

August 29, 2018



Welcome to the latest issue of “**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](#). This 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

- **Wyoming has released its 20-year economic diversification strategy** following a year and a half of meetings and outreach through the ENDOW initiative, reports *Wyoming Public Media*. From the article: "The document outlines more than 50 different actions the state government and private industries could take that would grow and attract businesses and keep young people in Wyoming. Some recommendations include appointing a Chief Economic Diversification Officer, creating business development zones, and growing the University of Wyoming's footprint." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Marissa, Illinois, a coal town of 1,800 people, is exploring the **opportunity to develop a solar farm for the community that would provide electricity for a host of municipal buildings and infrastructure**, reports the *Belleville News-Democrat*. From the article: "Plans call for construction of two solar farms, one 5 acres and one 11 acres, on village property on the west edge of town. Officials expect them to eventually provide all the electricity for the wastewater-treatment plant and most of it for other village buildings, saving thousands of dollars a year. Officials also hope residents of Marissa's 818 homes will consider buying electricity generated by the solar farms, becoming part of a solar boom in Illinois and possibly saving money on utility bills." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- **The Navajo Nation has been severely impacted by coal-fired power plant closures or planned closures in Arizona and New Mexico, leading to a variety of efforts to support retraining and workforce development**, reports the *Albuquerque Journal*. From the article: "The tribe is also working with public and private partners to diversify the regional economy. The Four Corners Economic Development organization, for example, is coordinating a collaborative effort to promote other industries, including tourism, agriculture, food processing, and alternative energy businesses, and to retrain workers for those sectors... [Electricity provider] PNM is actively supporting those efforts. It launched its workforce training program in 2013, when it first began planning to close two of San Juan's generating units, said Ron Darnell, senior vice president for public policy. It has provided \$200,000 a year for scholarships, or \$1 million to date. Click [here](#) to read the article.
- **The West Virginia Agriculture Advisory Board has announced it will undertake a five-year strategic plan for agriculture**, reports *West Virginia Explorer*. From the article: "A statewide survey, as well as market analysis, will be conducted to address the challenges and opportunities facing the industry... "We know that agriculture has the potential to be a significant economic driver for our state," [said Dean of WVU Extension Service Steve Bonanno]. "We have resources to significantly change farming and agriculture in our state, but those resources have not been put to good use. Our partners want to work together to see our farming and agricultural resources become a major economic engine for West Virginia. The feedback we receive from our agribusiness owners and others via this survey will be key in developing this long-term strategy." Click [here](#) to read the article.

- The *Craig Press* reports on how Severson Supply & Rental Company, **a local Craig, CO business, is diversifying its services and offerings to meet a changing market.** From the article: "Severson offers a variety of tools, parts, and accessories, from brooms for local street sweepers to the buckets, teeth, and belting required to run many of the draglines in the area. Its clientele is just as varied, ranging from firefighters renting lighting equipment to residents in need of mini excavators for home projects. Due to diversification efforts in the past decade, the general manager of Severson Supply and Rental Company can confidently say the business is not solely based on the energy economy. "If the coal mines shut down tomorrow, it would hurt, but we'll survive," [General Manager Todd Jourgensen] said." Click [here](#) to read the article.

Funding Opportunities and Resources

- The [TD Charitable Foundation](#) is providing funding to support programs aimed at **enhancing accessible housing options across various groups and populations.** The program, Housing for Everyone, funds education and assistance for people seeking both transitional and permanent housing based upon their conditions and needs. Twenty-five grants of \$125,000 are available. The deadline to apply is **August 31**. Eligible entities must be in specific states served by TD Bank. More information can be found [here](#).
- The [U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration \(ETA\)](#) has announced the **availability of up to \$100 million for Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grants to provide training and career services to dislocated workers affected by major economic dislocations.** These grants will provide funding to states, outlying areas, eligible tribal governments, and other entities to address one or more of the following events: the economic and workforce impacts associated with job loss or employer/industrial reorganization due to trade or automation; the loss, significant decline, or major structural change/reorganization of a primary or legacy industry; and/or other economic transition or stagnation that may disproportionately impact mature workers, putting them at risk for extended unemployment, lower wages, and underemployment. Click [here](#) for more information and to apply by **September 7**.
- The Foundation for Rural Service is accepting **grant applications from rural communities to support business and community development, education, and telecommunications.** Priority is given to projects in broadband development. The deadline to apply is **September 15**. Program guidelines and instructions to apply are available [here](#).
- The [U.S. Department of Labor](#) (DOL) **has announced the availability of \$85 million for YouthBuild programs.** YouthBuild is a pre-apprenticeship initiative supporting at-risk youth ages 16-24 through education and skill development opportunities for in-demand jobs. Funding is provided to expand public- and nonprofit-sponsored YouthBuild programs with 85 awards anticipated throughout the country. Awards will be granted from \$700,000 to \$1.1 million with a 25 percent match requirement. Grant recipients with FY2017 funding are not eligible to apply. Applications are due **September 18**. Click [here](#) for the funding notice.

- Does your town or city have an underused public space that would be ideal for outdoor concerts? The [Levitt Foundation](#) is now accepting applications for the Levitt AMP [Your City] grant program through **September 25**. Each year, the Levitt Foundation awards \$25K matching grants to up to 15 U.S.-based nonprofits serving small to mid-sized towns and cities to present the Levitt AMP Music Series, **10 free concerts that inject new life into public spaces and create vibrant community destinations**. Click [here](#) for more information and to apply.
- The [U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development](#) (USDA-RD) is **seeking applicants for priority points consideration under the Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) program**. To receive priority points, applicants submit proposals which detail projects supporting regional economic development plans in rural areas. If selected, points will be awarded to listed projects and recognized by USDA for Rural Development funding. Applications are due **September 30**. Click [here](#) for more information.
- The [U.S. Department of Labor](#) (DOL) has issued a notice on a sector-based apprenticeship program. The **program, Scaling Apprenticeship through Sector-Based Strategies, aims to increase apprenticeship opportunities in new industry sectors**. DOL will award \$150 million towards 15 to 30 apprenticeship programs. The agency will prioritize applicants that seek to expand apprenticeships within industries with few available learning opportunities and apprenticeships for small to medium-sized businesses. Proposals are due **October 16**. Click [here](#) for the funding notice.
- The [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy](#) has released two new reports this summer that explore **how energy efficiency programs can support economic and workforce development and can help rural residents save money on their energy bills**. To read “The High Cost of Energy in Rural America: Household Energy Burdens and Opportunities for Energy Efficiency,” click [here](#). To read “Through the Government Lens: Developing the Energy Efficiency Workforce,” click [here](#).
- The [Center for Community Progress](#) has released a new report, “Creative Placemaking on Vacant Properties: Lessons Learned from Four Cities.” This report **offers practical guidance for communities curious about how to leverage the power of creative placemaking to transform vacant properties**. It includes a creative placemaking primer and key takeaways based on work conducted over the course of two years. It also explores emerging practices in four communities: Kalamazoo, Michigan; Wilksburg, Pennsylvania; Newburgh, New York; and Macon, Georgia. Click [here](#) to read the report.

Events and Trainings

- Registration is open for [“Strengthening Economies in Colorado: A Forum for Coal Reliant Communities”](#) scheduled for **September 19 and 20 in Delta, CO** and hosted by NACo and the NADO Research Foundation with the support of U.S. EDA. 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 Colorado and the Western regions. Click [here](#) to view the draft agenda and register.
- [SOAR Summit 18](#) is scheduled for **August 30-31** at the East Kentucky Expo Center in Pikeville. This year’s summit is a **convening of organizations, businesses, and individuals who represent the best of Appalachia Kentucky**. This year’s Summit will feature inspiring keynote speakers who promote innovation and collaboration, economic and community development, and the alignment of the region’s work with the [Blueprint for a 21st Century Appalachia](#), a visionary plan for Appalachia Kentucky that was created through the input of thousands of people from across the region. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.
- The [Appalachian Regional Commission’s Annual Summit](#) is scheduled for **September 12 – 14** in Tupelo, Mississippi. The program will **highlight best practices, emerging ideas, and lasting strategies for economic development across Appalachia**. It will also cover hot topics in the Region such as capital access, the opioid crisis, and land reclamation. Plus, new to this year’s agenda are focused technical assistance offerings – including skill building workshops and strategy labs with ARC experts. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.
- The [Center for Creative Land Recycling](#) is hosting the National Brownfields Leadership Summit in **Washington, DC on September 25 and 26**. This event will bring together top leaders from across the redevelopment industry with key decision makers to discuss **the latest in redevelopment policies, programs, and funding opportunities**. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.
- [AARP’s](#) 2018 Livable Communities National Conference is scheduled for **November 12 – 14 in Charlotte, NC**. Join hundreds of elected officials, planning professionals, local leaders, and community advocates from throughout the nation to **learn from livability experts, connect with peers who are driving community change, and visit innovative projects and programs in and around Charlotte**. This conference is for anyone who is committed to making their state, county, city, town, or neighborhood a great place for people of all ages during all life's stages. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.

- The [National Summit for Gateway Communities](#) will celebrate the role of gateway communities in the stewardship of America's public lands and identify opportunities to help them thrive. It will bring together **gateway communities, their partners, and experts from conservation, community and economic development, recreation and tourism, planning, and other creative fields to highlight success stories and lessons learned** while engaging in robust discussions that lead to specific actions for invigorating the future of gateway and rural communities. The summit will take place on **December 11-13, 2018**, at the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. Click [here](#) to learn more and to register.

A Dose of Inspiration

- *University of Kentucky News* profiles Sky and Geoff Marietta who **relocated to Harlan, KY to raise their family after earning their PhDs at Harvard and spending ten years in Cambridge**. From the video: "I'm glad that we are raising our children [here], that they are getting that connection to place...and getting to see all kinds of diverse human experiences, experiences of caring where people come together. How often can you say my toddler went out and hunted morel mushrooms in the mountains with his friends to eat for supper?" Click [here](#) to watch the video.

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This newsletter is made possible with the support of a [US Economic Development Administration – Denver Regional Office POWER grant to the National Association of Counties](#) and the [National Association of Development Organizations Research Foundation](#). The views and opinions expressed by other organizations or outside publications referenced in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of NACo, NADO RF, or EDA.