

BizNews

mar 2019



Grow with Google Comes to Roanoke!

Free Digital Training Offered at Roanoke's Main Library

Google recently announced that it is coming to Roanoke as part of its *Grow with Google* initiative to help create economic opportunity in communities across the United States. Google will kick-start this work locally by hosting a free, one-day event on March 4 at Roanoke's Main Library located at 706 South Jefferson Street from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The event is designed to help job seekers, small business owners, students, educators, and entrepreneurs improve their digital skills. Attendees are welcome to drop in for a few sessions or stay all day.



"The vision of the Roanoke Public Libraries is to create services that 'Engage, Educate and Empower' citizens," said Library Director Sheila S. Umberger. "Every day, we work to support small business development, job searches, and technology skills. Through *Grow with Google*, the Roanoke community will be able to attend free workshops to strengthen important digital skills."

Google launched *Grow with Google* in 2017 with the goal of helping all Americans access the best of Google's training and tools to grow their skills, careers, and businesses. It aims to help address the skills gap by preparing Americans for middle-skill jobs; positions that require some skills, but not four-year degrees. According to the National Middle Skills Initiative, middle-skill jobs account for 49 percent of Virginia's labor force.

The American Library Association reports that nearly three-quarters of public libraries assist their patrons with job applications and interviewing skills, 90 percent help their patrons learn basic digital skills, and just under half provide access and assistance to entrepreneurs looking to start a business of their own. "Because of this trend, hosting *Grow with Google* training at the Roanoke Public Libraries is a natural fit. We look forward to partnering with Google now and in the future to help strengthen the Roanoke community and economy," said Sheila S. Umberger.

Grow with Google plans to visit libraries in every state, partnering with them to deliver digital skills training directly to job seekers and small businesses in their community. The tour will also visit two other Virginia communities, Herndon and Richmond.

To learn more about the free event and to register, visit g.co/GrowVirginia. Space will be limited, so please register in advance. To contact Roanoke Public Libraries Director Sheila Umberger, call 540-853-2476 or send an email to sheila.umberger@roanokeva.gov.

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American Electric Power Foundation awards \$100,000 grant to Virginia Western's Community College Access Program



From Left): Larry Jackson, Appalachian Power external affairs director for Virginia; Dr. Robert H. Sandel, President of Virginia Western Community College; and Brad N. Hall, vice president of external affairs for Appalachian Power.

The American Electric Power Foundation has awarded a \$100,000 grant to support Virginia Western's Community College Access Program (CCAP), a nationally recognized effort that provides up to three years of tuition to qualified Roanoke Valley high school graduates.

Brad N. Hall, vice president of external affairs for Appalachian Power, said "AEP and Appalachian Power have a long relationship with Virginia Western Community College and share its dedication to help build a workforce capable of developing and supporting the necessary elements for a climate of growth in the Roanoke region. This \$100,000 gift from the AEP Foundation represents our commitment to Virginia Western and its vision for the people of the area through CCAP."

The Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation, a nonprofit organization that raises funds to support CCAP, scholarships and other College needs, is the recipient of the grant. The Educational Foundation aims to raise a total of \$6.5 million by 2021 from public and private sources as part of its CCAP2 Campaign. The first campaign to launch CCAP surpassed its \$5 million goal in 2015. Since its founding in 2008, CCAP has provided tuition support to more than 2,500 students. CCAP provides "last in" scholarship support, filling any tuition payment gaps after a qualified student has applied

for federal or state financial aid. The program funding is based on a 50/50 match: A locality pledges a specific dollar amount for its high school graduates in a given year; the Educational Foundation then raises a matching amount from private businesses, foundations, community groups and individuals.

"Virginia Western and Appalachian Power have been a long-time partners in moving the region forward. Their leadership support for CCAP will support student success while eliminating crippling student debt. We are honored and proud to work with the AEP Foundation to make a difference in our communities," said Dr. Robert H. Sandel, President of Virginia Western Community College.

"Through this gift from the AEP Foundation we are representing and honoring dozens of our own employees who are graduates of Virginia Western and have already proven to us the benefits of its educational opportunity here. We hope through this gift that we can help assure the on-going success of the Community College Access Program and its participants who will become leaders in the economic growth of this region," said Larry Jackson, Appalachian Power external affairs director for Virginia.

With the American Electric Power Foundation grant, the Educational Foundation has raised \$2,011,969 million of the \$3.25 million in private support it is seeking during the CCAP2 campaign. It will continue its ongoing partnerships with Roanoke Valley localities to raise the public portion of \$3.25 million over the next five years.

CCAP serves the entire Virginia Western Community College service region, including the counties of Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke and the cities of Roanoke and Salem. Participants are required to volunteer 4 hours of community-based service each semester. To date, they have given back 19,000 volunteer hours to area nonprofit organizations. CCAP also recently expanded to include tuition support for students seeking short-term, industry-recognized credentials in high-demand fields such as welding, mechatronics and pharmacy tech. The average incoming grade point average of CCAP participants is 3.3. More than 78% enroll at Virginia Western with the intention of transferring to a four-year institution.

In 2014, CCAP was named a finalist in the Community College Futures Assembly's Bellwether Awards, in recognition of its pioneering effort to strengthen the local workforce. The program has served as a model for similar programs, including New River Community College and Dabney Lancaster College.

For more information about Virginia Western's CCAP, contact Philanthropy Director Amanda Mansfield at amansfield@virginiawestern.edu or (540) 857-6962. Go online to learn more about CCAP2 at virginiawestern.edu/makecollegepossible.

HS&T fellows dive deep to learn how to commercialize ideas



Harshawardhan Deshpande, Daniel Hoagland, and Ryan King (seated from left) explored how to turn ideas into real-world innovations through the HS&T Commercialization Fellows Program. They presented their strategies to (standing, from left) Geoff McCarty, vice president of marketing at Carter Machinery; Hal Irvin, Virginia Tech associate vice president for health sciences and technology outreach; James Ramey, principal and fund manager at Middleland Capital and the VTC Innovation Fund; Ashu Jain, founder and principal of Blue Ridge Innovation Management Advisors; Mary Miller, director of the Regional Accelerator and Mentoring Program; and Russ Ellis, president at gNext Labs and president of Common Wealth Growth Group.

An idea can't survive in a vacuum, cut off from the rest of the world — just ask the inaugural trio of young scientists known as the Health Sciences and Technology Commercialization Fellows.

For more than eight months, Harshawardhan Deshpande, Daniel Hoagland, and Ryan King have been immersed in learning how to turn new ideas into real-world innovations.

Working in the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at VTC and in collaborative space provided by a partnership with Virginia Western Community College at the Gill Memorial Hospital building in downtown Roanoke — home of the Regional Acceleration and Mentoring Program (RAMP) — the entrepreneurs-in-training crashed through the boundaries of their academic routines.

They each found a mentor who was proficient at moving ideas from the proverbial drawing board to the marketplace.

And, along the way, the commercialization fellows arrived at some common conclusions — innovation is customer-driven, considerate of stakeholder needs, and reliant on different styles of thinking.

Deshpande, a graduate student in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Mechanics in the Virginia Tech College of Engineering, intended to use neuro-marketing technology to develop a novel approach to product packaging and advertising.

Meanwhile, Hoagland, who was mentored by Ashu Jain, founder and principal of Blue Ridge Innovation Management Advisors, was familiar with drug discovery work in an academic world, but thought commercialization could be an alternative path to get medicine and

Research in Roanoke ~ *continued from Page 3*

HS&T fellows dive deep to learn how to commercialize ideas

And King, a student in Virginia Tech's Translational Biology, Medicine and Health graduate program, reflected on his student experiences and thought there had to be a way to streamline the graduate application process to make it easier for students applying, as well as for the schools reviewing the applications.

"The most important thing I learned was how early you need to have customer input," said King, who worked with mentor Russ Ellis, president at gNext Labs and president of Common Wealth Growth Group. "I had an idea to create a platform to help late-stage graduate students match with postdoctoral advisers; however, as I started doing customer discovery I quickly realized the solution I had dreamed up was not suitable for either postdoc applicants nor their potential mentors. It taught me an immense amount about how important it is to involve all stakeholders early in the process."

The fellows universally learned to value outside input.

"Thinking about products as things that customers 'hire' to do a job and designing them accordingly is a concept I'm still getting used to, but is invaluable to start-up companies," said Deshpande, who was mentored by Geoff McCarty, vice president of marketing at Carter Machinery. "The customer-centered innovation approach as opposed to starting with an idea and trying to fit its applications to a market was a revelation."

The different thought process applied to drug discovery as well.

"I now have an appreciation for a completely different style of thinking," said Hoagland, a postdoctoral associate in the laboratory of Robert Gourdie, a professor at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute. "Rather than just crunching data and continuing to hone and develop ideas for the next question I want to ask, I have to stop and think about what stakeholders need to know. People who ultimately might fund further research may not be familiar with the technical aspects of my idea, but they are very familiar with risks and pitfalls associated with similar ideas."

The commercialization program was funded by Virginia Tech's Office of the Vice President for Health Sciences and Technology.

Deshpande, Hoagland, and King will talk about their experiences at a presentation at noon on Tuesday, Feb. 19, at the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute. The session will also provide an overview of the 2019 commercialization fellows program, which is accepting applications from graduate students and postdoctoral associates engaged in health sciences and technology study or research until 5 p.m. Feb. 25.

The fellows illustrate one of the ways the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute, which was recently named in honor of a gift from Heywood and Cynthia Fralin and the Horace G. Fralin Charitable Trust, and Virginia Western work together to create opportunities, officials said.

"This is a great example of a collaboration that addresses the region's workforce development priorities in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)," said Michael Friedlander, executive director of the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute and vice president for health sciences and technology at Virginia Tech. "By supporting one another, we can create a direct link between our research and graduate programs and the growth of STEM-related programming at Virginia Western."

Virginia Western is finishing construction of a new, \$30 million-plus STEM Building that is opening to students in Fall Semester 2019.

"When the new Virginia Western Fralin Scholars are awarded in 2019, funded through the Fralins' generous contributions, there will be a natural bridge between those talented STEM students and the graduate students at the research institute for enrichment opportunities," said Virginia Western President Robert Sandel. "Together, we have the potential to build a stronger pipeline of STEM-related graduates who can feed the employment needs for life and health science companies in our region."

Virginia Western and the Fralin Biomedical Research Institute have agreed to continue to work together to promote career-development opportunities for the benefit of students, faculty and staff on the Roanoke campuses of both institutions.

For more information visit <https://research.vtc.vt.edu> or contact John Pastor at jdpastor@vt.edu.

WILLIAMSON ROAD AREA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (WRABA) ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Williamson Road Area Business Association

You and WRABA, Partners for Progress!

The Williamson Road Area Business Association (WRABA) Board of Directors is pleased to announce the appointment of Valerie A. Brown as Executive Director, effective January 1, 2019.

“Valerie comes to WRABA with a wealth of experience working with and for people and organizations,” said Walter Vance, President of the Board of Directors. “She has a strong background in development and fundraising, having also worked in communications, marketing and community outreach. All of these factors make her extremely qualified for this position.”

“I am excited about this new opportunity,” said Brown. “I look forward to continuing to build on the work that has been successful in the past, as well as forging new contacts, members and events. Williamson Road has the opportunity to become ‘one of the best parts of Roanoke’ and I look forward to being part of that opportunity with the business owners.”

Brown, who holds two graduate degrees, has spent the majority of her career in fundraising and development where she has worked with non-profits of all sizes, as well as with businesses and organizations in support of those non-profits. She will be working with the WRABA Board to ensure that the mission of the organization is fulfilled through programs, strategic planning and community outreach.

When asked her priorities, Brown listed three: to be an advocate with and for WRABA’s business community with local government officials; to be responsible for the implementation of WRABA’s programs to carry out the organization’s mission; and to be responsible for the enhancement of WRABA’s image by being active and visible in the community and by working closely with other professional, civic and private organizations.



Brown further added that “she has an open-door policy” and “she answers her own phone.” The invitation for the Williamson Road neighborhood to visit and call is there. “No issues or concerns are too big or too small.”

WRABA held a Meet & Greet for Valerie on Thursday, February 21 at the historic 1947 Carlin’s Amoco which is located on Williamson Road and was restored by Berglund Automotive in 2012. The event was well attended by Roanoke City and County officials, business-leaders and the Williamson Road community.

Val Brown, WRABA Executive Director, addresses attendees at the February 21 Meet & Greet.

Downtown Roanoke Bookstore Expands to New Space



Roanoke Valley's only independent bookstore, Book No Further, will relocate to a larger store in March to better serve western Virginia residents and visitors to Roanoke. The new location is at 112 Market Street SE, a 1,200-square-foot space which will enable the store to increase inventory, add book and reading-related merchandise and hold author signings, writing classes and book club meetings on-site. An expanded children's area will include space for reading and activities.

The move comes after operating at 16 West Marketplace on Church Avenue since October 2017.

Store manager Doloris Vest describes the area as "literary rich." "We have dozens of nationally published local authors writing fiction, non-fiction, young adult and children's books." The success of the authors, such as Beth Macy, whose look at the opioid crisis, *Dopesick*, spent five weeks on the New York Times best seller list, has increased interest in stories about the region.

Vest added a recent study from the Pew Institute shows more than 75 percent of Americans have a read at least one book in the past year and that there is an increase in reading among millennials. "Three times as many people read print books as e-books and fewer still listen to audio books," she said.

Company CFO Craig Coker says the current location has allowed the company to establish the valley's support for an independent bookstore. "This move will allow us more growth in an industry that is resurging." Sales at independent bookstores were up 5 percent in 2018 over the previous year and the number of independent bookstores is up more than 40 percent since 2009.

The store will close at 16 West Marketplace on Church Avenue at the end of February and reopen on the city market March 5. Book No Further is the only independent bookstore to carry new books in the New River and Roanoke Valleys and features books about Western Virginia and books by area authors.

Featured BizLink

<https://ramprb.tech/cohort-application/>

RAMP is seeking Cohorts for 2019!

Application Deadline: MARCH 15

Program Features:

Dedicated coworking space and gigabit internet in downtown Roanoke for 6-12 months

\$20,000 in seed capital – 0% equity taken

3-month curriculum including an 8-week course taught by internationally recognized instructors

A dedicated mentor

Access to business leaders, lawyers, accountants, and marketing experts

Technology companies with a strong founding team of 2+ members and a minimum viable product are encouraged to apply. We recognize the technology sector is both broad and diverse and includes companies in advanced manufacturing, information technology, bio-sciences, as well as other technologies. We encourage applications from across the technology sectors.

Visit this Featured BizLink to learn more!





ROA Passenger Traffic Continues Growth in January

January traffic was up 11.5% year over year at the Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport as 2019 begins with strong traffic growth.

The Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport has started 2019 off with strong growth as January traffic was up 11.5% on a year over year basis. Compared to January 2018 passenger traffic grew at 11.5% or 5,118 passengers. In January of 2019, 49,464 passengers flew via ROA compared to 44,346 in January of 2018.

For the full year of 2018, 660,836 passengers flew via ROA compared to 616,365 in 2017 and 608,288 in 2016. 2018 was the busiest year at ROA since 2007. Strong community support, additional capacity, and improved airline operational reliability have all played roles in the continuation of sustained passenger growth, which began in September of 2016.

“We are pleased to see this positive trend continue into 2019, especially given our strong traffic numbers in 2017 and 2018,” stated Timothy T. Bradshaw, A.A.E., executive director of the Roanoke Regional Airport Commission. “Passenger demand is a critical factor when speaking with airlines regarding improving and increasing air service to our region. Our carriers have added capacity at ROA and our customers have utilized it. We appreciate the support of our community choosing to fly ROA. Carriers will not add service to a market if the current service is not being used.”

The Commission continually works with the airlines to improve reliability, reduce airfare and upgrade equipment serving the region. This has played a significant role in the increase of passengers using the airport. In addition, the commission has invested resources to promote the services available at ROA and sincerely thanks our customers for choosing to fly ROA.

The Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport is the primary airport for Virginia’s Blue Ridge. ROA serves over 650,000 passengers per year via 4 airlines (American Airlines, Delta Airlines, United Airlines, and Allegiant Air) with nonstop service to 6 hub cities (Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, New York LaGuardia, Philadelphia, and Washington Dulles) as well as weekly flights to Orlando Sanford International Airport and St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport.

To learn more, please visit www.flyroa.com.



What is Micromobility?

It's an exciting time in the transportation world. Recent news has been made with remarkable new automobile technologies, from efforts to make the all-electric Tesla more affordable, to whiz-bang stories about driverless cars and self-driving tractor trailers.

And while there are big changes afoot, there might be even bigger changes underfoot via the rapid growth of micromobility. Micromobility describes the growing range of tools and technologies that help enable shorter, carless trips – from tried-and-true solutions like Roanoke's Zagster bikeshare system, to up-and-coming devices like e-scooters. Micromobility devices and systems are being developed, tested, and deployed rapidly, creating both opportunities, and sometimes headaches, for the communities in which they are operated.

Whereas automated vehicles and electric cars still require big infrastructure to operate, micromobility takes advantage of dense urban and neighborhood-center design to move people at a human scale, generally within existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The major benefit of such systems is that they make it easy to travel short distances without a car, distances that are inconvenient for walking but if driven generate short automobile trips that can cause traffic, emissions, and parking problems. Most micromobility solutions are intended to replace automobile trips of five miles or less.

Currently, the most common micromobility solutions you are likely to encounter are:

- The good-old bicycle: Whether you're riding your personal bicycle or using a bikeshare system, the bicycle remains the most common form of micromobility when used for transportation. In the Roanoke Valley, the growth of on-road bicycle facilities and greenway expansion has caused a boom in bicycle commuting and other practical uses.
- Electric bicycles: Electric bicycles can fall into one of a number of categories depending on top-speed, motor power, etc., but in general they all look like a traditional bicycle but have an electric motor capable of fully powering the bicycle, or assisting the rider with additional motive power when tackling hills or long distances. In the latter case, such vehicles are often called pedal-assist bicycles. Electric bicycles are becoming more common in the valley, with some bike shops able to retrofit existing bikes with electric engines. Roanoke City's Handsmith Bicycles can rent electric bikes for those who are interested in trying them out.
- E-scooters: You've mostly likely read about e-scooters in the news in the last few months, and most likely not in a flattering light. E-scooters are dockless, two-wheeled vehicles that, unlike most electric bicycles, don't actually require human power to run. Management systems vary, but generally scooters are reclaimed every night and recharged, then put back on the streets in designated locations the next day.

The biggest change new micromobility solutions have introduced to communities are dockless systems. Unlike traditional, station-based bikeshare that operates with the predictability of transit, many new electric bike and e-scooter systems are dockless, meaning once you're done with your ride you leave the vehicle where your trip ended, making it available for anyone else to check out. Dockless systems have challenges balancing the convenience of ending your trip anywhere you want against safe and equitable use of public space, but many cities are beginning to work out the kinks.

What does micromobility hold in store for the Roanoke Valley? It's hard to tell, but the success of our Zagster bike-share system and an ever-increasing emphasis on, and participation in, an outdoor lifestyle focused on getting outside and enjoying the valley's natural beauty, suggests that we're likely to see experiments with pedal-assist bikes and scooters on our streets in the very near future.

To learn more about Ride Solutions, visit the following:
Bikeshare by RIDE Solutions: zagster.com/ridesolutions
Facebook: [facebook.com/ridesolutions](https://www.facebook.com/ridesolutions)
Twitter: @ridesolutions
Instagram: @ridesolutionsva





Initiative Continues to Increase Marathon Visitors and Economic Impact



For the second straight year, Blue Ridge Racing and Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge have teamed-up to challenge runners with an added incentive to complete the area's three most popular half marathons to earn the 2019 Virginia's Blue Ridge Triple Crown finisher's medal.

To qualify runners must complete the following in 2019:

- Blue Ridge Full Marathon or Half Marathon (April 13)
- Salem Half Marathon (October 12)
- Star City Half Marathon (November 23)

"The growth in popularity of Virginia's Blue Ridge as an attractive place to visit, live and run contributed to establishing the Triple Crown. Last year's stats indicated 20% of the medal recipients were from outside of the local area. We are confident this will draw more interest and more runners again this year," said Molly Bullington, owner of Blue Ridge Racing, LLC and race director of the Blue Ridge Marathon and the Salem Half Marathon.

"Since the establishment of VBR Sports, a division of Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge in 2018, initiatives such as this have been increasing the economic impact to the region and enticing visitors to discover more diverse sports and activities. Our goal is to increase awareness and return visits to Virginia's Blue Ridge," said Bree Nidds, Director of Sports Development for Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge.

This year's Triple Crown medal features three concentric stars that spin on their central axis. The stars bear a resemblance to the Roanoke Star on Mill Mountain, a landmark included along the Blue Ridge Full and Half Marathon race course. More details about the Triple Crown can be found at www.blueridgeracing.net.

If you have questions, please call the following for additional information:

Molly Bullington, Owner
Blue Ridge Racing, LLC
(540) 798-8495
molly@blueridgeracing.net

Catherine Fox, VP of Public Affairs & Development
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge
(540) 494-0514
cfox@visiitvbr.com



Things are Looking Rather Green

Things at the CoLab are looking decidedly green at Colab, but it doesn't have anything to do with St. Patrick's Day. We have seen a growth in the number of green businesses and non-profits in our space and are quite excited about it.

This growth is really indicative of larger trends in our national and global economies. Throughout time, there have been trends that savvy business people can take advantage of. Today is no different. We have seen a proliferation of green businesses across the country as the population becomes more aware of the impact people are having on the planet.

Roanoke is no different. Whether you are looking to have solar panels put on your home or looking to start a corporate recycling program, people are stepping up to the plate. Not only is this true, but they are finding creative ways to make money, leverage the resources available and create change. Unsurprisingly, these businesses are amongst the fastest growing companies we have at the CoLab.

This all equates to more jobs. We've had these companies ask for assistance hiring both white and blue collar employees from the area. These are really good jobs that touch on a variety of skill sets from marketing and administration to construction and agriculture. In the end, this winds up being a boon for the area as a whole.

Further, it feeds directly into how we are branding ourselves as a region. We are more and more an outdoors destination for companies and individuals who cherish the outdoors and love to see other companies around helping protect it. Furthermore, they are more likely to contract with green partners and volunteer with environmental non-profits. All of this leads to a cycle of appreciation for our natural world and a desire to protect it which benefits even those that don't like to go hiking.

It has been exciting to see how this bigger trend is manifesting in Roanoke. Our great small city is only getting better due to the work of these forward thinking entrepreneurs and changemakers. We are looking forward to seeing what comes next!

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



Spotlight on Business ~

Retro Getgo

Jason Hoffheins, owner of RetroGetgo tells his story in this month's Spotlight on Business:

I had been buying vintage stuff for myself for a long time. But after moving home from Nashville, TN in early 2007, I really started indulging my habit. The focus expanded from just men's clothing and records, to women's stuff, home decor, hi-fi equipment, and whatever else caught my eye. Within a year I was already over run with treasures, but really had no outlet for them. After much procrastination (and lots more buying), I opened an Etsy shop in 2013.

Most of the collection at RetroGetgo comes from Central Pennsylvania, where I was born and raised. There is also quite a bit from Western Ohio, where I spent a year before moving to Virginia. I had always wondered what it would be like to have a brick and mortar store. Thanks to Garland Properties, I'm finally getting the chance to find out. After years of hauling carloads of clothing and records to shows in PA, VA, MI, OH, IN, NY, and all the way down to Austin, TX, it's nice to have it all set up in one place. The dedication the folks at Garland have for saving old buildings fits perfectly with my desire to find new life for these old treasures. And, I couldn't be more proud to be a part of the much needed rejuvenation of a really great and deserving neighborhood.

I realize that vintage stuff isn't for everyone. But the one thing I find myself emphasizing most to customers is the quality of these items. I have clothing in my shop that is 50 years old, and it looks brand new. If you buy a dress at the mall, you're lucky if it lasts 5 months, let alone years. My goal is to offer one of a kind pieces, in excellent condition, for prices affordable relative to buying new items of the same quality.

My focus is real life, day-to-day wear that is comfortable and easily styled with more modern things. I do have a few very high end, designer pieces and always try to get them when I can, but I really want functional, multi-purpose clothing and accessories for real people.



If you absolutely just do not dig the clothes at RetroGetgo, there are still books, records, beautifully framed artwork, small furniture and furnishings, and all kinds of random trinkets. You really never know what's gonna show up!

There is so much great new stuff happening in Wasena in the coming months, and I hope you'll stop in and say hello.

RetroGetgo is located at 1107 Main Street, SW in Roanoke. The phone number is 540.416.9822. You can visit www.retrogetgo.com, or find me on Etsy, Facebook, and Instagram.



~Business Bits ~ “To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace.”

Doug Conant, CEO of Campbell’s Soup



How would employees at your business answer the following? On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being extremely untransparent (I never know what’s going on) to 10 being extremely transparent (I am always in the loop) rate how transparent you feel your management is.

Transparency is one of the factors consistently cited for employee satisfaction. The more transparent employees feel the management is, the more satisfied they are with their jobs. This is an area that is very easy to improve with just a little reflection and effort. Here are some small things you can do to make a big difference in employee satisfaction, no matter what level you are within the company.

1. Explain your decisions. Invite involvement and ask for feedback. That doesn’t mean that you have to waiver in your decision, but allowing employees some input validates them and you never know, someone might come up with something powerful that never would have occurred to you.
2. Make yourself available. You can’t be transparent if you are behind a closed office door. Management by walking around is a solid technique. If you make this a regular effort – and schedule it on your calendar – you will be amazed at the information you’ll gain.
3. Respond in a positive way to honesty. If a co-worker or direct report shares a truth that you don’t necessary welcome, thank them. You want to keep the open communication open.
4. Prepare managers to answer tough questions. If you are in the position where the company is cutting back in some way, there are inevitable questions. Managers need to know ahead of time how to answer so they don’t have to say they don’t know or that it came from higher up. In a transparent company there is no reason to hide financial realities, but that doesn’t mean that the managers will instinctively know the best way to phrase the answers.
5. Keep people posted. As things change, let people know. Disseminate positive developments as quickly as negative developments.
6. Know where to draw the line. Transparency is not about knowing everybody’s business. It’s about making sure everyone has the information they need to do their job effectively. If you are left wondering what you should and shouldn’t share, ask your boss.

How much does increasing transparency cost?
Precious little. It’s one of the few employee initiatives costing practically zero.

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

Grow with Google

Free Digital Training Classes
for our community



SAVE THE DATE!

Monday

March 4

10:30 am - 5:30 pm

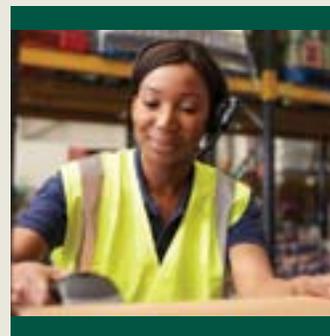
Roanoke Main Library

To learn more or register, visit

g.co/GrowVirginia.

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 Chesapeakeesc.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



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>





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 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
(540) 857-5858 or tsturner@rev.net

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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.