

May 9, 2018



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

- *West Virginia Public Broadcasting* covers the experiences of two participants in an innovative job-training program and their desire to stay in West Virginia. From the article: “Both Crystal [Snyder] and Colt [Brogan] have spent the past 2 ½ years as farming apprentices with Refresh Appalachia, a job-training program with the nonprofit Coalfield Development Corporation, based in southern West Virginia. The organization’s **five apprenticeship programs teach skills like carpentry and solar panel installation, and participants can work toward their associate’s degree at a community college.**” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Efforts are underway in **Wyoming to boost the number of residents with college degrees or certificates**, reports the *Laramie Boomerang*. From the article: “State and higher education leaders are embarking on the ambitious task of raising the percentage of Wyoming adults younger than 65 with college certificates or degrees by roughly 1.5 percentage points per year until 2040.” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Coal communities in Eastern Kentucky are **embracing music, theatre, and distance running events to diversify the local and regional economy**, reports *Yes! Magazine*. From the article: “[In Stearns] about 100 people signed up [in 2015] for 10K and 50K runs. By 2017, that number had grown to 650 runners...For the 2017 race, the Kentucky Department of Adventure Tourism calculated the uptick in tourism revenue the race brought to Stearns was \$150,000 for one weekend.” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- *KCPW's The Bottom Line* radio program featured a discussion about **economic diversification in Utah’s rural communities**, in particular Carbon, Emery, Uintah, and Duchesne counties. Click [here](#) to listen (original air date, May 2017).
- Gerry Roll, executive director of the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, writes in the *Lexington Herald-Leader* about the **value of philanthropy in leveraging funds to support community development in rural places**. From the article: “Recent research from the National Center for Responsive Philanthropy shows that only 6 percent of grants from foundations in the U.S. goes to rural places. National foundations spend \$4,000 per capita annually in places like New York and San Francisco. In Appalachia, that number goes down to \$12 per capita annually. Last year, our foundation distributed \$3.4 million across southeastern Kentucky. We didn’t do it because we have a lot of financial resources. We did it because we have a lot of grit.” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Workshops and webinars are **assisting retiring ranchers and farmers with succession planning**, a critical issue in many rural communities given the fact that their average age in the United States is 58 years old, reports *NPR*. From the article: “In a recent online class at the University of Wyoming, farm and ranch specialist John Hewlett coached ranchers with the same kind of advice a lot of estate planners would give: Sit down with your family and talk about it. Do it now, step by step,

so you don't have to worry about it later. Make sure everyone gets input. The goal in this case is to pass down the ranch to people who want it, so a tax burden doesn't force a sale and literally change the landscape." Click [here](#) to read the article.

Funding Opportunities and Resources

- The [National Association of Counties](#) and the [NADO Research Foundation](#) hosted the **"Strengthening Economies in Montana: A Forum for Coal-Reliant Communities" on April 18 and 19 at the Billings Food Bank facility in Billings, Montana**, with the support of the U.S. Economic Development Administration-Denver Regional Office. This educational and interactive forum was designed to convene and assist counties and regions in Montana experiencing economic and other community challenges due to changing conditions of the coal industry. During the event, plenary sessions, small group discussions, and mobile tours covered a variety of topics including strategic partnerships; entrepreneurship; technology and e-commerce; downtown revitalization; and education and workforce development. Click [here](#) to access presentation materials and other resources from the forum.
- The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) [Office of Community Services](#) (OSC) is **accepting applications to the Community Economic Development grant program**. Funding is provided for Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to implement projects improving job creation and business development among low-income populations. Applications are due **June 15**. Click [here](#) for the grant posting.
- 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 [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) and [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs](#) recently **opened applications to the Veterans Housing Rehabilitation and Modification Pilot Program**. Funding is available to modify or rehabilitate eligible veterans' primary residences. Eligible applications include nonprofits which support veterans and low-income individuals. Applications are due **June 25**. Click [here](#) for more details.
- 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](#).

- The [Amerisource Bergen Foundation](#) has announced the availability of **funding for education, prevention, and safe disposal of opioids**. The deadline to apply is **July 31**. More details are available [here](#).
- The [Delta Institute](#) has released its “Coal Plant Redevelopment Roadmap” **to provide coal-impacted municipalities with information and resources to navigate the transition process**. Throughout the document, community and site specific impacts are addressed in tandem to highlight that site reuse can and should be leveraged to create positive impacts across the community. This roadmap is intended to inform the municipal government’s planning and response to closure, recognizing their decision-making authority. The document may also be useful for other representatives of the community, such as environmental or community advocates, economic development organizations, or citizens at large, who will be impacted by the closure and who will have a positive impact on the transition process. Click [here](#) to access the document.
- The Center for American Progress has released a new report, “Rural Pragmatism: Lessons from Colorado’s North Folk Valley” that highlights efforts **underway to support economic diversification in this coal region through renewable energy, outdoor recreation, agriculture, and more**. Click [here](#) to download the report.
- The [U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development](#) (USDA-RD) has launched **a new website designed to engage the public on issues impacting rural America**. An interactive feature allows comments to be submitted to Rural Development Innovation Center staff to review and consider in further agency actions and objectives. The website also highlights resources available to aid e-connectivity and community health among other issues. The website is available [here](#).

Events and Trainings

- Registration is now [open](#) for “Strengthening Economies in Wyoming: A Forum for Coal Reliant Communities” to be held in **Gillette, WY on June 21 and 22** 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 Wyoming and the Western regions. Click [here](#) to register. Contact Jack Morgan at jmorgan@naco.org or Brett Schwartz at bschwartz@nado.org with any questions.
- The BUILD Act (Brownfields Utilization, Investment and Local Development) was signed into law in March 2018 and is the first major legislative change to Brownfields since passage of the original statute in 2002. Specific changes include: increased eligibility for funding, additional liability protections, and changes to grant programs, just to name a few. Technical

Assistance to Brownfields Centers at Kansas State University, the Center for Creative Land Recycling (CCLR) and New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT, in partnership with the National Brownfields Association at Smart Growth America, will **host an upcoming webinar, “BUILdIng on Brownfields Progress: Opportunities from the New Federal Build Act Brownfields Law.”** The webinar is scheduled for **May 9 at 2:00 p.m. ET**. Click [here](#) to register and for more information about the webinar.

- [BroadbandUSA](#), an initiative of the [National Telecommunications and Information Administration](#) (NTIA), will **hold a g webinar on rural broadband deployment**. Speakers will discuss best practices and case studies on expanding broadband in rural communities. The webinar is scheduled for **May 16 at 2:00 p.m. ET**. Click [here](#) to register.
- New research shows that children from poor families in rural communities earn more by their mid-20s than their urban peers, contrary to stereotypes about the disadvantages of growing up rural. A major study of individual incomes found that poor children who grow up in three-quarters of rural counties earn more than the national average by their mid-20s. Join the [Orton Family Foundation](#) and [Daily Yonder](#) on **May 17 at 2:00 p.m. ET** to **learn about what researchers call “neighborhood effects” in rural communities and the lifelong advantages of growing up in places with less income disparity, good schools, and strong civic life**. Hear about newly released research on how community matters to poor children. Click [here](#) to register.
- The [U.S. Department of Transportation](#) (DOT) recently issued a [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) **inviting applications for \$1.5 billion in surface transportation grants provided by the fiscal year (FY) 2018 omnibus appropriations act**. The program, Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD), replaces the TIGER discretionary grant program. Selection criteria for the program are largely like those from the FY2017 round of TIGER awards. DOT intends to award 30 percent of BUILD grants to projects located in rural area and to support rural broadband deployment where it is part of an eligible transportation project. A series of webinars for applicants is planned for May:
 - [How to Compete for BUILD Transportation Grants – All Applicants](#), **May 24 from 2 – 4 p.m. ET**
 - [How to Compete for BUILD Transportation Grants – Rural and Tribal Applicants](#), **May 29 from 2 – 4 p.m. ET**
 - [Preparing a Benefit Cost Analysis \(BCA\) for a BUILD Application](#), **May 31 from 2 – 4 p.m. ET**
- On **May 31 at 2 p.m. ET**, the Environmental Finance Center Network as part of the [Smart Management for Small Water Systems](#) project is hosting a free webinar, “Encouraging Customers to Conserve: Pricing and Non-Pricing Approaches.” Water systems have a variety of reasons for wanting to encourage conservation, from environmental benefits to limited supply or treatment capacity. This webinar **will explore pricing and non-pricing strategies that water systems can use to encourage their customers to conserve water**. You will learn how those approaches impact the system’s ability to cover the full cost of providing safe drinking water today and into the future. Click [here](#) to register.

- The [Appalachian Higher Education Network](#) is hosting its 5th annual conference on **June 19 to 21** in Asheville, North Carolina. At the event, **connect with colleagues and to learn about successful strategies to increase postsecondary education attainment in Appalachia**. Click [here](#) for more information and to register.

A Dose of Inspiration

- A short video from the [Wyoming Business Council](#) highlights **how small towns throughout the state are embracing placemaking and main street programs** to support economic development and improve community cohesion. Click [here](#) to watch the video YouTube.



This newsletter is made possible with the support of an [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, or EDA.