



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

POWER Award Summaries by State

October 2023

ALABAMA (1 award)

Project Title: *Economic Development Strategic Planning for Economic Growth & Resiliency*

Grantee: Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham in Birmingham, Alabama, for the *Economic Development Strategic Planning for Economic Growth & Resiliency* project. The project will lead to the preparation of a comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan with the goal of improving community capacity in multiple rural and under-resourced municipalities in and around Walker County. The plan will enhance multi-jurisdictional collaboration and regional project implementation and will align communities' priorities with federal funding initiatives from recent legislation and existing funding programs. Through partnerships with the Walker County Commission, the Walker Area Community Foundation, and the Walker County Development Authority, the plan will be based on local community engagement and reflect development plans for the Interstate 22 corridor and outdoor recreation industries. This project will result in the development of one Economic Development Strategic Plan over the course of 17 months.

KENTUCKY (9 awards)

Project Title: *Nursing Education Program Relocation (Pikeville Medical Center Summit Building to BSCTC Pikeville Campus)*

Grantee: Big Sandy Community and Technical College/Kentucky Community & Technical College System

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Big Sandy Community and Technical College (BSCTC)/Kentucky Community & Technical College System (KCTCS) in Prestonsburg, Kentucky, for the *Nursing Education Program Relocation* project. The project will renovate 12,317 square feet of the Clayton Little Building to support the relocation of the BSCTC's nursing program from the Summit Building at the Pikeville Medical Center. The project is aimed at addressing the healthcare shortages in rural eastern Kentucky by expanding and shoring up three allied health pathways at

BSCTC's Pikeville Campus through the renovation of the Clayton Little Building. Renovations to the facility will provide students with a modern, cutting-edge learning environment, enhancing their education and training. It will also help the BSCTC to attract and retain students and faculty while increasing the college's capacity to meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals in a region plagued by workforce shortages, especially in nursing and paramedics. Within three years (by September 2026), the Allied Health Programs on BSCTC's Pikeville Campus project will have served 650 students: 400 in Nursing Aid training, 150 in the Nursing Program, and 100 in EMT/paramedic training.

Project Title: *Buckhorn to Chavies Water Transmission Line Phase 2*

Grantee: City of Hazard, Kentucky

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the City of Hazard, Kentucky, for the *Buckhorn WTP to Chavies Transmission Line Phase 2* project. ARC funds will be used to increase water capacity to the Coal Fields Regional Industrial Park to allow for future economic growth. The project will replace an existing eight-inch PVC waterline with 45,830 liner feet of 12-inch DR11 HDPE transmission waterline. The larger waterline will increase the capacity of water available from the new Buckhorn Water Treatment Plant (WTP) to the Coal Fields Regional Industrial Park and northern Perry County. This water line is expected to serve three communities, 19 businesses, and 1,198 households, and create 336 jobs within three years.

Project Title: *Underserved People and Places: Community Economic Development for Those Who Need It Most*

Grantee: Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Mountain Association for Community Economic Development, Inc., in Berea, Kentucky, for the *Underserved People and Places: Community Economic Development for Those Who Need It Most* project. The project will create a small business lending program and provide technical assistance to underserved businesses on topics including clean energy, accounting training, and web design. The project will also continue and expand Mountain Association's technical assistance to nonprofits programs and another existing leadership development programs. This project specifically focuses these initiatives on underserved businesses, nonprofits, local governments, and community leaders. In partnership with SOAR, it will provide specialized training related to important issues. The project is expected to improve 220 businesses and create 120 jobs, as well as leverage \$3,000,000 in private investment over the course of two years.

Project Title: *University of Pikeville (UPIKE) College of Dental Medicine*

Grantee: University of Pikeville, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the University of Pikeville, Inc. (UPIKE), in Pikeville, Kentucky, for the *UPIKE College of Dental Medicine* project. The project will enable the grantee to purchase dental equipment and supplies for the new College of Dental Medicine (CDM), scheduled to begin accepting students in fall 2025, specifically for specialty clinics that will serve low-income and special needs patients in 10 economically distressed and medically underserved counties in Appalachian Kentucky. UPIKE is establishing the CDM to address the shortage of dentists in Kentucky and Central Appalachia and to help improve the health status of the region's workforce and its general population by providing oral health care for patients in need of specialized care—including pediatric patients and those recovering from substance use disorder. Within four years of the period of performance, this project is expected to create 57 new jobs in the College of Dental Medicine; in addition, 60 students will graduate annually from the four-year program and begin practicing dentistry throughout Central Appalachia, and 5,400 patients will be improved with greater access to dental care.

Project Title: *Developing a Technology-Focused Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Eastern Kentucky*

Grantee: Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR)

Award Amount: \$1,495,897

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,495,897 to Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) in Pikeville, Kentucky, for the *Developing a Technology-Focused Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Eastern Kentucky* project. This initiative will develop tailored, dedicated, quality support for college and university students with entrepreneurial aspirations. With its partners, SOAR will offer the following activities: a speaker series; early idea pitch competitions; workshops; a three-day event called Startup Sprints; boot camps on customer discovery and lean startup practices; the 606 Accelerator; and funding matchmaking including a series on how to access capital. The project's partners will provide outreach to participants, business space, and access to resources. Partners include the Appalachian Investors Alliance (AIA), Center on Rural Innovation (CORI), Invest 606, KY Innovation, University of Pikeville, Morehead State University, Union College, Ashland Community & Technical College, Hazard Community & Technical College, and Paintsville Independent School District. The project will create six new businesses and improve 49 non-student participants and 142 students during the three-year grant period.

Project Title: *Strengthening the Education-to-Career Pipeline for Eastern Kentucky Youth*

Grantee: Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky in Hazard, Kentucky, for the *Strengthening the Education-to-Career Pipeline for Eastern Kentucky Youth* project. ARC funding will support a comprehensive plan to explore a work-based learning program to help prepare the future workforce of Appalachian Kentucky. The research will include localized career pathway potential for high school and college students that lead to high-demand and upwardly mobile careers, including connecting the dots between credentials, certifications, degrees, and eventual employment. Project partners include Rural Up, Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR), Teach for America Appalachia, Red Bird Mission, Cowan Community Group, Inc., Roger Kobel, and the Prichard Committee. The plan will include an assessment of where work-based learning opportunities and career training programs exist in the Kentucky Promise Zone for youth; mapping of existing programs and initiatives; community and stakeholder input; resources and training needed to support the pipeline of employees; and the supervisor training required to mentor work-based, youth-oriented programs (e.g., internships, apprenticeships, and mentorship). The final comprehensive plan will include project management roles, budgets, phases of progress, responsible parties, and an implementation timeline.

Project Title: *US 23 Country Music Highway Museum and Conference Center Expansion*

Grantee: Johnson County Fiscal Court

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Johnson County Fiscal Court in Paintsville, Kentucky, for the *US 23 Country Music Highway Museum and Conference Center Expansion* project. The project will result in a plan to determine the feasibility, preliminary cost, and design of increasing the size of the US 23 Country Music Highway Museum and Conference Center to attract additional visitors and tourism. Using project funding, Johnson County expects to hire a consultant who will perform a feasibility study providing a site and area evaluation, market and financial analysis, physical planning recommendations, and development cost to expand the museum and the meeting space.

Project Title: *Transformational Flood Recovery Grants Consortium*

Grantee: Kentucky River Area Development District

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Kentucky River Area Development District in Hazard, Kentucky, for the *Transformational Flood Recovery Grants Consortium* project. This project will result in a plan for a grant consortium focused on flood and COVID-19 recovery. The consortium will gather organizations and

agencies to identify and apply for potential funding opportunities in the recovery space. Partners will work with a team of contracted grant writers to design this consortium, using best practices from successful grants consortiums to inform the plan. The target groups for the consortium are underserved governments and nonprofit organizations that have been impacted by historic flooding and need resources and guidance to access multiple funding opportunities.

Project Title: *Red Bird Strong Job Development and Community Center*

Grantee: Red Bird Mission, Inc.

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Red Bird Mission, Inc., in Beverly, Kentucky, for the *Red Bird Strong Job Development and Community Center* project. The project will result in a feasibility study for the construction of a community center in Laurel County, which will provide computer/workspaces for telework and work-from-home job opportunities; an entrepreneurship makerspace; job training classrooms; long-distance learning facilities; an Appalachian arts, music, and culture space; and an all-purpose room. Project partners include Clay County Adult Education, Hazard Community and Technical College, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Eastern Kentucky University, Advent Health, One Harlan County, Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, People's Rural Telephone Cooperative, Somerset Community College, and Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR). Project funds will be used to support to the work needed to refine building specs, identify necessary site improvements, and determine potential construction costs.

NEW YORK (1 award)

Project Title: *Dunkirk Strategies for Tourism-Based Economic Diversification*

Grantee: City of Dunkirk, New York

Award Amount: \$35,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$35,000 to the City of Dunkirk, New York, for the *Dunkirk Strategies for Tourism-Based Economic Diversification* project. The project will conduct a feasibility and planning study for a future four-season tourism attraction located on a city-owned property along Lake Erie. Chautauqua County has suffered from economic decline and population loss for several decades due to deindustrialization and the recent closing of a coal power plant. This project will aid the city's efforts to diversify the local economy and create a plan for tapping into the region's tourism potential. The project will produce a feasibility and planning study over the course of one year.

NORTH CAROLINA (2 awards)

Project Title: *EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems—Partnerships Strengthening Infrastructure and Supply Chains to Increase Farm Income and Resiliency*

Grantee: North Carolina State University

Award Amount: \$1,186,409

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,186,409 to North Carolina State University Raleigh, North Carolina, for *EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems (EMFS)—Partnerships Strengthening Infrastructure and Supply Chains to Increase Farm Income and Resiliency* project. EmPOWER Mountain Food Systems (EMFS) will develop a comprehensive program for expanding the local food economy in Western North Carolina by focusing on entrepreneurship, business development, job creation, workforce development, and growing community leadership for lasting change. The project will expand the impacts and double the number of counties served, with a targeted focus on food hubs and supply chain development, bringing resources into one of the most rural, resource-limited areas of North Carolina. This project will expand into an additional 14-county “foodshed” region across five Regional Councils of Governments, including the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. This project will serve 1,165 business, 3,212 participants and 50 students across 13 communities in Appalachian North Carolina.

Project Title: *Upscaling the Creative Manufacturing Sector in WNC*

Grantee: Land of Sky Regional Council of Government

Award Amount: \$952,963

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$952,963 to Land of Sky Regional Council of Government in Asheville, North Carolina, for the *Upscaling the Creative Manufacturing Sector in WNC* project. The Land of Sky Regional Council (LSRC) will work collaboratively across 26 counties to implement strategies that bring together local leaders to invest in and grow the capacity, strength, and sustainability of the creative manufacturing economy of Western North Carolina. Project partners include the Southwestern Commission, High Country COG, Western Arts Agencies of North Carolina (WNC Arts), AB Tech, Mountain BizWorks, and Center for Craft. This project builds off a previous ARC POWER planning project titled “Creative Manufacturing Sector Development Plan (CMSDP).” By the end of the period of performance, this project is expected to serve 705 businesses, create more than 110 jobs, retain 158 additional jobs and to leverage \$4,450,000 of private investment.

OHIO (11 awards)

Project Title: *Connecting Underserved Morgan County, Ohio*

Grantee: Morgan County, Ohio

Award Amount: \$2,499,803

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,499,803 to Morgan County, Ohio, for the *Connecting Underserved Morgan County, Ohio* project. This project will help fund the provision of high-speed broadband service to the Village of Chesterhill and other underserved or unserved areas of the county via a contract-for-services project structure. The preferred vendor will deliver symmetrical broadband speeds of up to 1 gigabyte per second to agricultural and retail businesses and residential units. This deployment will include broadband services to the entrepreneurial Chesterhill Produce Auction, which was identified as a priority investment area within Morgan County's recently completed Technical Assistance for Broadband Investment plan, funded through a previous ARC POWER planning grant. In addition, the project will enable the Morgan County Farm Bureau to deliver eight "broadband and technology" training courses for agricultural businesses over the grant period. Morgan County will also partner with Rural Action to expand local entrepreneurs' access to new markets. The project will provide access to broadband service to 914 unserved or underserved households and 23 unserved or underserved businesses.

Project Title: *Connecting Underserved Ashtabula County, Ohio*

Grantee: Ashtabula County, Ohio

Award Amount: \$2,497,161

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,497,161 to Ashtabula County, Ohio, for the *Connecting Underserved Ashtabula County, Ohio* project. The project will enable Ashtabula County to contract with a preferred vendor to expand broadband access in underserved or unserved areas of the county. The preferred vendor will provide up to 1 gigabyte of symmetrical broadband service with extremely low latency. Ashtabula County businesses and residents who have never had access to this type of service will also need training and access support for the investment to be transformational. Partnerships have been formed with public libraries in the impacted region, the Ashtabula County Farm Bureau, and the Ashtabula County Community Action Agency to implement coordinated outreach and training. The libraries are committed to providing venue space for trainings and meetings. Through this project, broadband service will be made available to 2,986 unserved or underserved households and 90 unserved or underserved businesses located across 14 communities.

Project Title: *Grand Theater Interior Auditorium Restoration*

Grantee: Steubenville Historic Landmarks Foundation

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Steubenville Historic Landmarks Foundation in Steubenville, Ohio, for the *Grand Theater Interior Auditorium*

Restoration project. The grant will provide funds for the renovation and revival of the historic Grand Theater. In addition to the immediate benefits of downtown revitalization and historic preservation, the Grand Theater's reopening is projected to generate an annual economic impact of over \$10.7 million for the greater Steubenville area. The project's completion promises not only a cultural and artistic hub, but also a driving force behind the continued rejuvenation of downtown Steubenville. The project aims to renovate 8,250 square feet of theater space, serve 449 businesses, and attract over 41,000 visitors.

Project Title: *Portsmouth Riverfront Development*

Grantee: City of Portsmouth, Ohio

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the City of Portsmouth, Ohio, for the *Portsmouth Riverfront Development* project. The project will replace a 78-year-old cobblestone boat ramp with a new Ohio River public access boat ramp and launch, parking lot, and access road, in the historic riverfront area of downtown Portsmouth, Ohio. This project will bolster regional tourism by highlighting the regional Underground Railroad history for Portsmouth and Scioto County. It will also connect the city to The Ohio River National Freedom Corridor, which promotes the Ohio River Corridor as a world-class tourism experience. Riverfront development will be a catalyst for downtown tourism, drawing recreational boaters to discover the historic Boneyfiddle District shops, eateries, and lodging accommodations and Portsmouth's Underground Railroad history. The project will highlight regional Appalachian points of interest for visitors and will include signage with QR codes for visitor bureaus in six additional Appalachian counties in Kentucky and Ohio. This is the first phase of an expansive riverfront rehabilitation project devoted to honoring and revealing the Underground Railroad history of Portsmouth, Ohio. The City of Portsmouth will partner with the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission to complete the boat ramp and launch over the course of approximately two and a half years.

Project Title: *GROW Appalachia*

Grantee: Appalachia Ohio Manufacturers' Coalition

Award Amount: \$1,396,500

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,396,500 to Appalachian Ohio Manufacturers' Coalition (AOMC) in Vincent, Ohio, for the *GROW Appalachia* project. The project will develop the Manufacturing Support Center (MSC) in Southeastern Ohio, including border counties in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. The goal of this project will be to expand the knowledge from previous programming and planning grants to create a youth-to-adult talent pipeline for the Ohio Valley region to create high-paying jobs with industry credentials. Project partners include Washington County Career Center, the National Museum of Education, Converge, Team Consortium, and programmatic support from previous work with Marshall Advanced Manufacturing Center (formerly known as Robert C. Byrd Institute). The project is anticipated to

train 225 workers/trainees and 175 students, support 75 businesses, and create eight new businesses. MSC will also aid the service area in retaining up to 125 jobs and creating up to 125 new jobs with employer partners by the end of the grant period.

Project Title: *Appalachian Ohio CDL Center*

Grantee: Mid-East Career and Technology Centers

Award Amount: \$1,333,916

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,333,916 to the Mid-East Career and Technology Centers (MECTC) in Zanesville, Ohio, for the *Appalachian Ohio CDL Center* project. The project will expand commercial driver license (CDL) training and testing in seven counties across southeastern Ohio. Funding from this project will enable MECTC to work with 13 local school districts to expand CDL classroom training to 12 additional area high schools by providing additional instructors, training materials, skills training, and by covering student physical exams and testing fees. Becoming a regional hub for CDL meets the region's demand for commercial drivers while improving income and employment outcomes for southeastern Ohio's workers. Through partnerships with Ohio Southeast Economic Development, Muskingum County (OH) Commissioners, Ohio Means Jobs, Muskingum County Community Foundations, Zane State College, Ohio Trucking Association, and other educational institutions, MECTC's CDL program will result in 200 students passing the CDL course, benefitting businesses with commercial driver needs over the course of three years.

Project Title: *Tuscarawas County Broadband & Workforce Transformation*

Grantee: Tuscarawas County Economic Development Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,079,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,079,000 to Tuscarawas County Economic Development Corporation in Dover, Ohio, for the *Tuscarawas County Broadband & Workforce Transformation* project. The project will provide high-speed broadband to households and businesses across Tuscarawas County by constructing and equipping six fixed wireless telecommunication towers, allowing the Northeast Ohio Appalachian region to compete for 21st century jobs through improved access to high-speed, low-latency broadband service. This project will provide 100 Mbps broadband service to over 10,000 households and 200 businesses in 19 underserved communities, thereby facilitating remote learning, telemedicine, and access to e-commerce and telecommuting in the area.

Project Title: *Youth Leadership Association Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership*

Grantee: Ohio–West Virginia Youth Leadership Association

Award Amount: \$49,900

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,900 to Ohio–West Virginia Youth Leadership Association in Latham, Ohio, for *Youth Leadership Association Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership* project. This project will support the Ohio–West Virginia Youth Leadership Association (YLA) plan for the expansion of facilities in Pike County, Ohio, and enhance and grow its Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership program. The training program helps high school students and young adults develop leadership skills to help their communities reverse the negative impact of coal plant closures and job loss through building an entrepreneurial, cultural, and civic foundation for economic renewal. One strategic plan for the Youth Leadership Association Cave Lake Center for Community Leadership will be created by the end of the grant period.

Project Title: *Muskingum University Appalachian Ohio POWER Career Pathway Collaboration*

Grantee: Muskingum University

Award Amount: \$49,848

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,848 to Muskingum University in New Concord, Ohio, for the *Muskingum University Appalachian Ohio POWER Career Pathway Collaboration* project. Muskingum University, along with eight educational partners in Appalachian Ohio, will work together to create a strategic plan for six comprehensive career pathways: healthcare; engineering; conservation; education/childcare; hospitality/tourism; and computer science and technology to support long-term economic demands and cluster development in tourism, conservation, and advanced manufacturing. Additionally, Muskingum University will conduct a feasibility study to expand the Muskingum University Center for Childhood Development to offer more childcare slots for preschool-aged children and more practicum and clinical offerings for students enrolled in education and childcare-related workforce training programs, thereby increasing the number of childcare professionals as well as the number of quality childcare slots, which are desperately needed by the workforce. This project will result in one strategic plan and one feasibility study within seven months.

Project Title: *Planning for Connecting to the Future: New Lexington & Southeast Ohio Broadband Expansion*

Grantee: New Lexington Schools

Award Amount: \$46,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$46,000 to New Lexington Schools in New Lexington, Ohio, for the *Planning for Connecting to the Future: New Lexington & Southeast Ohio Broadband Expansion* project. Project funding will enable New Lexington Schools to contract with a technical consultant to develop and conduct a broadband analysis and provide tangible recommendations in the form of a broadband plan. New Lexington Schools' project team will use the broadband plan to establish and convene the New Lexington/Perry County Broadband Advisory

Panel to utilize the recommendations to meet the broadband demands and needs of New Lexington and Perry County. The broadband plan will consist of fiber-deployment asset mapping of Perry County; a broadband demand analysis; broadband project analysis with recommendations, estimated project costs, and benefits; and digital transformation recommendations. Five communities will be improved through the broadband planning process.

Project Title: *Ohio Folk Centers: A Merging of Culture, Workforce Development, Education, & Health Care*

Grantee: Federal Valley Resource Center, Inc.

Award Amount: \$39,825

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$39,825 to Federal Valley Resource Center, Inc., in Stewart, Ohio, for the *Ohio Folk Centers: A Merging of Culture, Workforce Development, Education, & Health Care* project. ARC funds will be used to develop a plan for establishing a network of community centers for workforce development, education, health care, and cultural arts programming. The project will create a plan to build and operate three community centers in Meigs, Athens, and Perry counties that would provide essential services to meet the basic needs of residents and offer workforce training, art and music classes, and other educational offerings. The concept is based on the idea that basic needs must be met before people can focus on training or job readiness. They are modeled on traditional Appalachian folk schools or settlement schools, many of which went on to become local or regional cultural arts centers. This project will serve three communities and result in one plan over the course of the grant period.

PENNSYLVANIA (19 awards)

Project Title: *Washington County's East Finley Broadband Expansion*

Grantee: Washington County, Pennsylvania

Award Amount: \$2,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$2,500,000 to Washington County, Pennsylvania, for *Washington County's East Finley Broadband Expansion* project. This project will enable Washington County to contract with a preferred vendor to expand the provision of high-speed broadband services to 857 unserved locations in East Finley Township. The preferred vendor will design, build, maintain, and own a broadband network to make available a full suite of services, including broadband service, voice, video, and home security. This project is part of phase III of Washington County's county-wide internet access expansion effort. The contract for high-speed internet services will provide economic and educational benefits to 808 unserved or underserved residences and 49 unserved or underserved businesses over the course of the grant period.

Project Title: *Trade Institute of Pittsburgh Social Enterprise*

Grantee: Trade Institute of Pittsburgh

Award Amount: \$1,562,218

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,562,218 to the Trade Institute of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the *Trade Institute of Pittsburgh Social Enterprise* project. The project will provide additional paid workforce experience for trainees who have completed the masonry program and the Trade Institute but are still experiencing additional barriers to employment. This program will provide wrap-around services to trainees who may need recovery support, housing support, and additional services in the most distressed areas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Through a partnership with Community College of Allegheny County, Concrete Rose, First National Bank, Habitat for Humanity, Harris Masonry, Partners4Work, Pittsburgh Gateways, and Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation, trainees will be connected to support they need on and off the training site. In addition, businesses will get technical assistance for weatherization and clean energy practices. The project anticipates serving 138 workers/trainees and 10 businesses by the end of the grant period.

Project Title: *Transforming Our Workforce Ecosystem (TOWE)*

Grantee: Keystone Community Education Council

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Keystone Community Education Council (KCEC) in Oil City, Pennsylvania, for the *Transforming Our Workforce Ecosystem (TOWE)* project. Along with regional partners, KCEC will implement the TOWE project in four components that support employer-endorsed manufacturing skills training for in-school youth, new workforce entrants, dislocated workers, and current workers. Components of TOWE include: partnering with local chambers, employer groups, and economic development agencies to identify critical workforce issues, hiring obstacles, training needs, and possible workforce solutions; promoting skilled trades in middle schools by creating a website that connects regional youth programs with middle school guidance counselors; offering college-level evening certificate programs and pre-apprenticeship certification to high school seniors and out-of-school youth; and allow KCEC staff, working with the Pennsylvania Talent Pipeline Project (PTPP) network, Workforce Development Areas (WDAs), and other workforce and economic development partners, to identify employers with unfilled job openings or workforce development needs to develop apprenticeship opportunities to re-skill new hires and up-skill current employees. This project will improve 30 businesses, 258 students, and 69 workers/trainees, and implement 12 programs over the course of three years.

Project Title: *Providing Opportunities in Workforce and Entrepreneurship Through Recovery (Project P.O.W.E.R.)*

Grantee: Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the Pennsylvania Peer Support Coalition (PaPSC) in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for the *Providing Opportunities in Workforce and Entrepreneurship Through Recovery (Project P.O.W.E.R.)* project. The project will increase the number of peer-based SUD recovery professionals across the 52 coal-impacted counties of Appalachian Pennsylvania to help those in recovery connect to support services and find new career opportunities in growing sectors. The project is a continuation of work accomplished under a prior ARC POWER grant and leverages ongoing work in an INSPIRE Initiative grant to expand and enhance the SUD recovery ecosystem in western Pennsylvania. Project partners include regional Workforce Development Boards, FAVOR Western PA, FAVOR Laurel Highlands, Unity Recovery, RI International, the Copeland Center for Wellness and Recovery, the Pennsylvania Mental Health Consumers Association, and the Wright Center for Community Health. By the end of the three-year grant period, five of the 10 peer-based organizations served with technical assistance and entrepreneurship training will be fully prepared to provide services to the recovery community. It will also create one new peer-based, recovery-led organization, employ 250 workers in recovery, improve 60 peer-based professionals through professional development, and implement four new Recovery Wellness Retreat programs.

Project Title: *Pitt-Johnstown Future Works*

Grantee: Pittsburgh Gateways Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to Pittsburgh Gateways Corporation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the *Pitt-Johnstown Future Works* project. This project will renovate and preserve 70,000 square feet on Main Street in Johnstown to establish Pitt-Johnstown Future Works. The anchor tenant of the new facility will be the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ) Engineering. The new facility will enhance UPJ's degree programs with new advanced manufacturing courses, labs, and research. Pitt-Johnstown Future Works will also bring together small businesses and entrepreneurs focused on innovative manufacturing. The co-location of education and entrepreneurship at the renovated facility will encourage cross-collaboration to enhance students' educational experiences while simultaneously advancing local manufacturing technology, aiding regional businesses, and advancing economic growth in Johnstown. The project aims to serve 14 businesses and 90 students.

Project Title: *Partners for Creative Economy*

Grantee: Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,463,222

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,463,222 to Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation in Homestead, Pennsylvania, for the *Partners for Creative Economy* project. The project will build local leadership, provide career opportunities in historic trades, and invest in the future economic growth and success of the Pittsburgh region's cultural heritage assets. The Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area (ROS) has helped to lead the region's transition from heavy industry to high technology and diversified services, as well as to bolster the new regional economy by promoting arts and heritage tourism. The project presents transformational opportunities to communities in the region through five key strategies: a Creative Leadership Program, Joint Program Partnerships, Collaborative Marketing, Workforce Training, and Mini Grants. This process will bring together artists and designers with community groups, municipal leaders, heritage tourism assets, and others to address a range of community and economic development needs. The project will serve 30 businesses, 14 workers/trainees, 22 communities, and 72 participants.

Project Title: *Venango County Restaurant and Retail Food Accelerator*

Grantee: Venango County Economic Development Authority

Award Amount: \$1,457,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,457,000 to the Venango County Economic Development Authority in Oil City, Pennsylvania, for the *Venango County Restaurant and Retail Food Accelerator* project. The project will build on prior POWER investments to complete the renovation of the Oil City National Bank building with a restaurant and retail food accelerator. The food accelerator will re-activate a historic commercial space and lower the barrier to entry for new retail food businesses in Oil City. The project will renovate 15,700 square feet of commercial space, serving 3 businesses, creating 7 new jobs, and leveraging \$300,000 in private investment over the course of three years.

Project Title: *Building a Competitive Workforce to Boost Semiconductor Manufacturing in the ARC Region*

Grantee: Tri-County Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,400,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,400,000 to the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board, Inc., in Butler, Pennsylvania, for the *Building a Competitive Workforce to Boost Semiconductor Manufacturing in the ARC Region* project. This project aims to build a competitive workforce in the emerging market of semiconductor manufacturing and address the critical workforce shortage in related industries. Coal-power plant closures have resulted in direct layoffs over the years from regional employers including Hatfield's Ferry Power Station, First Energy Mitchell Power

Station, DTE Energy, Erie Coke Corporation, and Cheswick Generating Station. This project addresses the direct impact of coal-related job losses in 15 Western Pennsylvania counties by providing free training required to obtain jobs in the areas of HVAC-R, welding processes/building trades, semiconductor manufacturing, and building information modeling. Central to the project is a partnership with the Steamfitters Local Union 449 JATC, which will offer trainings at its Steamfitters Technology Center in Harmony, Pennsylvania, and utilize ARC funding to equip its orbital welding lab and semiconductor plastic fusion lab. Additionally, an outreach and recruitment campaign will be deployed to enroll workers in new training opportunities. The 18-month project aims to serve 550 workers/trainees, with 525 expected to secure employment or higher wages, or receive an industry-recognized credential.

Project Title: *Pennsylvania Cybersecurity Center*

Grantee: LindenPointe Development Corporation

Award Amount: \$1,150,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,150,000 to LindenPointe Development Corporation in Hermitage, Pennsylvania, for the *Pennsylvania Cybersecurity Center* (PCC) project. The PCC will expand its reach beyond a pilot in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, to seven additional counties in Appalachian Pennsylvania, thereby increasing the supply of local cybersecurity talent. The PCC has developed a curriculum with recognized industry leaders, Cisco and CompTIA, which leads to recognized Security IT Certificates. The PCC supplements this coursework with a Cyber Range, a virtual environment where workers/trainees practice handling specific real-world scenarios as cyber professionals. PCC then recruits workers/trainees from partnering high schools, colleges, and adult workforce agencies including the West Central Job Partnership. After training, the PCC places students into jobs within the cyber and IT industry through their current and future employer partnerships. The project is anticipated to serve 455 workers/trainees through the end of the grant period.

Project Title: *Building Capacity with Infinite Erie*

Grantee: The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Erie

Award Amount: \$1,082,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,082,000 to the The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Erie in Erie, Pennsylvania, for the *Building Capacity with Infinite Erie* project. Through partnerships with Infinite Erie, Erie Community Foundation, ECRDA, Erie's Black Wall Street, and the Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program this project will provide technical assistance, partnership and funding alignment, project development workshops, and organizational coaching for transformational projects identified by Erie's Investment Playbook. The playbook also includes economic development projects for healthy neighborhoods, a reimagined bayfront/tourism, and a 21st-century economy. With ARC's investment, 60 small,

Black, and minority business owners will receive customized business assistance from EBWS, and 60 local organizations will receive capacity-building support, including project development, planning, and grant writing.

Project Title: *Expanding Sectoral Partnerships in the Regional Food System Through Culinary and Butchery Training*

Grantee: Community Kitchen Pittsburgh

Award Amount: \$697,592

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$697,592 to Community Kitchen Pittsburgh (CKP) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the *Expanding Sectoral Partnerships in the Regional Food System Through Culinary and Butchery Training* project. The project will create jobs and provide paid culinary and butchery vocational training in the Greater Pittsburgh area to alleviate the long-lasting intergenerational effects of the collapse of the coal and steel industries in the region. CKP will develop a four-week Culinary Fundamentals program in collaboration with employer partner, The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), and develop a Registered Butcher Apprenticeship program in partnership with Unified Fields, a local butcher training company and meat processor. CKP will provide comprehensive case management and supportive services for students that include assistance accessing transportation, childcare, housing, utilities, and other emergency services as needed. Combined with the partnerships with strong employers, the provided services will allow trainees to obtain a job, stay engaged with their employment, and advance along a financially sustaining career path. Through enrollment of multiple cohorts of workers/trainees in the Culinary Foundations program or Registered Butcher Apprenticeship program, the project will serve 450 workers/trainees by helping them gain experience and attain employment, create 17 jobs, and retain four jobs at Unified Fields and Community Kitchen Pittsburgh by the end of the grant period.

Project Title: *Cultivating the Agri-Culinary Industry in Northwest Pennsylvania*

Grantee: Edinboro Market, Inc.

Award Amount: \$663,699

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$663,699 to Edinboro Market, Inc., in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, for the *Cultivating the Agri-Culinary Industry in Northwest Pennsylvania* project. The project will help expand Edinboro Market's footprint with the goal of building an "agri-culinary" destination. The project comprises several elements: renovating a new 3,500-square-foot space for the farmers market, enabling 30 additional sellers to participate; building new retail space and a cafe; and expanding educational programming on cooking, nutrition, and farming to serve adults and young people. The project's goal is to develop a roadmap to farming and food careers in northwest Pennsylvania.

Project Title: *Beaver County Business District Initiative*

Grantee: Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development

Award Amount: \$611,909

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$611,909 to Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development in Beaver, Pennsylvania, for the *Beaver County Business District Initiative* project. The project will launch a mini-grant program to assist small and startup businesses relocating to one of Beaver County's nine downtown business districts. Beaver County has experienced significant job loss and population decline for several decades due to the region's industrial decline and the more recent downturn in the coal economy. The county's downtown business districts have suffered from disinvestment and high vacancy rates as a result. In an effort to diversify its economy and create jobs, the county is pursuing efforts to incentivize downtown investment and provide resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs. This project will complement these efforts by providing financial incentives for small businesses to locate and grow their businesses in Beaver County's downtown districts. The project is expected to serve 90 businesses and create 180 jobs over three years.

Project Title: *Enhancing Nursing and Allied Health Professional Education with a High-Fidelity Simulation Lab*

Grantee: Westminster College

Award Amount: \$437,351

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$437,351 to Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania, for the *Enhancing Nursing and Allied Health Professional Education with a High-Fidelity Simulation Lab* project. This project will provide high-tech training and patient simulation equipment for a new high-fidelity simulation laboratory. The new laboratory will help Westminster College expand its nursing program and address the shortage of nurses and allied health professionals in three medically underserved and coal-impacted counties in Appalachian Pennsylvania. The project will benefit Westminster students earning their Bachelor of Science in nursing credential and community partners who wish to upskill their nursing or allied health workforce, including first responders. Additionally, regional healthcare systems experiencing a labor shortage will have a reliable pipeline of trained nursing and allied health professionals to meet the growing demand for skilled healthcare talent. By the end of the three-year grant period and each year thereafter, approximately 50 nursing students will earn the R.N. or B.S.N. credential and 25 workers in the allied healthcare field will earn or update their professional certifications and licensures.

Project Title: *Susquehanna Valley Makerspace Collaborative*

Grantee: Susquehanna Valley United Way

Award Amount: \$ 401,080

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$401,080 to the Susquehanna Valley United Way (SVUW) in city, Pennsylvania, for the *Susquehanna Valley Makerspace Collaborative* project. The project will equip and staff the Susquehanna Valley Makerspace Collaborative to provide training in a wide range of subjects, including culinary and industrial arts, arts and design, music, gaming, and a tech lab in locations across five counties of Pennsylvania: Columbia, Montour, Snyder, Union, and Northumberland. Additionally, funding will support the personnel to deliver mobile makerspace programs contracted by Bloomsburg and Lewisburg Children's Museum and Snyder County 4-H. The SVUW will hire STEM-trained staff at the makerspace locations to provide unique hands-on classes, curriculums, and experiences. Project hubs will be established at several locations, including the Improved Milton Experience; the Lewisburg and Bloomsburg Children's Museum; the Regional Engagement Center; For the Cause Teen Center; the Mt. Carmel, Shamokin, and Warrior Run Area makerspaces; and Bloomsburg Teen Center locations. Additionally, the project will establish mobile sites (with more limited programming) at libraries, YMCAs, community centers, and 4-H programs. The project is anticipated to serve 1,250 students and improve 650 students.

Project Title: *Junior Achievement Comprehensive Analysis of Territories—Western PA & West Virginia*

Grantee: Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania, Inc.

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania, Inc., in Bridgeville, Pennsylvania, for the *Junior Achievement Comprehensive Analysis of Territories—Western PA & West Virginia* project. The project will create plans to successfully implement Junior Achievement entrepreneurship, career exploration/readiness, and financial literacy programming in both Pennsylvania and West Virginia. This multi-state evaluation will enable the organization to assess capacity, additional funding needs, and necessary partnerships required to integrate and sustain its student-centric programming. Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania (JA of Western PA) will identify the optimal implementation of programming and school/business engagement, and partner with local businesses and educators to create a comprehensive strategy for engaging all 24 West Virginia counties within the service area. The project will support the creation of two strategic plans: one Pennsylvania-based strategy and one West Virginia-based strategy.

Project Title: *Lycoming County Broadband Engineering & Deployment Readiness Plan*

Grantee: Lycoming County, Pennsylvania

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, for the *Lycoming County Broadband Engineering & Deployment Readiness Plan* project. Lycoming County will contract with a qualified consulting vendor to prepare the

Lycoming County Broadband Engineering and Deployment Readiness Plan. The plan will verify the service status of previously identified unserved and underserved structures, identify broadband fiber deployment solutions to fill the gaps, locate areas best-suited for middle-mile and last-mile broadband infrastructure deployment, estimate the cost of required middle-mile and last-mile infrastructure, estimate the timeline for broadband infrastructure build-out, and develop an action and implementation strategy. The plan will encompass the entirety of Lycoming County, including all municipalities and census tracts. The plan will give Lycoming County and its stakeholders a reliable understanding of the distribution of unserved and underserved areas. The mapping exhibits will include the locations of anchor institutions, including major employers, healthcare facilities, libraries, local government buildings, and schools. This will assist Lycoming County in future prioritization of focus areas for fiber deployment. Twenty-two Pennsylvania communities will be improved through engagement in the broadband planning process.

Project Title: *TRPIL Advances Career Options and Opportunities*

Grantee: Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL)

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL) in Washington, Pennsylvania, for the *TRPIL Advances Career Options and Opportunities* project. This planning grant will support the planning of a workforce development program which will connect young adults with disabilities in Appalachia—a historically marginalized population twice as likely to be unemployed or underemployed than people without disabilities—to potential careers and life-long earning potential. Project partners include the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Washington Health System, Waynesburg University, Penn West California, and First Federal Savings & Loan of Green County. Local employer partners in need of workers will benefit through their partnership in an innovative program that will provide a pipeline of new employees eager to work and with the vocational skills necessary to meet industry needs. By the end of the 12-month grant period, the project will create one strategic plan that will inform a future implementation project to establish the TRPIL Advances Career Options and Opportunities program.

Project Title: *Ridgway Riverfront Master Site Plan*

Grantee: Borough of Ridgway, Pennsylvania

Award Amount: \$35,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$35,000 to Borough of Ridgway, Pennsylvania, for the *Ridgway Riverfront Master Site Plan* project. ARC funds will be used to develop a master site plan for a 28-acre parcel of land along the Clarion River that the Borough acquired in 2019. The property is located within walking distance of downtown Ridgway and is currently underutilized. This project will develop a Master Site Plan to

capitalize on the area's natural assets while addressing flood mitigation and streambank restoration. The goal is to find the best avenues for development of public recreational spaces and improved public access to the Clarion River for outdoor recreation, including restoration of a campground.

TENNESSEE (4 awards)

Project Title: *Etowah–North Etowah Industrial Park Sewer System Improvements*

Grantee: City of Etowah, Tennessee

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the City of Etowah, Tennessee, for the *Etowah–North Etowah Industrial Park Sewer System Improvements* project. This project will expand and upgrade the wastewater infrastructure that serves the Etowah Industrial Park. The scope of this work is Phase II of a three-phase project to increase capacity in the sewer system, thereby accommodating and encouraging growth in the industrial park. Phase II improvements are necessary to carry wastewater flows from the North Etowah Industrial Park to the treatment plant. The project will add a fourth pump at the city's Main Cane Creek Interceptor (CCI) Pump Station, which serves as the main delivery point to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and will replace an aged and undersized 12-inch transmission line with a new 18-inch force main. Over the course of the grant period, this project will serve five (5) businesses and 57 households, create 120 jobs, and result in 15,000 linear feet of pipe installed with 750,000 gallons of capacity added. It is projected this work will leverage \$600 million in private investment.

Project Title: *Spark Innovation Center: Advancing the Clean Energy Economy*

Grantee: Cherokee Farm Development Corporation

Award Amount: \$599,999

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$599,999 to Cherokee Farm Development Corporation in Knoxville, Tennessee, for the *Spark Innovation Center: Advancing the Clean Energy Economy* project. The project will support, attract, and retain promising technology startup companies by providing access to top-quality lab space, expert mentoring, programming, guidance, prototyping resources, and sources of early-stage capital. The Spark Innovation Center will enable advanced technology entrepreneurs emerging from research to stay and grow in East Tennessee. Project partners include Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council, the University of Tennessee and the UT Research Foundation, Mid-South I-Corps Hub (UT branch run by the University of Tennessee Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Development), Oak Ridge National Lab, Launch Tennessee, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. The project will serve 50 businesses; create 148 jobs and retain 142 jobs; leverage \$83 million in private investment; and generate \$57 million in non-expert revenues during the project period and up to three years after the end of the grant.

Project Title: *Pathways to Success*

Grantee: Bristol's Promise: Youth Networking Alliance

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to Bristol's Promise: Youth Networking Alliance in Bristol, Tennessee, for the *Pathways to Success* project. In partnership with the Appalachian Promise Alliance, the project will develop a plan for an essential "soft skills" program, considered to be the highest priority skill set to employers and community partners in Eastern Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. The Appalachian Promise Alliance will lead the project management and planning process and will formalize partners across their service area. The project will support future participants in programs focused on executive functioning skills, time management, conflict resolution, teamwork, and other essential skills that can be applied across all employers. The project will produce an essential skills program plan for the service area over the course of one year.

Project Title: *Developing a Farm-Centric Innovation Model & Plan for the Appalachian Regional Cluster*

Grantee: AgLaunch Initiative

Award Amount: \$49,890

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,890 to AgLaunch Initiative in Memphis, Tennessee, for the *Developing a Farm-Centric Innovation Model & Plan for the Appalachian Regional Cluster* project. The grant will enable AgLaunch Initiative to design a scalable expansion of its successful Farm-Centric Innovation Model. The model is aimed at creating a business platform for the exchange of farm-level data and knowledge, involving farmers' acres to incubate a range of new innovations spanning from robotics to market transparency solutions. This model, which has already supported numerous startups and generated substantial funding and job opportunities, strives to enhance farm efficiency, promote sustainable practices, and contribute to the prosperity of farming communities. The project will result in the development of one strategic plan that AgLaunch intends to use as a tool for future funding opportunities to implement its Farm-Centric Innovation Model in neighboring states' coal-impacted communities.

VIRGINIA (4 awards)

Project Title: *Opportunity Appalachia—Expanding Opportunity: Bringing New Investment to Underserved Coal Communities*

Grantee: Appalachian Community Capital

Award Amount: \$1,499,850

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,499,850 to Appalachian Community Capital (ACC), in Christiansburg, Virginia for the *Opportunity Appalachia—Expanding Opportunity: Bringing New Investment to Underserved Coal Communities* project. The project will enable six participating Appalachian states— Virginia, Kentucky,

North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, and West Virginia—to provide direct development technical assistance to 30 communities. Technical assistance providers will work with the communities, selected through a competitive process, to develop high-impact development projects with prospectus materials and project pitch videos and presentations. When the communities complete the investor prospectus materials, Opportunity Appalachia will reach out to pre-vetted investors directly and through a high-level Investor Convening. The following project partners will offer outreach and technical assistance to communities: Fahe (Kentucky), Mountain BizWorks (North Carolina), OhioSE, University of Tennessee, University of Virginia–Wise, and West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Center. National partners include Main Street America and Coastal Enterprises, Inc. The project is expected to serve and improve 30 businesses and communities, engage 600 participants, create 1,200 jobs and 11 businesses, and leverage \$150 million in private investment during the grant period and up to three years after.

Project Title: *Big Cherry Regional Recreation Enhanced Infrastructure*

Grantee: Town of Big Stone Gap, Virginia

Award Amount: \$1,221,100

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,221,100 to the Town of Big Stone Gap, Virginia, for the *Big Cherry Regional Recreation Enhanced Infrastructure* project. The project will develop water, sewer, and electric utility connections to a newly constructed general store, campsites, and restrooms to serve day and overnight visitors to Big Cherry. This project will install 4,400 linear feet of water and sewer line and fencing; a 10,000-gallon water storage tank; and a 5,000-gallon-per-day (GPD) wastewater treatment package plant while serving three communities and 5,550 new daytime and 5,550 new overnight visitors annually. The installation of essential infrastructure will help make Big Cherry a regional destination for campers, thru-hikers, and community members.

Project Title: *Southwest Virginia Creative Economy and Tourism Workforce Initiative*

Grantee: Friends of Southwest Virginia

Award Amount: \$980,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$980,000 to Friends of Southwest Virginia in Abingdon, Virginia, for the *Southwest Virginia Creative Economy and Tourism Workforce Initiative* project. The project will make the regional tourism workforce more competitive, while also promoting the cultural and outdoor recreation assets of 18 counties and four cities in Southwest Virginia. The project will develop a hospitality and tourism workforce training initiative; enhance the VisitSWVA website; build a digital asset management system for partners to have access to Southwest Virginia marketing collateral; conduct innovative market research for future marketing campaigns; and launch a national Southwest Virginia branding campaign that features the cultural and outdoor experiences of the region. This project will help Friends of Southwest Virginia continue to expand and grow the creative economy and drive economic development in the region. This project will

serve and improve 450 businesses, 56 communities, and 900 participants; create 48 new businesses and 245 new jobs; retain 9,782 jobs; and leverage \$3.8 million of private investment over the course of the three-year project.

Project Title: *Research into Employer Needs to Support Workers in Coal-Impacted Counties*

Grantee: Society for Human Resource Management Foundation, Inc.

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Foundation, Inc., in Alexandria, Virginia, for the *Research into Employer Needs to Support Workers in Coal-Impacted Counties* project. This project, which is focused on 117 counties in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia, will conduct a survey-based research project to collect information about employer competency, perceptions, needs, and capacities in the areas of hiring and retaining workers; addressing employee health needs; identifying community wraparound supports; and employer perceptions of local, state, and federal public policies. The project will result in a comprehensive report that synthesizes research findings to inform future work of the SHRM Foundation in Appalachia. The report will be made available to employers, employees, educators, and policymakers within the workforce ecosystem to inform policies, practices, and programs in Appalachia.

WEST VIRGINIA (13 awards)

Project Title: *Keith-Albee Renovation*

Grantee: Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,500,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,500,000 to the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center, Inc., in Huntington, West Virginia, for the *Keith-Albee Renovation* project. The project will renovate and upgrade the Keith-Albee Theater facility to expand programming and bring in new visitors. The Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center is a regional destination venue and an important asset to Huntington. This project will keep the building from falling into disrepair. The work includes waterproofing in the theater basement to protect the structural integrity of the building; replacement and installation of a new water service entrance with a new sprinkler riser with fire protection; refurbishment of 1,180 fixed auditorium seats; and construction of a new handicap seating area.

Project Title: *Powering Prosperity Through Infrastructure Job Training*

Grantee: BridgeValley Community & Technical College

Award Amount: \$1,499,969

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,499,969 to BridgeValley Community & Technical College in South Charleston, West Virginia, for the *Powering Prosperity Through Infrastructure Job Training* project. The project will provide credentialed employer-

approved training for seven high-demand occupations, including heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, electrical power-line installers, telecommunications-fiber optic installers, and transportation infrastructure inspectors. Project funds will modernize existing curricula, increase BridgeValley's capacity to train more students across its two campuses, increase completion rates by providing support services for participant retention, and engage industry partners in assessing program offerings and aligning them with employer needs. Through a partnership with Workforce West Virginia, local municipalities in Southeastern WV, and local employers, BridgeValley seeks to wrap support around current and future students for these new opportunities to train in high-demand fields. The project will serve up to 625 students with services for career preparation, support, and specialized training while they complete an industry credential program.

Project Title: *Constructing Jobs in West Virginia Coal Country*

Grantee: Mountwest Community & Technical College

Award Amount: \$1,499,125

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,499,125 to Mountwest Community & Technical College Huntington, West Virginia, for the *Constructing Jobs in West Virginia Coal Country* project. The project will deliver an innovative training program resulting in cutting-edge construction jobs and an efficient eco-friendly solution to the housing crisis in Cabell, Lincoln, Logan, Mason, Mingo, and Wayne Counties in West Virginia. In partnership with Hope Nation and Rhema Developments, Mountwest will create an education/employment pipeline to bolster the construction industry in target counties. By expanding and strengthening relationships between higher education and the construction industry, the project will create an education-to-employment pipeline that will continue to capture potential trainees by way of existing state programs. Mountwest will offer a permanent construction certificate and associate degree to potential students. This project will also develop a detailed business plan to create a revenue stream from the sale of products (structured engineered panels) and the potential sale of homes that students will create during this program.

Project Title: *Harnessing the Economic Power of the Elk River Trails*

Grantee: Elk River Trail Foundation, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,365,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,365,000 to the Elk River Trail Foundation, Inc., (ETRF) Elkview, West Virginia, for the *Harnessing the Economic Power of the Elk River Trails* project. In early 2022, the ETRF completed its ARC-funded Elk River Trails of West Virginia feasibility study detailing the opportunities for business and tourism infrastructure expansion along the Elk River. This project addresses each of the plan's priorities through a downtown facade program, expansion of the FASTER WV business technical assistance program, new wayfinding signage, and the construction of five water access points and four related trailheads in the towns of Sutton, Clendenin, Gassaway, and Clay. The project is expected to serve eight communities and over 42 businesses. Through its partnership with each Elk River

Trail town, the Elk River Foundation, and Advantage Valley, this project will kickstart the implementation of the Elk River Trails of West Virginia plan and intentionally grow business and downtown development alongside the expansion of the Elk River Trail.

Project Title: *Expanding West Virginia's Food System with Regional Entrepreneurship Centers and Innovative Business Streams*

Grantee: West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition, Inc.

Award Amount: \$1,134,341

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$1,134,341 to the West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition, Inc., in Charleston, West Virginia, for the *Expanding West Virginia's Food System with Regional Entrepreneurship Centers and Innovative Business Streams* project. The project will provide healthy foods to childcare centers across 16 West Virginia counties through the expansion of West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition's "food production hub" network model. This project will also foster entrepreneurial activities by providing workforce development, nutrition and culinary training, technical assistance, and production planning to local farmers. Building on a pilot project with partners Project Healthy Kids; Healthy Kids, Inc.; KEYS 4 Healthy Kids; Random Rabbit, LLC; the West Virginia Association for Young Children; and Expand the Monongalia County Food Production Hub, the project will launch three new hubs in Kanawha, Taylor, and Greenbrier counties and expand the existing Monongalia County Hub. The hubs will serve as the entry point for small or beginning farmers to scale up before accessing the wholesale distribution, grocery, or institutional purchasing market. Project funding will also help market prepared meals and preserved products to hospitals, schools, private schools, childcare centers, clinics, recovery centers, senior centers, and assisted living facilities. The project is anticipated to serve 65 businesses, 16 communities, 40 workers, and 4,000 participants; create 30 jobs and retain 10 jobs; and leverage \$4,306,400 in private investment.

Project Title: *Leveraging Opportunities to Grow Industry Careers (LOGIC)*

Grantee: Marshall University Research Corporation

Award Amount: \$995,677

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$995,677 to Marshall University Research Corporation in Huntington, West Virginia, for the *Leveraging Opportunities to Grow Industry Careers (LOGIC)* project. This project will establish an Advanced Manufacturing Technology training program with multiple career path options for automation, process controls, instrumentation, maintenance, and fabrication. The LOGIC project will work with the growing advanced manufacturing sector to train and equip individuals with in-demand skills that command higher wages. LOGIC is in close partnership with K-12 and higher education providers, advanced manufacturing industries, and local development agencies who will work together to develop and deliver curriculum, recruit participants, and make connections to

industry careers. The Marshall Advanced Manufacturing Center (formerly known as Robert C. Byrd Institute) will lead the project and work with integral partners including Mountwest Community and Technical College, Mason County Schools, and the Region II Planning and Development Council. The three-year project aims to serve 210 workers/trainees, 20 high school students, and 35 manufacturing businesses.

Project Title: *Huff Creek Broadband Fiber Deployment*

Grantee: Wyoming County Economic Development Authority

Award Amount: \$545,065

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$545,065 to the Wyoming County Economic Development Authority in Pineville, West Virginia, for the *Huff Creek Broadband Fiber Deployment* project. The project will construct an estimated 10.5 miles of fiber to connect unserved or underserved households and businesses in the unincorporated communities of Gillman Bottom, Campus, Cyclone, and Lacoma in rural Wyoming County. Expanding access to high-speed broadband will help spur economic development in a remote area with challenging terrain, an area rich in outdoor recreation but heavily impacted by the decline in coal. Broadband access will also enhance online communications, education, telemedicine, and remote work for the community's residents. The project will improve seven businesses and 89 households.

Project Title: *Mountain State Montessori Early Care & Education Expansion Plan*

Grantee: New River Gorge Learning Co-op

Award Amount: \$50,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$50,000 to New River Gorge Learning Co-op in Fayetteville, West Virginia, for the *Mountain State Montessori Early Care & Education Expansion Plan* project. The project will create a strategic plan for Mountain State Montessori to expand early childcare and education in Fayette, Nicholas, and Raleigh counties. Studies have found that children who participate in high-quality early care and education programs have improved outcomes in adulthood, including higher earnings, lower rates of crime and incarceration, and better health outcomes. The project will ensure that New River Gorge Learning Co-op has a well-developed plan that will enable Mountain State Montessori to double its capacity by adding three new classrooms and expanding childcare slots from 26 to 52 children.

Project Title: *Exploring the Feasibility of Developing a Workforce Training Program/Social Enterprise Focused on Glass and Plastic Recycling*

Grantee: Mountain CAP of WV, Inc.

Award Amount: \$49,995

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$49,995 to Mountain CAP of WV, Inc., in Buckhannon, West Virginia, for the *Exploring the Feasibility of Developing a Workforce Training Program/Social Enterprise Focused on Glass and Plastic Recycling* project. The project will produce a feasibility plan to establish a recycling plant for glass and plastic, create a social enterprise, and provide workforce development opportunities for those who face employment barriers. The plan will help guide Mountain CAP to address an increase in requests for services from those who are either homeless or families who have been impacted directly by substance use disorder. A study and business plan will determine the feasibility of the program.

Project Title: *West Virginia Community-Driven Outdoor Recreation Economy Initiative*

Grantee: West Virginia University Research Corporation

Award Amount: \$45,666

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$45,666 to the West Virginia University Research Corporation in Morgantown, West Virginia, for the *West Virginia Community-Driven Outdoor Recreation Economy Initiative (WV CORE)* project. The planning project will create a comprehensive inventory of existing outdoor businesses in West Virginia, benchmark national standards for outdoor recreation businesses and networks, host six business convenings throughout the state to initiate connections and facilitate feedback, and use this research to create an implementation plan for a standardized state outdoor business survey and census. The West Virginia University Research Corporation will offer research and convenings that pair the millions of dollars in infrastructure investment toward West Virginia's outdoor recreation assets with research and networking assistance to develop the outdoor recreation businesses currently operating and expanding in the state. Through a partnership with The Brad and Alys Smith Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative, Mon Forest Towns Partnership, New River Gorge Regional Development Authority, the Outdoor Industry Association, West Virginia Division of Tourism, and many others, the project will produce two plans and serve 15 communities over the course of one year.

Project Title: *Mingo County Rural Infrastructure Sanitation Systems and Water Planning Grant*

Grantee: Mingo County Commission

Award Amount: \$40,000

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$40,000 to the Mingo County Commission in Mingo County, West Virginia, for the *Mingo County Rural Infrastructure Sanitation Systems and Water Planning Grant* project. The project will create a database of current sewer access in the county and a prioritized project list of improvements based on the database. This project will include consulting services to compile stakeholder interviews, preliminary assessment of all major municipal systems, and the development of a county-wide mapping service usable by all six utility management

services in the county. The project will create one report and serve six utility communities over the course of one year.

Project Title: *Exploring, Building, and Developing: Industry/Higher Ed Partnerships in West Virginia*

Grantee: Fairmont State University

Award Amount: \$34,604

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$34,604 to Fairmont State University in Fairmont, West Virginia, for the *Exploring, Building, and Developing: Industry/Higher Ed Partnerships in West Virginia* project. The project proposes a series of partnership-building activities to investigate collaborative work opportunities with county economic development authorities and regional STEM industries and development of an implementation plan to address the needs of the changing economic landscape in Appalachia. In order to assess the feasibility of a regional collaboration with multiple institutions of higher education and business and industry partners, the primary activities of the planning project will be to strengthen mutual understanding and relationships among the core project team, with the goal of integrating and leveraging relevant existing networks of core project team members; identify the local and regional economic development challenges that call for collaborative action; create partnerships with local industries and/or business organizations and develop a shared mission and goal for collaboration; and to prepare an implementation plan related to regional economic development that will achieve value for all partners.

Project Title: *Arts Business Accelerator*

Grantee: Tamarack Foundation for the Arts, Inc.

Award Amount: \$30,758

Announcement Date: October 2023

Project Summary: ARC grant of \$30,758 to Tamarack Foundation for the Arts, Inc., in Charleston, West Virginia, for the *Arts Business Accelerator* project. The project will provide arts businesses in southern West Virginia with financial literacy workshops and small business education, tools, and resources. With these ARC planning funds, Tamarack Foundation for the Arts (TFA) will accomplish three main objectives: develop a three-year comprehensive Arts Business Accelerator Implementation Plan; investigate the need for additional levels of arts-based business education and creative entrepreneur support in the project service area using various methods of data collection; and research evidence-based, equitable, art-centered business education/creative entrepreneur programming in partnership with WV State University Extension. The project is anticipated to serve and improve 140 businesses and develop one comprehensive Arts Business Accelerator Implementation Plan.