

April 11, 2018



A Bi-weekly Update from the National Association of Counties and the National Association of Development Organizations



Welcome to the latest issue “**Growing Stronger Economies in Our Nation’s Coal Communities.**” This curated bi-weekly newsletter is a joint resource from the [National Association of Counties \(NACo\)](#) and the [National Association of Development Organizations \(NADO\) Research Foundation](#). NACo and NADO are collaborating on a POWER technical assistance grant generously provided by the [U.S. Economic Development Administration’s Denver Regional Office](#). The newsletter provides a national perspective on diversification efforts in coal communities, resources and funding opportunities, and upcoming events and trainings to support your work in a variety of areas to improve economic development, infrastructure, and quality of life in your region. It is delivered every other Wednesday.

Content Wanted! Have a news story or event that you would like featured in our newsletter? Send an e-mail to Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org. We welcome your feedback on content and ideas and encourage you to share this newsletter with your colleagues and partners. Thanks for reading!

Economic Diversification News

- **Three laws recently passed in Colorado will create new opportunities for funding rural broadband infrastructure throughout the state**, reports *StateScoop*. From the article: "Gov. John Hickenlooper signed three bills...that will rearrange the funding mechanisms for state investment in rural broadband, potentially bringing an unprecedented \$150 million in new funding to the effort and roll back a rule that localities have said gives incumbent service providers an unfair advantage." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- The East Kentucky Advanced Manufacturing Institute opened in February in Paintsville and is **providing training in Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining**, reports *Modern Machine Shop*. From the article: "[S]tudents beg[*i*]n their curriculum with classroom instruction. After learning the fundamentals of machining, they receive basic experience on a manual machine center before moving to CNC vertical machine centers (VMCs) and ending with CNC turning centers." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- **Wyoming's statewide economic diversification initiative, ENDOW, has identified maintaining reliable air service as one of its key priorities** and the state department of transportation has offered a plan to do so, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. From the article: "The plan is to use a so-called "capacity purchase agreement" to ensure reliable, convenient, and affordable air service across Wyoming...Under the WYDOT plan, the State of Wyoming would assume the role of carrier, negotiating a contract for a provider to offer certain flights, at certain times, to and from certain cities and at prices dictated by the state." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- The Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center in Bridgeport, West Virginia **trains students in a variety of technical areas and seeks to engage with displaced coal workers**, reports *WV News*. From the article: "Ralph Workman, director of the Robert C. Byrd Institute aerospace program, said they will be working to build upon their already robust partnerships to develop and sustain a proof-of-concept center in an area that's prepared for it. "From a training standpoint, we want to take the local workforce and create synergy with" the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center, he said. "We would like to get displaced coal miners or current clients and get them involved with a four- or five-week course...to get them familiar with machinist training."" Click [here](#) to read the article.
- **A recent event in Billings, Montana explored the future of the coal industry in the state**, reports the *Billings Gazette*. From the article: "The majority of 15 panelists discussing coal's future throughout the day were amenable to pursuing technology to capture coal pollution, though some said the United States lacked the political will to attempt saving the coal industry, either by aggressively pursuing technology or supporting subsidies. And there was the issue of whether the bill for clean coal technology would jack up the price of coal power, which is already being undercut by natural gas and renewable energy." Click [here](#) to read the article.

- As energy prices rise in parts of Appalachia, **K-12 students in Kentucky are undertaking projects to embrace renewable energy and promote energy conservation at their schools**, reports the *Allegheny Front*. From the article: “[Students at Arlie Boggs Elementary] were able to work with a former student, who had recently launched Bluegrass Solar, a solar installation company based in Letcher County. The three solar panels that sit on the school’s roof are used mainly to charge the classroom laptops, which Boggs said has reduced the school’s energy costs by about \$600 each year. The school district shares some of those savings with the school as an incentive for energy conservation.” Click [here](#) to read the article.

Funding Opportunities and Resources

- The [U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development](#) (USDA-RD) is accepting applications for Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvement projects. The projects help **agriculture producers and small businesses lower their energy costs and use through renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements**. The deadline to apply for grants is **April 30**; loan applications are accepted throughout the year. More information is available [here](#).
- The Department of Labor’s [Employment and Training Administration](#) (ETA) has opened **applications to fund research of workforce program management and effectiveness**. The Reentry Projects initiative supports assessment of workforce programs and development of models supporting employment outcomes for targeted populations, including adult and youth. ETA is especially interested in supporting apprenticeship models. Awards are approved at up to \$4.5 million per project. Proposals are due **May 4**. The Funding Opportunity Announcement is available [here](#).
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s [Agricultural Marketing Service](#) has **opened applications for the Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)**. FMPP supports production and marketing of local and regional agricultural products. Eligible applicants include agricultural businesses and cooperatives, economic development corporations, nonprofits, and regional farmers market authorities. Applications are due **May 7**. Click [here](#) for more details.
- The [Employment and Training Administration](#) (ETA) is accepting applications to the National Health Emergency (NHE) Dislocated Worker Demonstration Grant Program. Grants are available for **projects to retrain workers in communities impacted by widespread opioid use, addiction, and overdose**. The agency expects to award seven to ten demonstration projects between \$500,000 to \$5 million each. The March 20 Training and Employment Guidance Letter provides further details – click [here](#) for the letter.
- The [Rockefeller Foundation](#) and [Chan Zuckerberg Initiative](#) have announced new funding through the [Communities Thrive Challenge](#). The purpose of this challenge is to **fund and help to strengthen and scale community-driven approaches that enable low-income or otherwise financially insecure people find and retain well-paid and meaningful work, achieve financial security, or build economically vibrant neighborhoods**. This might include nonprofit programs; businesses,

organizing or advocacy models; technologies; economic development strategies, or other approaches that deliver significant and consistent results in any of the following areas. Register by **June 12** and apply by **June 19**. Click [here](#) to learn more.

- The [Charles A. Frueauff Foundation](#) offers **funding for projects in the areas of education, human services, and health**. Funding is available to support specific initiatives in economic development, health education, and healthcare facilities. Applications are due **July 1**. More information on application guidelines, eligibility, and previously-awarded projects is available [here](#).
- [Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation](#) (RURAL LISC) provides **loan funding for improvements to rural community facilities through its Growing Rural Communities Fund**. The Fund offers low-interest loans to eligible public facilities including health care centers and educational facilities in communities under 20,000 population. More information is available [here](#).
- The [Walmart Community Foundation](#) is accepting applications to its Community Grant Program. The Foundation awards grants to nonprofits and agencies **involved in community and economic development, public safety, and environmental sustainability**. Awards range between \$250 to \$5,000. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. More information can be found [here](#).

Events and Trainings

- Registration is open for [“Strengthening Economies in Montana: A Forum for Coal Reliant Communities”](#) to be held in **Billings, MT** on **April 18 and 19** and hosted by NACo and the NADO Research Foundation. This **free convening will bring together stakeholders from the public and private sectors for an educational and interactive gathering to share best practices, lessons learned, and new opportunities to support economic diversification**. Prepare for a mix of interactive sessions and small group discussions designed to deepen and foster new partnerships aimed at promoting innovation and prosperity throughout Montana and the Western regions. Click [here](#) to learn more and register. Contact Jack Morgan at jmorgan@naco.org with any questions.
- Two webinars are available on the rules and application requirements for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [Distance Learning and Telemedicine](#) (DLT) Grant Program. USDA staff will **discuss how to develop and submit a successful application to the DLT program**. The webinars are scheduled for **April 19 from 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. ET** and **April 25 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET**. Click [here](#) to register for the April 19 webinar; registration for the April 25 webinar is available [here](#). The Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA) was published on April 3 and can be found [here](#). Applications are due **June 4**.

- The [Appalachian Funders Network](#) is hosting its **annual meeting “Strong Roots, New Branches: Transition in Action” in Pikeville, Kentucky on April 24 – 26**. This annual meeting is a space for learning and analysis, where members build trust and relationships, expand their connections, develop lasting partnerships, and align their investment strategies to accelerate large scale change across Central Appalachia. Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.
- The [Administration for Community Living](#) (ACL) is **celebrating Older Americans Month in May**. ACL has many materials and resources to help your agency promote this year’s theme, *Engage at Every Age*. Click [here](#) to access activities, resources, and materials.

A Dose of Inspiration

- A short video highlights an American-German **peer exchange visit to German coal communities that have reinvented their economies through manufacturing, technology, and tourism/recreation**. “These are people who are very, very proud of their coal heritage similar to what we see back home in Central Appalachia...They are using their heritage and history as an asset to build culture in a place so that they can remember where they came from, but also look forward to building the community they want to see in the future,” says Eric Dixon of the Appalachian Law Center who participated in the peer exchange. Click [here](#) to watch the video via YouTube.

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