



Appalachian Regional Commission
POWER Award Summaries by State
As of October 2018

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) has invested \$120 million specifically to diversify the economy in the Region's coal-impacted communities through the [POWER \(Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization\) Initiative](#). These 149 investments are projected to create or retain almost 14,000 jobs, leverage an additional \$403 million into the Region, and prepare thousands of workers and students for jobs in technology, manufacturing, entrepreneurship, agriculture, and other sectors creating a strong economic future for Appalachia.

ALABAMA (7 awards)

\$1,920,000 ARC grant to Beville State Community College in Jasper, AL, for the *Beville State Community College POWER 2016 Initiative*. The project will create a new Rapid Training Center at Beville State's Jasper campus that will serve as a regional workforce training and job placement hub in northwest Alabama—an area that has been adversely affected by the recent retirement of coal-fired power generation facilities and the closure of multiple coal mines. The Rapid Training Center will offer accelerated workforce training programs that provide industry-recognized credentials in six growing regional industries: welding, commercial trucking, rigging, hydraulics/pneumatics, healthcare, and print reading. Through a partnership with the Alabama Department of Labor, individuals directly impacted by the decline in coal production will be offered up to \$1,000 in scholarships and stipends to move them through the Center's retraining programming in the most efficient manner possible. In addition, Beville State is partnering with the AARP to tailor a portion of the retraining and placement support for individuals who are 50+ years old. The project will train 4,000 trainees over the life of the award, and will improve 40 existing businesses in the region.

\$1,750,000 ARC grant to the Alabama Community College System in Montgomery, AL, for the Alabama S.T.R.O.N.G. (Skills Training to support Real Opportunities for New job Growth) project, which will target the coal-impacted communities in ten ARC counties in Alabama. The project seeks to increase awareness about the current and future job opportunities available in the advanced manufacturing sector, a growing part of the regional economy. It will provide students and workers with life skills, remedial education, and cutting-edge technical skills and certificate training to prepare them for either additional postsecondary education or direct placement into high-wage and high-demand careers available in Alabama's advanced manufacturing industry. Overall coordination will be provided through the state community college system, with individual course offerings delivered by Beville State, Jefferson State, Lawson State, and Shelton State Community Colleges. The project will expose thousands of residents to the benefits of working in advanced manufacturing, and it will serve close to 4,200 participants and their families directly with critical life and technical skills gap training, new job opportunities, and access to vital social and financial services necessary to succeed. At least 2,101 workers/trainees and 976 students will obtain new or enhanced positions, 1,132 jobs will be retained, seven new jobs will be created and six new programs implemented, and all 77 participating businesses will be improved by having access to a more skilled workforce.

\$1,500,810 ARC grant to West Alabama Works (WAW) - Region 3 Workforce Development Council in Tuscaloosa, AL, for the *WAW 2020 Initiative*. The project will deliver job training services to fill critical regional workforce needs in the rapidly growing automotive and advanced manufacturing industries in western Alabama—an area that has been adversely affected by the changing economics of the regional coal economy. WAW has partnered with Mercedes Benz to develop a specific recruitment and training plan for positions in mechatronics and industrial maintenance at their facilities in the area. In addition, the project will create a “pop-up” Community Resource Center in Brookwood, AL, to serve as a hub for community engagement; renovate the Brookwood Technical High School and Training Center to offer credentialing services to students at four regional high schools for employment in hospitality and culinary arts, healthcare, and advanced manufacturing; and, through a partnership with Energy Alabama and the Alabama Automotive Manufacturer’s Association, develop business-specific plans that will speed the adoption of sustainable energy in Alabama’s automotive industry. The project will train 1,000 dislocated workers and credential 500 students over the life of the award.

\$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.

\$997,150 ARC grant to the Shoals Entrepreneurial Center in Florence, AL, for the *Shoals Shift* project. The funds will be used to offer a wide range of entrepreneurial programming, including improved access to capital and credit and development of strategies to increase the profitability of the region’s start-ups and existing businesses through more efficient use of broadband technologies. The programming includes training and activities for community members and student entrepreneurs from middle schools all the way to the university level. Activities will take place in a nine-county region covering parts of northwest Alabama, northeast Mississippi, and south central Tennessee. The project is expected to help create or retain 110 jobs, start 20 new businesses, and leverage \$10,000,000 in private investment.

\$77,680 ARC grant to the Alabama Center for Sustainable Energy (ALCSE) d/b/a Energy Alabama in Madison, AL, for technical assistance for a study of strategies to develop an advanced energy economy, with an emphasis on coal-impacted communities. It will identify the advanced energy industry of the coal-impacted areas, the available jobs within that industry, the resources of community colleges to support workforce training, and the career centers that can facilitate placement in the advanced energy industry of unemployed workers. The project will also support stakeholder engagement to explore and harness additional careers in sectors such as aerospace, advanced manufacturing, entrepreneurship, healthcare and information technology. Local sources will provide an additional \$79,857 to fund the project.

\$60,202 ARC grant to the Southern Research Institute in Birmingham, AL, for the development of a strategic plan focusing on entrepreneurship in coal-impacted counties in the Appalachian part of Alabama. Innovation and increasing business startup activity will be the primary focus.

KENTUCKY (24 awards)

\$7,474,100 total (a \$4,974,100 EDA grant and a \$2,500,000 ARC grant) to the University of Pikeville in Pikeville, KY, for the *Kentucky College of Optometry (KYCO)* project. POWER funds will be used to purchase equipment, instructional supplies, and other materials to help launch a new College of Optometry. The college will both grow the healthcare workforce and improve access to vision care in Central Appalachia. KYCO will be only the second optometry college in the Appalachian Region, and will primarily serve Eastern Kentucky, Southern West Virginia, and Southwestern Virginia. Within the first three years of the award, KYCO will graduate 60 optometrists, provide care to 12,000 patients, and bring \$26,000,000 in direct economic impact to the regional economy.

\$3,500,000 ARC grant to Big Sandy Community and Technical College in Prestonsburg, KY, for the *Eastern Kentucky Coal County Transformation* project. The ARC award will enable three eastern-Kentucky education institutions—Big Sandy, Hazard Community and Technical College, and Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College—to launch a comprehensive, employer-driven workforce development program focused on building the digital economy and strengthening digital innovation and entrepreneurship across a 16-county region in eastern Kentucky. The consortium—in partnership with Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) and the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP)—will establish educational programs that develop workforce skills in emerging regional career clusters such as cybersecurity, medical coding, and advanced manufacturing. The program will specifically engage dislocated workers from the coal industry through targeted advertisements, and will provide adult basic education as needed to ensure that these individuals can participate in the training courses. In addition, to support the development of a technology-driven economy beyond classroom training, the program will identify and promote a number of digital innovation hubs, providing facilities and resources to encourage entrepreneurial activities. Success coaches will be available to instill critical 21st century skills and provide support to nascent technology workers, and a regional committee will be established to monitor industry trends and best practices. The project will serve 300 trainees and improve the operations of 30 existing businesses in the first two years of the award, and will lay the groundwork for the development of a vibrant and lasting digital economy in eastern Kentucky.

\$2,750,000 ARC grant to the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) in Hazard, KY, for the *TechHire Eastern Kentucky (TEKY) Initiative: Developing a Technology-Driven Workforce* project. The project will serve young adults aged 17-29 who are out of school, and older adults who are unemployed, laid-off, or underemployed by offering several avenues to industry-led accelerated technology training, paid work-based internships, and employment opportunities in IT careers. This comprehensive workforce development initiative will train 200 new workers, create 160 jobs, and serve to bolster existing and emerging sectors that rely on a skilled information technology workforce in 23 Eastern Kentucky counties. The initiative will provide the trained workers necessary for a private technology company to expand its operations into Eastern Kentucky.

\$2,022,133 ARC grant to the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) in Berea, KY, for the *Economic Transition for Eastern Kentucky (ETEK) Initiative*. The ARC award will expand fast-track retraining and entrepreneurial technical assistance services targeted to dislocated coal workers; establish an intern program aimed at placing former coal workers in the energy efficiency

sector; and increase access to capital through a \$1,000,000 venture capital loan fund. The project will create 200 new jobs and 100 new enterprises, serve 500 existing businesses, and bring \$12,000,000 in leveraged financing to a 54-county region in Eastern Kentucky.

\$1,800,000 ARC grant to the Appalachian Wildlife Foundation Inc. in Corbin, KY, for the *Appalachian Wildlife Center Infrastructure* project. ARC funds will be used to install water infrastructure at the future site of the Appalachian Wildlife Center, a conservation education and research facility. The Wildlife Center facility—located on 19 miles of reclaimed mine land—will feature the largest elk restoration and viewing effort in the United States. The facility will be modeled on the successful Elk Country Visitor Center in Benazette, Pennsylvania. The project will position a 10-county region in the tri-state area of southeastern Kentucky, northeastern Tennessee, and southwestern Virginia as a national tourist attraction, and will create 86 new jobs.

\$1,500,000 ARC grant to Hazard Community and Technical College (HCTC) in Hazard, KY, for the *Intergenerational Training Center*. ARC funds will be used to construct a 14,700 square foot facility at HCTC's Lees College Campus in Jackson, KY that will deliver job training and credentialing courses focused around four emerging regional career clusters: information technology, telemedicine and health sciences, mechatronics, and eco-tourism/small business development. The project will leverage the capacity of the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Inc. (EKCEP) and the Kentucky Career Center to promote and market the program to out-of-school youth and displaced and underemployed workers impacted by the decline in the coal industry. The project will serve a seven-county area in southeastern Kentucky, and will train 295 dislocated workers and credential 228 students over the life of the award.

\$1,464,251 ARC grant to the University of Kentucky Research Foundation in Lexington, KY, for the *Downtown Revitalization in the Promise Zone* project. This project—partnering with the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky, the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, the Kentucky Promise Zone, Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), and the Kentucky Mainstreet Program—will help revitalize the downtowns of 8 distressed towns in the Southeastern Kentucky Promise Zone. The project will provide each community with tailored economic studies that identify economic opportunities, support strategic planning sessions to capitalize on those opportunities, provide financial support for key steps to implement those strategies, and build local leadership and business capacity. The project will create 24 new downtown businesses, 72 new jobs, and leverage \$800,000 in private investment.

\$1,305,200 ARC grant to the Appalachian Wildlife Foundation, Inc. in Corbin, KY, to install a wastewater treatment facility for the Appalachian Wildlife Center (the Center). The Center will be a major tourist attraction and a world-class education and research facility focused on wildlife conservation and re-use of reclaimed coal lands of Appalachia. Located on 19 miles of reclaimed mine land, the Center will feature the largest elk restoration and viewing effort in the United States and will boost tourism in a tri-state area. When fully operational, the Center expects to host over 835,000 annual paying attendees. The visitor center building will house classrooms, a museum of natural history and wildlife conservation, and a museum of regional history. An artisans' market, display gallery, and work area will highlight regional artists. Following the project's completion, 11 communities will be improved through revenues from tourism and 99 jobs will be created at the facility during the performance period. Additional funding for the Center is being provided through the Abandoned Mine Lands program of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

\$1,290,000 ARC grant to Maysville Community and Technical College (MCTC) in Maysville, KY, for the *KY-WV Regional Drone Technology Workforce Project*. MCTC will partner with Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College to deliver comprehensive training courses in small-air drone operation to a seven-county area in southern West Virginia and a 13-county area in northeastern Kentucky. Specific training activities will enable graduates to operate drones and drone sensors to provide in-demand commercial services -- such as the close-up inspection of fixed structures like power lines, utility poles, and cell phone towers. The project will serve 100 trainees over the two-year life of the award, will leverage \$14,000,000 in private investment, and will, in conjunction with a previous ARC POWER award, further strengthen the emerging drone industry cluster in the West Virginia-Kentucky-Virginia tri-state area.

\$1,250,000 ARC grant to the Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation in London, KY, for the *Kentucky Highlands Employment and Financial Training Program*. The ARC award will capitalize a loan fund to enable Kentucky Highlands to invest in local entrepreneurs at both the start-up and expansion stages of companies located across 21 southeastern Kentucky counties. In addition, ARC's award will engage the Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union (ACFCU) to expand their portfolio of financial literacy services to the project's service territory. Specifically, ACFCU programs will increase financial knowledge, security, and wellness through the provision of credit builder loans, debt consolidation loans, payday alternative loans, affordable non-prime auto loans, and 80/20 mortgage loans. The project will create or retain 200 jobs and leverage \$2,250,000 in private investment.

\$1,000,000 ARC grant to the Center for Rural Development in Somerset, KY, to support the Center's Community Oriented Access to Learning (COAL) program. This training program will serve 14 counties in southern and eastern Kentucky that have been severely impacted by the downturn of coal production. The program will assist unemployed and under-employed individuals from these communities in obtaining training and education that will support them in finding employment. Additionally, the program will benefit employers within the region by providing a more skilled workforce to meet growing workforce demands. The grant will support training and education in two growing sectors: Allied Health and Information Technology. The COAL program will also offer much-needed soft skills training. The COAL program expects that 50 Allied Health workers/trainees will obtain employment in a field related to their training, 110 Information Technology students will obtain employment and/or move into a higher-level position based on the training they receive through this program, and 26 broadband technology students will obtain employment and/or continue their education.

\$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.

\$1,000,000 ARC grant to the Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises, Inc., (FAHE) in Berea, KY, for the *Appalachian HEAT Squad* project. ARC's investment will be utilized to improve the energy efficiency of low-income homes in coal-impacted communities across a nine-county region in eastern Kentucky—while also creating entrepreneurial and skills-based training opportunities in the area. The project will partner with Hazard Community and Technical College and the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development (MACED) to deliver the entrepreneurial education and construction training component, and with two other training organizations to increase the skill-base for private housing contractors operating in the region. The project will create or retain 119 jobs, increase the quality, affordability, and performance of over 270 homes, and leverage \$525,000 in private investment.

\$1,000,000 ARC grant to the Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises (FAHE) in Berea, KY, for the *UPLIFT Appalachia Recovery* project. The ARC award will be used to finance three community recovery facilities that will support residents' recovery from addiction, provide needed health services, and create job opportunities in coal-impacted communities. These facilities will primarily serve three eastern Kentucky counties—each of which is located within the federally designated USDA Strike Force Zone. Specifically, the award will facilitate the development of a housing facility in Louisa, KY, that works with patients for 2-3 years and focuses on transitioning them from the center's care directly into an internship or job; assist in the creation of a 100-bed facility in Somerset, KY, that employs a peer-based care model in which patients in different stages of recovery work together to get and remain sober; and enable an existing facility in Jackson, KY to expand their services to an additional 990 people, to build a dental clinic, and to partner with the University of Pikeville for optometry care. The award will serve 5,060 patients, create or retain 63 jobs, and will leverage investment from USDA's Uplift America program and private investors.

\$600,000 ARC grant to Hazard Community and Technical College (HCTC) in Hazard, KY, to expand the college's welding technology program. HCTC's welding technology program is operating at capacity and the demand generated by regional employers exceeds the resources available to the college. The grant will fund renovations, equipment, and personnel, serving at least 12 more students per cohort in each short-term training. The training is developed in consultation with area employers. At the end of the grant period, HCTC expects 70 workers/trainees will obtain a job in the field for which they were specifically trained and 60 students will complete the credit-bearing training program. The expansion of the welding program builds on a prior POWER grant to HCTC to expand its course offerings in four other career clusters.

\$596,250 ARC grant to the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (SKCTC) in Cumberland, KY, for the Southeast Kentucky Revitalization project. SKCTC is working with strategic partners to develop an innovative series of training programs to develop and retrain the workforce and create economic sustainability. The goal of these programs is to prepare individuals for opportunities in emerging sectors and develop social and physical infrastructure better suited to take advantage of these developing economic opportunities. The first phase of the project will involve community engagement and other planning activities that will be used to refine the final training programs in the second phase. Training areas will initially include hospitality and customer service training, design and digital literacy, and training for next-generation contractors and builders. The project is expected to improve 29 businesses, create or retain 80 jobs, and train 165 people.

\$500,000 ARC grant to the City of Whitesburg, KY, for the Whitesburg Daniel Boone Hotel Stabilization project. ARC funds will be utilized to make immediate and urgent repairs to stabilize the historic, brick Daniel Boone Hotel—which represents the city’s rise after the arrival of railroads and the opening of the region’s coalfields. The hotel is a central component of Whitesburg’s economic development future and revitalization plans. After the structure is stabilized and renovated, it will be a regional destination and economic driver. The project will create 23 jobs, leverage \$2,000,000 in private investment, and will attract 9,900 additional visitors annually to the area.

\$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.

\$80,000 ARC grant to Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College in Cumberland, KY, for an assessment of investment opportunities in five Southeastern Kentucky counties (Bell, Harlan, Knott, Letcher, Perry), focusing on identifying redevelopment projects that also include potential entrepreneurship components. The assessment will include an executive summary that presents an overview of creative place-making in the five-county region, an economic and financial snapshot for

each county, and investment case studies from within Southeastern Kentucky as well as from outside the region. The findings will yield a set of recommended investments and opportunities. Additionally, a communications strategy will be released to help market these opportunities to local communities, developers, and philanthropies. The assessment will tie in the work of six POWER-funded projects in the area.

\$75,000 ARC grant to the Kentucky Center for Agriculture and Rural Development in Elizabethtown, KY, for *Local Food Supply Chain Development in Eastern Kentucky* project. EDA is also awarding \$468,635 to this project. Entrepreneurs using the Jackson County Regional Food Center in Tyner, KY, will receive technical assistance in areas such as business planning and marketing to help them reach targeted markets for their products.

\$75,000 ARC grant to Saving Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) in Pikeville, KY, for *Unleashing the Power of the I-Way!* EDA is awarding \$1,000,000 and ETA is awarding \$2,000,000 to the Commonwealth of Kentucky as part of this project. The Kentucky Institute for Economic Development will offer annual training in professional development and economic development best practices to professionals recruited by the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program (EKCEP) and other partners.

\$75,000 ARC grant to Appalshop, Inc., in Whitesburg, KY, for *Mines to Minds: Southeast Kentucky High-Tech Workforce Training*. EDA is also awarding \$200,000 to this project. ARC funds will be used to purchase digital multi-media supplies and equipment and to fund the creation of a technology and digital workforce development training curriculum in collaboration with area educators and regional employers.

MARYLAND (1 award)

\$48,000 ARC grant to Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, Inc. in Frostburg, MD, for technical assistance to develop an economic development plan for the I-68 region in Maryland and West Virginia. The *I-68 Regional Economic Partnership* project will include the development of a regional asset map, regional labor shed analysis, a target industry list, as well as county and regional lists of recommendations. The data and maps developed through the project will serve as resources for companies looking to build, hire, or expand in the region. Workforce training and job creation are two anticipated outcomes of the project. Local sources will match the \$48,000 in project funding provided by ARC.

MISSISSIPPI (1 award)

\$730,559 ARC grant to the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District in Starkville, MS, to support a project that will diversify the economy of four coal-impacted Mississippi counties (Choctaw, Kemper, Webster, Winston) by building a competitive manufacturing workforce. The project's first goal is to implement a middle-skill manufacturing training program based on the *Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway Model* to build up a skilled workforce in the four counties. The second goal is to strengthen existing *Pathway Model* programs in the region, especially work experience opportunities. Developed by the State of Mississippi, the *Pathway Model* consists of intensive career development, necessary skills assessment, and basic skills development with career enrichment activities geared toward in-demand, middle-skilled occupations. Training will be provided by three area community

colleges. At least six of the eight participating companies will be improved by hiring students and trainees. It is anticipated that 108 of the students who enter a training program will complete and obtain employment. All 165 incumbent workers will benefit from having higher level skills, and 31 of the unemployed adults will obtain employment.

NEW YORK (1 award)

\$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.

NORTH CAROLINA (4 awards)

\$1,250,000 ARC grant to the Southwestern NC Planning and Economic Development Commission in Sylva, NC, for physical improvements to the Western North Carolina Farmers Market (WNCFM). This investment will bring the market to appropriate standards and capacity to expand the region's food and agricultural economy. The project will strengthen the economy in an area that has seen job losses associated with the closure of a nearby coal-fired power plant and the conversion of another coal-power generation facility to natural gas. The infrastructure improvements will provide immediate benefits to 64 market-dependent businesses, will attract new clients and consumers to the market, and will provide space to incubate value-added businesses. Construction of a Value-Added Food Business Support Center, managed by Blue Ridge Food Ventures, will expand operations at the WNCFM to include entrepreneurs engaged in production and sale of foods, cosmetics, and natural products in an FDA-certified facility. Performance outcomes from this investment are expected to include 64 businesses improved, 36 businesses created, 50 new jobs created, 120 existing jobs retained, 150 students improved, 25 worker trainees improved, and \$700,000 in leveraged private investment. Additional funding is being provided by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture.

\$940,000 ARC grant to Mountain BizWorks in Asheville, NC, for a collaborative regional approach to expanding Western North Carolina's (WNC) promising outdoor gear manufacturing industry. With a focus on fostering entrepreneurship in this sector, the project will leverage assets within the region's coal-impacted communities to create and grow new businesses. These assets include a skilled workforce, the region's manufacturing heritage, and popular natural and cultural resources. The project will also support timely economic diversification in WNC's communities that have lost jobs and economic activity related to coal industry contractions, including the conversion of coal-fired power generating facilities, the closure of a key coal rail yard, and the loss of mining-related customers for local manufacturers. Strategies for boosting the outdoor gear sector include workforce development,

entrepreneurship and access to capital, supply chain optimization, and engagement of local economic development practitioners. To advance the sector, Western Carolina University will develop new degree and certificate programs and the area's community colleges will promote outdoor industry career pathways. Outcomes for this project are expected to include 100 businesses improved, 50 students improved, 45 workers/trainees improved through enhanced skills, \$4 million in leveraged private investment, 35 new businesses created, 150 new jobs created, 65 jobs obtained, and \$6 million in new revenue by participating firms.

\$100,000 ARC grant to Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine, NC, on behalf of the Community Colleges of Appalachia (CCA) to develop two strategic plans that address both opioid issues and entrepreneurial training in the coal-impacted communities served by the community colleges. The funding will allow two CCA colleges from each of the thirteen ARC states to participate in the plans' formulation. As plans are developed, they will be made available to all community colleges in the Appalachian region, fostering partnerships that address ARC's goals of developing and maintaining a healthy workforce and creating environments that support the growth of entrepreneurial enterprises. This project will help identify sources of funding that will help with the implementation of the plans.

\$99,000 ARC grant to the Piedmont Triad Regional Council in Kernersville, NC, for a strategic plan to address the current and future workforce needs of Forsyth and Surry counties—two counties that are experiencing challenges associated with the decline of the coal supply chain as local manufacturers lose customers in the coal industry. This plan will include a state-of-the-art workforce development and education center called the Dream. Career. Academy. The center's purpose will be to train workers to fit the needs of the local and regional economies and close the growing talent alignment and skills gap.

OHIO (14 awards)

\$2,000,000 ARC grant to Ohio University in Athens, OH, for the *Leveraging Innovation Gateways and Hubs Toward Sustainability (LIGHTS)* project. The ARC award will strengthen Southern Ohio's entrepreneurial ecosystem by leveraging the capacity of four strategically located "Innovation Hubs"—which provide facilities, equipment and design/engineering expertise to entrepreneurs—and five regional "Gateway Centers" that link local entrepreneurs to a broad array of support services throughout the ecosystem. The project will build on the successful TechGROWTH Ohio model, create 360 new jobs, 50 new small businesses, and bring \$5,000,000 in leveraged private investment to the area.

\$1,422,965 ARC grant to Hocking College in Nelsonville, OH, for the *Appalachia RISES (Revitalizing an Industry-ready Skilling Ecosystem for Sustainability)* Initiative. The project will leverage the expertise of regional education, business, and government entities to deliver comprehensive workforce training services in employment fields that meet current and anticipated industry needs in North Central Appalachia—including advanced energy, automotive technology, petroleum technology, welding, and commercial driver's license (CDL). The project will train 306 workers over the life of the award, and primarily serve a 17-county region covering southeastern Ohio and central West Virginia.

\$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.

\$750,000 ARC grant to Ohio University in Athens, OH, for the Social Enterprise Ecosystem (SEE) program to foster social enterprise activities in coal-impacted communities in Ohio and West Virginia. The grant will support a two-year continuation and expansion of the one-year SEE pilot project previously funded by a POWER grant. Social enterprises use for-profit business strategies to achieve specific social benefits. The project focuses on several key areas, including entrepreneurial and business development, creating a ready workforce, building critical infrastructure (such as broadband), leveraging cultural assets to stimulate economic activity, building capacity for social enterprises, and convening and facilitating impact investors' investments in the region. Through the grant, new or strengthened social enterprises will serve at least 32 communities. Key partners for the work include the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio, the Parkersburg (WV) Area Community Foundation, and Rural Action. The project expects to improve the performance of at least 42 social enterprise businesses and help launch 17 new ones. In addition, the SEE team projects that 38 new jobs will be created, and the grant will yield at least \$6 million in leveraged private investment.

\$538,200 ARC grant to the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation in South Point, OH, to foster the creation of a dynamic angel investment group serving the tri-state region of Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. The project will build the technical capabilities of the Tri-State Angel Investing Group (TSAIG) so that increased amounts of private funds can be raised and invested in potential high-growth companies across 19 counties in Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. The lack of angel capital is an impediment to entrepreneurial growth and job creation in the tri-state region. The expected outcomes for this project include 30 businesses improved, five new businesses created, 40 new jobs, 19 communities improved, and \$1 million in private investment that will be leveraged through ten new investors.

\$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.

\$119,460 ARC grant to Rural Action in The Plains, OH, to develop a strategic plan and feasibility study for the Appalachian Ohio Solar Supply-Chain Initiative. This regional planning effort will focus on building a stakeholder partnership that will develop a regional solar manufacturing supply-chain in response to a major utility's plan to deploy new solar resources in Ohio.

\$78,624 ARC grant to Buckeye Hills Regional Council in Marietta, OH, for a feasibility study examining broadband deployment opportunities along Route 33 in Ohio between Groveport and Belpre. Half of Appalachian Ohio's residents and business are without broadband service that meets FCC standards. This study will analyze service gaps, gauge demand in underserved communities, inventory existing assets, and develop strategies for deployment. The ultimate goal is to attract new jobs and investments in areas affected by the loss of coal-related jobs and establish a new "high tech corridor."

\$68,700 ARC grant to Rural Action, Inc., in The Plains, OH, for *Emerging Social Enterprise Development*. SBA is also awarding up to \$2.5 million to the Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth as part of this project. The project will expand social enterprise development in sustainable forestry and other emerging sectors by providing technical assistance and support to non-profits and private enterprises in idea generation, market assessment, and business modeling.

\$41,065 ARC grant to the Workforce Initiative Association in Canton, OH, for the Coal Business United Resource Network (Coal BURN) Real-Time Insights for Real-Time Actions project. The project will implement a formal multi-state planning process to obtain a better understanding of current and future

workforce opportunities (“real-time” data) in coal-impacted communities in parts of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The new multi-county, multi-state consortium will draw on data and actions that currently exist while obtaining information and data on specific skills needed in the workplace, helping the workforce system to more effectively enable dislocated workers to meet the needs of local businesses. The primary goal of the Resource Network in Ohio will be to connect workforce development, economic development, and education in a collaborative, seamless, and customer-focused partnership structure to deliver effective and efficient business services. Through the planning process, the model will be expanded into Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

\$30,000 ARC grant to Growth Partnership for Ashtabula in Jefferson, OH, to develop a strategic plan for Ashtabula County’s rail and port transportation infrastructure. Due to the downturn of the coal economy, service has been cut at the County’s ports and along its rail lines. The plan will inventory existing transportation infrastructure assets and review market needs in order to identify opportunities for greater usage of current assets by local businesses.

\$22,758 ARC grant to Youngstown State University in Youngstown, OH, to analyze and develop a project plan for the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation and Commercialization Center. The project is expected to serve 14 counties in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

PENNSYLVANIA (19 awards)

\$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.

\$1,227,447 ARC grant to the Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission in Altoona, PA, to expand the Alleghenies Entrepreneurial Ecosystem (“Startup Alleghenies”). Startup Alleghenies seeks to recognize, encourage, and guide entrepreneurs to create new businesses or expand existing businesses, ultimately generating new jobs and investments in the Alleghenies Region. The project will identify innovative, entrepreneurial individuals and connect them with coaches/mentors who will link them with resources and training to facilitate their success. Startup Alleghenies first received a POWER grant in 2017, with the work focused on Blair, Cambria, and Somerset Counties. The new grant will help the Alleghenies Entrepreneurial Ecosystem increase the number of new business starts by expanding the geography served to include Bedford, Fulton, and Huntingdon Counties and by enriching the offerings provided through the four existing pillars of the ecosystem including: providing coaching, creating places for entrepreneurs, establishing a network of resources, and producing events, gatherings, and trainings. The expansion is expected to create 30 new businesses, improve 20 existing businesses, leverage \$2 million in private investment, and create 150 new jobs. Additional funding for the work of Startup Alleghenies is provided by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies.

\$1,213,868 ARC grant to the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAPDC) in Altoona, PA, for the *Southern Alleghenies Entrepreneurial Ecosystem* project. The project will strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem of a three-county region in southwestern Pennsylvania through the provision of a wide array of diverse, wrap-around business support services, facilitated via business coaches and mentors. In addition, the award will renovate several existing entrepreneurial spaces in the region where much of the programmatic activity will take place. The project will create 125 new jobs and 25 new businesses, and will leverage \$3,750,000 in private investment.

\$1,200,000 ARC grant to the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Career Centers Inc. in Prosperity, PA, for the *New Start Retraining Initiative for Displaced Coal Industry Workers* project. The ARC award will deliver workforce training and job placement services to unemployed coal mine workers in eight southwest Pennsylvania counties and two southern West Virginia counties. UMWA will partner with the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics, the Allegany College of Maryland, and Pennsylvania Highlands Community College to design and implement training programs in strategic regional career sectors including commercial trucking, cybersecurity, and advanced manufacturing. Training will be complemented by job placement and other wraparound support to ensure that each trainee has maximum potential for securing employment. The project will serve 400 trainees over the life of the award.

\$1,035,000 ARC grant to Innovation Works, Inc. in Pittsburgh, PA, for the Western Pennsylvania Small Business Services for Coal-Impacted Communities (SBS) program. The project focuses on the revitalization of western Pennsylvania's coal-impacted communities through innovation and entrepreneurship by providing opportunities for those negatively impacted by contractions in the coal economy, including displaced individuals looking for new jobs or opportunities to start their own businesses, main-street businesses in need of business-support services, and new and existing manufacturing and technology businesses. The SBS is a joint initiative of Innovation Works/Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Southwestern Pennsylvania, Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Central and

Northern Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh's Institute of Entrepreneurial Excellence (IEE). Together, they will provide opportunities through co-working spaces, accelerators, and incubators to service business owners, independent contractors, and entrepreneurs in communities where there are limited resources. Targeting 24 coal-impacted counties in western Pennsylvania, the project is expected to help create 32 new businesses and 156 new jobs, retain 260 existing jobs, and leverage \$20 million in private investment.

\$948,673 ARC grant to Somerset County, PA, for the *Somerset County Fiber Extension Project*. ARC funds will be used to install 22 miles of fiber optic cable on existing pole lines that will allow a variety of business, residential, medical, and educational customers in Somerset County access to broadband services. The area does not currently have cable broadband available and DSL service is not offered ubiquitously. The project will serve 1,094 businesses and 3,962 households, and will act as an economic and tourism driver in the county.

\$670,000 ARC grant to Catalyst Connection in Pittsburgh, PA, for PA MAKES (Pennsylvania Manufacturing Assistance for Keystone Entrepreneurial Success). This initiative will be implemented in over 48 coal-impacted counties across Pennsylvania and use mini grants that will support small and medium manufacturing enterprises (SME's) in an "economic gardening approach" that provides targeted and direct assistance to companies. Catalyst Connection is the region's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), providing technical assistance to help businesses increase their competitiveness. PA MAKES' efforts to diversify and grow SMEs will include building SMEs' capacity, improving efficiencies and demand locally, stimulating job creation, and driving economic impact. To help SMEs become more competitive, PA MAKES will help these enterprises make strategic business investments that will foster market and product diversification and growth. Outcomes of the initiative are expected to include 42 businesses improved, 120 new jobs created, 1,200 jobs retained, and \$15 million in leveraged private investment.

\$662,567 ARC grant to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation in Pittsburgh, PA, for the *Southwest Pennsylvania Economic Gardening Initiative*. ARC funds will diversify the business operations of supply chain industries in a 10-county region in southwestern Pennsylvania. Working with Catalyst Connection (the regional Manufacturing Extension Partnership), the project will focus on small manufacturing establishments (SMEs) in the coal supply chain by providing mini-grants to targeted firms that enable the most impactful business development strategies to move forward quickly and efficiently—with a specific emphasis on increasing access to advanced manufacturing technologies. In addition, the project will target freight and logistics firms operating along the waterways of southwest Pennsylvania to increase their competitiveness by identifying and prioritizing new markets and opportunities. The project will create or retain 330 jobs, serve 55 supply chain businesses, and leverage \$25,000,000 in private funds.

\$653,400 ARC grant to the Washington Greene County Job Training Agency Inc. in Washington, PA, for the *Transitioning from Black to Blue: Training Former Coal Workers for Natural Gas Utility and Pipeline Careers in Appalachia* project. The ARC award will provide a targeted retraining program for displaced coal workers that enables them to pursue local employment in the natural gas utility and pipeline industry. The training courses will be offered at three regional education institutions—Butler County Community College, Westmoreland County Community College, and Washington State Community College. The curriculum includes input from the Gas Technology Institute to ensure that participants'

knowledge and skill development is industry-standard and best positions them to find stable employment in an expedited manner. The project will primarily serve a 23-county area in southeast Ohio and southwest Pennsylvania, and will serve 100 trainees.

\$587,950 ARC grant to the Community College of Beaver County in Beaver, PA, for the Tristate Energy and Advanced Manufacturing (TEAM) Consortium in order to launch a three-part, regional (Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia) workforce development initiative. The initiative's goal is to increase enrollment and graduation from education and training programs to provide a supply of skilled workers for energy and advanced manufacturing (E&AM) industries that are critical to the resurgence of the tristate region. The initiative's first step is to align relevant curricula among higher education institutions in the three states to facilitate the creation of seamless pathways to jobs. The second is to provide the necessary online access to information and referrals to programs within E&AM, and the third builds on the success of outreach and engagement practices that raise awareness of, change perceptions about, and increase interest in pursuing occupations in targeted STEM manufacturing sectors. Within three years of completion of this project all 120 participating businesses will be improved by upskilling their current workforce and/or hiring new workers, 600 jobs will be created, 402 students will obtain employment, 752 workers will have higher skills, and eight new programs will be implemented. The grant builds on work funded by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation and Chevron and takes advantage of an agreement for developing the region's shale resources signed in 2015 (and subsequently renewed) by the Governors of the three participating states.

\$500,000 ARC grant to Pennsylvania Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc., in Russell, PA, for the *Nature Tourism Cluster Development in the PA Wilds* project. The ARC award will be used to create a coordinated regional cluster development system to capitalize on Pennsylvania's numerous nature-tourism assets that spread across 2,000,000 acres in 12 counties. This strategy will drive attendance to these natural attractions, and will be leveraged by \$500,000 in match investments to develop a network of small businesses to support the increased demand for products and services in the area.

\$500,000 ARC grant to Innovation Works, Inc., in Pittsburgh, PA, for the *Revitalization of Southwestern Pennsylvania Coal-Impacted Communities through Innovation and Entrepreneurship* project. ARC funds will be used to implement five different but complimentary programs designed to deliver a variety of benefits to entrepreneurs and small businesses in a nine-county region in southwestern Pennsylvania—including the provision of human resource services to early-stage, high-growth companies, and training services for existing small businesses. Programs will target entrepreneurs who were formerly employed in the coal industry, coal-fired power plants, and suppliers to those industries. The project will create 65 new jobs and 7 new businesses, leverage \$1,100,000 in additional investment, and retain 30 existing jobs.

\$471,843 ARC grant to the SEDA-Council of Governments in Lewisburg, PA, for the *Central PA Asset Based Economy—Adaptive Reuse of Coal-Impacted Land and Outdoor Recreation as an Economic Engine* project. ARC funds will be used to position reclaimed mine land in five central Pennsylvania counties as a regional outdoor tourism destination. Specifically, the project will construct an EMS/cell tower to provide 911 and cellular communications and broadband services to the Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area (AOAA); design and construct 15 miles of new multi-use trails; develop and construct in-facility campground infrastructure; provide support for a coordinated marketing campaign focused on the region's tourism options; and provide entrepreneurial assistance activities to build-out the service

industry around the increased tourism activity in the area. The project will drive 12,000 new visitors annually to the area, generate over \$18,000,000 in non-export revenue, and create 26 jobs.

\$100,000 ARC grant to the Northwest PA Regional Planning and Development Commission in Oil City, PA, for technical assistance to develop a feasibility study for broadband access in the Northwest Pennsylvania region. The *Northwest PA Broadband Assessment* project will include capacity building among regional partners, identify gaps in high-speed internet infrastructure, and recommend solutions to improve internet connectivity among residents and local business. State sources will provide an additional \$86,047 to support the project.

\$72,000 ARC grant to the Pennsylvania Environmental Council in Pittsburgh, PA, for a feasibility study assessing the uncompleted sections of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the PA Wilds Loop. These two trails are a part of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition, which utilizes existing natural and cultural assets in the region to diversify the local economies. Work will include right-of-way acquisition assessments, community outreach, segment prioritizations, and identifying funding sources that will help cover the costs of completing the final 210 miles in the trail system. The local communities have already seen the benefits of a burgeoning tourism sector from recently completed trail sections. A previous POWER grant is supporting entrepreneurship activities in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

\$50,000 ARC grant to the Armstrong County Industrial Development Council in Freeport, PA, to develop an Economic Development strategy for the county. The *Armstrong County 2017 POWER Technical Assistance* project will, in cooperation with local partners, build a road map for shaping the delivery system of economic development services and programs in Armstrong County. The plan will look at new and existing services, programs and initiatives. Local sources will provide an additional \$60,820 for the project.

\$40,000 ARC grant to SEDA-Council of Governments in Lewisburg, PA, for a feasibility study of broadband access in four central Pennsylvania counties (Clinton, Lycoming, Northumberland, Union). The study will assess current broadband needs in the four-county region and review existing infrastructure assets, both public and private. With this data, three communities in each county found to likely benefit the most from increased access to broadband will be selected for further implementation projects. The study will also help create a model Request For Proposals (RFP) that can be used for future implementation projects.

\$14,214 ARC grant to the United Mine Workers Association Career Centers, Inc. in Prosperity, PA, to provide grant writing assistance to raise funds for the development of a training program at their Greene County, PA, training facility. The program will emphasize high demand occupations such as commercial driver's license, and heavy equipment and diesel mechanics.

TENNESSEE (6 awards)

\$1,501,499 ARC grant to Marion County, TN, for the *Marion County Regional Center for Higher Education Phase II & III* project. ARC funds will be utilized to construct a 30,000-square-foot educational facility that will house new technology and industrial training programs. The project will also conduct outreach to displaced workers from the Widows Creek Power Plant—a coal-fired facility in the area that

was recently retired. The project will train 109 people for careers in advanced manufacturing and information technology, and will improve 20 existing businesses in the region.

\$1,500,000 ARC grant to the Volunteer Energy Cooperative in Decatur, TN, for the Internet of Things (IoT) Innovation Ecosystem Project. This project involves the buildout of an Internet of Things ecosystem with three components: an IoT technology platform, innovation partners, and an entrepreneurial ecosystem. Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) is developing the IoT technology platform by deploying fiber optic broadband and smart grid technology to improve real time management of power supply and demand. These investments will drive the prototyping of technology solutions by innovation partners like Tennessee Tech University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Lincoln Laboratory. Viable solutions can be further developed and commercialized by entrepreneurial clients of the Biz Foundry and other entrepreneur centers in the Launch Tennessee network, itself a prior POWER grantee. An IoT innovation ecosystem holds the promise of utilizing local utility infrastructure to expand rural broadband access and to generate new businesses and jobs from an emerging "data economy." Anticipated outcomes of deployment include \$4.4 million of additional grid improvements by VEC, 416 households improved by subscribing to fiber broadband service, 22 businesses improved by subscribing to fiber broadband service, 250 households improved by subscribing to load management service, and 13 businesses improved by subscribing to load management service.

\$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.

\$400,000 ARC grant to Erwin Utilities in Erwin, TN, for the *Temple Hill & Bumpus Cove Broadband* project. ARC funds will be used to install 35 miles of fiber optic cable on existing pole lines—allowing business and residential subscribers in Temple Hill and Bumpus Cove access to broadband services. The area does not currently have cable broadband available, and DSL service is not offered ubiquitously. Tourism expansion is a major economic driver in the area and increased bandwidth will help expand the tourism industry and revenue base. The project will serve 680 households and 30 businesses, and will act as an economic driver in a three county area in northeast Tennessee, which has been adversely affected by the closure of a major rail yard as a result of the decline in coal shipments.

\$353,086 ARC grant to the Town of Unicoi, TN, for the *Mountain Harvest Kitchen Incubator and Entrepreneurial Training Program*. ARC funds will purchase equipment for a shared-use, commercial kitchen where value-added processing of locally-harvested products will take place. Entrepreneurial training will be offered by partner organizations including AccelNow, the Appalachian Resource Conservation and Development Council, and the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension for start-

ups and established businesses in the agricultural sector. The program will serve a nine-county region in northeast Tennessee and northwest North Carolina, create 30 new businesses and 60 new jobs, serve 91 trainees, and leverage \$1,200,000 in private investment.

\$68,000 ARC grant to Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union in Kingsport, TN, to underwrite a study for developing an affordable, flexible loan program called *Funding the Future*. The program will focus on providing accessible financing to residents in a 17-county area across Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia for in-demand certificate training programs. Despite being hit by the decline of the coal industry, there exists a demand for good-paying jobs in the service area including welders, line technicians, and commercial truck drivers. Current loan programs at the state and federal level are limited in what they can offer for certificate-granting programs and are restrictive in what can be paid for using loan funds. *Funding the Future* looks to fill the existing funding gap by providing flexible loans for in-demand programs that can also be used to cover living expenses and tools of the trade, as well as tuition and books.

VIRGINIA (15 awards)

\$3,000,000 ARC grant to Friends of Southwest Virginia in Abingdon, VA, for the *Building Appalachian Spring: Growing the Economy of Southwest Virginia* project. This comprehensive project will significantly enhance the outdoor recreation industry as an economic driver in a four-county region in southwestern Virginia. ARC funds will be used to develop four access points to the New River that strategically link the river to nearby communities' hospitality and tourism services; construct a 4,000-square-foot Gateway Center to the High Knob Recreation Area—providing visitors with more centralized access to numerous nearby recreation assets; build an Appalachian Trail Center in downtown Damascus; and create a 30-mile, multi-use trail connecting Breaks Interstate Park directly to downtown Haysi's business district. The project will increase travel expenditures in project locations by \$30 million over the next five years, create 60 new businesses and 200 new jobs, and is supported by funding from the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission.

\$2,500,000 ARC grant to Virginia Community Capital in Christiansburg, VA, for *Impact Appalachia: A Market-Making Fund for Central Appalachia*. The project will fill critical capital gaps to strengthen Central Appalachia's economy and accelerate market development for a six-state region (Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia). *Impact Appalachia* will support business development and advance emerging sectors in the region by acting as an entrepreneurial ecosystem coordinator to increase the region's readiness and capacity to attract and absorb capital. It will provide grant-like funds to fill critical gaps in the investment pipeline and will serve as an investment vehicle providing capital to investment-ready businesses. It will also launch an impact investment fund that will raise and deploy affordable capital to expand essential infrastructure and invest in job-creating businesses that build local wealth and increase the number of quality jobs. The project is anticipated to improve 15 communities, leverage \$111 million of private capital, and create or retain 649 jobs.

\$2,220,000 ARC grant to the Industrial Development Authority in Wise, VA, for the *Virginia Emerging Drone Industry Cluster Project*. ARC funds will be used to position five counties in southwestern Virginia as a national destination for the development of a drone-operator workforce to support the emerging drone industry in the United States. The award will enable Mountain Empire Community College to offer courses that train students, including former coal industry workers, to operate drones and drone

sensors to provide commercial and government services—including geospatial surveys, close-up inspections of fixed structures, and mapping. The award will train 64 new workers, leverage \$15,000,000 in additional investment, and enable a private aerospace company in the region to perform work on a major contract—thereby creating 210 new direct and indirect jobs.

\$1,500,000 ARC grant to Appalachian Sustainable Development in Abington, VA, for the *Central Appalachian Food Enterprise Corridor*. This 5-state, 43-county project will develop a coordinated local foods distribution network throughout Central Appalachia, and will connect established and emerging producers in Ohio, West Virginia, Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, and Eastern Kentucky to wholesale distribution markets. The ARC award will support planning, partner convening, and capacity building, as well as production and processing equipment, supplies, and labor costs, and will be supported by funding from the Just Transition Fund. The strengthened food corridor will act as regional economic driver—creating 120 jobs, retaining 250 jobs, and ultimately creating 95 new businesses.

\$1,420,219 ARC grant to Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC) in Cedar Bluff, VA, for the *Southwest Virginia Regional Cybersecurity Initiative*. The initiative brings together three colleges in southwestern Virginia—SWCC, Mountain Empire Community College (MECC), and University of Virginia’s College at Wise (UVA-Wise)—and aims to position this seven county southwestern Virginia area as a regional hub for the cybersecurity industry. Specific activities will include creating a certification/credential program aligned with industry needs and National Security Agency guidelines; providing support services to cybersecurity start-up companies that locate to the region; and expanding UVA-Wise’s existing bachelor’s degree program in cybersecurity through an accelerator space in which cybersecurity companies can co-locate research and development activities. Additional funding for the project is being provided by the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. The project will train 161 new workers, and retain 110 jobs.

\$1,417,375 ARC grant to Southwest Virginia Community College (SWCC) in Cedar Bluff, VA, for the *Retraining Energy Displaced Individuals (REDI) Center for Dislocated Coal Miners* program. The REDI program will provide fast-track reemployment services directly to displaced coal miners—equipping them with the necessary skills to get back to work in a high-demand field, earning comparable wages to their previous employment. Through an intensive, accelerated program of coursework, workers can obtain credentialed skills in as little as four months, rather than the more traditional training periods of a year or more. Training will be focused on three sectors with local employment opportunities: advanced manufacturing, construction, and health technology. The program will certify 165 new trainees over the life of the award, and will be supported by funding from the Thompson Charitable Fund and the Virginia Tobacco Commission.

\$1,307,650 ARC grant to the Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc., in Abingdon, VA, for *The Heart of Appalachia Economic Transition Project*. The project will align the grantee—a non-profit industry association of manufacturers from southwest Virginia—local workforce development boards, and the Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Center to deliver business technical assistance to coal supply chain manufacturers in an effort to return them to profitability. The project will conduct outreach to prospective companies in the 16-county southwest Virginia service territory, and perform network analysis that will allow for participating companies to retool their manufacturing efforts in the most feasible, cost-effective manner possible. In addition, the project will increase the number of young adults pursuing careers in manufacturing by redefining the image and value of manufacturing among young people, their parents, their educators, and policy makers. The award will

create 300 jobs and retain 200 existing jobs, and will positively impact the operations of 58 existing businesses.

\$950,000 ARC grant to Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) in Big Stone Gap, VA, for the *Power Linemen Career Education* program. MECC will partner with regional power industry employers to develop and implement a training curriculum that equips participants across a four-county area in southwest Virginia for entry-level employment as apprentice utility line workers and positions them for a career as journeyman-level power lineman. The project will also partner with the Flatwoods Job Corps Center's in order to utilize their outdoor instructional facilities. The project will serve 362 trainees over the life of the award.

\$917,315 ARC grant to the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission in Duffield, VA, to conduct *Project Intersection*, a new regional 200-acre industrial site in the coalfields of southwestern Virginia. LENOWISCO will partner with the Norton Industrial Development Authority and Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority in developing the site on abandoned mine land. The ARC grant will be paired with a portion of an already awarded grant from the Abandon Mine Lands (AML) Pilot program of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement at the U.S. Department of the Interior. Project activities will yield a highly visible, highly desirable, regional industrial and business site. *Project Intersection* is situated at the junction of U.S. Highways 23 and 58A, with the highest cumulative non-Interstate traffic volume in far southwestern Virginia. No comparable combination of available land and transportation infrastructure exists in that part of the state. The development of *Project Intersection* aids the effort to foster diversification and rejuvenation of the regional economy, luring private investment and new employment opportunities. The initial phase of development will create 75 jobs and an initial private capital investment of \$10 million as a result of companies locating at the site.

\$800,000 ARC grant to Virginia Community Capital in Christiansburg, VA, for the *New Economy Loan Fund* project. The project—which will leverage the capacity of a variety of regional governments, education institutions, and business incubators—will provide needed capital and targeted technical assistance to small business owners in coal-impacted communities across nine counties in southwest Virginia. Specifically, ARC funds will assist in capitalizing a loan fund that will support small business development in the service area, and will enable a full-time technical assistance provider to deliver business assistance directly to entrepreneurs to build the knowledge and skills for continued profitability and sustainability. The project will create or retain 55 jobs, enable 17 businesses to receive loans and 30 businesses to receive technical assistance, and leverage \$4,800,000 in private capital.

\$99,670 ARC grant to Appalachian Voices in Norton, VA, for the *Southwest Virginia Renewable Energy and Economy* Project. The project will conduct a feasibility study, develop a strategic plan, and provide capacity building assistance to determine the viability of a renewable energy plan for the Southwest Virginia region. The project's activities will include a structured process for engaging local officials and organizations that are interested in renewable energy as part of the region's economic diversification strategy.

\$75,000 ARC grant to Friends of Southwest Virginia in Abingdon, Virginia, for *RESOURCE-FULL: A Consortium Approach to Workforce and Economic Development in Southwest Virginia*. EDA is also awarding \$275,000 to this project. The ARC award will be used to brand the southwest Virginia region as an international outdoor recreation destination and will include the development of tools and materials to be used for business and employee recruitment.

\$61,603 ARC grant to the Virginia Coalfield Coalition, Inc., for technical assistance to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Southwest Virginia's telecommunication needs, which include identifying current levels of service, any gaps in that service, and the affordability of various broadband solutions. The *Virginia Coalfields Telecommunications Planning Grant* will develop a road map to address the specific deficiencies in each community and assess building capacity amongst regional partners. Local sources will provide an additional \$37,757 for the project.

\$34,750 ARC grant to Grayson Land Care, Inc., in Fries, VA, to develop a feasibility study for the development of an abattoir, or slaughter house, in the I-81 and I-77 corridor, a region that includes parts of Virginia and West Virginia. The *Blue Ridge Plateau Abattoir* project will, in cooperation with local partners, directly support the development and planning tasks needed to launch the facility and implement a workforce training program. The proposed abattoir would strengthen the local food system and help diversify the regional economy.

\$11,108 ARC grant to Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network in Abingdon, VA, to provide grant writing assistance to raise funds for the creation of a regional craft beverage cluster that will strengthen Virginia's agriculture industry and tourism in the region. The project will build off the extensive network cultivated by the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation.

WEST VIRGINIA (42 awards)

\$2,500,000 total (a \$1,500,000 ARC grant and a \$1,000,000 EDA grant) to the Bluewell Public Service District in Bluefield, WV, for the *Mercer County Regional Airport Development and Diversification Initiative*. POWER funds will be used to extend public water service along Route 52 and Airport Road to the Mercer County Regional Airport. In addition to providing essential infrastructure to the regional airport, the project will create 38 new jobs, and will capitalize on an existing regional asset by providing funding for a strategic plan that will position the airport and its adjoining 200 acres of flat, developable land as an economic driver for four counties in Southern West Virginia and Southwestern Virginia.

\$2,034,667 ARC grant to Coalfield Development Corporation in Wayne, WV, to support its Social Enterprise and Economic Diversification-Leveraging Investment for Transformation (SEED-LIFT) project. The project's primary objective is to remove barriers to participating in the workforce. SEED-LIFT plans to improve the education and skill-sets of residents to ensure workforce readiness within a four-county region in West Virginia (Lincoln, McDowell, Mingo, Wayne). It will strengthen cultural assets (especially coal community downtowns) by investing in community-based real estate development through social-entrepreneur oriented revitalization concepts; and will continue to grow Coalfield Development Corporation's network of employers leading to reemployment training and job placement services. Lastly, the project will recapitalize existing social enterprises to expand job creation and business development. At the project's completion, there will be seven communities improved, 60 jobs created, three new businesses created, revenues increased by 35 percent, 50,000 square feet of redeveloped downtown space, and \$7 million in leveraged private investment. The project builds on the demonstrated success of Coalfield's previous POWER grant and its innovative 33-6-3 on-the-job training/education/life skills workforce development model. Additional funding is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$2,196,450 ARC grant to the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education in Charleston, WV, for the *EntreEd K-14: Every Student, Every Year* project. The EntreEd program enables K–12 teachers to integrate entrepreneurial content and context into delivery of required standards in any subject or grade level. The project will educate the next generation of Appalachia’s workforce to create their own businesses to drive the local economy. ARC funds will expand the footprint of the proven EntreEd program into five additional counties in West Virginia, eleven counties in Kentucky, three counties in Ohio, one county in Tennessee, and two counties in Virginia. The program will be supported by expertise from the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE), project management from the EdVenture Group, and funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. The EntreEd program will serve 15,000 K–12 Appalachian students in 50 individual schools and 7 community colleges over the life of the award.

\$1,870,000 ARC grant to the Coalfield Development Corporation in Wayne, WV, for the *Appalachian Social Entrepreneurship Investment Strategy*. ARC funds will be used to incubate job-creating social enterprises; scale-up Coalfield Development Corporation’s innovate 33-6-3 on-the-job training/education/life skills workforce development model; and expand Coalfield Development Corporation’s service territory to other coal-impacted areas in Southern West Virginia. The award will create 85 new jobs and equip 60 trainees to pursue quality jobs in high-demand industries in the Appalachian Region, and will be supported by funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,822,500 total (a \$1,200,000 EDA grant and a \$622,500 ARC grant) to the Randolph County Development Authority in Elkins, WV, for the *Hardwood Cluster Manufacturing Expansion Project*. POWER funds will be utilized to expand a major cabinet manufacturer’s operation by enabling the doubling of its current production rate due to a new national contract—thereby creating 45 new jobs and adding \$2,500,000 in annual wages to the regional economy. In addition, the award will strengthen the Hardwood Alliance Zone—a nine-county region in Central West Virginia containing a cluster of hardwood businesses.

\$1,800,000 ARC grant to the West Virginia Forest Products Cooperative, Inc. (WVFPC) in Princeton, WV, to foster a more competitive forest products-based industry in an interstate region centered at Princeton, West Virginia. WVFPC plans to develop a skilled, competitive workforce capable of utilizing advanced manufacturing equipment and processes for the manufacture of secondary forest products. Training will be provided through a partnership with the Robert C. Byrd Center for Advanced Manufacturing at Marshall University. The Cooperative will also encourage business development and entrepreneurial activities from the pool of trained members. These two initiatives will lead to the formation of a forest products hub that will allow businesses to be independent designers and manufacturers but at the same time capture the efficiencies of scale that are usually only afforded to larger companies. The resulting numbers at the project’s completion are expected to include 50 new businesses created, 250 new jobs created, ten existing jobs retained, and \$4 million in leveraged private investment, 50 businesses improved, 1,000 workers improved, and 40 students improved. The U.S. Forest Service will provide manufacturing space for WVFPC.

\$1,502,938 ARC grant to Marshall University Research Corporation in Huntington, WV, for the *Sprouting Farms* project. The project will facilitate the development of a vibrant agricultural industry in a nine-county area in southern West Virginia by educating new farmers, launching farm businesses, and jump-starting wholesale market channels, all while encouraging business and farm sustainability. ARC funds

will be used to implement workforce and farm business accelerator training programs; secure and upgrade the project site and facilities; and provide direct business support and employment to new agricultural businesses and program graduates. The project will create 20 new businesses and 33 new jobs, and leverage \$961,475 in additional investment. Additional funding is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$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.

\$1,500,000 ARC grant to the Marshall University Research Corporation in Huntington, WV, for the *Appalachian Hatchery* project. The program, operated through the Robert C. Byrd Institute, will assist specific businesses affected by the decline in coal production return to profitability through the adoption and deployment of emerging advanced manufacturing technologies—primarily 3D printing and additive manufacturing. In addition, the program will provide other business assistance services, including shared equipment options, modern workforce development strategies, and the establishment of better linkages between large and small manufacturers. The program will serve a 20-county region—including 13 Distressed or At-Risk counties—in southern West Virginia, will create or retain 375 jobs, and will leverage \$750,000 in private investment. Additional funding is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,499,400 ARC grant to the Canaan Valley Institute in Davis, WV, for the *Sustainable Jobs Initiative*. The project will create an economic diversification and entrepreneur training program to grow the apiculture (honey and bee products) and native plant industries across 14 coal-impacted counties in southern West Virginia, with a focus on using reclaimed mine land. Activities include training for displaced and underemployed workers and veterans to gain the business and technical skills necessary to become successful entrepreneurs in these sectors. A Beekeeping Collective will enable residents of Central Appalachia to take advantage of the robust, growing market for honey and other bee products, while a Native Plant Horticulture Program will train workers to collect, grow, and market high-demand local varieties of native plants, a growing niche market in the eastern United States. Key partners include Appalachian Headwaters, Green Forests Work, the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, and New River Technical and Community College. The project will serve over 2,600 workers, generate \$2.4 million of revenue over three years, and attract \$4.6 million of leveraged private investment.

\$1,499,175 ARC grant to the Marshall University Research Corporation in Huntington, WV, for the Creating Opportunities for Recovery Employment (CORE) Program. The program will develop a regional system to provide treatment and recovery services, job training, and placement assistance for displaced

workers suffering from the effects of the downturn in coal production and the opioid epidemic in rural, southern West Virginia. Components of this large-scale project include three hubs offering peer recovery coaches and job training and placement, six Drug Free Moms and Babies sites, three new programs offering medication assisted treatment by health care providers, and a network of private sector partnerships. Other innovative aspects of the CORE Program feature development of social enterprises to create additional sustainable employment opportunities to those in recovery and leveraging sustainable investment in health care delivery services by developing a “pay for success” or other innovative financing model. Key partners in the project include the Region 1 Workforce Development Board, the West Virginia Perinatal Partnership, and Coalfield Development Corporation. As a result of the CORE Program, of 1,500 participating individuals, 850 will gain improvements in the form of documented placement in a new job or the retention of an existing job. Of 250 participating businesses, 83 will benefit, as measured by the successful hiring of at least one CORE client. Sixteen jobs will be created for professionals working in the partner agencies. Approximately three new business social enterprises will be formed, providing employment opportunity and social returns for their communities. Additional funding is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,372,275 ARC grant to the Hatfield McCoy Regional Recreation Authority in Man, WV, for the *Southern Coalfields Sustainable Tourism & Entrepreneurship Program*. ARC funds will develop and implement a comprehensive program to expand tourism-related employment and businesses in southern West Virginia, and will foster Hatfield McCoy Trail expansion in Kentucky and Virginia. In addition, the award provides for the deployment of a coordinated marketing effort, which will increase the region-wide economic impact of the Trails by \$13,000,000 per year. The project will create 225 jobs and 50 new businesses along the Trails, and will be supported by funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,370,000 ARC grant to the Natural Capital Investment Fund (NCIF) in Shepherdstown, WV, for the Downtown Appalachia Redevelopment Initiative (REDI). The project seeks to create healthy downtown commercial districts with robust, resilient local economies in coal-impacted West Virginia towns by catalyzing downtown revitalization. Through an integrated, comprehensive set of strategies, REDI, in collaboration with the Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center, will identify, grow, and support property owners, private developers, and community development groups who will invest in and manage their properties to benefit their communities, bringing about the return of healthy real estate markets and local economies, as well as creating economic opportunities. REDI will drive sustainable economic development downtown by building local capacity among private and public sector participants, enabling catalytic commercial real estate redevelopment projects through targeted technical assistance, and providing financial packaging, structuring, and equity-like financing for projects. In addition to providing technical assistance, NCIF will launch a Downtown Appalachia Redevelopment Loan Fund as a financial resource for eligible property owners. Expected initiative outcomes include: five communities served through the revitalization of significant buildings, five businesses improved through increased property values and/or revenues, \$8 million in leveraged private investment (LPI), 80 jobs retained, and 80 jobs created. Additional financial support for REDI is being provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,325,655 ARC grant to the Marshall University Research Corporation in Huntington, WV, for the *Sustainable Employment for Community Health Workers in Coal-Impacted Counties* project. The ARC award will create permanent jobs for at least 26 Community Health Workers (CHWs)—who will provide

healthcare coordination services directly to high-risk patients in coal-impacted communities across 10 counties in southeastern Ohio, eastern Kentucky, and central West Virginia. CHWs will be a critical component of the local care team, supervised by a Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner or other clinician. Their inclusion in the regional healthcare workforce will streamline the provision of healthcare services; increase health outcomes for patients suffering from diabetes, congestive heart failure, and COPD—diseases that are disproportionately common in Appalachia; and ultimately drive down the overall cost of healthcare in the service territory. In addition to the 26 permanent jobs created, the project will serve 625 patients and leverage \$780,000 over the life of the award. Additional funding is being provided by the Sisters Health Foundation and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,250,000 ARC grant to the Natural Capital Investment Fund, Inc. in Shepherdstown, WV, for the *Growing Triple Bottom Line Small Businesses in Coal Impacted Communities in Central Appalachia* project. These funds will be used to expand coal-impacted communities' access to capital in Southern West Virginia by capitalizing a \$4,000,000 tourism-related revolving loan fund and developing a West Virginia New Markets Tax Credit Fund. The project will create 200 new jobs and 20 new businesses, bring \$5,000,000 of leveraged private investment into the region, and will be supported by funding from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$1,073,304 ARC grant to the West Virginia Regional Technology Park Corporation in South Charleston, WV, for the *Green Mining Model Business Program*. The project brings 17 public and private partners together to operate a system of linked activities designed to use reclaimed soils on inactive surface mining land to grow value-added crops; extract high-value products from these crops and market/sell them; and leverage land reclamation, crop cultivation, and chemical extraction and processing activities to provide displaced coal and energy industry workers across 13 West Virginia counties with training, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities. The project will focus primarily on training these displaced workers to farm and cultivate lavender—during a demonstration of the project, it was discovered that cultivation of 2.5 acres of lavender supported the direct and indirect employment of 25 individuals. The WV National Guard and coal company partners will donate free or reduced-cost land and land preparation assistance to the project, and the West Virginia Regional Technology Park will provide access to its multi-million dollar chemical manufacturing facilities. The project will create 250 direct and indirect jobs, leverage \$459,987 private investment, and create six new businesses. Additional funding for will be provided by the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$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.

\$967,500 ARC grant to the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority in Beckley, WV, for the *New River Gorge Region – Developing an Entrepreneurial Economy* project. ARC funds will be used to establish a technical assistance support program—which will assist start-up businesses with hands-on technical aspects of their operations—and to hire social enterprise and region-wide business coaches. The project will yield 15 new businesses, improve 294 existing businesses, and create 225 new small-business jobs.

\$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.

\$856,050 ARC grant to the West Virginia Healthy Kids and Family Coalition (HKFC) in Charleston, WV, for the *Growing Social Enterprise and Healthy Communities* project. HKFC will expand the successful Try This WV economic and community development program to 15 local communities in the service territory—which will enable them to phase-in second stage development activities designed to improve community vitality and health. Simultaneously, Strong Mountain Communities, a southern West Virginia economic development organization, will build a pre-market social enterprise development program and create an Investors' Circle; combined, these two activities will deliver technical assistance directly to social entrepreneurs, and will raise capital to invest in the creation and expansion of local social enterprises. The project will serve 23 counties in southern West Virginia, create 100 jobs, leverage \$1,200,000 in private and community financing, and will provide for 200 entrepreneurs and community leaders to receive in-depth technical assistance.

\$750,000 ARC grant to the Huntington Municipal Development Authority in Huntington, WV, for the Polymer Technology Center of Huntington ("P-TeCH"). Part of a larger plan for creating jobs and businesses in the regional polymer industry, the project will convert a 27-acre abandoned brownfield in downtown Huntington (a former coal barge rail docking facility) into a multi-purpose resource for West Virginia's growing polymer manufacturing sector. A Product Development Center will assist manufacturing and technology firms with product development and design, testing, validation, and

other commercialization services. A Light Manufacturing Center will provide business incubation and scale-up manufacturing space for polymer industry start-ups. P-TeCH will also be a job skills and workforce development center for a pipeline of interns, manufacturing workers, and entrepreneurs in the region. The project will partner with a leading private-sector polymer manufacturing company, leverage \$2 million in private investment, and improve the competitiveness of 24 businesses.

\$749,001 ARC grant to BridgeValley Community and Technical College in South Charleston, WV, to develop a Construction, teleCommunications, and Energy (CCE) Workforce Training Center based in Montgomery, West Virginia. This center will provide workforce training in content areas identified by industry partners that provide the job skills needed to obtain an entry-level position in the industry. The center will also have HVAC and energy management coursework that will prepare students with the skills needed to obtain employment in the HVAC industry and electrical metering departments of utility companies. After completing eight weeks of training, students will be eligible for on-the-job training experiences at partnering companies. Expected project outcomes include ten businesses improved through access to skilled workforce and 202 workers/trainees improved through employment.

\$400,000 ARC grant to the West Virginia University Research Corporation in Morgantown, WV, for the *Manufacturing Value Stream for Shale* project. The project will transition companies and suppliers affected by the downturn in the coal economy toward the emerging shale-manufacturing sector by providing direct economic diversification and investment assistance. The applicant—partnering with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers in West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Ohio—will identify specific companies in the tri-state service area with shale-manufacturing assets and opportunities; assess participating companies' prospective entry points into the shale-manufacturing value stream; and deliver direct guidance to SMEs on value chain opportunities. The award will create 400 new jobs and 12 new businesses. Additional funding is being provided the by Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

\$362,989 ARC grant to the Center for Rural Health Development, Inc., in Hurricane, WV, for the *WV Rural Health Infrastructure Loan Fund* project. ARC funds will assist in capitalizing a revolving loan fund designed to strengthen the health care industry in a 25-county region in central West Virginia. In addition, the award will provide technical and business development assistance to existing health care providers with business-related needs. The project will create or retain 65 jobs, yield \$1,000,000 of financing for health care businesses, and provide 216 organizations with technical assistance.

\$300,000 ARC grant to Woodlands Community Lenders (WCL) in Elkins, WV, for the *Financing Entrepreneurship in Randolph, Barbour, and Tucker Counties* project. The ARC award will expand WCL's proven, comprehensive set of services to the tri-county area of Randolph, Barbour, and Tucker Counties in northeast West Virginia. Specifically, the project will deliver program participants services focused around small business development, real estate and downtown redevelopment, innovative financing of entrepreneurs, and finance packaging. WCL will work closely with local small business development center business coaches, and with Main Street/OnTRAC staff to provide technical assistance to borrowers. The project will create 100 jobs and 25 businesses, and will leverage \$1,100,000 in additional private investment.

\$200,000 ARC grant to the West Virginia Development Office for the *Hobet Strategic Plan*. West Virginia will receive technical assistance to develop a detailed economic assessment and strategic plan for the

best use of the Hobet Surface Mine Site in Boone and Lincoln Counties, previously the largest surface mining operation in the state.

\$150,000 ARC grant to Reconnecting McDowell, Inc., in Charleston, WV, to develop an economic development and diversification strategy for the City of Welch and McDowell County centered on the Renaissance Village Apartments, a housing project that will develop rental housing in downtown Welch for teachers and young professionals employed in the area. Renaissance Village will serve as an anchor for redevelopment efforts in the downtown area and provide affordable housing. The planning project will assist with an entrepreneurship and small business initiative, along with financial and operations modeling for Renaissance Village.

\$140,000 ARC grant to the West Virginia Connecting Communities Inc. in Charleston, WV, in partnership with the New River Gorge Trail Association for the development of an economic feasibility study for a regionally-connected bike trail system in Fayette and Nicholas Counties. The focus of the study will be the viability of linking over 500 miles of bike trails and the impact to small communities throughout the region.

\$123,488 ARC grant to the Region 4 Planning and Development Council in Summersville, WV, to develop a strategic plan for the Upper Kanawha Valley. In partnership with the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, the plan will include prioritizing economic strategies, building regional collaboration across counties, and assisting communities to create greater economic diversification that fosters sustainability.

\$105,000 ARC grant to Williamson Health and Wellness Center in Williamson, WV, to provide grant writing assistance, and develop a feasibility study, a strategic plan, and preliminary architectural design work for a vacant building in Williamson's downtown, a former "pill mill." If deemed viable, the building will be rebuilt as a one-stop facility that would provide workforce training, opioid addiction and substance abuse treatment services to assist individuals in recovery to become employment ready. The service area will include counties in both Kentucky and West Virginia.

\$101,981 ARC grant to the Southern Appalachian Labor School in Kincaid, WV, for technical assistance to develop a strategic planning and feasibility study for the establishment of the Entrepreneur Coalfield Alternative Opportunity (ECAO) project. ECAO will be a social enterprise that will train and employ individuals to deconstruct old coal camp houses and replace them with modular units. The feasibility study will focus on establishing market demand for the start-up, documenting the financial ability to maintain positive cash flow, and building a management operational plan and staffing plan. The ultimate goal is a business enterprise that can provide workforce training and improve the local housing stock in Central Appalachia.

\$100,000 ARC grant to West Virginia Geological & Economic Survey in Charleston, WV, for the State of West Virginia Broadband Development Hub. The grant will fund an online hub hosting information concerning prospective broadband deployment in West Virginia. Initially ten counties and their municipalities will have access to a broadband development hub that will host content related to broadband deployment, including information on access, public rights-of-way, a database of currently available assets, and draft contracts for dealing with service providers. Multiple agencies throughout the state will contribute to the platform. The data collected throughout this process will then be used to create a *Guide to Broadband Development in West Virginia* and a supplemental legal toolkit. Once the initial ten counties' broadband deployment needs have been addressed, access to the broadband

development hub will be extended to the rest of West Virginia. In addition to the POWER grant, an additional \$50,000 for the hub is being provided through special ARC funding for broadband work in distressed West Virginia counties.

\$100,000 ARC grant to Region II Development Council, Inc. in Huntington, WV, for a strategic plan that will analyze the feasibility and economic impact of potential heritage tourism projects along West Virginia State Route 152, also known as the Appalachian Heartland Highway. The proposed study will be a coordinated and comprehensive regional planning effort to create a tourism cluster that increases the chances of successfully restructuring the regional economy away from a reliance on the coal industry. A top priority will be to study the construction of an Appalachian Heartland Visitors Center at the interchange of Route 152 and I-64.

\$93,495 ARC grant to the West Virginia Community Development Hub in Fairmont, WV, which, in partnership with the International Economic Development Council, will provide technical assistance to five coal-impacted counties (Boone, Greenbrier, Lincoln, McDowell, and Wyoming) through economic development mentoring for local community teams. As a result of this investment, community teams will develop local economic diversification strategies.

\$90,000 ARC grant to Randolph County Development Authority in Elkins, WV, to develop a strategic plan focused on the promotion and expansion of the hardwood industry cluster. In partnership with the Hardwood Alliance Zone, the strategic plan will assist in strengthening the economy of the nine-county region. The project will build on the recent EDA and ARC POWER grants that are enabling a local wood products manufacturer to expand its operations.

\$75,000 to the Williamson Health and Wellness Center in Williamson, WV, for the *Health Innovation and Food Hub*. EDA is also awarding \$600,000 to the Coalfield Development Corporation as part of this project. The ARC award will support consulting fees and startup equipment necessary to launch the Health Innovation and Food Hub, which will play a key role in facilitating regional collaborative networks, providing technical assistance and training opportunities, facilitating access to capital, and linking the local food systems infrastructure to supply markets.

\$64,000 ARC grant to the National Coal Heritage Area Authority in Oak Hill, WV, to study natural and cultural heritage assets of the Tug Fork River and the communities along its banks. The 159-mile river runs through three states—Kentucky, West Virginia, and Virginia—and much of the region has been heavily impacted by the decline of the coal industry. This study would lay the foundation for the development of an outdoor recreation tourism sector by establishing the Tug Fork River as a recreational water trail. GIS technology will be utilized to identify and mark potential river access points, mile markers, and potential hazards. Local communities will be assisted in applying for Kentucky Blueway and West Virginia Water Trail designations. The resulting plan will complement existing county and regional efforts and elevate awareness of the region's natural and cultural assets.

\$60,000 ARC grant to Webster County Economic Development Authority in Webster Springs, WV, to conduct a feasibility study for the development of a multi-county All-Terrain Vehicle trail system in five counties. This grant will assist in developing a major tourism asset for the region and create opportunities for local small businesses. The project will work in partnership with the Hatfield McCoy Trail Authority.

\$36,700 ARC grant to Unlimited Future, Inc. in Huntington, WV, for capacity building and development of a feasibility study for expansion of local food systems. The *Beefing Up the Local Food Economy* project will support the planning process for a value-added meat processing facility in a local, vacant plant. The project will also look at workforce training programs serving the meat business and at expanding market opportunities for producers across the region, which includes Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. Local sources will contribute an additional \$20,000 to the project.

\$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.

\$10,000 ARC grant to The EdVenture Group in Morgantown, WV, for the Creating Opportunities, Diversifying Economy for displaced coal miners (CODE) project to develop a sustainable plan for economic diversification. The project being developed is expected to serve 12 counties in West Virginia.

POWER SPECIAL REGIONAL PROJECTS(14awards)

\$1,747,806 ARC grant to the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship in Chapel Hill, NC, for the *Building Entrepreneurial Communities: The Foundation of an Economic Transition for Appalachia* project. The project will build and strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem in an 18-county region covering southeastern Ohio, southern West Virginia, and southeastern Kentucky. Project activities include establishing a support system that can identify and develop new entrepreneurs; assisting new and expanding businesses with skill development; and connecting entrepreneurs with existing capacity-building resources in the region. The project will create 72 new businesses and 250 new jobs.

\$1,200,000 ARC grant to the Natural Capital Investment Fund, Inc., in Shepherdstown, WV, on behalf of the Central Appalachian Network (CAN) for the Growing Food System Capacity and Scaling Economic Impact project. ARC's investment will support the members and partners in CAN to build upon five years of collective local food systems development work across Central Appalachia. Building a strong local food economy will help diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The project will target production capacity, one of the primary leverage points holding back the Region's food system. This will be achieved by providing small and medium-sized farms, farm workers, value-added processors, and food businesses with technical assistance, training, capacity building, capital improvements of equipment and facilities, market development, supply chain intermediation, and peer learning. Members of CAN include the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks, Appalachian Sustainable Development, the Coalfield Development Corporation, the Community Farm Alliance, and Rural Action. It is anticipated that the project will serve and improve 37 existing businesses, create 26 new businesses, create 100 jobs, and leverage \$4 million in additional private investment across 58 counties in 5 states (Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia).

\$750,000 to continue a collaborative effort with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal partners to research opioid abuse and related problems of HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV) in Appalachia's coal communities.

\$750,000 ARC grant to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other federal partners to help continued collaborative research on effective interventions for opioid use disorders and related diseases in rural Appalachian coal communities. Appalachia faces disproportionate impacts from substance use disorders, as well as an increased risk for the spread of associated diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C. As part of a multi-year Federal effort that aims to implement and assess evidence-based interventions in rural areas, ARC funds will allow teams from the University of Kentucky and West Virginia University to continue research focused on coal-impacted communities in the Region. Successful completion of this effort will help establish and deploy best practices in the prevention and treatment of opioid use, HIV, and hepatitis, especially within the context of rural Appalachia.

\$499,480 ARC grant to RAIN Source Capital, Inc., for the *Appalachia Angel Investor Network* project. ARC funds will enable the awardee to work with existing and new angel investment funds to enhance the capability of coal-impacted communities across 9 Appalachian states to make investments in start-up, early stage, and growth companies. Specifically, the project will create at least four new angel funds in target communities, and will provide tools, training, and support services to existing angel funds and networks already operating in Appalachia. The project will result in the creation of 20 new businesses and 100 new jobs, and will leverage \$4,000,000 in private investment from 100 investors.

\$497,000 ARC grant to the Region 1 – Planning and Development Council in Princeton, WV, for the *Coalfields Cluster Mapping Initiative* research project. ARC funds will be used to map the extent of the coal industry supply chain across the tri-state region of Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. The resulting detailed information on the supply chain will complement ongoing work undertaken by other ARC-funded projects, examining the extent of the decline in the coal economy and providing business technical assistance to aid the impacted supply chain firms in their return to growth and profitability.

\$400,000 for a partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to expand the Cool & Connected Initiative to help 10 Appalachian coal-impacted communities use broadband service to revitalize small-town main streets and promote economic development. Participating communities will receive technical assistance for strategic planning, as well as initial implementation support for the first steps of their plans. The communities are located in Alabama, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

\$352,000 to provide training, technical support, and expanded market opportunities to Appalachian-based coal supply chain companies through partnerships developed at MineExpo 2016, the world's largest and most comprehensive exposition dedicated to mining equipment, products, and services. This trade show is part of the 2016 U.S. Commercial Service International Buyer Program schedule, which connects U.S. exhibitors with foreign buyer delegations at the show. ARC funds will be used to ensure the participation of companies from Appalachia and enable them to get international trade support tailored to the specific needs of the individual companies. Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission in Altoona, Pennsylvania, is coordinating the ARC assistance.

\$349,999 ARC grant to West Virginia University Research Corporation in Morgantown, WV, for the *Economic Analysis of Coal Industry Ecosystem in Appalachia* project. This study will examine the full ecosystem of the coal industry in Appalachia through in-depth quantitative analysis. Specifically, this research will identify, quantify, and map data on all relevant coal industry activity throughout the Appalachian Region. The three tasks of this research project are to: 1) identify all components of the coal ecosystem and estimate the supply chain impacts in Appalachia; 2) examine the implications of the coal industry downturn on freight rail, barge, and truck transportation in Appalachia; and 3) develop a typology of regional economies that surround the coal-fired plants in the Region using both econometric and input-output techniques.

\$184,595 to Chamberlin/Dunn, LLC of Indianapolis, IN, for a contract to monitor and evaluate the POWER Initiative thus far. In particular, contractors will work with ARC and its partners to determine the extent to which POWER grantees funded in Fiscal Years 2015-2017 are progressing toward their stated performance goals. Deliverables include monthly reports that provide a snapshot of grantee performance during that period. The purpose is to highlight success stories, flag potential challenges, and recommend technical assistance and training needs to ensure grantee success, particularly in performance monitoring and evaluation.

\$175,000 ARC grant to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) in Washington, DC, for the Industry-Informed Infrastructure in Appalachian Colleges (“I3”) project. I3 will start as a two-state pilot effort over one year to expand the industry connections and technical training capacities of community colleges serving coal-impacted communities in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, along with adjacent areas of neighboring states. The activities in Pennsylvania will focus on the oil and gas industry, while those in West Virginia will highlight management and leadership in the hospitality industry. Additional components of the project will link participating community colleges with industry leaders in other high-demand sectors identified by the colleges. The initiative is founded on the concept that Appalachian community colleges deserve the highest-caliber industry infusion of resources to create critical talent pipelines for the Region’s workforce. AACC will identify national industry partners and trade associations that can be leveraged to provide reduced-price services or partnerships that can build the capacity of the colleges, communities, and students. At least 12 colleges are expected to benefit from the project.

\$149,998 ARC grant to Downstream Strategies in Morgantown, WV, for the *Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachian Communities* project. This research will explore and document strategies and policies local leaders can use to enhance the future economic prospects of coal-impacted communities throughout the Appalachian Region. There are four key components to this research project: 1) develop a comprehensive, quantitative framework to explore economic resilience; 2) identify a series of best-practice strategies for strengthening local economic resilience; 3) conduct up to 10 in-depth case studies; and 4) produce a concise guidebook that interprets and integrates findings of the research, written specifically for local economic development practitioners.

\$100,000 ARC grant to Jobs for the Future (JFF) in Boston, MA, for the *Career Online High School: A Leapfrog Strategy for Appalachian Communities* project. JFF will partner with Cengage Learning to eliminate high school completion barriers for individuals in Appalachian states and help them progress along learning and career paths. Key to the project’s success will be the integration of a cutting edge high school diploma completion model with educational and career pathway strategies and supports to

ensure long term workforce and economic opportunity for students. Through a competitive process, JFF will work with coal-impacted communities from Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia to help students complete high school and secure in-demand jobs. The project will train 40 students and expose 1,000 participants to the high school completion program.

\$60,000 for a partnership with the National Association of Counties Research Foundation to provide additional technical assistance to 11 teams from Appalachian coal communities that participated in the EDA-funded Innovation Challenge for Coal-Reliant Communities Program. This support includes grant writing, feasibility studies, strategic plan development or updates and capacity building to facilitate strategic and sustainable investments. Community teams are located in Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.