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GROWING **STRONGER ECONOMIES** IN OUR NATION'S COAL COMMUNITIES

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



Happy Thanksgiving!

We are very grateful for your support of this newsletter – please continue to send in content and share with your networks!

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

- The first ever “Mountain Women Mean Business” conference was recently held in Harlan, Kentucky, **bringing together over 100 women from Eastern Kentucky for a day of training, networking, and celebration**, reports the Mountain Association for Community Economic Development. From the article: “Sessions included *Makers: Selling Your Work, Food: Farms, Food Trucks, and Restaurants*, and *Understanding Your Online Presence*...Sky Marietta from CEDIK [Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky] served as the master of ceremonies. She explained that the organizing committee wanted to take the opportunity to highlight woman-owned businesses from the region... The high turnout showed that it was needed, and CEDIK plans to host some follow-up events as well as another conference in a year.” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- The Brayton Point Power Station, **a former coal-fired power plant in Somerset, Massachusetts, is being rebranded and redeveloped into the Brayton Point Commerce Center**, reports *South Coast Today*. From the article: “As demolition of the former Brayton Point Power Station continues, the company that now owns the site is rebranding the property to position it better in the sustainable energy market...” “The launch of the new brand and logo will help to strategically reposition Brayton Point as a world-class logistics port, manufacturing hub, and support center for the emerging offshore wind energy sector,” [Commercial Development Co.] said in a release.” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- At the Northern Plains Resource Council annual meeting in Billings last weekend, presenters reflected on the future of the coal industry and coal communities throughout the state, reports the *Helena Independent Record*. From the article: [Colstrip power plant control room operator and International Brotherhood of Electric Workers Local 1638 union registrar Ted Stimac said], “I wish people outside the coal industry knew that we take pride in our community and our work. It can be dangerous. It's difficult and long hours but we do it not only to put food on the table but to power our country. **In Colstrip, there's a lot of pride around the coal industry, but it is obvious that change has come whether we like it or not.**” Click [here](#) to read the article.
- The *Associated Press* reports from the small town of Nanty Glo, PA (Welsh for “streams of coal”) as it attempts to rebuild its economy following the loss of coal and steel jobs in the 80s and 90s. From the article: “[Mayor Billy Ray] said **one boost would be to market the Ghost Town Trail, a 36-mile-long hiking and biking trail following abandoned coal-mining communities through Indiana and Cambria counties**, with one of its access points in Nanty Glo. Ray said he'd like to get hikers to stop in the town by appealing to them with local shops and eateries.” Click [here](#) to read the article.

- *West Virginia Public Broadcasting* profiles Wirt County, WV and the **strong culture of volunteerism and civic engagement which has led to better social and economic outcomes for the region**. From the article: "Within walking distance of the local diner [in Elizabeth, WV] is a senior center, the three local schools, and the community health center, all connected by sidewalks that were built through a grant a few years ago. Many of the sidewalks are used by kids who walk to school, said Kathy Mason, director of the Wirt County Family Resource Network. Volunteers and various groups, including the Family Resource Network, worked on this sidewalk project together. They also built a walking trail that wraps around the elementary and middle schools. After school lets out in the afternoon, the public is allowed to use the elementary school to do laps or walk inside the school gym, a resource Mason says has been popular among Elizabeth's aging population." Click [here](#) to read the article.

Funding Opportunities and Resources

- [NTCA-The Rural Broadband Association](#) is **accepting applications for the Smart Rural Community Collaboration Challenge** through **December 1**. Grants will provide up to \$5,000 to support the development and deployment of innovative broadband-enabled solutions to support rural commerce and economic development, education, energy, health care, public safety, or other community-oriented initiatives. Click [here](#) to learn more and apply.
- The [Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program](#) is now accepting applications and will award eleven grantee communities in 2019. The **Safe Routes to Parks Activating Communities program provides tailored technical assistance for communities to develop action plans, and awards \$12,500 to each community** to begin implementation of those plans. The action plans will be based upon the Safe Routes to Parks Action Framework, developed in 2017 through the collaborative efforts of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership and the National Recreation and Parks Association. Apply by **December 10, 2018**. Click [here](#) to learn more.
- [HRSA/FORHP](#) has announced a second round of the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program. The purpose of the program is to support treatment for, and prevention of, substance use disorder -- including opioid use disorder -- in rural communities. In FY 18, HRSA made 95 awards and in FY 19, HRSA anticipates making approximately 120 awards. The current awardees can be found on the [HRSA website](#). Any domestic organization forming a consortium of four or more members in a rural community may be eligible to apply for funding. More information on eligibility and requirements can be found in the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#). Interested applicants may attend a live [technical assistance webinar](#) on **Friday, December 7, 2018 from 2 – 3 p.m. ET**. Applications are due on **January 15, 2019**, with a program start date of June 1, 2019. Please contact ruralopioidresponse@hrsa.gov with additional questions.
- The [Treasury Department](#) and the [Internal Revenue Service](#) **have issued proposed regulations and other published guidance for the new Opportunity Zone tax incentive**. Opportunity Zones, created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act,

were designed to spur investment in distressed communities throughout the country through tax benefits. Under a nomination process completed in June, 8,761 communities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories were designated as qualified Opportunity Zones. Opportunity Zones retain their designation for 10 years. Click [here](#) to learn more.

- Many places throughout the country and the world have built economies around a single sector or industry, leaving them vulnerable to both immediate shocks, as well as long-term, slow-moving chronic trends. A new [NADO Research Foundation webinar tutorial](#) featuring Erik Pages of [Entreworks Consulting](#) covers the **basics of economic diversification, shares best practices and case studies, provides key tips for revitalization, and more**. Click [here](#) to access the recording.
- The [New Jersey Institute of Technology Technical Assistance for Brownfields](#) team has released a new resource, "Implementing Infill Development on Brownfields in Rural Areas and Small Towns." This resource contains **information about the economic, environmental, health, and social benefits of brownfields redevelopment**, steps for implementing infill development on brownfields, best practices, and more. Click [here](#) to access the resource and learn more.
- A new report from the Reclaiming Appalachia Coalition **shares a variety of case studies of innovative mine reclamation in Central Appalachia**. This report seeks to spur innovative economic development throughout Appalachia in communities where the landscape has been irreparably changed by coal mining. Specifically, the report provides case studies of projects that advance community development amidst abandoned mine lands. Click [here](#) to download the report.
- The [American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy](#) has released a new report, "Reaching Rural Communities with Energy Efficiency Programs." This **report highlights six energy efficiency programs serving rural areas**. It describes trends across programs for rural customers and offers recommendations to help utilities and other stakeholders better serve these communities. Click [here](#) to download the report.
- [USDA Rural Development \(USDA-RD\)](#) released a **new guide designed to help rural communities access federal funds and resources to address the opioid misuse epidemic**. This resource is the first deliverable resulting from the Rural Opioid Federal Interagency Working Group, created by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and USDA-RD. You can access the resource [here](#).

Events and Trainings

- West Virginia University Press, Teaching for Change, Higher Ground in Harlan County, and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America are hosting an event to **celebrate the release of Tom Hansell's book *After Coal: Stories of Survival in Appalachia and Wales* on November 29 at 6:30 pm** in Washington, DC. The gathering will include a film screening and

panel discussion. Click [here](#) for more information and to RSVP for free.

- [LISC](#) has announced a **six-part webinar series called “How to Do Creative Placemaking”** that will run from **November through April**. Creative placemaking—the practice of integrating arts, culture, and design activities into efforts that strengthen communities—has become a widespread practice in communities of all shapes and sizes to advance local economic, physical, and/or social outcomes. Webinars will cover topics such as building partnerships, community engagement, measuring impact, communicating success, hiring & contracting artists, and more. Click [here](#) to learn more and 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

- **Reforestation efforts in Appalachia on old coal strip mines** are underway to restore natural systems and capture carbon from the atmosphere, reports *Voice of America*. From the article and accompanying video: “Since 2009, Green Forests Work has planted nearly 2.5 million trees on roughly 1,600 hectares of what used to be strip mines across Appalachia. **In West Virginia alone...restoring red spruce to its old habitat could lock up the equivalent of 56 million barrels of oil.** Not right away. It takes decades. Nature works slowly. But it works.” Click [here](#) to read the article and view the video.



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