

BizNews



EARTH FARE WILL BRING HEALTHIER FOOD TO VIRGINIA THIS FALL *Roanoke chosen as site for first store in The Commonwealth*

Earth Fare, the authentic specialty organic and natural foods grocery store, announced on January 4, 2017 that it will bring healthier choices to Roanoke in the fall of 2017. The 24,000 square-foot store will be part of the Ivy Market development on Franklin Road, adjacent to the new Mellow Mushroom restaurant and the Carilion Institute for Orthopedics and Neurosciences (ION).

Since 1975, Earth Fare has distinguished itself as a leader in the healthy foods industry by developing a unique Food Philosophy that informs every product offered in the store. This Food Philosophy is exemplified by a rigorous set of **Quality Standards**, which ensures all products sold are free of high fructose corn syrup, artificial fats and trans-fats, artificial colors, artificial preservatives, artificial sweeteners, bleached or bromated flour, and are never administered antibiotics or growth hormones. The full list of unacceptable ingredients can be found on its [Boot List](#). Every aisle of the new store will adhere to these standards so shoppers can easily make healthier choices, every day.

“Earth Fare’s unparalleled commitment to keeping our products free from harmful additives means you can shop our store and be confident that your cart is full of healthy, wholesome options,” said Earth Fare president and CEO Frank Scorpiniti. “Virginia shoppers deserve a store where they can find all the products they need to help their families lead healthier lives, and we are looking forward to bringing our mission of providing healthy food for everyone with the Roanoke community.”

Beyond groceries, the new store will also feature Earth Fare’s Heirloom Organic Juice Bar, which features 100% Certified Organic coffees, smoothies, and juices, including custom blends as well as convenient freshly prepared bottles for the person on-the-go. Shoppers will also find a wide variety of organic choices at Earth Fare’s kitchen, featuring ready-to-go and prepared foods including the salad bar, hot foods bar, pizza station, sandwich counter, and conveniently packaged meals-on-the-go. Shoppers can enjoy a homemade meal without the work, whether dining in the indoor and outdoor 80-seat café with free Wi-Fi or taking it home.

“Earth Fare will be a great addition to our retail offerings in the city and the region, and will enhance the synergy of other economic development activities along the Franklin Road corridor and the adjacent South Jefferson redevelopment area,” said City Manager Chris Morrill.

Earth Fare will be the new anchor tenant of Ivy Market, a four-acre retail and consumer services destination owned and managed by Harbour Retail Partners. Located just off Route 220 at the intersection of Wonju Street and Franklin Road on the south side of Roanoke, the growing development serves thousands of shoppers in the neighborhoods of Old Southwest, Raleigh Court, Grandin Village, South Roanoke, the Downtown District including the Riverside Center for Research & Technology, Southern Hills and beyond.

“We are thrilled to develop Ivy Market, anchored by Earth Fare,” said Randy Kelley, principal of HRP. “The location is perfectly positioned to serve the ever-expanding medical and research corridor, the surrounding neighborhoods, and downtown Roanoke, and provides convenient interstate access to the greater Roanoke Valley.”

Founded in 1975 in Asheville, North Carolina, Earth Fare is one of the largest natural and organic food retailers in the country, with 39 locations across 9 states in the Southeast, mid-Atlantic and Midwest. Their full-service philosophy incorporates the highest food Quality Standards in the industry with compelling value, friendly and knowledgeable service, and a superior shopping experience. It’s a philosophy that makes it easy to live a healthier lifestyle, every day.

Learn more about Earth Fare’s fresh approach to improving lives through a healthier lifestyle at www.earthfare.com.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1/EARTH FARE ANNOUNCES ROANOKE STORE
- 2/BRANCH CIVIL FORMED, FEATURED BIZLINK
- 3/SPOTLIGHT ON BUSINESS
- 4-6/RESEARCH IN ROANOKE
- 7/COLAB REPORT
- 8/RIDE SOLUTIONS ART BY BUS
- 9/VBR & ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION NEWS
- 10 -14/TRAINING & EVENTS
- 15 -17/DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The Branch Group, Inc. Announces Consolidation *Merger will support long-range strategic growth of company*



On December 14th, 2016, J. William Karbach, CEO of The Branch Group, Inc. announced the consolidation of the company's civil subsidiaries, Branch Highways, Inc., and E.V. Williams, Inc. The newly consolidated company will be named Branch Civil, Inc.

According to Karbach, "This consolidation supports our long-range strategic growth plans by significantly improving our go-to-market capabilities, scalability, and economy of scale, particularly in the evolving transportation construction industry throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast United States. Our extremely effective and competitive team positions us for a 20-year market trajectory and beyond."

Patrick Bartorillo, who joined Branch Highways, Inc. in 2013, was named President of Branch Civil, Inc. Other officers leading the new organization will be Jay Openshaw and Brian Evans. Mr. Openshaw, who has been with E.V. Williams, Inc., since 1998, was named Senior Vice President. Mr. Evans, who has been with E.V. Williams, Inc. since 2000, was named Vice President of Operations.

As a result of this consolidation, the talented and tenured employees of the two component organizations will be able to better serve their clients, customers, and communities. Branch Civil, Inc. will operate in Virginia from offices in Roanoke, Manassas, and Virginia Beach, and from Cary, North Carolina.

Branch Civil, Inc. is committed to continuing a 75-year tradition of building outstanding infrastructure projects in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States. Projects have included public highway and street construction, public-private partnerships, military bases, ports, airports, utilities, landfills, and reservoir dams. In the private sector, site work includes manufacturing and distribution facilities, office and retail developments, and residential subdivisions.

Headquartered in Roanoke, VA, The Branch Group, Inc., the parent organization, touches all aspects of the built environment through Branch Civil, Inc., Branch and Associates, Inc., and G.J. Hopkins, Inc. The organization is committed to exemplary performance and to developing business relationships sustained by mutual benefit and respect.

In 2016, Virginia Business Magazine ranked The Branch Group, Inc., as the fourth largest construction company in Virginia, and Engineering News-Record ranked the company as #182 of the Top 400 Largest Construction Companies in the United States.

In 2015, The Branch Group, Inc., had total revenues of \$392,000,000 and a workforce of over 900 employees. Through its Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), it ensures that every employee has a vested interest in its success.

If you would like to learn more information about Branch Civil, Inc. or The Branch Group, Inc., please contact Larry Dickenson, Vice President, The Branch Group, Inc. by calling 540-982-1678 or by emailing larryd@branchgroup.com.

Featured BizLink

The Virginia STEP Program Helps Smaller Businesses Go Global.
<https://exportvirginia.org/step/>

The State Trade and Export Promotion Grant (STEP) is designed to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting and to raise the value of exports for those small businesses that are currently exporting. The program is funded in part through a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

By providing trade-related resources and services, we help smaller businesses generate new export revenues and create new jobs for Virginia.

Funds may be granted for export activities including: Travel to Market Programs, Website Translation, Search Engine Optimization and Localization, Utilization of USCS Gold Key Services, Featured Ad in Relevant Trade Publications, And More.

Visit <https://exportvirginia.org/step> for additional information.



Spotlight on Business ~

Spotless Roanoke - Making Your Business Shine!

Kat Pascal and Jimmy Delgado launched Spotless Roanoke in 2011 from their home office while working full time in other jobs. Kat was quickly progressing in her career in banking as a branch manager and Jimmy also worked full-time in the banking industry. Although both had a desire to be self-employed, working in corporate careers gave them the security to support their young family, which includes their two children, Julian and Jacob. Commercial cleaning is one of the unspoken necessities of all businesses. Nobody notices when it is being done right, but everyone notices when it is neglected. The trade is not glamorous but it is required and it is a specialized service that Spotless Roanoke has mastered.

Pascal and Delgado both had experience in pursuing their entrepreneurial sides. Jimmy was born in New Jersey but grew up in Colombia with his grandmother. As a young teen he would wake early and make hot sandwiches to sell to the other students on the bus ride to school. After graduation, he came back to the United States and stayed with a friend in Roanoke where he attended Patrick Henry High School to help with his English language skills. During this time he picked up some part-time jobs, one of which was floor maintenance for a commercial cleaning company. He attended college in North Carolina and always had the desire to start his own company. Jimmy met Kat through mutual friends and they instantly clicked. They shared the desire to set goals and achieve success and growth in their careers. Like Jimmy, Kat was born in the U.S. of Colombian parents. She also always pursued her own business outside of the corporate jobs she held, including selling Colombian made jewelry.

Jimmy shared his experience in the cleaning industry and his plan for starting his own business with Kat. Kat encouraged him to pursue his idea while continuing to work days in banking and Spotless Roanoke was born. They quickly landed their first contract with Dominion Air & Machinery Co. In this early stage of the start-up, Jimmy performed all the roles in the company from sales and support to purchasing, contracts and cleaning. It was done by trial and error, through perseverance and a drive to succeed and to provide the best quality from first contact to follow-through on contracts.

As the business began to grow Pascal and Delgado added staff for servicing the accounts, then a full-time supervisor followed soon after by an accountant. Once they had a few contracts signed and under way, Spotless Roanoke needed to move out of their home office yet could not support its own storefront. The Business Lounge had opened in 2012 in downtown Roanoke and the co-working space offered the young company just what it needed. Started by Samantha Steidle, The Business Lounge was the Roanoke area's first co-working office, allowing entrepreneurs the location and supplies they needed for a reasonable fee to share a professional office space for their business use. For only \$100 per month, Spotless Roanoke signed on as one of the first tenants of The Business Lounge. When The Business Lounge moved to Grandin Road and became The CoLab, naturally Spotless Roanoke moved with them.

Delgado continued calling area businesses, setting appointments, making recommendations for custom solutions and gaining more contracts. Eventually he was able to quit his job in banking and focus full-time on continuing to grow and improve Spotless Roanoke, adding services and adjusting the business model as the company expanded. Pascal began to assume more responsibilities managing accounts and co-managing the 24 hour service provided by the company to their clients. In 2015, their accountant gave Pascal the go ahead to leave her full-time job. She was hesitant to depart from the corporate structure, security, and benefits that it provided for their family. After careful consideration, they decided in order to continue to grow Spotless Roanoke throughout the region and beyond, Kat needed to also be able to be a full time account manager for the company, to help set appointments for new business and to help manage existing contracts and human resources for their growing staff.

Fast forward five years, Spotless Roanoke has grown to over 45 accounts and over 20 employees. Although they continue to share space at the CoLab on Grandin, the company's rapid growth allowed them to recently place a down payment on their own 2,000 square foot storefront on Williamson Road. Spotless Roanoke operates account and supplies management from here as well as continues to use the office and meeting space provided by the CoLab space on Grandin. Pascal and Delgado have no plans to stop now. They work long hours, seven days a week, but they love what they do and are fulfilled seeing their dream realized. Spotless Roanoke has grown larger than its name, beyond Roanoke, throughout the Southwest Virginia region and into neighboring states. There are plans already in place to expand in other states the same way they started here, one cold call at a time or one referral from another satisfied customer at a time.

To learn more about Spotless Roanoke, visit the website at www.spotlessroanoke.com, call 540-765-8267 or email them at contact@spotlessroanoke.com.



Research in Roanoke ~

UVA, Virginia Tech Carilion partner to fund leading-edge, cross-university neuroscience



The University of Virginia-Virginia Tech Carilion Neuroscience Research Collaboration capitalized on the enormous talent in brain research in the Commonwealth by encouraging cross-institutional research projects.

The University of Virginia-Virginia Tech Carilion Neuroscience Research Collaboration recently announced more than a half-million dollars in grant funding will be awarded to nine research teams to tackle pressing problems in brain development and function in health and disease.

Investigators received the awards through a competitive review process and were notified by Michael J. Friedlander, vice president for health sciences and technology and professor at Virginia Tech, where he is also the executive director of the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and the senior dean for research at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine; and Margaret Shupnik, senior associate dean for research and a professor at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, where she is also the Gerald D. Aurbach Professor of Endocrinology.

“We are planting seeds that will bring additional research funding to the commonwealth from government agencies, private organizations, industry, and foundations,” said Virginia Tech President Tim Sands. “We continue to pursue partnerships with people and organizations who want to join us in solving some of the most pressing problems in health care.”

The leadership of the University of Virginia School of Medicine, Carilion Clinic, Virginia Tech, and the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute provided financing for the program and issued an open call for proposals with a submission deadline of October 10, 2016 through the University of Virginia – Virginia Tech Carilion Neuroscience Research Collaboration. In all, \$550,000 will be awarded to nine projects with each receiving between \$50,000 and \$70,000.

Research in Roanoke ~ Continued from Page 4

“We are taking full advantage of the combined talent of our faculty and encouraging lasting brain research collaborations between the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech Carilion,” Friedlander said. “The pilot funding will serve as a catalyst to form new teams to tackle important questions, perform transformative work, obtain new extramural research funding in neuroscience for each of the partner institutions, and to develop new applications.”

Organizers believe that the dialogues and the new collaborations stimulated by the program ultimately will generate significant, meaningful knowledge to benefit society, Shupnik said.

“The proposals speak to the scientific strength at our institutions and the synergies that these collaborations will create: studies of the causes of and means of diagnosing neurological diseases; new methods for understanding brain development, normal function, and dysfunction; models of neural circuitry; and potential interventions to restore function to the diseased nervous system,” Shupnik said.

Carilion Clinic President and CEO Nancy Howell Agee said, “Research leads to better health care outcomes and better lives for our patients.”

“These projects will provide a strong foundation for future research collaborations and funding opportunities, with the ultimate goal of benefiting our patients,” Agee added.

Funded grants address major questions and health challenges, including:

- Herpes virus infections in the brain;
- New strategies for treating Rett syndrome in children;
- The development of the blood supply to the brain;
- The mechanical forces of injuries leading to concussions;
- The use of ultrasound to modulate critical chemical neurotransmitters in the human brain to affect behavior;
- Development of new therapeutics for multiple sclerosis;
- The role of breast cancer genes in brain function and development;
- New combined therapeutic strategies for treating malignant brain tumors;
- The relationship between seizures and microcephaly;

The University of Virginia – Virginia Tech Carilion Neuroscience Research Collaboration has been several years in the making, Friedlander said.

From the beginning it was clear that there was enormous talent in brain research in the commonwealth with distinct areas of excellence but little in the way of cross-institutional collaborations,” said Friedlander, who arrived as the executive director at Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute in 2010 and began recruiting 15 leading brain research teams to Roanoke, Virginia.

Friedlander worked closely with leading neuroscientists at several universities across the state, who went on to develop ties and began planning a strategy to transform Virginia into “The Brain State” — a hub of scientific efforts and leading technological innovation to understand brain function and to develop new paradigms for diagnostics and treatments for brain-related disorders.

Meanwhile, the state’s political leadership expressed support for collaborative efforts between the state’s universities, which resulted in a statewide Virginia Neuroscience Initiative, coordinated by the Virginia Biosciences Health Research Corp.

In addition, teams of neuroscientists at various universities and health systems in Virginia identified opportunities to partner for major breakthroughs and new funding strategies.

The University of Virginia School of Medicine, Virginia Tech, and Carilion Clinic neuroscience teams hosted each other and shared their work at multiple meetings at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute in Roanoke and at the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville.

“It was apparent from the outset that the enthusiasm for collaborating and energy for developing new approaches to some of the most important problems in neuroscience between the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech Carilion neuroscientists were extremely high,” Friedlander said. The teams decided they would begin a series of collaborations building on their complementary strengths and mutual interests, identifying focused topics for advanced inquiry.

After the competitive review process of 24 proposals involving more than 50 investigators, nine proposals were selected for funding:

Co-principal investigators Andrea Bertke, an assistant professor of population health sciences with the Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine; and Anna Cliffe, an assistant professor of microbiology, immunology, and cancer biology at the University of Virginia School of Medicine: Chromatin Composition of Latent HSV-1 and HSV-2;

Co-principal investigators Sanchita Bhatnagar, an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular genetics at the University of Virginia; Alexei Morozov, an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences; Michael McConnell, an assistant professor of biochemistry and molecular genetics; and Mark Beenhakker, an assistant professor of pharmacology, both of the University of Virginia: Pharmacological Reactivation of Inactive X-linked MECP2 for Rett Syndrome Therapeutics;

Research in Roanoke ~ Continued from Page 5

Co-principal investigators John Chappell, an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences; Shayn Peirce-Cottler, a professor of biomedical engineering at the University of Virginia: Computational and Experimental Modeling of Blood Vessel Growth and Vascular Pericyte Investment in the Developing Germinal Matrix;

Co-principal investigators Stefan Duma, the Harry C. Wyatt Professor at the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences and director of the Virginia Tech Institute for Critical Technologies and Applied Science; Steven Rowson, an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech-Wake Forest School of Biomedical Engineering and Sciences; and Matthew Panzer, an assistant professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the University of Virginia: Brain Strain Patterns Associated with Concussion Injury;

Co-principal investigators Jeff Elias, a professor of neurosurgery at the University of Virginia School of Medicine; Read Montague, the Virginia Tech Carilion Vernon Mountcastle Research Professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and professor of physics at Virginia Tech; and Mark Witcher, an assistant professor of neurosurgery at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Carilion Clinic: Impact of Cognitive and Ultrasound Stimulated Serotonin and Dopamine Release in Human and Swine Striatum;

Co-principal investigators Alban Gaultier, an assistant professor of neuroscience at the University of Virginia; Kevin Lynch, a professor of pharmacology at the University of Virginia; and Webster Santos, an associate professor of bioorganic and medicinal chemistry in the Virginia Tech College of Science: Sphingosine Kinase Inhibitors and Multiple Sclerosis;

Co-principal investigators Deborah Kelly, an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and the Department of Biological Sciences at Virginia Tech; and Mark Yeager, a professor of molecular physiology and biological physics, and of cardiovascular medicine at the University of Virginia School of Medicine: Decoding the Role of BRCA1 in Brain Cells using High-Resolution Cryo-EM;

Co-principal investigators Samy Lamouille, a research assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute; and Benjamin Purow, a professor of neurology at the University of Virginia: Disruption of Cx43-mediated Regulation of Microtubules to Eradicate Glioma Stem Cells in Glioblastoma Treatment;

Co-principal investigators Konark Mukherjee, an assistant professor at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute and the Virginia Tech Department of Biological Sciences; and Howard Goodkin, a professor of neurology and pediatrics at the University of Virginia: Contribution of Early Epileptiform Activity to Secondary Microencephaly in CASK(+/-) Mice.

Written by John Pastor for VTCRI.

VTCRI Eric Shullman Distinguished Public Lecture Series ~ coming soon!

The Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute's Eric Shullman Distinguished Public Lecture Series will kick off the new year with two outstanding guest speakers this month.

Dr. George Koob, Director of the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) at NIH, will lead off the 2017 program on Thursday, January 19 with his presentation on "Neurocircuitry of Addiction: An Alcohol Perspective." On the following Thursday, January 26, Dr. Peter Mohler, Director of the Dorothy M. Davis Heart and Lung Research Institute, William D. and Jacquelyn L. Wells Chair of Cardiovascular Research and Professor of Physiology, Cell Biology and Internal Medicine at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, will present, "Defining New Pathways For Human Arrhythmia."

These public lectures will be held at 5:30 PM at the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute located in Roanoke at 2 Riverside Circle and each presentation will be preceded by a reception beginning at 5 p.m. The lectures and reception are free and open to the public.

To learn more about these speakers, please visit <http://research.vtc.vt.edu/events/distinguished-scholars-series/2016/>.



George Koob, PhD



Peter J. Mohler, PhD



CoLab Report ~ From Cubicle to Coworking -

CoLab members discuss the transition from a traditional workplace environment to a less structured, open workspace.

As with any transition, starting a new chapter can be daunting. Many CoLab members come from a corporate / traditional office background, and starting a remote job or new business out of the coworking space does require some patience and work.

When asked about this transition, CoLab members had a diversity of experiences and anecdotes to offer. Kat Pascal has been a CoLab member for years and is the co-founder of Spotless Roanoke, a local cleaning services company. Kat went from working full-time in a banking position that she describes as “corporate” and “all about professionalism [where you] play by the rules and only within the rule.” Though this description sounds limiting, the transition to a completely open workplace like the CoLab was an uneasy one for Kat at the beginning.

“I had a hard time adjusting to people coming to talk to me while I was working. I quickly had to prioritize my goals for the day and realized I was only as successful as I kept my plan,” she said. This sentiment is reflected in Mike Edward’s story, as well. Mike, owner of Bald Guy IT, says that in a coworking environment, “people are aware that I work a lot, but that impression takes a lot of effort to maintain.”

These concerns about coworking spaces are universal. How do I stay on task when there are so many distractions? How do I remain professional when I am able to wear comfy jeans to work and sit on a neon green couch? What is the best way to create meaningful relationships in the workplace while still staying relevant in my field, industry, and with my actual coworkers (who may be hundreds of miles away)?

At the CoLab, we try to stay realistic about these concerns. Without the “corporate” structure, individuals are required to create their own version of professionalism, which means different things to different people. Learning the rules and expectations of the coworking space takes time, because it morphs slightly as different people join and leave.

At the other end of the transition timeline, there are many benefits to joining a coworking space, which are at the core of the CoLab’s main service to its members. For instance, Kat found that even though it was hard to stay on-task at times, she encountered people who “think outside the box [which helped her find] limitless solutions.”

Similarly, Mike reflected that once he left his traditional office environment, he needed some help getting started with his own business. He said, “there isn’t really a ‘how-to’ guide on what you need to do in Roanoke VA to be a legit business. Everybody knows their little piece, but very few people know the whole picture. Yet another reason why Co-Lab is nice. Other people have gone through similar things and can give feedback.” Editor’s note: Check out the link which follows for a current and comprehensive Business Owner’s Guide. <http://www.bizroanoke.com/RoanokeED/media/Business-Support-Documents/Business-Guide-2016.pdf>

This referral and feedback system has grown as an amenity at the CoLab ever since it opened in 2014 with 11 members. Now, with nearly 160 members, the diversity of experience and knowledge is vast, and CoLab members just need to chat with a desk-neighbor or post in the private Facebook group to have a question answered - and it is a more personal, verified referral or answer than they might get elsewhere.

Coworking is not ideal for every work style, as expressed by Fe Nguyen, who transitioned to CoLab after many years of a traditional workplace environment. She explained, “the most challenging thing about coming to a coworking space after working a job in a more traditional atmosphere is self-management when it comes to distractions and socialization. As someone with a short attention span and a penchant to chat with everyone, making sure I get work done can be a bit of a balancing act.” This balance can be seen during many new members’ first few days at the CoLab. Either the new member is particularly quiet or incredibly willing to chat, and either way works to find a balance that works for him or her.

“Once I figured out my personal mix of socializing and work, though, being in a coworking space created some really valuable friendships and opportunities for collaboration. I find that my ‘mental rolodex’ is way bigger than it used to be and no matter what anyone needs, either in CoLab or out and about in my daily life, I can pull up a name or a business that can help them because of the people I’ve met while socializing at the CoLab”

The experience of working in a coworking space is as unique as the member. While it can be hard to leave the structured workplace, the casual coworking environment packs a lot of benefit for those willing to open their mind and risk going off topic. As most members know, it is the strange and unexpected conversations that sometimes yield the greatest results!





RIDE Solutions, the City of Roanoke Arts Commission, and the Greater Roanoke Transit Authority are partnering to once again present a unique public art project in spring 2017. Up to four Valley Metro buses will display artworks selected from the City of Roanoke's Regional Public Art Collection during the months of March and April.

Additionally, a writer or writers will be issued a one month bus pass and paid an honorarium of \$1,000 to create a unique work of literature while riding different bus routes. The work may be any genre including short stories, poetry, essays, plays, etc. The work may also be multimedia and include art, music or photography. The work will be published on the participating organizations web sites and other venues as possible. If appropriate an exhibition of the work will be displayed at a prominent downtown location.

The goals of the project are to publicize the many works of regional art in the city collection and draw attention to the important role public transportation plays in connecting our neighborhoods and communities. In addition to encouraging ridership, Valley Metro will help bring these works of arts into all of Roanoke's neighborhoods.

Art by Bus is part of a larger promotion by Ride Solutions throughout March and April which will include other activities such as live musical performances, sculpture, activities at the bus stops, partnerships with local schools, and more. Art by Bus will partner with transit agencies throughout the RIDE Solutions service area of Central and Southwest Virginia.

Individuals or groups may submit an application by submitting an entry form, a writing sample, resume and references. A panel made up of representatives from the sponsoring organizations and community members will review the applications and select the writer or writers from the applicants. The panel seeks to have content that is original, family friendly, creative and constructive.

Timeline: Applications due by 5 PM on January 20, 2017

Selected writer notified no later than February 1, 2017

Project onset March 1, 2017

Deliverables finalized by May 30, 2017

Applications may also be downloaded at www.roanokeva.gov/artsandculture

For additional information on previous Writer by Bus efforts or for more details, visit www.ridesolutions.org/artbybus.



**NEED A STICKER?
SEEKING IDEAS TO
HELP VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE
GAIN VISIBILITY!**

The City of Roanoke has now adopted the region's brand - Virginia's Blue Ridge – and local businesses and residents are beginning to use the brand in many forms. The City of Roanoke is planning to add the sticker reflected below to various city fleet vehicles. These stickers are available at the Visitor Information Center in Downtown Roanoke. We are looking for more ways to gain visibility for the brand. Please contact Catherine Fox with Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge with your suggestions at (540) 342-6025 Ext. 114 or email her at Cfox@visitvablueridge.com.



New Executive Director Named at Roanoke Higher Education Center

Dr. Kay Dunkley, former Virginia Tech Roanoke Center Director succeeds Dr. Tom McKeon



Kay Dunkley, Ed.D.

Kay Dunkley, Ed.D., former director of Virginia Tech Roanoke Center, has been named by the Roanoke Higher Education Center Board of Trustees as Executive Director of the Roanoke Higher Education Center. Dunkley replaces Dr. Tom McKeon whose retirement was effective December 31, 2016. Dr. McKeon led the Roanoke Higher Education Center for 17 years from the development and opening of the institution in 1999.

Dunkley, a native of Wythe County, VA came to Roanoke in 2011 after leading Virginia Tech's Reynolds Homestead enrichment center and forestry research center operations in Patrick County. In her most recent role as director of Virginia Tech Roanoke Center, she oversaw graduate and continuing education programs for the university in the Roanoke Region.

Dunkley holds a bachelor's and master's degree from Radford University and a doctorate of education degree from Virginia Tech.

The Roanoke Higher Education Center offers over 200 programs of study through more than a dozen member institutions. It supports 310 jobs and has an annual economic impact of \$32 million per year. For more information and to learn about the numerous opportunities offered at the institution, visit www.education.edu.

TRAINING & EVENTS

Selling to the Commonwealth

Moving your business forward

"Calling all Roanoke Region Small Business, Startups and Entrepreneurs"

You are invited to attend this workshop.

Date: **Thursday, January 26, 2017**

Time: **9:00 - 11:00 AM**

Location: **Roanoke South County Library
6303 Merriman Road
Roanoke, VA 24018
(Free parking!)**

Are you looking for new sales growth markets?

If so, this **FREE** workshop is for you! Discover the opportunities and steps to connecting to Virginia's \$8 billion government marketplace. Learn how to run reports to identify agency targets, spend history, and how to get registered and steps to SWaM and Micro certification.

To register, visit <http://vastartup.org/blog/events/roanoke-selling-commonwealth/>. If you have questions or require additional information, contact Lisa Soltis, City of Roanoke Economic Development at 540-853-1694 or Jessica Fintel, Roanoke County Economic Development at 540-772-2185.

No fee event. Advanced registration is required.



Sponsored by Freedom First in partnership with these organizations.



TRAINING & EVENTS



**What is GrowthWheel?
How can it help your business?
Join us January 11, 19, or 31 from 9:00 - 10:30 am for
FREE information sessions.**

RSVP to Bart Smith

Make Smarter Decisions —Avoid Blindspots

An Introduction to GrowthWheel® and how
to get a 360° perspective on your business

Three Dates to Choose From:
January 11, 19, 31, 2017
9:00-10:30am

Location:
Roanoke Regional SBDC
at Roanoke Regional Chamber
210 S. Jefferson St.
Roanoke, VA 24011

Speaker:
Bart Smith,
Director,
Roanoke Regional SBDC

Registration: **Companies 2+ Years**
RSVP required
Breakfast Snacks will be provided

What's included?
Selection of GrowthWheel PDF
Tools including: 360 Screening,
Worksheets and Articles.

RSVP to:
bsmith@roanokechamber.org or
540-983-0717.

Entrepreneurs and business owners, are you challenged to keep up with the daily routines in your business, knowing you need to do more to focus on growth, but uncertain what to do?

GrowthWheel is a hands-on, multi-session, action-oriented program designed to help entrepreneurs and businesses overcome their barriers to growth.

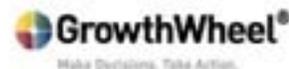
Join Bart Smith, Director of the Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center for a 1 hour introduction to the GrowthWheel toolbox and the GrowthWheel Training Program designed to help growth companies get focus, set an agenda, make decisions and take action.

This 8 session program helps established businesses address four key challenges. They need an attractive business concept, lasting customer relations, profitable operations, and a strong organization.

Attendees will participate in a hands-on workshop introducing the GrowthWheel toolkit, and will get a sense of how empowering it can be to work with a Certified Growthwheel Advisor and other regional companies ready to grow.

How will GrowthWheel help your business?

- Supports the decision making that we do every day.
- Supplies a visual toolkit for dialogue, focus, agenda setting, decision-making and action taking.
- Provides a simple action oriented process to help you grow.
- Stays true to the way most entrepreneurs think and work.
- Helps companies determine which areas to focus on to strengthen and grow their business.
- Provides an opportunity to network with other successful regional companies.



TRAINING & EVENTS

VT KnowledgeWorks

April 12 2017



VIRGINIA TECH STUDENTS: DEVELOP YOUR ENTREPRENEURIAL IDEAS, ENHANCE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS VENTURE, AND SHOWCASE YOUR CREATIVITY AT THE...

GLOBAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP CHALLENGE SEMIFINALS

Students compete to earn **\$15,000** in scholarships and eligibility for the VT KnowledgeWorks 2017 Global Student Entrepreneurship Challenge finals next August, where student teams from around the world compete for the **\$25,000** grand prize. All participants must be full-time students at Virginia Tech, and the average age of the team must be less than 28.

To enter, submit a 1-page summary of your business concept by February 10 at www.vtknowledgeworks.com. A panel of faculty and local entrepreneurial business leaders choose semifinalists to then submit a 3-5 page business concept document by March 3.

Finalists are chosen by a panel of local entrepreneurial business leaders and investors. VT KnowledgeWorks assists the finalists in the preparation of their presentations. Finalists present their business concepts at the Global Entrepreneurship Challenge Semifinals on April 12.

INNOVATION

Virginia Tech Students win up to \$40,000!

TRAINING & EVENTS

Tuesday, January 17, 2017
4 - 7 p.m.

BUSINESS BASICS 2017

Are you considering starting a new business? Not sure what you need to do and what steps to take? Then this is the class for you! Business Basics is an introduction to owning your own business. Topics covered include deciding on a legal entity structure, basic accounting and tax issues, steps you need to take for permits and licensing, steps to writing a business plan and basics of marketing and market research. We cover the nine steps to market research to determine if your business idea makes sense. Class is for individuals in business, or those thinking of starting a business, even if it might be years in the future. The class is 3.0 hours long so these topics will only be briefly covered. Upon completing the class you will have the opportunity to schedule a one-on-one appointment with one of the professional business counselors in our office. We do not charge anything for our one-on-one sessions. For questions or more details, please call Tom Tanner at 983-0717 ext 103.

Speaker: Tom Tanner

Location: Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center, Chamber of Commerce Building, 210 S. Jefferson St., Roanoke, VA

Fee: \$ 20.00

Tuesday, January 24, 2017
4 - 7 p.m.

SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS 2017

Social Media is a necessity in today's technological environment. In this course, we will break down the key social media platforms, best practices for each, as well as creating a strategy to make sure you reach your audience through these channels. The following platforms will be discussed: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Periscope, YouTube, and Snapchat. You will learn to create personas for your business, as well as discuss how to use Inbound Marketing strategies to grow your social media reach. Digital advertising through these platforms will be briefly discussed as well as management tools once your social media channels are set up. Following this workshop, you can schedule a time to meet with our staff should you have additional questions.

Speaker: Christina Garnett

Location: Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center, Chamber of Commerce Building, 210 S. Jefferson St., Roanoke, VA

Fee: \$ 20.00

Thursday, January 26, 2017
9 – 11 a.m.

SELLING TO THE COMMONWEALTH

The Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity, the City of Roanoke Department of Economic Development, Roanoke County Economic Development and Freedom First Credit Union have teamed up to offer Selling to the Commonwealth, a free workshop targeting regional small business owners and entrepreneurs. Coffee and light refreshments will be offered

Speaker: Sandy Ratliff, Business Services Manager, Virginia Department of Small Business & Supplier Diversity

Location: Roanoke South County Library, 6303 Merriman Road, Roanoke, VA

Fee: FREE

To register, visit <http://www.vastartup.org/blog/events/roanoke-selling-commonwealth>



TRAINING & EVENTS

LEAN ACADEMY

The **Lean Academy**, hosted by Virginia Tech, is designed to support the needs of all participants in government, from front-line workers, through supervisors and managers, up to and including senior leaders. Employees at all levels have important roles to play in lean transformation and new capabilities and behaviors must be cultivated at each level. Special features include networking opportunities with government leaders from all over the U.S., simulations that relate to workplace conditions, and experienced practitioners who will facilitate the classes.

Lean Academy courses include:

- Executive Overview : Lean Transformation
- Introduction to Lean Thinking
- Lean Practitioner
- Lean Supervisor

Executive Overview : Lean Transformation

This course is designed for managers and senior executives who will serve as lean leaders and function as the developer of coaches, the designer of systems that develop people, and the leaders of organizational transformation. Course content will focus on how to plan and design a strategy of implementation and the messaging needed to communicate a clear vision and direction. Participants will discover ways to organize cross functional teams that put lean improvements into practice.

March 30 & 31, 2017

March 30 9:00 - 4:00 pm

March 31 8:30 - 1:00 pm

Tuition: \$499/ person or
\$459 for companies sending 3 or more

Location:

The Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center

110 Shenandoah Avenue
Roanoke, Virginia 24016



For more information:

Erin Burcham
Erinb1@vt.edu or 540-767-6100

Check it Out! City Owned Available Property

The City of Roanoke has a variety of properties, from existing buildings to buildable sites, that are 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>

**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). This Roanoke City Tax Parcel #7160119 is zoned Commercial-General (conditional), is 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 will be home to the new Deschutes Brewery, and 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

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



Development Opportunity Property for Sale Located at 2903 Peters Creek Road, NW \$1,695,000



The City of Roanoke (owner) is accepting proposals for the purchase of three adjoining parcels located at 2903 Peters Creek Road, NW; Tax Map Numbers 6410104, 6410105 and 6410106. The combined acreage is approximately 11.8 acres, a portion of which is zoned Commercial Large Site (conditional) and the remaining portion is zoned Commercial General.

Conveniently located just minutes from Interstates I-581/220, and I-81, the site offers bi-directional access to Peters Creek Road, NW. Current traffic count is approximately 18,000 vehicles per day.

For complete property details please follow the link to the City of Roanoke's GIS system and use the Search/Query function by entering the following parcel ID Tax Numbers: 6410104, 6410105 and 6410106.

GIS link: <http://gisre.roanokeva.gov/>

How to Propose:

Proposals for the property must contain the following elements and be accompanied by the required signature form available on the Economic Development website under Available Properties, Peters Creek Road.

Proposals for the property must contain the following elements:

- Identification of the property and any adjacent property involved in your development
- Concept plan of the intended development including use, location and size of any buildings, number of units and a timeline for the completion of the project
- Description of the qualifications and experience of the proposer/developer
- Business Plan and Financial Plan for the project
- Offer amount for the property

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated for compatibility to the City of Roanoke's Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plan. The proposer will be contacted after sufficient time for staff review.

Please submit your written proposal to:
Rob Ledger, Manager, Department of Economic Development
117 Church Avenue, SW Roanoke, VA 24011

Or submit by email to: econdevl@roanokeva.gov

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

Business Opportunity - Historic Fire Station Number 1

Summary

The City of Roanoke (City) is considering long-term lease proposals for the revitalization and use of Historic Fire Station No. 1 located at 13 Church Avenue, S.E., Roanoke, Virginia. Although a long term lease is preferred, proposals to purchase the property will also be considered under certain circumstances that must include the conditions and covenants the proponent will impose to insure preservation and stewardship of Historic Fire Station No. 1. Due to the historic nature and unique features of Historic Fire Station No. 1, the City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Background

Completed in 1907, Historic Fire Station No. 1 served as one of the oldest fully-functioning firehouses within the Commonwealth of Virginia until it ceased regular Fire-EMS operations in 2007. Built in the Georgian Revival style, it continues to be a source of considerable civic pride and has played a valuable role in educating the public on the City's outstanding history of Fire and Emergency Management Services. Historic Fire Station No. 1 was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

Details

Historic Fire Station No. 1 is a two-story structure situated on a 0.2307 acre lot in the heart of the City's Central Business District. Immediately adjacent to the Historic City Market and the new Hampton Inn & Suites Hotel, the building contains 13,326 square feet of usable space and is within walking distance of over 60 restaurants, as well as several key Roanoke landmarks, including the Farmer's Market, Center in the Square and the Taubman Museum of Art. This property is currently zoned Downtown (D), which allows for a wide range of commercial and business use opportunities. This property is located within the H-1 Downtown Historic Overlay District, making any proposed changes to the exterior of the building subject to approval by the City of Roanoke's Architectural Review Board. A City-owned trash compactor occupies the southwestern corner of the property, which will not be included as part of any transaction.

Proposal Content

Please include the following in your proposal:

- A concept plan or complete description of proposed development that includes: intended use; historic preservation efforts; and an estimated timeline for completion (Note: Due to its location within the H-1 Downtown Historic Overlay District, proposed improvements to the exterior of the building must be limited to rehabilitation and upgrades. Significant alterations will not be permitted);
- Identification of any adjacent properties to be included in development of the project;
- A full description of efforts to preserve and maintain portions of the structure directly attributable to the City of Roanoke's Fire-EMS history and other efforts to celebrate and highlight the fire service history of the building;
- A detailed outline of the process for accommodating and cataloguing public feedback on proposed uses;
- A proposed property use actively open to the public;
- A description of developer's qualifications and related experience in renovation and revitalization of historic structures;
- A fully-developed Business Plan and a Financial Plan that outlines financing of proposed improvements;
- For Lease Proposals: A proposed term of lease and a proposed amount for lease payments. (Note: Virginia Law limits a lease of the property to a maximum term of 40 years);
- For Purchase Proposals: A specific purchase price and a detailed description of the covenants, restrictions, and other provisions the proponent will establish to insure the restoration and preservation of Historic Fire Station No.1.

Potential Incentives

This property is located within a Conservation District, a Historic District and Enterprise Zone. Enterprise Zone incentives may include the following:

- Façade Grants (to be limited to rehabilitation and/or upgrades to front exterior of building only)
- Fire, Water and Sewer Hookup Grants
- Building Permit and Comprehensive Development Review Fee Rebates
- Job Creation Grants
- Real Property Investment Grants

For complete details, please follow the link below to access the City of Roanoke's GIS system:

GIS Link: <http://gisre.roanokeva.gov/>

How to Submit Proposals

Deadline for Proposals: **February 1, 2017 at 2:00 PM (EST)**. Proposers must complete the proposal form found on the Economic Development website, www.bizroanoke.com.

Please submit your written proposal package to:

Marc Nelson, Special Projects Coordinator
Department of Economic Development
117 Church Avenue, S.W.
Roanoke, VA 24011

Or by email to: marc.nelson@roanokeva.gov. For more information, please contact Marc Nelson at the Department of Economic Development at (540) 853-2717 or the department's main line at (540) 853-2715.



Property features include:

- 0.2307 acre site;
- Tax Map Number 4011706;
- Lot size: 50x200 feet;
- Building size: 13,326 sf; and
- Zoned Downtown (D) & H-1

Located in the Historic Overlay District and has potential eligibility for Enterprise Zone Incentives.

