existing businesses.
- Create a dialogue with elected officials to ensure their support for entrepreneurial initiatives.
- Establish an Opportunity Summit to assess and showcase existing opportunities and strengths, uncovering possible new ventures and entrepreneurial talent.
- Develop a peer-to-peer small business mentoring program, engaging business experts as advisors or as individual coaches. Collaborate with existing programs, such as UVa’s Venture Forward and Virginia Tech Growth Partners, to model best practices.
- Promote educational programs, such as Darden’s Entrepreneurship Certificate that focus on business basics and entrepreneurship.
- Increase access to capital by hosting a Venture Summit. Conduct an Entrepreneurial Boot Camp and a Business Plan Competition to prepare for investment pitches.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- New entrepreneurial initiatives build upon a firm foundation of existing assets, capitalizing on current strengths, experience and opportunities.
- Experiential learning opportunities provide real solutions to real issues, often delivered in a crucial “just-in-time” mode.
- Seed capital investments lay the groundwork for future angel and venture capital funding, creating a robust environment for growth and capitalization.

Build a sustainable infrastructure and stable leadership for long-term viability of entrepreneurship initiatives

Take Action:

- Appoint an organizing committee to implement the blueprint. Empower the group to prioritize strategies, set a timeline, establish metrics and evaluation criteria and issue a call to action.
- Secure funding to support various initiatives and to underwrite the organizational structure.
- Create a Director of Regional Entrepreneurship position as a champion for blueprint initiatives.
- Identify, prepare and apply to a nationally-recognized certification program for regional entrepreneurship. Become a certified entrepreneurial community.
- Create partnerships with state government and other state-wide entrepreneurship efforts, leveraging their expertise and resources for the benefit of Southwest Virginia.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Dedicated organizational resources result in increased support for the region’s most promising entrepreneurial projects and talents.
- Successful implementation of these blueprint initiatives lays the foundation for future innovations and new ventures.

Strategy #2

Grow Entrepreneurs and New Ventures

Create an entrepreneurial mindset as early as possible - by encouraging students in elementary schools through college to think big, take risks and pursue their dreams

Take Action:

- Work with 4-H Clubs, Junior Achievement, YPO (Young Professionals Organization), REAL (Rural Entrepreneurship through Action Learning) and FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) to sponsor student business start-up competitions. Invite local investors and economic developers to judge and attend the competitions.
- If these organizations don't exist in the community, start them. Encourage the creation of entrepreneurship clubs at schools and on campuses.
- Encourage tech schools and community colleges to establish dual enrollment entrepreneurship programs. Implement "Business 101" classes.
- Develop job shadowing and internship programs. Focus on developing meaningful relationships between budding entrepreneurs and successful entrepreneurs.
- Showcase local businesses in the schools. Host business fairs and invite entrepreneurs to share their stories of success and failure.
- Encourage collaboration among various student entrepreneurship groups at area universities and colleges including:
 - Co-host workshops and/or video conferences for pre-entrepreneurs (how to get started).
 - Collaborate to create an "Entrepreneurship Week" to promote new programs and resources.
 - Identify relevant college courses, such as UVa's *Markets for Human Hope*, to identify grand challenges that address a public need in the region.
 - Bring together student entrepreneurs from several schools to work on a Jefferson Public Citizens project to address a public need in the region.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Business competitions create "a-ha" moments, opening doors to new possibilities and often resulting in sustainable ventures.
- Graduating high school and college seniors are well-equipped with basic business skills.
- On-the-job training, such as job shadowing and internships, lead to permanent employment - a win-win situation for students and business owners. Alternatively, students gain the real-world training they need to start their own ventures.
- Positive exposure to entrepreneurial role models lead students down new and exciting career paths.
- Cross-pollination of ideas and best practices at the student level nurtures new collaborations, capitalizing on the energy and inventiveness of the next generation of entrepreneurs.



Carolyn Moore from Franklin County.

Strategy #2

Grow Entrepreneurs and New Ventures

Encourage networks for entrepreneurs, providing opportunities to learn from each other's successes, risk strategies and life experiences

Take Action:

- Establish community forums to facilitate the exchange of ideas and to build networks including:
 - Regional networking events with an educational component
 - Young professional get-togethers
 - Industry cluster discussions
 - CXO roundtables
 - Peer-to-Peer networking
 - Meet the Experts (Got a burning question? Get it answered by local business experts)
- Support intrapreneurship - innovation within existing and growing businesses. Provide outreach to these companies to ensure their connection to all entrepreneurship initiatives.
- Acknowledge and address the risks of entrepreneurship. Rally around the challenges with "Crash and Burn" or "Start-up Mess-up" seminars.
- Create a community blog where entrepreneurs and innovators can share their challenges and ideas.
- Create a regional network of entrepreneurial cafes - physical locations suitable for drop-in conversations, collaborative brainstorming and elevator pitch events.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- New communities and mutually-beneficial relationships create pools of knowledge that successfully assist participants with problem-solving and mutual support.
- Unanticipated responses and radical innovations result when creative thinkers with diverse experiences come together around untapped opportunities and difficult problems.
- Tangible relationships between growing businesses and innovators create new products and new revenues. Adoption of an innovative mind-set helps these companies to be nimble as economic conditions change. Risk-taking and success attract young talent.
- Honest discussions about constructive risk-taking behaviors provide young entrepreneurs with models to optimize their time, talent, resources and expectations.



High Knob Landform.

Strategy #3

Promote the Region as a Vibrant Entrepreneurship Hub

Celebrate small businesses, new ventures and all innovation initiatives, positioning the region as a vibrant hub for entrepreneurial enterprises

Take Action:

- Create a media campaign to counteract negative regional stereotypes, highlighting instead the successes of the region's entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Establish an Entrepreneurs Hall of Fame as a permanent, physical and digital exhibit celebrating successful entrepreneurial ventures throughout the history of SW VA.
- Use social media to generate excitement among youth, entrepreneurs and business leaders. Establish programs of interest using podcasts, webinars and YouTube. Announce networking events, competitions and pitch events using social media networks.
- Produce marketing materials and a communication plan that highlight regional niches, clusters and resources, focusing especially on areas of collaborative strength such as Heartwood, the Crooked Road, Spearhead Trails, 'Round the Mountain and the Clinch River Valley Initiative.
- Expand marketing messages to promote entrepreneurship as a viable pathway for young people to stay in the region when they graduate from high school or college, as an alternative to moving away from the region to seek success and prosperity.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Young people are exposed to real examples of entrepreneurship in action. They recognize that entrepreneurship is rewarded and celebrated as a viable career path.
- Entrepreneurs, legislators and investors outside of SW VA will see the region in a new light - as a vibrant location for invention, innovation and risk-taking - resulting in new ventures, new talent, new investment and new networks.
- Communities within the region gain confidence and momentum, recognizing the importance of asset-based collaborations and the abilities of individual entrepreneurs to turn risks into successful ventures.

“Southwest Virginia is poised to become one of the growth regions in the Commonwealth.”

Don Purdie
Vice President of Operations
Data Ensure Inc.

Call to Action

Leaders from a wide-ranging group of economic development organizations and business ventures will bring the blueprint to life by prioritizing these strategies, developing a timeline, establishing metrics and evaluation criteria for each action item and implementing a call to action.

Defining Success

As these actions and networks become reality, we will begin to see new thought processes around economic development models that give rise to a new regional entrepreneurial identity. This innovative thinking will benefit existing and emerging businesses in local sectors such as manufacturing, mining, arts, culture and ecotourism, as well as in non-traditional ventures.

We will begin to see an integrated framework that unifies existing support systems, agencies, stakeholders and their missions and budgets. The fully executed blueprint will build upon existing programs, generating excitement and fostering opportunities. We will know that the blueprint initiatives are successful when:

- **New Capital** - Increasing amounts of capital are invested in local companies.
- **Fresh Ideas** - Business plan competitions thrive with active sponsorships and well-executed submissions.
- **Improved Economic Indicators** - The region experiences positive demographic impacts, such as increased graduation rates, decreased poverty, improved health outcomes and increases in per capita income and employment rates.
- **Engaged Youth** - Students at all levels enroll in entrepreneurship classes and clubs, driving up demand for these opportunities.
- **Vibrant Ecosystem** - The region exhibits an active entrepreneurial ecosystem, including increased numbers of networking and educational events.
- **New Growth** - There are increases in the number of new businesses, including more occupied leased and owned commercial space.
- **Corporate Expansion** - Existing companies grow and thrive, with sustainable workforces and engagement in regional entrepreneurial initiatives.
- **Wealth Creation** - All willing citizens have opportunities to participate, resulting in regional wealth creation.

Celebrating Business Success

Ceramic Technology, located in Tazewell County, Virginia, designs and fabricates custom steel equipment for a variety of industries across the globe. Formed in 1985 with only three employees, the company has grown to nearly 50 members with sales growing 15 to 20 percent a year over the company's 27 year history. Utilizing the near-diamond hard ceramic linings extends the life of steel equipment 10 to 15 times over non-lined equipment, according to owner Lee Osborne. Ceramic Technology pioneered this technology more than two decades ago. The company was awarded a U.S. international patent in March 2010 for its Sam-1 Static Pre-Screen technology. The recognized technology helps coal and mineral processing operations lower operational costs and has been installed in more than 400 processing operations. The company expanded operations to other mineral-rich countries including Canada and Australia with 20 percent of the company's total revenue now coming from international sales. Osborne has a strong love for Southwest Virginia and although Australia is interested in Osborne establishing a manufacturing site Down Under, he prefers to manufacture in Tazewell County and ship abroad.



The CTI SAM-1 Static Pre-Screen With U.S., Canadian, and Australian Patents.

The Family Bakery is a family-owned and operated business in downtown Gate City, Virginia. Allan and Vickie Roberts are the heads of the family as well as the business which gives it a true “family” atmosphere.

Co-owner Vickie has been cooking up delicious food for others for more than two decades. She ran a successful catering business until her role as a mom became too hectic to do both, so she opted to put her family first and put her business on hold. Vickie volunteered to cater church and school events and looked for any excuse to have family and friends over for a meal and homemade desserts. Now that her kids are grown, she and her husband, Allan (also known as “Cotton”), are thrilled to have this opportunity. The result is a warm, relaxing place to enjoy a cup of coffee and a choice of sweets with friends or family.

Glass Machinery & Excavation has been providing commercial construction and paving services in Lee County since 1996. With approximately 80 year-round employees and over 100 seasonal workers, it stands as one of the largest employers in the county. Greg Glass started the company in 1996 and has seen continued growth despite the uncertain economy.

Home Hardware was established in 1932 as a full-service general store serving the City of



Norton and surrounding areas. The business flourished as a general store offering diverse products ranging from hardware and sporting goods to toys. In 1945, the store was purchased by the manager, a member of the local Craft family, whose grandchildren own and operate the business today.

By the 1980's the store slowly began seeing declining sales resulting from the competition with corporate big boxes. However, approximately 10 years ago the owners noticed an increase in the number of tourists who visited the store to enjoy one of the few remaining downtown hardware/general stores. The

"Good Ole Boys", as they are known locally, decided that they should not "butt heads with the big guys" on price but instead to focus on customer service and project support. As their father always told them, "it doesn't cost a cent to be nice and go the extra mile" for their customers. Since that time, in addition to the normal hardware products, they began to offer a greater selection of some of the same items that can be found with national competitors.

In their own words, they are just an "old store trying to keep up with the times" and obviously they have kept up quite successfully. Their customers in the City of Norton wouldn't want it any other way.

JWT Well Services provides support services, including road construction and well-site development for the natural gas industry. Carl Rose took ownership of JWT Well Services, headquartered in Stratton, VA, in 1998, beginning with 12 employees. Since then, the company has grown to an operation employing more than 70 employees. JWT's customers include Range Resources and EQT Corp. In addition to construction, JWT delivers hydraulic fracturing materials, transports the equipment and trucks needed for drilling operations and performs site reclamation.

In order to help secure a future for his sons, Rose recognized the need to diversify his business. In 2008, he purchased the former McClure Lumber Company at McClure, Virginia and, in honor of a historic lumber company, renamed it Ritter Circle Lumber and Supply. Ritter Circle is a building supply company providing building materials for home and commercial construction. Currently, Rose is expanding into a warehouse adjacent to the original site where he will be able to provide better displays for his customers.

In 2009, Rose purchased 17 acres of property and a former coal company warehouse to establish Ritter Circle Metal Roofing. Ritter Metal is a manufacturing company that forms metal for buildings and roofing. Ritter Circle Metal Roofing provides and delivers metals to customers in Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee. Rose also rents out additional business space within the warehouse.

LaZa Modz, operating in Wise, Virginia, customizes Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 controllers tailored to each customer's personal preferences. The company serves the general public as well as celebrity clients such as, Chad Ochocinco, Paul George, Dennis Dixon, LaMichael James and supplies larger companies including DSPGaming. In 2008, Zak Sturgill started the company as a service to his friends and currently reaches over 200,000 people each month.

www.lazamodz.com

Virginia Carbonite has developed and patented a clean coal technology and is the first ever clean coal process that can remove 100 percent of mercury from coal before it is burned.

The company has rehabilitated a former coal load-out facility in Wise County. The process has been proven in two multi-million dollar pilot plants within the past twenty years to convert coal and other carbon bio-mass materials into a clean carbon product. It also produces at least one barrel of coal oil liquids that can then be sold to the oil refinery industry for use in making gasoline and diesel fuels. The project uses 100,000 to 500,000 tons of coal annually from local mining operations in addition to providing continued employment in existing mining operations and the creation of additional mining employment opportunities.

Two patents have been awarded for the carbonite and formed coke process, one patent is now pending, and two additional new patents have been filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Virginia. Carbonite has received an official Trademark Certification from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. This newly patented technology of converting coal into a mercury-free carbonite product and coal oil liquids could become the leading clean coal technology for the future utilization of coal throughout the world.

West River Conveyors and Machinery Company, located in Oakwood, Virginia, was founded in 1981 to manufacture conveyor systems and rebuild used mining equipment for the coal mining, sand and gravel and potash industries.

Over the years, West River has expanded its manufacturing business to include the buying and selling of used conveyor parts and speed reducers. West River supplies reducers and components for many different industries across the United States and abroad, including coal mining, sand, gravel, gold, silver, sugar, wood, paper and zinc.



Real 24K Gold Custom Controller.

Lebanon Physical Therapy is a privately owned practice originally founded in 1996 by Judy Easterly Lockridge. Lebanon Physical Therapy and Rehabilitative Services is committed to providing quality physical therapy to the residents of Southwest Virginia. In 2011, Judy sold this successful practice to Greg Cornforth and Robert Weatherly. Lebanon Physical Therapy continues its tradition of providing state of the art evidence-based physical therapy by offering water therapy, sports physical therapy, pediatric therapy and industrial rehabilitation.

Data Ensure Inc. has been providing information technology services to Southwestern Virginia since 1995. Based in downtown Norton, Virginia, Data Ensure serves many of the small businesses in the region by providing expert advice and quality solutions to technical problems. Data Ensure also provides remote data backup services. Data used by entrepreneurs is often stored on their computers and it is central to their business. In the event that data is lost (through disaster or accident), Data Ensure can restore it. This enables small businesses to stay focused on what they do best, thus facilitating growth. Data Ensure also provides IT consulting services for businesses that want to expand or become more efficient through technology.

Founded by Donald and Sharon Purdie, Data Ensures' mission is to help local businesses and communities with all their IT needs, while providing outstanding customer service and a forward looking vision.

“**Southwest Virginia** is unique
for the work ethic of its residents
and the independence of its business
community. With the
excellent cost of living, low tax base and strong labor pool, it
is an **ideal** place
for **entrepreneurs** to establish
themselves and look to grow and prosper.
Likewise entrepreneurship should play a
significant role in the
economic development
of the region and be assisted with
available resources of the area
and the Commonwealth.”

Mike Quillen
Founder and Chairman
Alpha Natural Resources

Participants

During a series of four community forums, economic developers, educators, healthcare professionals, government agencies, entrepreneurs and local business leaders gathered to spend time considering what entrepreneurship means to this region. The format was interactive and collaborative, building upon each participant's expertise and driving toward a consensus on the region's challenges and strengths. These community discussions, combined with dozens of follow up discussions, ultimately led to the creation of this comprehensive document supporting an asset-based strategy for entrepreneurial growth.

The following individuals provided input into the development of the Entrepreneurship Blueprint. The inclusion of names and organizations does not mean that participants agree with all statements in this document.

Jonathan Aberman, StartUp Virginia
Mandy Archer, Blue Ridge Crossroads SBDC
Jim Baldwin, Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission
Kitty Barker, Virginia Tourism Corporation
Jeremy Bise, ThoseGeeks
Diana Blackburn, 'Round the Mountain
Tim Blankenbecler, Mountain Empire Community College SBDC
Shannon Blevins, UVa-Wise
Whitney Bonham, Virginia Tech
Glenda Calver, SWCC Center for Economic Development
David Castle, Secor Inc.
David Cattell-Gordon, UVa
Louise Chagnon, UVa Roanoke Center
Todd Christensen, SW VA Cultural Heritage Foundation
Karin Clark, NanoQuantics
Jeff Cochran, Lane Engineering
Mark Crowell, UVa
Gary Crum, Graduate Medical Education Consortium
Bill Dingus, Clinch Valley Outfitters
Margie Douglass, Tazewell County
John Dreyzehner, Tennessee Department of Health
Frank Dukes, UVa
Sim Ewing, UVa-Wise
Greg Fairchild, Darden School of Business
Carolyn Ferrell, Bristol Chamber of Commerce
Tom Fleckenstein, Virginia Highlands Community College SBDC
Dallas Garrett, Blue Ridge Crossroads EDA
McKenzie Gibbs, VECTEC
Joe Gillespie, VEDP SW VA Representative
Don Green, Napoleon Hill Foundation
Eddie Greene, Russell County Medical Center
Christine Gyovai, UVa
Pamela Hale, PTAC - Richlands
Kayla Harman, UVa
Bob Harrison, C.R. Pate Insurance
Mandilyn Hart, Center for Appalachian Philanthropy
Ron Helton, Thompson and Litton
Tammi Holbrook, Center for Appalachian Philanthropy
Richard Hughes, TruPoint Bank
Spencer Ingram, Entrepreneur

Michael James, Lee County IDA
 Jean Jordan, VCEDA
 John Kilgore, Scott County
 Joyce Kinder, Southwest Virginia Community College SBDC
 Paul Kuczko, Lonesome Pine Office on Youth
 Doug Jackson, DHCD
 Marc Johnson, Darden School of Business
 David Kendall, UVa-Wise
 Tom Kennedy, Wise Lumber
 Lianne Landers, UVa
 Samantha Landingham, Heart of Appalachia Tourism Authority
 James Lawson, Edward Jones
 Lea Lofty, VDBA
 Pace Lochte, UVa
 Drew Lumpkin, Senator Mark Warner's Office
 Linda Marshall, Russell County Chamber of Commerce
 Rob McClintock, VEDP
 Gary McGeough, Bristol Chamber of Commerce
 Alice Meade, Russell County Chamber of Commerce
 Donna Meade, Virginia Cooperative Extension
 Carl Mitchell, Virginia Economic Bridge
 Sally Morgan, Smyth County
 Paul Nolde, Virginia Community Capital
 Jim O'Quinn, VCEDA
 Nathan Ormes, Cliffhanger Ranch
 Travis Perry, Dungannon Development Commission
 Bryan Phipps, People Inc.
 David Prior, UVa-Wise
 John Provo, Virginia Tech
 Kevin Pujanauski, Student Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED)
 Marcia Quesenberry, UVa-Wise
 Mike Quillen, Alpha Natural Resources
 Shaun Rai, Virginia Community Capital
 Sandy Ratliff, VDBA
 Karen Remley, Virginia Department of Health
 Ernie Roberts, Citizen from Cleveland, VA
 Ed Rogers, Clean Energy R&D Center, SVHEC
 Randy Rose, VA Tourism Corp.
 Jeff Sadler, DHCD
 Monty Salyer, Wise County Redevelopment and Housing Authority
 Kimber Simmons, Virginia Economic Bridge
 Skip Skinner, LENOWISCO Planning District Commission
 Josh Smith, People Inc.
 Robert Stolle, CIT Regional Growth Programs
 Jackie Stump, DHCD
 Stephanie Surret, Stephanie Surret & Associates
 Roger Sword, Russell County IDA
 Keith Thompson, Manufacturing Technology Center
 Sharon Van Dyke, Kissito Healthcare
 Sue Wagner, Virginia Highlands Community College SBDC
 Wayne Waldrop, VDBA
 Teresa Walker, Virginia Community Capital
 Michael Wampler, Southwest Virginia Regional Recreation Authority
 Senator William Wampler
 Steve Willinger, Bristol SCORE
 Karen Witcher, Bristol Chamber of Commerce
 Buzz Witt, City of Norton

Inventory of Entrepreneurial/Small Business Resources

		Business Support Organization							
		Appalachian One-Stop Workforce Center & Richlands Business Incubator	Bluestone Workforce Training Center and Business Incubator	Center for Innovative Technology	Chambers of Commerce	Lonesome Pine Tourist & Information Center	Manufacturing Technology Center	People Incorporated of Virginia	Pioneer Centers for Business Opportunity
Business Support Activity									
Technical Assistance									
	Business Plan Assistance							X	X
	Marketing Analysis/Research				X		X		X
	Marketing Collateral Development								X
	Marketing Strategy Development						X		X
	Inventory of Community Assets				X	X			
	Patent Research								X
	Legal Guidance								X
	Accounting/Financial Guidance							X	X
	Strategic Planning					X		X	X
	International Trade Assistance								X
	Government Contracting Assistance								X
	Disaster Preparedness								
Capital									
	Microenterprise Stage Funding			X				X	
	Venture Stage Funding (Venture Capital Funds/Angel/etc.)							X	
	Loan Guarantees								
Culture and Education									
	Mentoring			X	X		X	X	
	Business Plan Competitions			X					X
	Celebrations of Successful Entrepreneurs			X	X	X		X	X
	Business Basics - Training/Workshops for Small Business	X	X	X	X			X	X
	Educational Campaigns - Middle School/HS to promote Entrepreneurship							X	
	Networking Opportunities		X	X	X	X	X		X
Infrastructure									
	Collective access to Broadband		X	X					
	Incubators		X	X					X

Contact information for each support organization listed above, as well as many others, may be found on the following pages.

Planning District Commissions 1 & 2	Procurement Technical Assistance Center	Return to Roots	'Round the Mountain - Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network	SCORE	Small Business Development Centers	Southwestern Virginia Technology Council	Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps	Southwest Virginia Workforce Investment Board	Tazewell County Economic Development & Tourism	Virginia Business Information Center	Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority	Virginia Community Capital	Virginia Department of Business Assistance	Virginia Economic Development Partnership	Virginia Tourism Corporation
			X	X	X					X		X			X
	X			X	X								X		X
			X		X								X		X
	X		X	X	X							X	X		X
X					X			X			X			X	X
					X										
					X							X			
				X	X				X			X	X		X
				X	X									X	
	X			X	X			X					X		
X					X		X						X		
													X		
		X	X	X						X					
					X										
		X		X	X	X									
	X		X	X	X	X							X		
				X	X			X							
X		X	X	X		X		X	X			X		X	X
X		X													
X					X				X				X		

Business Resources

Economic Development

Jurisdiction	Name	Email	Phone
Buchanan County	Craig Horn	rchorn@bvunet.net	(276) 597-7907
City of Norton	Fred Ramey	fredr@nortonva.org	(540) 679-1160
Dickenson County	Charlotte Mullins	charlotte.mullins@ida.dcwin.org	(276) 926-1619
Lee County	Michael James	mjames@co.lee.state.va.us	(276) 346-7766
Russell County	Harry Rutherford	russellcountyida@bvunet.net	(276) 971-0173
Scott County	John Kilgore	jkilgore@scottcountyva.com	(276) 386-2525
Tazewell County	Margie Douglass	mdouglass@tazewellcounty.org	(276) 988-1270
VCEDA	Jonathan Belcher	jonathan@vaceda.org	(276) 889-0381
Wise County	Carl Snodgrass	econdev@wisecounty.org	(276) 328-2321

Chamber of Commerce (Towns and Counties)

Jurisdiction	Name	Email	Phone
Buchanan County	Mary Belcher	bcchamber1@verizon.net	(276) 935-4147
Dickenson County	Rita Surratt	chamberdickenson@yahoo.com	(276) 926-6074
Lee County	Rita McCann	leetreas@co.lee.state.va.us	(276) 337-9277
Russell County	Linda Marshall	lindatate@bvunet.net	(276) 889-8041
Scott County	Penny Horton	phorton@scottcountyva.com	(276) 386-6665
Tazewell County	Becky Duncan	info@tazewellchamber.org	(276) 988-5091
Town of Richlands	Ginger Branton	richlandschamber@roadrunner.com	(276) 963-3385
Wise County/City of Norton	Joyce Payne	wisecountycoc@verizon.net	(276) 679-0961



View from High Knob Landform.

Business Resources

Business Resource List			
Organization	Name	Email	Phone
Appalachian One-Stop Workforce Center/Richlands Business Incubator	Meagan McGhee	mmcghee@tazewellcounty.org	276-963-2660
Bluestone Workforce Training Center and Business Incubator	Pamela Necessary	pnecessary@tazewellcounty.org	276-988-8976
Center for Innovative Technology	Bob Stolle	robert.stolle@cit.org	804-240-0273
Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission	Jim Baldwin	jimbaldwin@bvunet.net	276-889-1778
Heartwood	Todd Christensen	Todd.Christensen@dhcd.virginia.gov	276-492-2424
LENOWISCO Planning District Commission	G.A. "Skip" Skinner	gskinner@lenowisco.org	276-431-2206
Lonesome Pine Office on Youth	Paul Kuczko	vareal@lpoy.org	276-523-5064
Lonesome Pine Tourist & Information Center	Anita Wade	gap.partnership@yahoo.com	276-523-2060
Manufacturing Technology Center	Keith Thompson	kthompson@wcc.vccs.edu	276-223-4881
People Incorporated	Deborah Wagner	dwagner@peopleinc.net	276-623-9000
Pioneer Centers for Business Opportunity	Tim Blankenbecler	tblankenbecler@me.vccs.edu	276-431-7226
Procurement Technical Assistance Center	Carolyn Alley	pac.info@sw.edu	276-964-7334
Return to Roots	Carl E. Mitchell	cmitchell@vebinc.org	540-731-6800
'Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network	Diana Blackburn	info@roundthemountain.org	276-492-2408
SCORE	Joy Behymer	jdbmassage@yahoo.com	423-366-1930
SCORE	Steve Willinger	smwillinger@gmail.com	423-797-0355
Small Business Development Center - SWCC	Joyce G. Kinder	joyce.kinder@sw.edu	276-964-7345
Small Business Development Center - VHCC	Tom Fleckenstein	tfleckenstein@vhcc.edu	276-739-2515
Small Business Development Center - MECC	Tim Blankenbecler	tblankenbecler@me.vccs.edu	276-523-6529
Southwest VA Workforce Investment Board	Darrell Blankenship	dblankenship@wiaone.com	276-883-4034
Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps	Kristina K. Morris	kristina.morris@vdh.virginia.gov	276-274-0555
Southwestern Virginia Technology Council	Esther W. Bolling	ebolling@swvtc.info	276-679-7800
SWHEC/Int'l Trade	George Hiller	ghiller@swcenter.edu	276-619-4374
USDA	Travis Jackson	travis.jackson@va.usda.gov	276-228-4547
UVa Venture Forward Mentoring Program	Lianne Landers	lbl6u@virginia.edu	434-243-2196
UVa Licensing and Ventures Group	Michael Straighttiff	straighttiff@virginia.edu	434-924-2175
UVa-Wise	Shannon Blevins	sblevins@uvawise.edu	276-889-8184
Virginia Business Information Center	Heather McDonough	heather.mcdonough@vdba.virginia.gov	804-371-8230
Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority	Jonathan S. Belcher	mail@vaceda.org	276-889-0381
Virginia Community Capital	Paul Nolde	pnolde@vccva.org	804-344-5484
Virginia Cooperative Extension Service	Donna Meade	dgmeade@vt.edu	276-889-8056
Virginia Department of Business Assistance- Financing Authority	Linda Gilbert	linda.gilbert@vdba.virginia.gov	540-293-2602
Virginia Department of Business Assistance-Business Services	Sandy Ratliff	sandy.ratliff@vdba.virginia.gov	276-676-3768
Virginia Department of Business Assistance-Job Investment Program	Lea Lofty	Lea.Lofty@vdba.virginia.gov	276-676-5573
Virginia Economic Bridge, Inc.	Carl E. Mitchell	cmitchell@vebinc.org	540-731-6800
Virginia Economic Development Partnership	Joe Gillespie	jgillespie@yesvirginia.org	276-730-4709
Virginia Economic Development Partnership - International Trade	Diane Thomas	dthomas@yesvirginia.org	276-623-1536
Virginia Employment Commission	Gary Hale	gary.hale@vec.virginia.gov	276-679-9416
Virginia Employment Commission	Frank Taylor	cedarbluff@vec.virginia.gov	276-964-4007
Virginia Highlands Small Business Incubator	Jason Berry	jnberry@vhsbi.com	276-492-2060
Virginia Tourism Corporation	Kitty Barker	kbarker@virginia.org	276-466-8772
Virginia Tourism Corporation	Randy Rose	rrose@virginia.org	276-322-2044



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