



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

*Annual Report
FY2018*



Southwest Virginia Economic Development Partnership:
Appalachian Prosperity Project

UVA's Annual Report to the Commonwealth, FY2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Appalachian Prosperity Project* (APP) is a collaborative partnership among the University of Virginia (UVA), UVA's College at Wise (UVA-Wise), Planning Districts 1 and 2, the private sector, and the Commonwealth of Virginia (<http://APPProject.org/>). The project is designed to advance education, health, and economic prosperity in Southwest Virginia. Progress in FY2018 includes:

- UVA helped secure **\$2.3 million in new funding** to bring programs and services to the residents of Planning Districts 1 and 2. The total funding secured over the past eleven years is almost \$23 million.
- UVA provided **\$3.5 million from the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)** to UVA-Wise to increase enrollment in **targeted technology programs** and create a more robust culture of **entrepreneurship and innovation** in the region.
- UVA partnered with UVA-Wise, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, and the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission to **help recruit a 500-person technology company** to Southwest Virginia. The company ultimately did not choose the site but the process laid the groundwork for future collaborative economic development opportunities.
- The UVA Medical Center approved and funded a **primary health care clinic to open at UVA-Wise**. The clinic will offer UVA-Wise employees and students access to onsite UVA health care providers. It will also provide learning opportunities for UVA-Wise nursing students. This important asset will promote prevention and healthy lifestyles, improve health outcomes, and reduce sick days and costly complications.
- The UVA Center for Telehealth continues to add new sites to the region, with a **total of 26 sites online** and ready to deliver specialty clinical services within Planning Districts 1 and 2. **UVA provided more than 741 patient interactions in the region**, saving patients the travel time and expense involved in a 500 mile round-trip to the UVA Medical Center in Charlottesville. Specialty care services were provided in oncology, diabetes, infectious

disease, psychiatry, endocrinology, neurology, orthopedics, pain management, pediatric cardiology, surgery, rheumatology, wound care, hepatology, and dermatology.

- UVA Telehealth continues to **address the opioid crisis** in Southwest Virginia, facilitating opiate treatment training for primary care providers and establishing a partnership with The Health Wagon to pilot an addiction management program in the region.
- **UVA's Virginia College Advising Corps (VCAC) helped first-generation college students** matriculate to postsecondary education institutions, holding more than 1,000 one-on-one meetings with high school seniors and assisting 350 students with college applications. Students in the program received **more than \$2.5 million in scholarships**.
- UVA biology Professor Michael Timko partnered with UVA-Wise faculty member Ryan Huish on a project aimed at creating industrial hemp and medicinal marijuana varieties suited for traditional tobacco-growing regions. The biologists are growing industrial hemp on 10 acres of reclaimed strip-mined land owned by the College. They are **analyzing the impact of changing state regulations** on the rapidly evolving industrial **hemp industry**.

BACKGROUND

History

The Appalachian Prosperity Project (APP) builds on a formal commitment made in 2007 by UVA to the Commonwealth to help stimulate economic development in Southwest Virginia. The initiative resides in UVA's Office of Economic Development with UVA-Wise as a critical partner and influential local presence. This annual report is prepared for the General Assembly as stipulated in the Restructuring Management Agreement (<http://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 and grow companies, local leaders recognize the need for an educated workforce, a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, and widespread access to medical care.

Vision and Mission

The vision of the APP is to position the region for success in the global economy, while honoring its traditions and culture and leveraging its local assets. The mission is to address issues related to education, health, and economic prosperity, through collaboration and leveraging of assets.

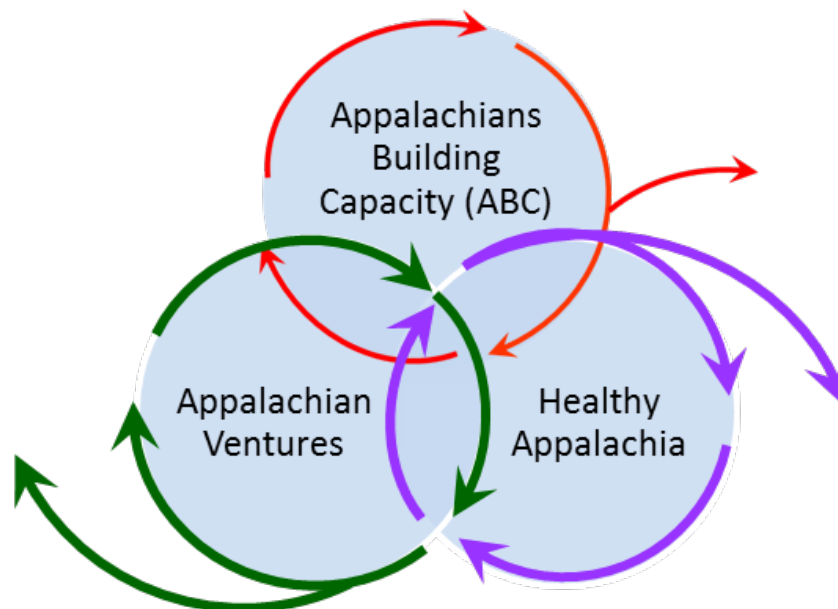
APP has led the development of blueprints and reports that create a vision for the region and highlight important early groundwork. These blueprints and reports include:

- *Blueprint for **Health Improvement** and Health-Enabled Prosperity*
- *Blueprint for **Entrepreneurial Growth** and Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia*
- *Blueprint for Attracting and Sustaining **Advanced Manufacturing** in Southwest Virginia*
- *Recommendations for Prescription Drug Abuse in Southwest Virginia*
- *The **Jefferson National Forest and Community Development** in Southwest Virginia*
(<http://aproject.org/resources/reports/#tab-blueprints>).

The *Blueprint for Health Improvement and Health-Enabled Prosperity*, updated in 2011 in partnership with the Southwest Virginia Health Authority, outlines 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 outlines strategic goal categories (e.g., overall health, health-related economic development, etc.) and organizational goal categories, including development funding, advocacy, and operations. The blueprint galvanized the region into action, increasing awareness and progress toward improving population health.

The Partnership

The APP uses a systems approach to advance **education** (*Appalachians Building Capacity*), **health** (*Healthy Appalachia Institute*), and **entrepreneurship** (*Appalachian Ventures*).



Appalachian Prosperity Project

The APP's broad range of programs impact the regional economy, providing infrastructure to transform conversations into initiatives. The partnership is unique because it connects disparate stakeholders from public, private, and government agencies in a coordinated and focused effort. All partners give and receive knowledge; together they incubate ideas, generate resources, develop programs, lead, and execute projects. This mutually beneficial alliance creates new knowledge to inform future community- and university-based shared research and partner activities.

The coalfield community identifies challenges, provides cultural understanding and history, and establishes strategic direction. The University listens to the needs of communities and their citizens; initiates conversations; supports strategic planning; provides innovation and evidence-based research and evaluation; collects and analyzes data; and helps secure funding. Virtually every school at the University has been involved, including the schools of engineering, architecture, business, education, nursing, and medicine.

PROGRESS IN 2018

HEALTH FOCUS AREA: ADVANCES IN FY2018

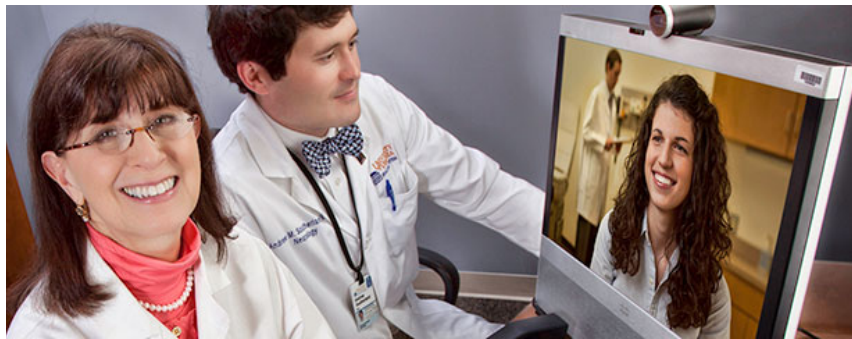
Health care delivery in the region

UVA provides health care to the citizens in Southwest Virginia through a number of different delivery methods including clinics located in the region as well as through a rich network of telehealth sites that link patients to specialty services at the UVA Health System in Charlottesville.

Primary Care Clinic: The UVA Medical Center approved and funded a **primary health care clinic to open at UVA-Wise**. The clinic will offer UVA-Wise employees and students access to onsite UVA health care providers, including a full-time nurse practitioner. It will also provide learning opportunities for UVA-Wise nursing students. This important asset will promote prevention and healthy lifestyles, improve health outcomes, and reduce sick days and costly complications.

Specialty Care & Prevention Services: UVA has been providing healthcare services in Southwest Virginia for more than 20 years. Strong partnerships with communities throughout the region continue to result in a robust health network that offers specialty clinical services otherwise unavailable to residents. With support from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), UVA has increased patient access to specialty care and prevention services.

Through the UVA Center for Telehealth, **more than 600 patients received access to world-class specialty services without having to leave the region.** In FY2018 UVA Telehealth provided 487 patients in Planning District 1 with specialty services in diabetes education, diabetic retinopathy, infectious disease, adult psychiatry, colposcopy, endocrinology, neurology, orthopedics, pain management, pediatric cardiology, plastic surgery, rheumatology, surgery, urology, wound care, and ostomy. The center provided 120 patients in Planning District 2 with specialty services in lung cancer screening, endocrinology, hepatology, psychiatry (adult, child, and family), dermatology, infectious disease, diabetes education, neurology, and wound care. Highlights of accomplishments in telehealth include:



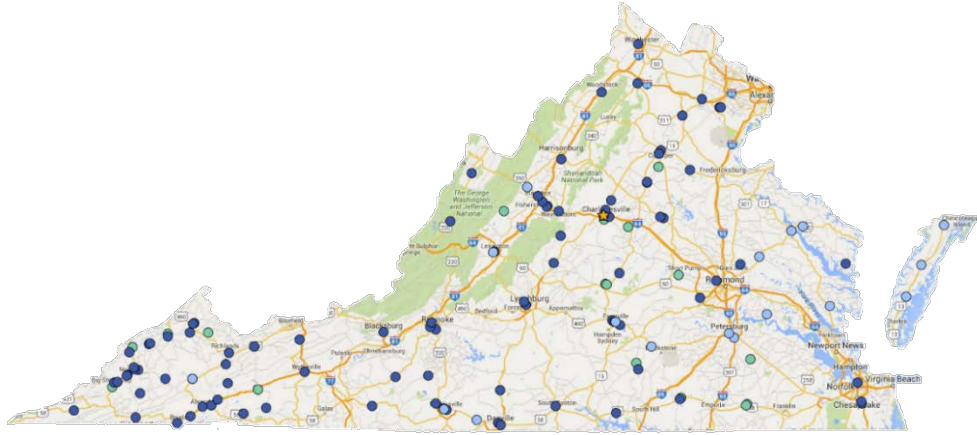
Professor and Medical Director for Telemedicine Dr. Karen Rheuban facilitates a telehealth consultation.

- UVA established four new clinics in Planning Districts 1 and 2 for the treatment of HIV, hepatitis C, pain management, and black lung disease.
- UVA Telehealth continues to add new telehealth sites to the region, with a **total of 26 sites** online and ready to deliver specialty clinical services within Planning Districts 1 and 2.
- UVA's Faculty Employee Assistance Program (FEAP) continued to provide telehealth-based education and support services in workplace settings within the region. UVA-Wise works with FEAP to provide employee access to individual and group encounters.
- UVA Telehealth continues to foster a culture of collaborative practice between nurse practitioners in the region and UVA physicians, securing an additional **\$200,000 in funding** from the General Assembly to increase telemedicine technology **for nurse practitioner support and guidance.**
- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced \$100 million in funding to support telemedicine in rural communities for low-income residents and veterans

nationwide. UVA will be a strong partner in this effort with Appalachia as a key focus area. Professor and Medical Director for the Office of Telemedicine Dr. Karen Rheuban will testify at an upcoming meeting of the FCC on the importance of this award and the urgency for support in Southwest Virginia.

- Telehealth programs to treat mental health, diabetes, developmental pediatrics, and strokes continued to expand in the region:
 - Telemedicine provided 72 child and family **psychiatry consultations** and 69 adult psychiatry consultations in Planning Districts 1 and 2 during FY2018.
 - Support from the Deeds Commission will create a telemental health initiative to develop a network of providers for treating mental illness through telemedicine. The General Assembly awarded \$2.2 million over 2 years to support the **Appalachian Telemental Health Network**. UVA Assistant Professor of Public Health Sciences and Director of the Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center Katharine Wibberly will partner with the Healthy Appalachia Institute on implementation.
 - Since 2008, UVA's Diabetes Tele-Education Program served 2,859 patients at 44 locations, with 265 patients served at nine locations within the broad Southwest Virginia region in FY2018. The program offers a series of four classes: *Basics of Diabetes and Medications*; *Nutrition Basics*; *Eat Smart – Change Your Lifestyle*; and *Glucose Control, Activity, and Stress* through a videoconferencing platform. The program remained open to employees at the Winston Ely Health and Wellness Center at UVA-Wise this year and served a total of 208 patients in Planning Districts 1 and 2.
 - Diabetes is a leading cause of blindness in Virginia. With initial support from the TRRC and the UVA Department of Ophthalmology, the UVA Health System and the Center for Telehealth continued an **innovative diabetic retinopathy screening program**. UVA developed partnerships with nurses throughout Southwest Virginia to acquire and send retinal images for rapid evaluation by UVA Ophthalmology physicians in an effort to obtain earlier diagnosis and prescribe sight-sparing treatment. In FY2018, UVA screened 166 patients in Planning Districts 1 and 2.

- In 2018, the Center for Disease control announced that 1 out of every 58 children in the United States will be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. UVA Telehealth provided 39 developmental pediatric consultations in Planning Districts 1 and 2 during FY2018 and continues to advance these services in Southwest Virginia as a **leader in autism spectrum disorder research and care.**
 - UVA provided its **1,000th telestroke consultation** in 2018, delivering immediate response from board certified stroke neurologists at UVA to patients across Virginia. This milestone includes 13 consultations in the emergency department at Norton Community Hospital during FY2018.
- ***Opioid Addiction:*** UVA Telehealth continues to **address the opioid crisis in Virginia**, facilitating opiate treatment training for primary care providers and establishing a partnership with **The Health Wagon** to pilot an addiction management program in the region.
 - UVA Telehealth secured \$120,000 from the Virginia Department of Health to continue telehealth-based **opiate treatment training for primary care providers** in the region. The Center delivered training through Project ECHO, a knowledge-sharing network led by expert teams who use multi-point videoconferencing to conduct virtual clinics with community providers (<https://echo.unm.edu/>).
 - UVA Telehealth secured \$250,000 in new funding from the Virginia Department of Health to develop a course on techniques for communicating the harmful effects of opioid abuse during pregnancy. The course will **prepare health care providers** in Southwest Virginia to effectively stress the seriousness of neonatal abstinence and will be offered beginning in FY2019.
 - UVA established a partnership with The Health Wagon to create a telemedicine network in Southwest Virginia to treat opioid addiction. Supported by a \$448,000 grant from the TRRC, UVA and The Health Wagon will establish a pilot program enabling residents to **receive specialty care in addiction management.**



A map of Virginia illustrates the UVA Telemedicine Partner Network, with Planning Districts 1 & 2 as an area of concentration.

- ***UVA's Cancer Center Without Walls.*** To address the unique challenges faced by cancer patients in rural areas, the University of Virginia Cancer Center partners with the UVA Center for Telehealth as well as communities and organizations in Southwest Virginia to create a virtual hospital — *UVA's Cancer Center Without Walls*. This effort provides patients with advanced cancer care and clinical trials close to home. Funding for the center is sustained through the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (TRRC). Initiatives include:
 - **Lung and Bladder Cancer:** Smoking in Virginia is creating a health crisis. Virginia's rate of adult smokers (19%) exceeds the national average, and in Southwest Virginia the rate is even higher (28%-30%). Smoking leads to higher rates of lung and bladder cancer, diseases that are overrepresented in the tobacco footprint. When detected early, both cancers can be treated with curative intent but are often detected too late, resulting in suffering, death, and costly medical expenses. The UVA Cancer Center utilizes telehealth technology to detect these cancers at early stages through screening projects aimed at reducing cancer morbidity and mortality among Southwest Virginia residents.
 - The Cancer Center partnered with the Center for Telehealth to expand the **nation's first telehealth mediated lung cancer screening program**. Buchanan General Hospital offered the pilot screening to high-risk patients and evaluated their need for a low dose chest computer tomography (CT) scan. The program is unique for its comprehensive screening approach and effort to connect patients to a system of support for diagnosis and early stage treatment.

Healthy Appalachia Institute

- Since 2006, the **Healthy Appalachia Institute Fellows Program** (HAI) mentored 47 students with a strong interest in solving healthcare challenges in the region. Many of the students are now in graduate school, medical school, graduate nursing education, or are practicing health-care professionals.
- HAI collaborated with the UVA Center for Global Health over the past eight years to engage a total of 12 UVA-Wise students in global health research. Three students from UVA-Wise became Healthy Appalachia Institute Fellows in FY2018.
- UVA-Wise students Rion Caldwell and Logan Baker will serve as HAI Global Health Scholars, joining the *UVA Minority Health International Research Training (MHIRT)* cohort. MHIRT offers short-term **international research opportunities to undergraduate students** from medically underserved populations.
 - Rion Caldwell, a junior biochemistry major and public health minor from Wise, VA, will travel to Limpopo, South Africa. She will work with students and faculty from UVA and the University of Venda to analyze alcohol-related sexual risk and develop intervention measures for intimate partner violence.
 - Logan Baker, a sophomore biochemistry major and public health minor, will work in the Southwest Virginia region to research community perceptions of needle exchange programs as part of a comprehensive public health strategy in Dickenson County, VA.
- HAI expanded public health education at UVA-Wise through the development of a **Public Health Minor** available in fall 2018. The minor will engage students in public health education and address public health challenges through academic outreach, research, community engagement, and collaboration.
- HAI collaborated with the UVA Cancer Center, the UVA Center for Telehealth, and the Virginia Cooperative Extension to implement the ***Survivor Network***, an initiative created to collect information on cancer survivor needs, link individuals to improved survivorship services and follow-up care, and develop new targeted support services through the use of telemedicine. HAI hosted a series of small focus groups to identify available resources and opportunities for increasing access to clinical and support services. During the spring of 2018, focus

groups occurred in Buchanan, Scott, Smyth, Washington, and Dickenson Counties. Funding for the network comes from a three-year grant of \$560,710 awarded by the TRRC.

- In partnership with the Virginia Department of Health, HAI supported development of a **health coalition in Lee County** as part of a strategic health improvement plan focused on priority risk factors identified by community members.
- UVA's Cancer Control and Population Health program funded a telehealth site at the Stone Mountain Health Clinic. UVA Cancer Center's Dr. Timothy Showalter will work with HAI to oversee telehealth programming at Stone Mountain and incorporate additional sites.
- HAI will provide administrative support for the **Appalachian Telemental Health Network Initiative**, an effort to build a region-wide network of hospitals, clinics and education institutions dedicated to utilizing telehealth techniques for improving mental health. This effort is in partnership with UVA Psychiatry, the UVA Center for Telehealth and the Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center.
- HAI partnered with UVA's Center for Diabetes Prevention and Education (VCDPE) to host ***Weight Loss at Wise***, an evidence-based Center for Disease Control program to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. Nine participants completed the program this year.

EDUCATION FOCUS AREA: ADVANCES IN FY2018

Virginia College Advising Corps

- UVA's **Virginia College Advising Corps (VCAC)** helped first-generation college students matriculate to postsecondary education institutions, holding more than 1,000 one-on-one meetings with high school seniors and assisting 350 students with college applications. Students in the program received **more than \$2.5 million in scholarships**.
- VCAC maintained partnerships with Central High School (Wise County) and Burton High School (Norton City), placing recent college graduates from UVA and UVA-Wise directly into the high school sites as advisers:
 - At Central High School, the college adviser held 646 one-on-one meetings with seniors and 39 parent/family meetings, arranged campus tours for 61 students, facilitated 94 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms, and assisted

83 students with SAT registration and 231 students with college application submissions.

- The college adviser at Burton High School held 506 one-on-one meetings with seniors and 22 parent/family meetings. She facilitated 46 FAFSA forms and assisted 37 students with SAT registration and 122 students with college application submissions. At each site, these numbers were higher in all categories compared to the inaugural year of the program.



Central High School (Wise County) students celebrate VCAC's "Decision Day."

Dreamwakers

- **DreamWakers**, a national education nonprofit founded by two UVA alumnae, uses free videoconference technology to **connect classrooms to top career professionals**. Each virtual session, called a "flashchat," illuminates the real-world applicability of course lessons and inspires students to prepare for personal and professional opportunities.
 - Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, DreamWakers served hundreds of 4th-12th grade public school students in Southwest Virginia from Scott County Schools, Tazewell Middle School, and the Graham Area Schools of Bluefield, Richlands, and Cedar Bluff. Students from Bluefield received their first-ever tour of the UVA.
 - In 2018, DreamWakers connected Southwest Virginia classrooms with Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, Foreign Service Officer Dan Mehring, UVA Professor of Surgery Jeff Young, and *Kode with Klossy* Founder Karlie Kloss.

- In partnership with JetBlue, DreamWakers flew Brayden Surface of Graham Middle School and Valencia Angles of Tazewell to Manhattan for their annual fundraiser. The event honored Surface and Angles as the 2017 DreamStudent of the Year and the 2017 DreamTeacher of the Year respectively.



Students from Bluefield, VA enjoy a tour of the University of Virginia.

- For more than a decade, UVA, UVA-Wise, and the Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium (SVPEC, comprised of 16 school systems) collaborated to improve teacher and student knowledge of traditional American history through a series of federal **“Teaching American History”** grants. The Curry School of Education (Curry) and the Center for the Liberal Arts (CLA) are working on a grant proposal to the Teaching Primary Sources program of the Library of Congress to sustain this work.
- The **Central Virginia Writing Project**, housed at Curry and managed by the CLA, provides multi-disciplinary support for educators that spans early childhood through university levels. For the second consecutive year, the Central Virginia Writing Project compensated teachers from the region to serve as judges for the 2017 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, the nation’s longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for teens in grades 7–12.

- Key instructional leaders within the region identified a need for improved teacher and student knowledge of algebra. CLA responded by collaborating with UVA Mathematics and Statistics Professor Jeff Holt on a grant proposal to the Honda Foundation.

Academic Partnerships and Research

- UVA biology Professor Michael Timko partnered with UVA-Wise faculty member Ryan Huish on a project aimed at creating industrial hemp and medicinal marijuana varieties suited for traditional tobacco-growing regions. The biologists are growing industrial hemp on 10 acres of reclaimed, strip-mined land owned by the College and are analyzing the impact of changing regulations in the state.
- UVA and UVA-Wise established a **memorandum of understanding** to implement a **course-sharing initiative** between institutions. The memorandum will be effective for six years.
- UVA and UVA-Wise drafted a white paper that considers a variety of solutions to challenges facing rural Virginia. Virginia Tech, Virginia State, and other universities are contributing to this white paper and will file a report with the General Assembly fall 2018.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOCUS AREA: ADVANCES IN FY2018

Entrepreneurship

The *Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity*, published in 2012, creates a roadmap for promoting entrepreneurial activity. The Blueprint was cited by Virginia's Rural Jobs Council as a model for the state and the APP and is leading several initiatives. Opportunity SWVA, the entity formed to implement the Blueprint, inspires collective action, examines policies, fosters regional networks, builds on the region's assets, and seeks new investments. Sources of project funding include a Building Collaborative Communities (BCC) grant, an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant, and a Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) investment. Many participating communities are eligible to secure matching funds. During FY2018, each community focused on tangible, momentum-building investments to strengthen community engagement and foster a spirit of progress.

The Blueprint continues to enhance the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem in positive ways, including:

Increase UVA-Wise Entrepreneurial Capacity

- UVA provided **\$3.5 million from the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF)** to increase enrollment in targeted technology programs at the College and create a robust **culture of entrepreneurship and innovation** in the region. The SIF grant included funding for key personnel hires and implementation of an entrepreneurship boot camp at “The Nest”. In FY2018, UVA-Wise hired an entrepreneurship professor/director, innovation center manager, and program coordinator to carry out the initiative.
- In November 2016, UVA-Wise received a \$15,000 Building Entrepreneurial Economic (BEE) planning grant from the DHCD for “**The Nest**” concept. The concept offers collaborative, off-campus space and critical resources for the pre-incubation of business ideas. A generous site donation in Wise will become the future home of “The Nest.” An additional \$40,000 BEE Implementation Grant will transform the site into a fully functional facility in 2018.
- To foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, UVA-Wise engaged students in two initiatives during the academic year:
 - In fall 2017, the Entrepreneurship Cup Concept Competition awarded \$1,750 to students with business ideas. Winning concepts included a smart mobile web browsing app, a hemp farm, a social media marketing company, and an alternative book purchasing system for colleges.
 - In April 2018, UVA-Wise students attended the Tom Tom Founders Festival in Charlottesville, VA. During the trip, twelve students toured HackCville. They also attended the American Evolution Innovators Cup, where student entrepreneurs pitched their businesses for cash prizes totaling \$20,000. A UVA-Wise team hopes to compete in 2019.

Expand the Opportunity SWVA Initiative

- The Opportunity SWVA’s steering committee now consists of 36 members representing 26 organizations across 19 counties and four planning districts. Steering committee members include representatives from regional university and college systems, workforce development boards, the private sector, small business development centers, economic development authorities, planning districts, and community action organizations.
- Opportunity SWVA keeps a strong online presence through its website (www.opportunitySWVA.org) which offers entrepreneurs and small business owners

information and resources to start and run a business effectively in the region. Additional communication and event promotion platforms include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and an email newsletter list of more than 1,200 subscribers.

- UVA-Wise hosted the **2018 SWVA Economic Forum** in May 2018 with 367 attendees from Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia. The Forum's theme **addressed talent quality and needs** in the region. Six regional start-up companies presented their concepts and appealed to participants for Kiva loan support, a non-profit fundraising platform aimed at alleviating poverty by connecting people through lending. The Kiva community-backed loan tool (<https://www.Kiva.org/>) generated **\$23,000 in new capital for three area businesses**: Adventure Mendota, Garic Stephens Designs, and Sugar Hill Brewery. The APP was a primary sponsor of the forum.

Encourage Entrepreneurial Competitions

- In 2018, three Southwest Virginia communities received \$60,000 each from the Community Business Launch Grant through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The Town of St. Paul used the funds to develop new start-ups and grow existing small businesses. The Entrepreneur Challenge Toolkit developed by Opportunity SWVA hosted competitions in 2018 throughout the region. These toolkits provided the foundation for the DHCD to implement the Community Business Launch program statewide.



Winners from the 2nd Entrepreneurial Competition in St. Paul.

- Within the past three years, **100 new businesses created more than 300 new jobs.**

Build Community Leadership Capacity



Gate City Theatre Project

Dante Sign Project

- ***Rally SWVA*** builds community leadership capacity and reinforces collaborative, entrepreneurial communities across the region. UVA-Wise provides management support and oversight for all *Rally SWVA* initiatives. In partnership with the DHCD, *Rally SWVA* worked with Dante, Gate City, Richlands, Big Stone Gap, Norton, Dungannon, St. Paul, and Haysi to **strengthen leadership capacity** through \$3,000 and \$5,000 mini-grant projects.
- In fall 2017, UVA-Wise hired four community builders to enhance entrepreneurial ecosystems in Dungannon, Haysi, Norton, St. Paul, and Buchanan and Tazewell Counties.
- UVA-Wise received funding from the Appalachian Regional Commission for an emerging leadership program titled ***Rise SWVA***. The program will **prepare a new generation for leadership roles** that impact community and economic development. *Rise SWVA* gathered input for program content and delivery during a breakout session at the 2018 SWVA Economic Forum. Participant selections will begin in May 2019.

The 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 (<http://www.clinchriverva.com/>).
- UVA's **Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN)** serves as convener, facilitator, recorder, administrator, researcher, fundraiser, and advocate for the CRVI. Informal surveys indicate the institute's involvement is highly valued by CRVI leadership and participants.
- Monthly CRVI Steering Committee phone meetings and quarterly in-person meetings continued to guide the initiative's future direction. The IEN facilitated four in-person meetings and eight conference calls of the Steering Committee focused on planning for continued grant funding. Each CRVI Action Group met regularly to plan and measure progress.
- Five action groups continued to address key areas: Clinch River State Park; Access to the Clinch; Water Quality; Environmental Education; and Downtown Revitalization and Entrepreneurship. Some of this year's CRVI Action Group accomplishments include:
 - **Access to the Clinch**
 - A **revised brochure** with an updated river access map is available and will be printed and distributed in the coming year.
 - **Water Quality**
 - The 4th Annual **Clinch River Valley Youth Summit** occurred on March 10, 2018. The Youth Summit was a great success, with mini-grants awarded by the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable to student participants. Students learned about water quality, riparian buffers, sustainable agriculture, and more.

- **Environmental Education**
 - The St. Paul community and the CRVI Environmental Education Action Team **won the 2018 SWVA Economic Forum Trailblazer award** for work on hospitality and youth.

 - CRVI's *Teach the Clinch* curriculum guide is available for download (<http://teachtheclinch.com/>). Intended for educators, the guide contains nearly 50 lesson plans, each tuned to the Virginia Science Standards of Learning that use habitats, species, and places within the Clinch Valley to introduce broader concepts to students.

 - The 6th Annual Environmental Education Symposium occurred on Saturday, May 12, 2018, in St. Paul, VA, and had a record number of participants.
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