



# APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION

## POWER AWARDS, JUNE 2017

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A complete list of all ARC POWER awards is available at [www.arc.gov/power](http://www.arc.gov/power)

### ALABAMA

**\$1,200,000** ARC grant to the Southern Research Institute (SRI) in Birmingham, AL, to establish The Prosperity Fund to foster entrepreneurial activity in a four-county area in Alabama that has been significantly impacted by the decline in the coal industry. With this ARC investment, The Prosperity Fund will connect entrepreneurs with seasoned private-sector business leaders and key representatives from state economic development agencies to provide the tools necessary to build high-growth companies and create wealth in Walker, Jefferson, Fayette, and Tuscaloosa Counties. SRI will focus on five business sectors that have significant potential in those counties: automotive, agriculture, primary materials, forestry products, and chemicals. The Prosperity Fund team will also provide entrepreneurs in the area with access to resources to raise capital, create and administer customer discovery and marketing programs, and obtain other training and support opportunities. This implementation grant builds on an earlier POWER technical assistance grant to SRI. The project is expected to create 80 jobs and leverage \$6.2 million in private investment.

### KENTUCKY

**\$1,000,000** ARC grant to Community Ventures Corporation in Lexington, KY, for the Build Appalachia Loan Fund project. The Build Appalachia Loan Fund will provide affordable capital to educational institutions in Appalachian Kentucky and West Virginia that will own, operate, and manage facilities that are eligible for New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC). The loan fund will provide gap financing for major projects and will attract primary and leveraged financing for the construction or renovation of college facilities. A strategic partner in the Build Appalachia Loan Fund is the Appalachian College Association, a group of 4-year private educational institutions that seek new sources of investment capital. The fund's focus will be in healthcare-related higher education, given that much of the region is medically underserved and there is strong demand for qualified health professionals. Additional financial support for the fund is being provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, and the Opportunity Finance Network. The Build Appalachia Loan Fund will leverage \$50 million in private investment in 5 projects, creating 500 new jobs in healthcare-related activities.

**\$497,305** ARC grant to Morehead State University in Morehead, KY, for the next phase of Shaping Our Appalachian Region Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (SOAR STEM) project. The project's goal is to develop a highly skilled STEM workforce that can foster job growth and business expansion in an area that has experienced major job losses because of the decline in coal. It has four main areas of focus: upskilling teachers so that they receive National Board Certification; training high

school teachers across 27 counties of eastern Kentucky to implement curriculum developed by Project Lead The Way, a nationally recognized developer of K-12 STEM education curricula and professional development; supporting the development of Mentoring Centers—partnerships between industry and local school districts that provide paid internships and mentoring for high school students and connect the future workforce with local employers; and support for maker spaces, entrepreneur hubs, and a Navy Seals coding boot camp that provide hands-on skill training and experience. The program will train over 80 teachers and impact 20,000 students over the first three years of implementation.

**\$300,000** ARC grant to Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (SEKCTC) in Cumberland, KY, for the Selling to the World Initiative. SEKCTC, along with Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) and the Discover Downtown Middlesboro Main Street Association, piloted an initiative in 2015 targeting eastern Kentucky artisans and craftspeople whose products are the type and quality that could support internet-based businesses for world-wide marketing and sales. The initiative seeks to boost the region's economy—which has been adversely affected major job losses in the coal industry—by growing local businesses, strengthening the entrepreneurial support system, helping “brand” products from the region, and promoting exports. The two-year launch phase of the initiative was privately funded by the New York Community Trust. The ARC investment will continue this activity, concentrating on artisan businesses from four coal-impacted eastern Kentucky counties, one county from northeast Tennessee, and one county from southwest Virginia. The program for artists and craft makers is expected to help create 30 new jobs and leverage \$297,000 in private investment.

**\$80,000** ARC technical assistance grant for Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Inc., in Somerset, KY, for the Restoring PRIDE in Kentucky's Appalachia project. PRIDE, along with The Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, Eastern Kentucky University, and Union College, will develop a tourism-based strategic plan for 41 counties in eastern Kentucky, an area impacted by the downturn in the coal industry. By the end of the 12-month technical assistance, the partners will decide upon a branding plan to attract public and private investment for increased economic activity via joint marketing initiatives, new branding, and heritage tourism activities.

## **NEW YORK**

**\$1,500,000** ARC grant to Alfred State College (ASC) in Alfred, NY, for the Biorefinery Development and Commercialization Center (BDCC) project. The project will help private and public partners leverage natural resources (wood) to create sustainable businesses using advanced manufacturing processes. It will strengthen a regional economy that has experienced the closure of a coal-fired power plant and job losses in coal supply-chain companies. The BDCC is a prototype facility that will develop and commercialize a process that extracts valuable chemical assets from wood and uses them to manufacture basic commodities and advanced technology materials, energy, and biofuels. The facility will spur additional investment, including business start-ups and full-scale biorefineries. It will be used by ASC, the State University of New York (SUNY), universities from other ARC states, and private-sector

bioenergy and biochemical companies. The college and its network will also provide training and technical services to coal-impacted companies as they seek to enter new markets, diversify their manufacturing base, and adapt their workforce. The facility will contribute to the creation of 15 new business and help 125 workers gain skills and retain or gain employment.

## OHIO

**\$1,200,000** ARC grant to Buckeye Hills Regional Council in Marietta, OH, for the Innovation Gateway Network of Appalachian Ohio project. The Gateway Network will provide an innovative program of learning, makerspace activities, and entrepreneurship development in three multi-use facilities, located in Somerset, Nelsonville, and Marietta, Ohio. Each center will be designed to reflect the specific needs of its local community, with access to commercial-grade broadband, a range of immediate job opportunities from employer-paid training to entry-level work, a technology hub, and flexible classroom and small group workspaces. The Innovation Gateway Network programming aims to boost employment and income; strengthen and diversify local economies; and grow, retain, and attract talent to the region through alternative learning and career pathways. In developing its offerings, each of the three sites will rely on the expertise of Ohio University's Innovation Center, a collaborating partner in the project. During the three-year project period, this project will help at least 205 adults obtain jobs, 55 students obtain a high school diploma, and 75 students make progress towards an associate's degree. The project will also help 130 participants earn additional income and/or complete an industry credential.

**\$1,000,000** ARC grant to Youngstown State University (YSU) in Youngstown, OH, for the Excellence Training Center project. The grant will allow YSU to renovate a facility to house the Excellence Training Center, an advanced manufacturing education and workforce training facility that will benefit a 14-county, three-state region (OH, PA, WV). The center will be developed as a 24/7 access, shared-use facility with a manufacturing training lab and group project and workroom space supporting displaced workers, students, manufacturers, and entrepreneurs. Regional partners for the project include Eastern Gateway Community College, Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition, Youngstown Business Incubator, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and regional workforce development boards. The center will help address regional employment problems caused by the downturn of the coal industry by providing requisite hands-on training for high-demand advanced manufacturing skills, creating a pipeline of knowledgeable and trained workers. It is expected the project will train 200 workers and create or retain 188 jobs. Funding from the State of Ohio is matching the ARC grant.

**\$450,000** ARC grant for Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth (APEG) in Nelsonville, OH, to establish an Appalachian Ohio Community Development Financial Institution (AO CDFI) to provide business loan products that are currently unavailable in southeast Ohio. In crafting and delivering these products, APEG will partner with regional entities like local development districts and private lenders. The Appalachian Ohio CDFI will provide gap financing for capital equipment and facility purchases, as well as longer-term capital financing. The loan products will support business growth that would not otherwise occur, thereby enabling new employment opportunities for dislocated coal economy workers. A number of national and regional banks that serve southeast Ohio have committed funds to support the

creation of the CDFI. APEG projects that 54 loans will be originated in the grant period, leading to the creation or retention of 227 jobs and leveraging \$2.75 million in private investment.

**\$300,000** ARC grant to Ohio University in Athens, OH, for the Social Enterprise Ecosystem (SEE Appalachia) project. Ohio University and its partners will work to strengthen entrepreneurial ecosystems that support the start-up and/or expansion, funding, growth, and sustainability of social enterprises in Ohio and West Virginia. Social enterprises combine the social mission of a nonprofit with the market-driven approach of a business to solve complex social and environmental problems in a financially sustainable and scalable way. SEE Appalachia will assist social enterprises that focus on health and wellness, education, and the environment. The Foundation for Appalachian Ohio and the Parkersburg Area Community Foundation will provide regional outreach and identify potential social enterprise clients, assist in building capacity for social enterprise work, and advise on venture investment decisions. The project is expected to assist at least 12 social enterprises to gain investment sufficient for start-up and launch, create 20 well-paying jobs, and leverage \$1.18 million in private investment in the first year.

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

**\$1,750,000** ARC grant to Fayette County Community Action Agency, Inc. in Uniontown, PA, for the Southwestern PA Development of a Local Food Shed project. The project will develop a robust local food shed that provides new and diverse economic opportunities to communities in 38 counties impacted by the decline of the coal industry across Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Maryland. ARC's investment will support the cultivation of four of southwestern Pennsylvania's existing agricultural industry clusters: sheep, lamb, and goats; poultry; specialty crops; and value-added processing. A diverse group of partners will establish a Regional Agriculture Advisory Council to steer the project's goals and objectives and sustain the local food shed efforts in the long-term. Major project activities will include comprehensive asset mapping to identify new products, technologies, and emerging markets; and diverse training and technical assistance to farmers and food entrepreneurs to assist them with increasing production, business skills, and marketing. Partners include the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture and a regional Community Development Financial Institution. It is anticipated that the project will serve 50 existing businesses, create 10 new businesses and 100 jobs, and leverage \$3.5 million in private investment.

**\$1,489,945** ARC grant to Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc., in Washington, PA, for the Appalachian Region Code (ARCODE) Initiative. The ARCODE Initiative will teach high-demand skills in software engineering and development to displaced workers from the coal sector in southwest Pennsylvania and West Virginia. It harnesses and combines the software training expertise of Mined Minds, a proven software development training organization, and CentralApp, an international software solutions developer. The two will work together to provide courses and certifications needed to qualify for high-demand technology jobs, enabling participants to work locally for companies that can be located anywhere in the world. Mined Minds will provide a supply of certified tech talent that program partners and others will be able to hire locally or contract for short-term, labor-intensive projects. CentralApp trainees who obtain certifications will have access to CentralApp Talent Exchange and will

obtain work from its customer base of thousands of active Salesforce customers, systems integrators, and consultancies. The project will train and place 71 workers in computer tech jobs at seven or more companies.

## TENNESSEE

**\$500,000** ARC grant to LaunchTN in Knoxville, TN, for the Entrepreneurial Education and Workforce Development project. LaunchTN is working with partner organizations to provide high-impact entrepreneurial support services to innovators, entrepreneurs, and early-stage companies. The programs help increase availability of and access to resources, grow and diversify the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and create sustainable financial roadmaps for organizations and companies. Activities will focus on expanding rural youth innovation and idea generation programs, increasing access to technology and business support that result in customer acquisition and strategic partnerships, building out a roadmap to the marketplace for entrepreneurs from east Tennessee colleges and universities; and elevating opportunities for independent makers and local craft manufacturers. The programs will primarily target the coal-impacted counties of Anderson, Campbell, Claiborne, Cumberland, Fentress, Grundy, Marion, Morgan, Scott, and Sequatchie. The project is expected to result in 31 new businesses and 60 new jobs created, as well as roughly \$154,000 in leveraged private investment.

## WEST VIRGINIA

**\$1,500,000** ARC grant to Bluefield State College (BSC) in Bluefield, WV, for equipment and program support for the Center of Excellence in Manufacturing Engineering (CEME). The leading-edge training and lab equipment will prepare existing workers and new students, including displaced coal industry workers, to meet the demands of new manufacturing technology and processes. In response to changing industry needs and emerging markets, BSC recently updated its degree and workforce training programs to offer the new Manufacturing Engineering Technology program of study. This project will build the capacity and equip that program so that it may train new students, displaced coal miners, and other workers impacted by the decline of the coal industry. The center will provide consultation, assessments, and other technical assistance to mining equipment and service companies to help them innovate, develop new product lines, and streamline existing services. The center will focus on collaborative robotics and offer services and training related to 3D printing, design for manufacturability, and adaptive manufacturing methods. These activities collectively will create a strong manufacturing sector in an area that has been heavily dependent on coal. The center will serve 15 businesses and 210 students and lead to the creation of approximately 100 jobs.

**\$1,017,308** ARC grant to Pierpont Community and Technical College in Fairmont, WV, for Powering Up the Aerospace Workforce in Coal-Impacted Communities of West Virginia project. The ARC grant will help increase the number of former coal miners who graduate from workforce training and two-year degree programs at the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center (NAEC) in Bridgeport, WV, a joint venture of Pierpont Community and Technical College and Fairmont State University. NAEC provides the state's only FAA-certified aerospace training, degrees, and certifications. The project will

maintain and build existing components of the NAEC program, including the Aircraft Structures training program, the Aviation Technician associate's degree program, and the Airframe and Powerplant certificate program. The project will also provide funding for the development of a new 12-month Avionics certificate program. The project rests on a strong partnership with private-sector aerospace companies. It is expected that 130 students will enroll in these programs, and 89 students will complete the various training programs over a two-year period.

**\$999,963** ARC grant to Region 4 Planning and Development Council in Summersville, WV, for the Linking Trails and Communities to Spawn Economic Growth: The Southern WV Bike Trail Network project. The investment will create a regionally connected bike trail system and build on the region's strengths and potential for outdoor recreation and increased tourism. The trail system will be located in Fayette, Nicholas, and Greenbrier Counties—areas hit hard by job losses in the coal industry—and will traverse sections of the Monongahela National Forest, the New River Gorge National River, the Babcock State Park, and other key recreational areas. The project will focus on building new segments and improving existing ones that will provide the greatest economic impact by facilitating access to towns, businesses, and other tourism anchors. Major activities will include trail construction and mapping, developing a trail maintenance program, and facilitating partnerships with local business incubators and regional development organizations to support business creation. The project is expected to attract \$3 million in new revenue through increased visitors to the area.

**\$899,791** ARC grant to PRIDE Community Services in Logan, WV, for the BuildJobs Initiative project. In an effort to develop a pool of construction trade professionals for the region, the BuildJobs Initiative will provide training programs with career pathways and re-employment opportunities in construction trades for displaced coal economy workers. It will also provide entrepreneurial support for participants who wish to create new businesses in the construction sector. PRIDE will implement the project in partnership with EnAct Community Action, MountainHeart Community Services, Southern Community Action Council, Coalfield Community Action Partnership, and Southern West Virginia Technical College. The BuildJobs Initiative will focus on five ARC counties in southern West Virginia that have been adversely affected by the decline in the coal industry sector: Boone, Lincoln, Logan, Mingo, and Wyoming. Within three years of the start of the project, 84 displaced workers will be retrained and find employment, and 15 new businesses will be created.

**\$20,800** ARC technical assistance grant to KVC Health Systems, Inc., in Charleston, WV, for the KVC Health Systems College project. The technical assistance will help KVC Health Systems develop a feasibility study for the KVC College concept, which envisions repurposing the former campus of the West Virginia University Institute of Technology in Fayette County into a specialized, accredited college with a focus on young adults emerging from foster care. The feasibility study will evaluate the site for redevelopment and determine the appropriate workforce and life skills programming that will benefit the region. The downturn in the regional coal economy and the closure of the WVU Tech branch campus provide an opportunity to recruit and create a skilled workforce and make non-residential educational programming available. Once the feasibility study and workforce plans are completed, KVC Health Systems will explore various funding opportunities to implement the full concept.