



Luna Innovations Acquires General Photonics, A Leader in Characterization and Control of Light for Photonics Applications

Acquisition will accelerate growth in Luna's communications test segment



Luna Innovations Incorporated (NASDAQ: LUNA), a global leader in advanced fiber optic-based technology, recently announced that it has acquired General Photonics Corporation, a Chino, California-based leading provider of innovative components, modules and test equipment focused on the generation, measurement and control of polarized light critical in fiber optic-based applications. The purchase price was \$20 million, which includes a potential \$1 million earnout payment. General Photonics provides customers with advanced technological solutions across a variety of industries, including those within Luna's strategic markets.

General Photonics' component and module product lines are an ideal addition to Luna's overall product portfolio. Its polarization measurement instruments are highly complementary to Luna's industry-leading line of optical measurement tools. Integrated into Luna's Lightwave division, General Photonics' product portfolio will add both breadth and depth to Luna's offering, and facilitate greater penetration within Luna's target customer base. In addition, several of Luna's instruments already incorporate General Photonics' products, creating vertical integration synergies.

"We are excited to announce the acquisition of General Photonics, another step in the execution of our core strategy. This acquisition brings a highly complementary product portfolio to the capabilities of Luna's communications test products," said Scott Graeff, President and Chief Executive Officer of Luna. "We intend to drive a quick and smooth integration as both company's products are built on similar electronics, optics and software platforms for high-precision measurement and control of light. This deal further demonstrates our commitment to use capital prudently for transactions that are quickly accretive to our earnings, and it is consistent with our previously stated goal to drive long-term value."

Vice President and General Manager of Luna's Lightwave Division, Brian Soller, Ph.D., said, "We have created a broader, stronger product portfolio that is centered around what we do best: measure and manage light in optical fiber. The complementary nature of our combined product lines will allow Luna to leverage existing channels to market and provide solutions across more of the value chain in our key target markets. We are now in a better position to service our customers' measurement needs in a rapidly evolving market, where the need for high-quality measurement and control of light is growing."

"The combination of Luna and General Photonics clearly strengthens both companies and creates greater opportunities to increase value for our customers," said Steve Yao, Chief Executive Officer, President and Founder of General Photonics. "I can't think of a better place for my company to continue the success we've created. And with access to the incremental engineering and sales resources available at Luna, we will be able to further accelerate our growth."

Luna Innovations, Incorporated (www.lunainc.com) is a leader in optical technology, providing unique capabilities in high-performance, fiber optic-based, test products for the telecommunications industry and distributed fiber optic-based sensing for the aerospace and automotive industries. Luna is organized into two business segments, which work closely together to turn ideas into products: a Technology Development segment and a Products and Licensing segment. Luna's business model is designed to accelerate the process of bringing new and innovative technologies to market.

Luna's headquarters are located in Roanoke, Virginia at 301 1st Street in downtown Roanoke.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1/LUNA INNOVATIONS ACQUIRES GENERAL PHOTONICS
- 2/AGRICULTURE PROGRAM LAUNCHED AT VWCC
- 3/STUDENT COMPETITION - VT KNOWLEDGEWORKS ANNOUNCED
- 4-5/RESEARCH IN ROANOKE
- 6/VWCC PRESENTS 2019 IMPACT AWARD
- 7/QUALCOMM THINKABIT LAB OPENS; FEATURED BIZLINK
- 8/RIDE SOLUTIONS UPDATE
- 9/VBR UPDATE
- 10/COLAB UPDATE
- 11/SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS - DIXIE PRODUCTS
- 12/LEONORE'S...FAMILY-OWNED WITH STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY
- 13/VT BUSINESS BITS
- 14-20/TRAINING & EVENTS
- 21-22/DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Virginia Western to launch new Agriculture Program for Fall 2019

Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring along with Delegate Terry L. Austin to speak at special event on March 28.

Virginia Western Community College announces a new Associates Degree in Agriculture that will be available beginning in Fall 2019. The program is designed to be flexible and tailored to individual student needs.

The Agriculture Program is transferrable to a four-year college, where students can pursue career paths such as extension work, agricultural education, agribusiness and veterinary medicine, for example. Alternatively, if students are not interested in a transfer they can modify the program to include technical skills, such as welding, which can help them in their home agribusinesses. Currently there are approximately 330 different career choices available in the agricultural industry.

“The Roanoke Region has a robust agricultural history and we are excited to be offering this truly outstanding program to students,” said Dr. Robert H. Sandel, President of Virginia Western. “Helping individuals develop the skills they need to succeed in a 21st Century farming and agricultural landscape, we believe we will have a lasting positive economic impact on our region.”

Virginia Western will host a launch event on Thursday, March 28 from 3 - 4:30 pm for its new Agriculture Program featuring guest speakers and supporters to include Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Bettina Ring and Virginia Delegate Terry L. Austin. Dr. Robert H. Sandel, President of Virginia Western and Virginia Western's Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, Amy White will also share comments at the event which will be held on the Virginia Western Community College campus in Whitman Theater.

Specialized classes such as animal science, plant science and forestry will provide students the basic skills needed to maintain livestock, land and forests. Other classes in the program, such as agribusiness and welding can provide skills needed to handle farm finances and farm maintenance or provide an avenue of additional income.

“Agriculture is interwoven into the history of our region, which is home to more than 4,000 farms,” Austin said. “Virginia Western's Ag program will ensure that farming remains one of our cornerstone industries for decades to come.”

In addition to launching the Agriculture Program, Virginia Western will also announce a new guaranteed transfer agreement between the program and Ferrum College's Agricultural Sciences major. Students completing the Virginia Western Agriculture Program will be able to begin as a junior at Ferrum and focus on the emphasis areas of Animal Science, Agribusiness, Agronomy, Horticulture and Equine Studies.

On the day prior to the kick off, VWCC faculty will be participating in the Virginia-North Carolina AgBio Conference in Danville. This meeting will convene policy makers, farmers, thought leaders, educators, public health officials and industry partners to bring innovative bioscience and technology to the farms.

“As a 6th generation farmer in this region, the launch of this program really touches my heart because I know how much of a difference it will make in putting students on the path to personal and professional success,” White said. “The local agriculture industry impacts our lives in countless ways on a daily basis, and by passing on the best practices and most up-to-date knowledge and technology, we can ensure it continues to thrive for decades to come. Agriculture is vital to the health and economic success of our region, and it is our privilege to contribute to this robust and dynamic industry.”

For more details about the Agriculture Program, visit <http://viriniawestern.edu/academics/stem/programs/sciagri.php> or call the School of STEM at 540-857-7273.

Virginia Western Community College is a forward-thinking community college inspiring individual, community and economic transformation. It provides quality educational opportunities that empower students for success and strengthen communities. The college provides credit academic programs and non-credit workforce training along with distance learning online and dual enrollment courses in area high schools. To learn more, visit www.viriniawestern.edu.

VIRGINIA WESTERN

WE'LL TAKE YOU  THERE

Student entrepreneurs from around the globe compete while building lasting connections at Virginia Tech

Future entrepreneurs from around the world will showcase their best ideas at Virginia Tech this summer at the annual Global Entrepreneur Partnership.

The 10th annual celebration includes the VT Global Entrepreneur Challenge, a pitch competition that allows student teams to present their ideas for a \$25,000 grand prize at The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skelton Conference Center. The event will be held Aug. 22-31 and is hosted by Outreach and International Affairs and VT KnowledgeWorks.

"The Challenge celebrates the energy and innovation of university students and enhances their understanding of what it takes to launch a successful business venture," said Jim Flowers, executive director of VT KnowledgeWorks. "As these young people grow to become leaders in their respective home regions, they carry with them a set of connections from this event that will enhance global cooperation, international trade, and cultural sensitivity for years to come." Student teams will present their business concepts for \$45,000 in cash prizes, sponsored by Virginia Tech's Outreach and International Affairs, The Branch Group, Inc., Carilion Clinic, and First Piedmont Corporation. The prizes include:

- \$15,000 Advanced Manufacturing Award for the most outstanding tangible product
- \$15,000 Information Technology Award for the most outstanding service
- \$10,000 awarded as an additional grand prize for one of the two teams that receive the Advanced Manufacturing Award or the Information Technology Award
- \$5,000 People's Choice Award

During their stay in Blacksburg, students are housed with local families, get coaching from successful technology companies, and build friendships with each other and with Virginia Tech students during social gatherings. Students also take a regional trip that includes stops in Newport News, Danville, and Roanoke.

"They will remember the close ties they have built with the Virginia cities that have hosted them. When the time comes for them to build business ties in the U.S., we will be very high on their personal lists," Flowers said.

Faculty attendees will participate in a multi-university roundtable where they will discuss entrepreneurship programs, including best practices, innovations, and initiatives. The event provides many opportunities for university-to-university networking to help build future collaboration and partnerships. Roberto Napoli, assistant to the rector at the University of Trento, Italy, has participated in the event for five years. "Many successful joint projects have been developed with the colleagues met during this event that I dare call my friends now," he said.



Pictured left to right: 2018 Global Challenge Judges, Jack Sepple, Lisa Garcia, with Team GRACE, Federico Jensen, Alex Carimán, Cedric Little (faculty member), and Felipe Nagel, as well as Judges Tim Meyers and Todd Headley.

In the 2018 competition, the grand prize of \$30,000 was awarded to team GRACE from the Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Santiago, Chile, which included Felipe Nagel, Federico Jensen, and Alex Carimán. Their prize package included the \$10,000 Advanced Manufacturing Award for the most outstanding tangible product. In addition to that, they were awarded another \$20,000 as the overall grand prize winner. GRACE is a biomedical device that eases tremor caused by Essential tremor and Parkinson's Disease, therefore, helping people to recover and improve their quality of life. It doesn't require surgeries or drugs, and it's non-invasive.

Other event sponsors include the Apex Center for Entrepreneurs, College of Engineering, and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation. Program support sponsors include Automation Creations, Inc., City of Roanoke, Click & Pledge, G.J. Hopkins, Inc., Montgomery County Department of Economic Development, Plastics One, Shentel, SunTrust Bank, Third Security, LLC, Union Bank & Trust, Virginia Tech College of Science, Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, VPT, Inc., and Wordsprint Marketing Services.

For more information contact Lindsey Eversole, global partnership manager, at leversole@vt.edu.

National Institutes of Health provides \$23 million for statewide translational research institute



The new Clinical and Translational Science Award will engage Virginia Tech and Carilion Clinic with the University of Virginia and Inova Health System to build infrastructure and programs to integrate the biomedical research enterprises, ultimately improving health care throughout the state. Here are some of the iTHRIV team members at an organizational meeting in Charlottesville.

The integrated Translational Health Research Institute of Virginia (iTHRIV) has been awarded a five-year grant of nearly \$23 million from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to advance innovative ideas from the point of discovery to implementation in clinical practice and population health.

iTHRIV includes the University of Virginia, Inova Health System, Virginia Tech and Carilion Clinic as partners, with the Center for Open Science and UVA's Licensing & Ventures Group as affiliates. The focus of iTHRIV is "using data to improve health" and leverages the data science expertise across the state.

About the Partnership:

As individual institutions, the partners each have established strengths in biomedical and health-related research. Though individual programs have invested in maximizing research success, iTHRIV is the first cross-state effort in Virginia to integrate broad clinical and translational research resources and processes to transform how this is done.

Translational research is the process of applying knowledge from basic biology and clinical trials to improve health outcomes for patients. Each partner brings resources and expertise in doing research with patients in areas of greatest need. The overarching goal of iTHRIV is to support research that benefits our rural and urban populations by optimizing the use of data science.

The NIH Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA) program, supported by the NIH's National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS), provides resources for researchers across the statewide consortium, trains the next generation of biomedical and health scientists and

Research in Roanoke ~ *continued from Page 4*

National Institutes of Health provides \$23 million for statewide translational research institute

collaborates with community partners to improve health. The national CTSA network includes approximately 60 institutions around the country that are recognized as elite clinical and translational research institutions.

Powerful Collaboration:

iTHRIV brings together distinctly different areas of expertise, including translational research, clinical research and data science, and its multi-principal investigator leadership reflects this design, including Karen C. Johnston, an expert in clinical trials and a neurologist who specializes in caring for patients with acute stroke; and Donald E. Brown, a data scientist and systems engineer who was the founding director of the UVA Data Sciences Institute.

Leadership from Virginia Tech and Carilion includes Warren Bickel, co-director of VTC's Center for Transformative Research in Health Behaviors and a professor with the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute and with the Virginia Tech College of Science; Paul Skolnik, chairman of VTC School of Medicine and Carilion's Department of Internal Medicine; Michael J. Friedlander, Virginia Tech's vice president for health sciences and technology and executive director of the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC; Audra Van Wart, assistant vice president for health sciences education at Virginia Tech; and Kathy Hosig, director for the Virginia Tech Center for Public Health Practice and Research in the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine.

At Inova, John Niederhuber, Genomics and Bioinformatics Research Institute, leads the program.

A 'Pipeline of Innovation':

"We are very grateful for the NIH funding to support this pipeline of innovation," said Richard P. Shannon, UVA's executive vice president for health affairs. "We are extremely excited about the potential of this statewide collaboration to accelerate the development of new treatments and improve the health of people across the commonwealth and beyond."

"We're delighted to be part of this transformative initiative in translational and clinical research," said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. "This partnership advances our biomedical health and sciences enterprise, expands our ongoing collaboration with Carilion Clinic, and strengthens our connections with colleagues across the commonwealth at the University of Virginia and Inova in a way that will benefit the health of all Virginians."

"This grant is an indication of the innovative research happening right here in Virginia," said Carilion President and CEO Nancy Howell Agee. "It is an investment that will improve lives across the commonwealth, and we are excited to join our partners and peers in discovery."

"Translational research is essential to the development of new medical treatments that address currently unmet patient needs. By nurturing the translational research enterprise in Virginia, this grant to iTHRIV will help our researchers work together more effectively to make tomorrow's breakthroughs," said Mickey Y. Kim, senior vice president of research and commercialization and the head of Inova Translational Medicine Institute.

About the CTSA Program:

The national CTSA program, which now includes iTHRIV, enables research teams including scientists, patient advocacy organizations and community members to tackle significant scientific and operational problems in clinical and translational research that no one team can overcome.

The program goals:

Train and nurture the clinical and translational science workforce; Engage patients and communities in every phase of the translational process; Promote the integration of special and underserved populations in translational research across the human lifespan; Innovate processes to improve the quality and efficiency of translational research; and *Advance the use of cutting-edge informatics and data science to improve the health of communities.

The NIH award consists of grants 1 UL1 TR003015-0 and 1 KL2 TR003016-01. This news is from a University of Virginia news release written in cooperation with the partners.

MEDIA CONTACT

John Pastor, jdpastor@vt.edu

Virginia Western presents 2019 Community College Impact Award to Maury L. Strauss

Roanoke business leader recognized for moving college forward through endowment support.

The Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation presented the 2019 Community College Impact Award to Maury L. Strauss and the Strauss Family, in recognition of his \$1 million naming gift in support of the Virginia Western Forward Endowment Fund: A Vision of Dr. Charles W. Steger Jr. The award was presented Wednesday at the Educational Foundation's Annual Scholarship and Awards Ceremony.

One of the highest honors the College can bestow, the Community College Impact Award serves to recognize significant philanthropic and community support by individuals, corporations or organizations that will provide perpetuating benefits for Virginia Western, its students and the region at large.

Virginia Western Community College dedicated the Maury & Sheila Strauss Family Student Life Center in January 2019 in recognition of Strauss' visionary leadership in support of student success and regional economic development.

"Maury is a very special human being," said Dr. Robert H. Sandel, President of Virginia Western. "We are honored to celebrate this vision of the Strauss family's philanthropy, which will make a true difference in our students' lives, and will help drive a strong future for our community."



*Roanoke Businessman and Community Benefactor,
Maury L. Strauss*

Strauss, founder of Strauss Development Corp. and a longtime community benefactor, said he believes in giving back to the community that helped build his business and a home for his family. Virginia Western "holds a warm spot in his heart" for the power that higher education brings to the lives of its students. Sheila Strauss, a well-known supporter of the arts and nonprofit organizations in the Roanoke Valley, passed away in 2016.

The \$1 million gift from the Strauss family launched the public phase of the Educational Foundation's unrestricted endowment initiative, the Virginia Western Forward Endowment Fund, a vision of Dr. Charles W. Steger Jr., named in honor of the Foundation's late Board of Directors Chairman and President of Virginia Tech. This unrestricted endowment effort will flexibly empower and sustain the college to address, now and in perpetuity, educational excellence in a rapidly-changing economic environment.

For more information about the Foundation's annual Community Impact Award or the Virginia Western Forward Endowment Fund, contact Philanthropy Director Amanda Mansfield at amansfield@viriniawestern.edu or (540) 857-6962.

The Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation is an independent nonprofit dedicated to enhancing awareness of the college and securing private and public funds. Its efforts support the Community College Access Program, student scholarships, faculty development and capital projects at Virginia Western. To learn more, visit viriniawestern.edu/foundation.

Virginia Western Community College is a forward-thinking community college inspiring individual, community and economic transformation. It provides quality educational opportunities that empower students for success and strengthen communities. The college provides credit academic programs and non-credit workforce training along with distance learning online and dual enrollment courses in area high schools. To learn more, visit www.viriniawestern.edu.

VIRGINIA WESTERN

WE'LL TAKE YOU  THERE

Virginia Tech Roanoke Center Thinkabit Lab Grand Opening April 26



The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center (VTRC) is excited to announce the grand opening of their Inspired by Qualcomm Thinkabit Lab on April 26! The lab brings hands-on STEM learning to middle school students in an engaging, inviting and absurdly awesome learning environment. The lab is structured to open the doors for students to potential STEM-related careers, while nurturing their creativity through a makerspace. Event details will be posted to our Facebook page soon: www.facebook.com/vtroanokecenter.

If you have questions about the lab or would like to sponsor a field trip for area students, please contact Lesa Hanlin at (540) 767-6100 or lesa@vt.edu.

Featured BizLink www.genedge.org

Since 1992, GENEDGE has been a business consulting organization providing Virginia's industrial and manufacturing sectors access to expert business solutions, which otherwise are often only accessible to larger companies. We are part of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Network of over 50 centers nationwide, and have access to industry-wide benchmarks with proven, results-based solutions.

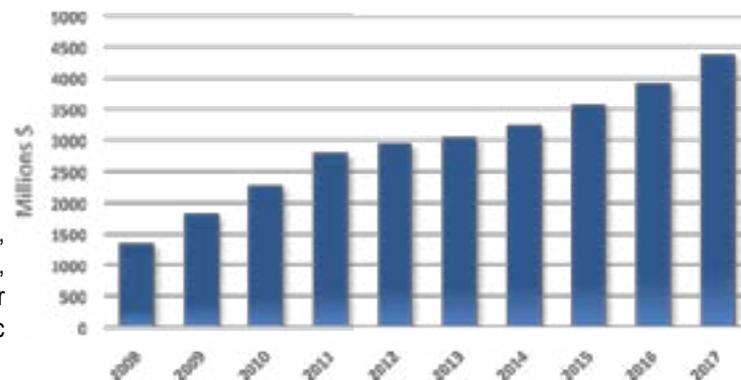
Our partnership with the Manufacturing Technology Center (MTC) in Wytheville provides additional expertise to deliver MEP services statewide helping our clients generate a sustainable competitive edge through process improvement, growth services, and job creation.

Our assessment process is results oriented. The effectiveness of GENEDGE'S affordable, professional consulting services is measured by the cost savings and bottom line profitability that we help clients achieve and results are independently surveyed to insure your satisfaction. For every \$1 dollar invested in GENEDGE assistance and service, \$25 is returned to the client's bottom line impact based on cumulative bottom-line survey results for fiscal years 2000 to 2017.

Since 2008, we have delivered over \$3 billion in Cumulative Economic Impact for our clients.

Additional Client Impact 2000-2018*
\$2.3 billion sales increased or retained
\$1.5 billion cost savings
\$1.8 billion bottom line impact
\$598 million investments made to operations
12,742 jobs created or retained

GENEDGE services these sectors: Advertising, Aerospace, Automotive, Biotechnology, Ceramics, Distribution, Federal Government Operations, Finance, Food, Furniture, Healthcare, Housing, Insurance, Machinery, Medical Devices, Military, Nuclear Shipbuilding, Packaging, Pharmaceuticals, Plastics, GENEDGE Cumulative Economic Impact* Printing, Publishing, Semiconductors, Specialty Chemicals, and Textiles.



Genedge Cumulative Economic Impact

To learn more, visit the Featured BizLink reflected above!

RIDE Solutions Launches New Ridematching App

Commuters across the Roanoke region and beyond now have an easier, instant way to explore their transportation options. RIDE Solutions, the region's commuter services program, has launched a new website and smart-phone app that allows commuters to instantly search for carpool partners, transit routes, bike buddies, and more. The app allows users to explore other commuters on and along their routes and instantly connect with them via in-app messaging.

Users can also log their carpool, bike, bus, and telecommute trips to earn points which they can cash in for thousands of local and online rewards. So in addition to the money they are already saving on their commute, they can save even more at their favorite local shops and restaurants.

For employers, the upgraded system provides new opportunities to build a robust and successful worksite-specific commuter program. Through the RIDE Solutions Workplace program, employers can build vanpools, promote carpool matching, and develop facilities to encourage bicycle commuting, while building employer-specific rewards within the new app. Rewards could include everything from premium parking spaces, to PTO hours, to discounts in the employee cafeteria or gift shop, all developed and managed with the help of RIDE Solutions staff.

The new platform also allows for easy analysis of program performance, so employers know exactly how many employees are participating, what transportation modes they are using, and the worksite's impact on a range of measures – from parking spots reduced to greenhouse gases emitted – so employers know they are hitting their target transportation-related goals.

The new RIDE Solutions system is available at ridesolutions.org or from your favorite app store.

Ride Solutions is a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Agency, a program dedicated to expanding the efficiency and life of the roadway network and reducing the environmental impacts – air pollution – of vehicle emissions. By helping to promote and connect individuals and business partners to transportation options, TDM agencies (RIDE Solutions) help to reduce traffic on local roads and improve air quality by reducing the impacts of vehicle emissions. Fewer cars on the road during the busy rush hours of the day can also mean safer roads. Through incentive programs, education, and encouragement, RIDE Solutions connects people to transportation options.

To learn more about RIDE Solutions, please contact Jeremy Holmes, Director by email at jholmes@rvarc.org. You may also connect with the agency by visiting:

Bikeshare by RIDE Solutions: zagster.com/ridesolutions

Facebook: facebook.com/ridesolutions

Twitter: [@ridesolutions](https://twitter.com/ridesolutions)

Instagram: [@ridesolutionsva](https://instagram.com/ridesolutionsva)



4 Easy Steps

- Sign Up**
Sign up online or download our app to your mobile device. It takes seconds to get started.
- Find a Ride**
Instantly find carpoolers, vanpoolers, transit, and more. Use in-app messaging to coordinate trips and connect to other commuters.
- Take a Trip**
Log your carpool, vanpool, bike, transit, or walking trip to earn points.
- Earn Rewards**
Cash in your points for monthly raffles, coupons, discounts, and free stuff at local and national retailers.

www.ridesolutions.org

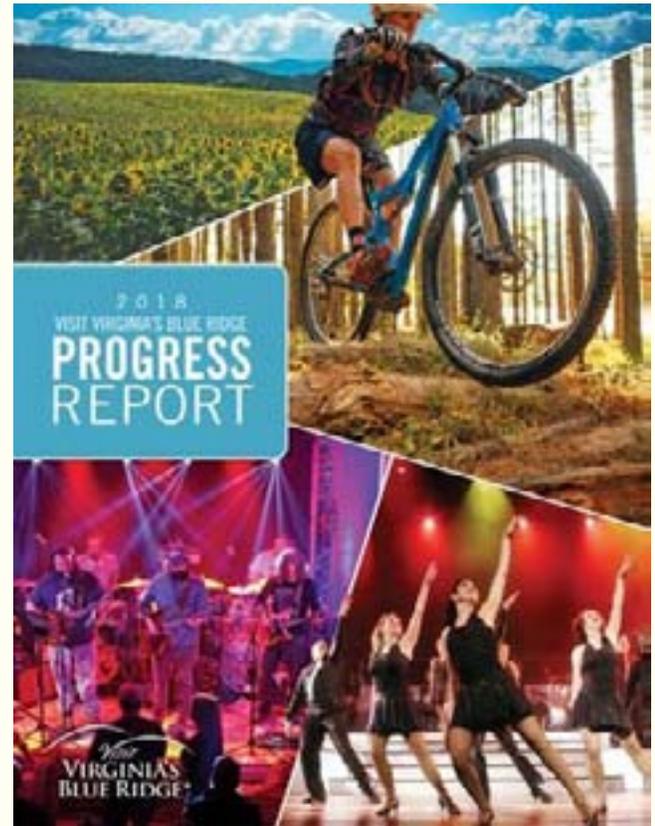
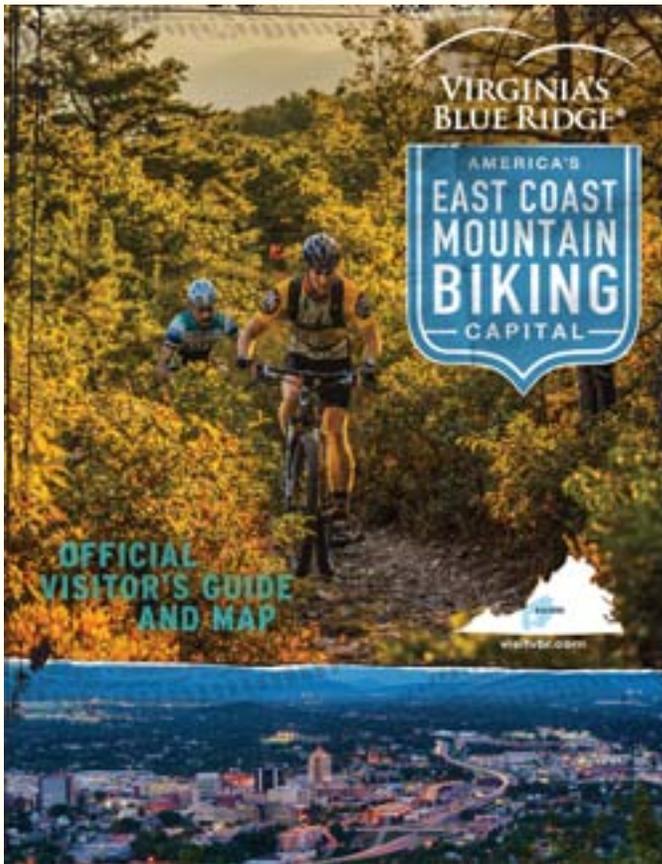


Tourism Growth in Virginia's Blue Ridge on the Rise

Regional tourism generated \$850 million in direct travel expenditures and nearly 8,000 jobs in 2018. Efforts by Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge are focused on attracting more visitors and increasing visitor spending while generating more jobs and tax revenues. It is collaborative effort with our participating localities including the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, and the Counties of Roanoke, Botetourt and Franklin as well as over 1,475 business partners. By working together, we have achieved nine consecutive years of RECORD growth! [Click here](#) to view the 2018 Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge Progress Report.

Additionally the 2019 Virginia's Blue Ridge Visitor's Guide is printed and ready for distribution. Feel free to share and view the Visitor's Guide by [clicking here](#).

To learn more about Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge, stop by the offices located at 101 Shenandoah Avenue NE, call (800) 635-5535 or visit www.visitroanokeva.com.





Businesses In Roanoke Are Thinking Big & Challenging Norms



One of the defining characteristics of a great business is the willingness to push boundaries. Great businesses have not been built without thoughts about how to improve people's lives. As we look around the CoLab these days, it is exciting to see so many folks here locally pushing the limits of our region and their industries.

Doing what "has always been done" is not the way to build a groundbreaking business. You have to be willing to learn from the past and push for something better. There is nothing wrong with doing a great job of running a traditional business. But, if you want to do big things, you have to think about what sets your business apart.

What does this look like? Well, let's look at a few examples here locally...

- Sam Austin and his team at Spotlight Revenue are doing fascinating work in the marketing and sales space. By streamlining processes, they have been able to translate marketing into leads and into real appointments for their clients. Additionally, they have been able to utilize the wealth of data which is no longer available to significantly increase ROI for their clients. They have changed what marketing means to their clients.
- Hal Trent and his team at Purple Crayon have recently stepped into what would seem boring space...technical writing. They are changing the game by focusing on ensuring the content their clients need to purvey to customers is matched to dynamic and specially designed distribution methods. They are rendering the old instruction manual obsolete and have seen new advances in technology while identifying a tremendous opportunity to change how we think about technical writing.
- Maureen McNamara Best and her team at LEAP are consistently pushing what is possible in our local food scene. In addition to starting a mobile market to get fresh, local produce into areas traditionally not serviced, they are also able to offer the ability of matching the SNAP benefits of shoppers. Now low-income families throughout the city can afford to buy the healthiest food available and have it delivered close by. When they saw an opportunity to amplify the work they were already doing, they jumped and have now been able to expand their impact dramatically.

In each of these circumstances, we see a company or organization challenged by a problem identifying a new alternative for dealing with it. We have been marketing, producing technical writing and selling products for years. But each of these organizations has included an additional lense and is now able to solve the problem much more efficiently.

These are only three examples of the many folks here at the CoLab thinking differently about how to build a business. There are others working in everything from translation and software to leadership and education. So, we will leave you with this final question...what is your business doing differently to set yourself apart?

For more information on the CoLab, please reach out to us at info@colabroanoke.com.

Spotlight on Business ~

Dixie Building Products Celebrates 60 Years in Business!

Founded by Al Silverstein in 1959 on Patterson Avenue in southwest Roanoke, Dixie Products began as a specialty distributor to the building and construction trades. Inventory initially sold included aluminum windows, foundation steel and accessories, concrete form systems and accessories, basement columns, steel angles, brick lintels, fireplace form systems, shower doors, storm doors and storm windows. Beginning in 1960, the product line was expanded to include sales and service of residential and commercial garage doors and electric operators.

In 1964, with business expanding exponentially, Silverstein moved the company to Salem Avenue allowing increased space for the growing demand of a more diverse product line. Just three years later, additional warehouse, office and showroom facilities were constructed to better display and serve the needs of both the company and customers. Thanks to Silverstein's business acumen, this would become a pattern for Dixie Products. He seemed always able to be on the edge of a new trend and then adept enough to innovate and expand the business accordingly. Between 1974 and 1982, rigid insulating foam and factory built fireplaces were added to the product line. A new multi-story warehouse was constructed for storage of these products as well as new products such as kerosene heaters, ceiling fans, and outdoor gas grills.



Mark Silverstein of Dixie Products

Starting in 1988, Silverstein had the insight to begin marketing the company under the generalized name of "Dixie Products" – reflecting the more diverse product mix and the evolution from wholesale to additional retail specialty items and services. To this day, the company is known and branded as Dixie Products.

Just two years later, Silverstein added decorative gas logs to the Dixie Products line, a product that is proudly serviced and installed to this day. Since that first discerning step, Dixie Products has become SW Virginia's #1 servicer and installer of gas logs and fireplaces. In 1994, the company opened the fireplace shop at 2120 Salem Avenue and expanded the product line to include vent free gas logs, vent free gas heaters, fireplaces and fireplace accessories. With the new showroom in place, Silverstein was able to expand the company even further. In 1999, Dixie Products began marketing worldwide via the website www.dixieproducts.com, generating yet another revenue source for the company.

As the company added retail lines, service requirements would need to grow accordingly. In yet another bold move, Silverstein, at the end of 2003, moved Dixie Products to the current location at 3342 Melrose Avenue and provided the largest showroom in SW Virginia! In order to aid in selection and improve the shopping experience for customers, the most recent renovation includes displays of gas logs, direct vent fireplaces, gas grills and garage doors – definitely worth a visit!

The Dixie Products torch was passed to the second generation in the family business in 2008, prior to Al's passing in 2015. Sharing in his father's passion for the business, Mark Silverstein assumed the main management role of the company. He grew up witnessing his father's expertise and has a wealth of knowledge regarding the hearth and garage door industries. As technology evolves and trends emerge, Mark will continue the Dixie Products tradition of offering the 'next big thing' in garage doors and fireplaces.

Dixie Products is very grateful to all of our customers for making us the leading gas log and garage door company in SW Virginia. We assure you that, as we celebrate 60 years in business, we will continue to work to earn our reputation and your business. Although products are always evolving, our dedication to our customers and service remains of utmost importance and our first priority.



Leonore Restaurant...a family owned business with a strong sense of community



Miguel Liendo (2nd from left) with several Leonore staff members.

As you stroll Campbell Avenue from downtown heading west, you'll find one of Roanoke's best kept secrets. Leonore Restaurant is waiting to bring you some of the best pizza, salads and Venezuelan dishes in the Roanoke Region.

Owned by Miguel Liendo and family, this fine restaurant is located at 128 Campbell Avenue, SW.

"Here at Leonore, we like to keep everything as fresh and homemade as possible from baking our own bread to making our salad dressings. With a friendly staff and a homemade meal, you wouldn't want to take your family anywhere else to experience Venezuelan and Italian dishes," states Mr. Liendo.

TripAdvisor, Inc., an American travel and restaurant website company showing hotel and restaurant reviews, accommodation bookings and other travel-related content, often gives Leonore 5 stars. One reviewer from Lancaster, Pennsylvania wrote in January, 2019, "Two Cuisines Under One Roof - while visiting my nephew and wife in Roanoke they took me to Leonore's. What a delight! A marvelous mix of Italian and Venezuelan dishes to choose from and I only had one visit to experience it, darn as the entree I selected, Pabellon Criollo was flavorful with a hint of spicy and a bit of heat. Yes, I recommend. I had a salad also which featured fresh greens and other fixins. Kevin was our server and he was super with a nice sense of humor and a true advocate for Roanoke altho' he is originally from Maine! Nice atmosphere and pricing is reasonable. It is downtown near old courthouse. Definite recommend if you are in the area. Enjoy."

In addition to great, fresh food and service, Leonore Restaurant offers the Good Deed Program. "Our family simply wants to thank the

community for their support by giving back to the needs important to our customers," says Mr. Liendo. The good deed program offers 10% of the proceeds received from our valuable customers on a designated day and time. The proceeds will be given to the selected cause for that specified day. Liendo goes on to say, "our customers are not asked to pay any extra for this meaningful contribution, they just simply come in and mention they are supporting the cause of the day."

Leonore Restaurant offers reasonably priced daily lunch specials and Wednesday Happy Hour Wine specials. They open Monday - Saturday at 11 am, closing at 9 pm except on Friday and Saturday evenings with hours until 10 pm. Carry-out is available too and if you prefer to have your food delivered, Leonore's works with Fetch.

For more information, please visit Leonore's website at <http://www.leonorerestaurant.com> or call 540-904-5559.

Leonore
RESTAURANT

~Business Bits ~

The Argument for Celebration in the Workplace



“Companies need to focus less on rewarding performance (which has actually been shown to reduce intrinsic motivation) and start celebrating performance. Celebrating success is fun and energizing and shows employees that their efforts are being seen by leaders and by their peers” – Alexander Kjerulf, Chief Happiness Officer, author of *Happy Hour is 9 to 5*

Not every organization can have a Chief Happiness Officer, but wouldn't that be fun? Most companies do celebrate employee birthdays and anniversaries, and some may even have casual Fridays. We know that celebrations increase job satisfaction and retention. What can we do to go beyond the “one cake to celebrate all February birthdays” mentality?

1. Encourage employees to socialize outside of work. We all lead busy lives and don't need another obligation. But voluntary socializing outside of work can increase communication, help us know one another better, identify common interests, and build trust. People from other departments become “real people”. Think about volunteering for a charity together, or staying late to decorate doorways for the anniversary of your business (include after work snacks). Start a bowling or other interest league or a corn hole tournament. Ask employees what types of activities they would like to do.
2. Celebrate small accomplishments. Did someone attend training? Come up with a great idea? Make the effort to collaborate with someone from another department? They deserve a quick thank you visit or note, or they could be celebrated at the next team meeting.



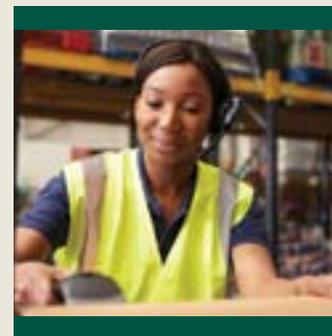
3. Pass around an inexpensive trophy, troll doll, or something meaningful to your business. Go beyond the “employee of the month” approach and develop a monthly plan for celebration. Maybe one month it's for the person who traveled the farthest on work trips. Another month it could be for whomever has worked in that department the longest.

Celebration has nothing to do with compensation and everything to do with letting people know they are valued. Did you know that national Have Fun at Work Day is January 28th every year? Get your Chief Happiness Officer working on that for next year!

Business Bits is brought to you by Lesa Hanlin (Lesa@vt.edu), Virginia Tech, Executive Director, Roanoke Regional Initiatives at 540-767-6100.

TRAINING & EVENTS

OSHA COMPLIANCE TRAINING



YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACE - IT'S THE LAW!

These courses are comprehensive safety trainings designed for anyone involved in construction and general industry. The programs provide complete information on OSHA compliance issues and cover hazard identification, avoidance, control and prevention. Stay on top of job safety and health, it's the law!



COURSES DESIGNED TO PROTECT WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY IN ROANOKE!

WHERE:	Roanoke Higher Education Center
WHEN:	<p>January 28-February 1, 2019 • Safety Training Methods – National Safety Council (\$1650.00)</p> <p>February 26-Mar 1, 2019 • OSHA 511 – Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry (\$795.00)</p> <p>March 11-15, 2019 • Principles of Occupational Safety and Health (POSH) – National Safety Council (\$1650.00)</p> <p>April 1-4, 2019 • OSHA 3095 – Electrical Standards (\$795.00)</p> <p>May 20-23, 2019 • OSHA 501 – Trainer Course in Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry (\$795.00)</p>
REGISTER:	Registration material can be found online at Chesapeakesc.org or call 1.800.875.4770 . For more information, contact Carla Jackson at 540.767.6010 or via email at carla.jackson@education.edu .



ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER
CALL 540.767.6010 OR EMAIL AT CARLA.JACKSON@EDUCATION.EDU

RHEC HOURS OF OPERATION:
 MONDAY – FRIDAY 7:00 AM – 10:30 PM
 SATURDAY 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
 SUNDAY CLOSED

108 N. JEFFERSON STREET
 ROANOKE, VA 24016
 WWW.EDUCATION.EDU
 540.767.6161

TRAINING & EVENTS

April 8th 8:30-12:30



Blue Ridge Sales Summit 2019

OUR
2019
Agenda

Hosted at Vinton War Memorial
Monday, April 8th 8:30 to 12:30

Event include Keynote Speaker and Sessions on
Social Media for Small Business
Branding your Business, Entrepreneurship
Cyber Security for Businesses , Succession Planning
and eVA Virginia's eprocurement Marketplace

No fee but Advance registration is required
<https://salesummit.eventbrite.com>
or email ramain.gohar@sbsd.virginia.gov

Registration
8:30 - 9:00

Welcome and Introduction
9:00 - 9:30

Keynote Speaker
9:30 - 10:15

Breakout Session Track 1
10:30 - 11:15

Breakout Session Track 2
11:20- 12:00

Refreshment and Network
12:00 - 12:30



TRAINING & EVENTS

APRIL 10, 2019 - 9 - 11 AM

SCALE UP YOUR BUSINESS

Ready to take your business to the next level?

Join us for this free class!

Representatives and partners of the Small Business Development Center will provide you with the foundation and strategies to accelerate profitable growth for your business.

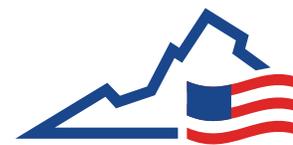
SOUTH ROANOKE COUNTY LIBRARY
6303 MERRIMAN ROAD

To register for this free class, visit
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/scale-up-your-business-tickets-57637760092>



VIRGINIA VALUES VETERANS

Bringing Veterans and Employers Together Across the Commonwealth



Virginia Department of Veterans Services

Virginia Values Veterans V3 Program



Learn How Veterans can be the Ideal Solution to Your Talent Needs!

The Virginia Values Veterans V3 Program offers this free employer training event.

- Become educated on nationally recognized best practices in recruiting, hiring and retaining Veterans
- Learn how you might qualify for the V3 Program \$10,000 Veteran Employment Grant

This special all-day event will feature ALL courses needed for V3 Certification.

WHEN:

Tuesday,
April 16, 2019
8:30 am - 3:00 pm

WHERE:

Roanoke Regional Chamber
210 South Jefferson Street
Roanoke, VA 24011

REGISTER:

<http://bit.ly/Roanoke2019>

Lunch Provided

*Closest Parking: Center in the Square Garage
11 Campbell Ave. SE
Cost: Free for participants*

Thank you to our sponsors!



**Dominion
Energy®**



Altria



www.dvsv3.com • (804) 371-2683
GET TRAINED - GET CERTIFIED

Maury Strauss Distinguished Public Lecture Coming in March

Upcoming lecture is free to the public and will be held at Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at 2 Riverside Circle.

The Age of Living Machines: How the Convergence of Biology and Engineering Will Build the Next Technology Revolution

Event will be held April 18, 2019, 5:30 p.m. at Fralin Biomedical Research Institute

Susan Hockfield, Ph.D.

President Emerita

Professor of Neuroscience

Massachusetts Institute of Technology



Susan Hockfield, Ph.D.

Understanding, treating, and preventing addiction: what would animals do?

Event will be held April 25, 2019, 5:30 p.m. at Fralin Biomedical Research Institute

Marilyn Carroll, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychiatry

University of Minnesota



Marilyn Carroll, Ph.D.



Volunteers Bake Thousands of Homemade Shortcakes for Upcoming Festival

Preparation Underway for the 39th Annual Community School Strawberry Festival Coming May 3 & 4 to Downtown Roanoke

COMMUNITY SCHOOL'S
39TH ANNUAL

Strawberry
Festival



May 3rd and 4th, 2019

Over 60 volunteers recently gathered to bake approximately 10,000 homemade shortcakes for the 2019 Strawberry Festival. In an age of mass production and instant everything, Strawberry Festival shortcakes are homemade and hand made by Community School parents, school staff, alumni and community volunteers. Real butter, locally milled flour and fresh Homestead Creamery milk are just a few ingredients that serve as the base for the festival's famous Strawberry Shortcakes.

Community School's Strawberry Festival was founded 39 years ago as a fundraiser for the school. More than 2400 volunteer hours go into this annual event which draws approximately 20,000 people from Virginia's Blue Ridge and beyond. The event takes place in downtown Roanoke's Elmwood Park on Friday, May 3 from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 4 from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The event is free to the public and offers two fun-filled days of scrumptious berry-filled treats, children's games and activities, live musical entertainment, food and arts and crafts vendors.

Contact Liz Fox Johnson, at 540-632-1696 or Liz@communityschool.net for additional information.



Get2KnowNoke Summer Internship Program

The Roanoke Regional Partnership is kicking off a new summer internship program in 2019. This leadership program is focused on preparing your emerging talent to enter the workforce. While students intern with your organization to learn industry knowledge, the Get2KnowNoke Summer Internship Program provides soft skill/professional development training, peer networking, and opportunities to explore the region as a young professional to increase your chances of retaining talent.

Benefits for your company

Recruit Interns

- Learn how to get the most from your internship programs
- Reach more intern candidates with our on-campus marketing
- Engage students with the Roanoke Region before summer begins

Engage Interns

- Connect interns to a social and professional network
- Provide a glimpse of life in the Roanoke Region through activities such as, outdoor adventure, sporting events, and social gatherings
- Deliver professional development and soft skill training
- Kick-off the summer at Experience 2019, a regional young professional conference, to introduce interns to YP mentors and leadership programming

Retain Interns (as full-time employees in the future)

- Increase student's awareness of the region for talent attraction
- Connect students to a peer and mentor network
- Enhance the student's summer experience

Who can participate in the program?

- College students currently enrolled in an associate, bachelor or master's degree program, or a recent graduate of such programs
- Students in an internship, co-op, or apprenticeship with a business in the Roanoke Region
- Students at least 18 years old
- Students with summer housing in the area and transportation

2019 Schedule

Professional Development and Networking

- June 6 at Blue 5 White Room
- 1-4 p.m. (training)
- 4:30-6:30 p.m. (networking)

Experience 2019 Leadership Conference

- June 7 at Taubman Museum
- 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Concert Meetup

- Early June at Daleville Town Center
- 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Kayak/Standup Paddleboarding

- June 21 at Explore Park
- 1-5 p.m.

Leadership Luncheon

- Mid-July
- 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Learn about Brewing + Game Night

- Mid-July at Three Notch'd
- 4 p.m.

Salem Red Sox Game/End of Summer Social

- July 25 at Salem Memorial Baseball Stadium
- 7 p.m.

How to Apply

The hosting company should fill out the **online application (get2knownoke.com/interns)**. The first 40 students who qualify and are registered by their companies will be able to participate. Once accepted, an email with program details will be sent to the company contact and student. The cost of the program is \$125 per student for Roanoke Regional Partnership investors (\$175 per student for non-investors). Fee includes internship promotions, Experience 2019 conference tickets, professional development instruction and materials, and recreational activities at summer-long events.

Calling all Entrepreneurs Gig Economy Course



Begins › June 4 – July 30th (no class July 2nd)
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

This course will enable you to "bootstrap" your way into a successful business rather than undertaking significant financial risk. You'll learn to identify problems, find solutions and make customer connections. It's ideal for anyone seeking to:

- › Transition from employee to independent worker
- › Explore entrepreneurship as a pre-retirement transition
- › Earn extra money while maintaining your current job
- › Transition from unemployed to self-employed
- › Use your skills, talents and interests to discover your entrepreneurial path

Cost FREE for area residents and businesses who apply by May 1, 2019, and who are accepted into the course through an application process.

Thanks to assistance from a Virginia Western's Educational Foundation and Roanoke County Economic Development.

Ready to apply? Deadline: May 1, 2019

For more info <https://tinyurl.com/RkeCo-Entrep-Mindset>

Commercial Property for Sale \$299,000



Approximately 1.09 acres located on Blue Hills Drive are available for sale and commercial development. The parcel (Lot 6) is located at the entrance to The Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT), just off of Orange Avenue (north side of Route 460). The Roanoke City Tax Parcels #7160118, #7160119 and #7160120 are zoned Commercial-General (conditional), are level and suitable for office or commercial use. Public utilities are available and the listing agent can provide information regarding the Blue Hills Concept Plan.

RCIT is one of Western Virginia's premiere industrial parks with approximately 2,500 employees. The 440-acre park was initially developed by the City of Roanoke in 1980, and was expanded in 1992. RCIT is adjacent to US Route 460 and offers quick access to Interstate 581 (approximately 3.4 miles), Interstate 81 (approximately 6.9 miles), less than 4 miles to the Norfolk Southern Bulk Transfer Terminal, and 8 miles to Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport.

RCIT currently houses Advance Auto Parts Distribution Center, AT&T, Creative Kids School, Eaton, Elizabeth Arden, FedEx Ground, Heritage Point/Roanoke Natural Foods Co-op, InfoSeal, Orvis, SEMCO, Virginia Utility Protective Services/VA811, and Wholesome Harvest Baking.

For more information, contact:
Thomas S. Turner Property Listings
Senior Associate Broker
Hall Associates, Inc.
112 Kirk Avenue, S.W.
Roanoke, VA 24011
(540) 857-5858 or tturner@rev.net

Wish to be a BizNews
Subscriber?

Simply visit City of Roanoke
Department of Economic
Development at
www.BizRoanoke.com
and
enter your email address under the
heading
"Subscribe to our Newsletter."

Check Out BizRoanoke on RVTV
Channel 3!

BizRoanoke is a
monthly
program highlighting
economic activity and
programs within the
City of Roanoke.

Tune into
RVTV Channel 3 to learn more,
access it on our website at
www.BizRoanoke.com
or follow this link to our most
recent show:

https://youtu.be/FzEYH_fbRzE

Visit us on Facebook!

DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Roanoke
Department of
Economic
Development
is on Facebook!
Please "like" us
today!



Check it Out! City Owned Available Property

The City of Roanoke has a variety of properties, from existing buildings to buildable sites presently available for acquisition. The purchase of City property must be approved by Council; this requires potential buyers to submit a proposal for the property. For more information on available properties and the proposal process, please visit the links below:

<http://www.bizroanoke.com/Start,-Locate,-Expand/Sites-and-Buildings/Available-Sites.aspx>

<http://www.bizroanoke.com/Start,-Locate,-Expand/Sites-and-Buildings/Available-Buildings.aspx>



Renovation/Reuse Opportunity Former Melrose Branch Library Proposal Deadline: April 15, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.



A parcel of approximately 2.96 acres (Property), including the soon to be vacated (summer of 2019) Melrose Branch Library, is available for renovation and reuse opportunities. The property, located at 2607 Salem Turnpike, N.W. (Tax Map Number 2420206), is adjacent to the Roanoke City Public School's Forest Park Academy, Goodwill of the Valleys Jobs Campus, new Melrose Library Branch (currently under construction), and the Landsdowne Park Housing Complex. The existing library building was constructed in 1976, and contains approximately 6,700 square feet of space. The site also contains a 26-space parking lot. It is anticipated that the existing building will be available for occupancy by late-summer, 2019.

The real estate is proposed to be conveyed in fee simple, with the following conditions/considerations:

- The City is willing to consider proposals for conveyance of the Property in whole in or part, based on the reuse/development plan submitted by the Proposer.
- The City anticipates the need to reserve to the public, access rights across the Property along existing pedestrian ways (sidewalks), to be constructed in conjunction with the new Melrose Library Branch project, and use of the existing parking lot for access to facilities located at the adjacent Horton Park site located immediately to the east.

How to Propose:

Proposals for the Property must contain the following elements:

A Business Plan outlining the intended use of the Property and the proposed financing of its renovation/reuse. The plan must include a timeline for undertaking the proposed development of the Property from the initial due diligence period to the completion of the project;

- Renovation/Reuse plan outlining proposed physical improvements to the existing building and proposed actions for any new structures to be built on the Property, including the location and size of any proposed buildings;
- Description of the qualifications and experience of the proposer and developer;
- Proposers may presume the conveyance of the Property by the City for nominal consideration, but without any direct financial support from the City; and,
- Any other proposed conditions and/or contingencies associated with the project proposal.

The Proposer may be contacted after sufficient time for staff review for requests for additional information or clarification of information contained in the submittal. Upon staff review and recommendation to the City Council for the proposal which is determined to be in the best interest of the City, a sales agreement will be drafted in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions of the Proposal, as amended, if necessary. Prior to a sales agreement being executed between the City and the selected Proposer, the City Council will hold a public hearing regarding the proposed sale/conveyance of the Property.

Please submit your written proposal including the form on the following page to:

Rob Ledger, Acting Director, Department of Economic Development
117 Church Avenue, SW
Roanoke, VA 24011

Or by email to: econdevl@roanokeva.gov

For more information please contact the Department of Economic Development at 540-853-2715.