

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

APPALACHIAN Apps 

# TRANSFORMING THE REGION'S ECONOMY



**October 14–15, 2015**  
**Somerset, Kentucky**

An Appalachian Regional Commission Conference  
Hosted by the Commonwealth of Kentucky



# TRANSFORMING THE REGION'S ECONOMY



## Welcome to Somerset, Kentucky!

We are very happy you are here for ARC's annual fall conference. This year, we are recognizing 50 years of ARC's continued commitment to Appalachia. The conference's theme—**Appalachian Apps: Transforming the Region's Economy**—is an opportunity for us to highlight the emerging opportunities in our region and learn from our best practices. By focusing on e-infrastructure, workforce development, and cultivating next-generation leaders, this conference will help us serve and support Appalachia well into the future.



While in Somerset, we hope you will get a chance to reconnect with old friends, network with new colleagues, and share strategies for how to make our region strong. Together we will continue making Appalachia America's next great investment opportunity!

Sincerely,

**Steven L. Beshear**  
Governor of Kentucky  
2015 ARC States' Co-Chair

**Earl F. Gohl**  
ARC Federal Co-Chair

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

3:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m. Main Lobby	<b>Registration Desk Open</b>
5:30 p.m.–8:00 p.m. North Exhibit Hall and Theatre	<b>WELCOME RECEPTION</b> Join fellow conference attendees for entertainment by popular eastern Kentucky bluegrass band <i>Coaltown Dixie</i> . Hors d'oeuvres will be served.  The reception will be held in the North Exhibit Hall; entertainment will take place in the theatre.
	<b>Dinner on Your Own</b> Enjoy dinner in one of the Somerset area's many restaurants and eateries.

### THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

7:00 a.m.– Noon Exhibit Hall Corridor	<b>Registration Desk Open</b>
8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. North Exhibit Hall	<b>Breakfast</b>
9:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m. North Exhibit Hall	<b>Welcome and Opening Remarks</b>



9:15 a.m.–10:15 a.m.  
North Exhibit Hall

## OPENING PLENARY SESSION

### A Conversation on Appalachia's Future

The conference sessions will begin with a lively moderated conversation between Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear, U.S. Congressman Hal Rogers, and ARC Federal Co-Chair Earl Gohl as they reflect on the current state of Appalachia and consider the Region's future. To date, what have been the most successful strategies in helping build Appalachia's economy? What are the emerging economic, social, and cultural trends impacting the next phase of Appalachia's growth? What can we do to continue strengthening Appalachia in both the short term and long term? What does Appalachia's future hold?

**Moderator:** *Renee Shaw*, Producer, Writer, and Host, Kentucky Educational Television, Lexington, Kentucky

**Panelists:** *Kentucky Governor Steve Beshear*, 2015 Appalachian Regional Commission States' Co-Chair

*U.S. Congressman Hal Rogers*, Kentucky–Fifth Congressional District

*Earl F. Gohl*, Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, Washington, D.C.

10:15 a.m.–10:45 a.m.  
North Exhibit Hall

## Special Announcement

10:45 a.m.–Noon

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS I

(Sessions will be repeated in the afternoon.)

### Bringing Our Best Practices Forward: Investing in E-Infrastructure (Ballrooms C, D, + E)

Broadband Internet access is an essential component of a community's infrastructure, but many communities in Appalachia struggle to obtain services sufficient to meet educational, health care, and business demands. Panelists in this session will discuss strategies for financing and installing robust fiber networks in currently underserved communities, and tactics for helping local companies use these networks to improve productivity and revenues.

**Moderator:** *Lonnie Lawson*, President and CEO, Center for Rural Development, Somerset, Kentucky

**Panelists:** *Andrew Cohill*, President and CEO, WideOpen Networks, Blacksburg, Virginia; *Michael Curri*, President, Strategic Networks Group, Ontario, Canada; *Jacob Haug*, Director of Software Development, Kimmel and Associates, Asheville, North Carolina

### Bringing Our Best Practices Forward: Developing a Sustainable Workforce (South Exhibit Hall)

Ensuring that workers are prepared for today's workplace is a challenge for job seekers and employers alike. Panelists in this session will discuss successful training models that value employers as an integral part of program design and operation, using their expertise to design relevant curricula, provide instruction, and ensure that training meets the needs for expanding occupations and industries.

**Moderator:** *Jeff Whitehead*, Executive Director, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Hazard, Kentucky

**Panelists:** *Teri T. Brahams*, Executive Director, Economic and Workforce Development, Pellissippi State Community College, Knoxville, Tennessee; *Craig Clark*, Executive Director and Dean of Applied Technology, Wellsville Campus, Alfred State College, Wellsville, New York; *Mike Spearman*, Maintenance Technician, Yokohama Industries Americas South Carolina LLC, Easley, South Carolina

10:45 a.m.–Noon

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS I *(Continued)*

### Bringing Our Best Practices Forward: Cultivating the Next Generation

**(Ballrooms A + B)**

Across Appalachia, young leaders—those from 18 to 35 years old—are helping create vibrant, economically diverse, and healthy communities. As business owners, educators, health professionals, and local farmers, these emerging leaders are bringing a new energy and entrepreneurial spirit to the Region's economic future. Panelists in this session will discuss effective programs for young leaders that include both learning and taking action to help their communities overcome challenges and reach their economic development goals.

**Moderator:** *Dino Beckett*, CEO, Williamson Health and Wellness Center, Williamson, West Virginia

**Panelists:** *Jared Arnett*, Executive Director, SOAR–Shaping Our Appalachian Region, Pikeville, Kentucky; *Kierra Sims*, Education Team Member, Highlander Research and Education Center, New Market, Tennessee; *Stephanie Tyree*, Director of Community Engagement and Policy, West Virginia Hub, Charleston, West Virginia

Noon–1:15 p.m.  
North Exhibit Hall

### Lunch and Presentation

#### A Reflection: The Genesis of the Appalachian Regional Commission

Learn about the visionary leaders who conceived, developed, and implemented the landmark public policy that created the Appalachian Regional Commission—the 50-year standard for regional collaboration that has changed the face of Appalachian America.

1:15 p.m.–2:30 p.m.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS II

(Repeat of morning sessions)

2:30 p.m.–3:30 p.m.  
North Exhibit Hall

## CLOSING PLENARY SESSION

### Emerging Opportunities in Appalachia: Bit by Byte

What does Appalachia's future hold? Where are the emerging opportunities for economic development to serve the next generation? As we wrap up the conference discussion, we will meet some of the area's new leaders in technology, workforce training, and economic development. The discussion will focus on how comprehensive investment strategies in dedicated sectors can yield great results. The session will also help us identify who Appalachia's leaders for tomorrow will be and what we can do to support them.

**Moderator:** *Earl F. Gohl*, Federal Co-Chair, Appalachian Regional Commission, Washington, D.C.

**Panelists:** *Garland Couch*, Web Developer, Bit Source, Pikeville, Kentucky; *Justin Hall*, President, Bit Source, Pikeville, Kentucky; *Paul Hedgecock*, President, eCBiz Solutions LLC, Asheville, North Carolina; *Cortney Piper*, President, Piper Communications, Knoxville, Tennessee

3:30 p.m.

### Conference Concludes

ARC and the Kentucky Department for Local Government would like to thank the following sponsors for their support of the *Appalachian Apps: Transforming the Region's Economy* conference.



Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives



See all the conference info on your phone or tablet! Scan this QR code or go to [www.arc.gov/Appalachia15](http://www.arc.gov/Appalachia15).



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