

December 13, 2017



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



Please note: The next issue will be available on January 3 (Happy Holidays!)

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

- The *Gillette News Record* reports how **Wyoming's Carbon Engineering Initiative is providing funding to support research into non-energy/non-fuel uses for coal and coal products**. From the article: "The initiative, less than two years old, is already generating a significant amount of intellectual property for the state, said Richard Horner, deputy director of emerging projects and technology for UW's School of Energy Resources. "About 26 patents have been filed, which hopefully will turn into patent awards over the coming year," he said. "Patents are a significant measure of our success. They can be sold, they can form new companies based around a patent or the rights to those patents can be sold on the basis of a revenue stream coming back to the state." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- *WBUR* shares highlights of a conversation with Rusty Justice, founder of [Bit Source](#) in Pikeville, KY and Jeff Freilich, associate director of alliances at the MIT Computer Science & Artificial Intelligence Lab, who discussed opportunities for promoting tech and computer science jobs in Appalachia. From the article: "We just had a displaced workforce that we needed to find something that would work here in our region, where we're geographically bounded by the mountainous terrain. Agriculture and large-scale manufacturing typically doesn't exist in mountainous areas, so we saw that **there was earning potential equivalent to our mining jobs in the tech sector, and that there was a demand for tech workers and that that was a product we could produce here and export over fiber optic cable to the greater market in the world.**" Click [here](#) to read the article.
- **Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and the Canadian province of Saskatchewan have signed an MOU to share information about carbon capture and other emerging technologies**, writes the *Casper Star Tribune*. From the article: "Wyoming has [a] test center and ongoing study from the University of Wyoming's Carbon Engineering Initiative and its School of Energy Resources. Saskatchewan is home to the first large scale carbon capture and storage facility attached to a commercial coal plant, the Boundary Dam 3 project. North Dakota's Energy and Environmental Research Center and Montana's Big Sky Carbon Sequestration Partnership have each looked at ways to store carbon dioxide." Click [here](#) to read the article.
- The *Herald-Dispatch* reports on how drone training programs have gained in popularity at Southern West Virginia Community and Technical College, in part to advances in technology and outside funding support, including from the Appalachian Regional Commission. From the article: "[SWVCTC Educators Rick Thompson and Matt Payne] hope that like other SWVCTC programs **the drone program will be able to partner with local companies - which could hire graduates of the technology courses**. "We also want to integrate it into our business and entrepreneurship courses," Payne said. "Right now, the surveying field is using drone technology hot and heavy." In addition to mining, surveying, medicine, and marketing other areas of the workplace that drones will affect include such things as technical inspection of cell-phone towers." Click [here](#) to read the article.

- On November 30, the US House of Representatives passed the Brownfields Enhancement, Economic Redevelopment, and Reauthorization Act of 2017 **which would reauthorize the US EPA's Brownfields Program**, reports *The Hill*. From the article: "The House bill reauthorizes the program until 2022 at \$200 million level annually. It authorizes \$50 million in annual grants for states and Native American Tribes and it tweaks several aspects of the program, including multipurpose grants and the law's funding caps." Click [here](#) to read the article.

Funding Opportunities and Resources

- Applications are due **December 15** for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants](#). These grants **fund programs that recruit, train, and place local, unemployed, and under-employed residents with the skills needed to secure full-time employment in the environmental field**. EPA encourages applicants to develop their curricula based on local labor market assessments and employers' hiring needs, while also delivering comprehensive training that results in graduates securing multiple certifications. As in past rounds, regional councils and workforce investment boards/workforce development boards are eligible to apply. Click [here](#) to learn more information and to apply.
- The [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) is accepting **proposals to fund training and counseling programs for veteran small business owners**. The Boots to Business (B2B) program supports training opportunities including technical and financial skill development and comprehensive business assessments to current and former military personnel engaged in starting or growing a small business. SBA expects to award 17 to 23 grants between \$225,000 and \$375,000. Applications are due **January 8**. Click [here](#) for more details.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#) is seeking applications for the AgVets Program that provides grants to nonprofit organizations for **training programs and services to establish and enhance farming and ranching opportunities for military veterans**. A letter of intent is due **January 11** and the application is due **February 8**. Click [here](#) for more information.
- The [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) examines how **microbusinesses (firms with 1-9 employees) contribute to the economy** in a new fact sheet. "Small Business Facts: The Role of Microbusiness Employers in the Economy" notes that the microbusiness is the most common type of small business but holds a small share of overall employment. The fact sheet is available [here](#).
- The [Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce](#) and JPMorgan Chase & Co. released results from a recent **analysis on good jobs that require less than a bachelor's degree (B.A)**. "Good Jobs That Pay without a B.A.: A State-by-

State Analysis” includes research on job gains and losses by industry and education throughout all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The report and related information can be found on the Goodjobsdata.org website [here](#).

- The [Rural Health Information Hub](#) (RHihub) has developed a [Rural Transportation Toolkit](#), recognizing that a significant barrier to achieving rural health outcomes is access to health facilities and services, including transportation. The toolkit contains **resources and information focused on developing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining rural transportation programs**, including information on various models and examples. Click [here](#) to access the toolkit.
- [Smart Growth America](#) has released a new whitepaper [“Made in Place: Small-scale Manufacturing and Neighborhood Revitalization.”](#) **Small-scale manufacturing can grow local entrepreneurship and small business, develop or enhance new and existing economic sectors, and revitalize downtowns and business districts.** Using tools and case studies, this whitepaper builds the case for why economic development practitioners should be thinking about working with small-scale manufacturers, how to grow the sector, and the particular synergies that are created when locating these businesses in downtowns and mixed use centers. Click [here](#) to download the paper.

Events and Trainings

- Accessing, interpreting, and incorporating the right data are some of the most important tasks in writing an effective plan. The [NADO Research Foundation](#) and the [BlastPoint](#) team delivered a free [webinar](#) last week that **explored how big companies think about data and how you can adapt these approaches to improve your organization’s planning and policy development work**. This session covered concepts like indexing, segmentation, and forecasting, and showed how real examples from the world of marketing and analytics are within reach of anyone with the right tools. This session also included a demo of BlastPoint’s features. Click [here](#) to access the recording.
- The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has announced **two upcoming webinars related to freight transportation planning**. On **December 14 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET**, FHWA and the Bureau of Transportation Statistics will present the webinar [How to Leverage Freight Analysis Framework \(FAF4\) Freight Data for Transportation Analysis: Example Cases from the Oregon and Tennessee DOTs](#). On **December 20 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. ET**, FHWA will offer the webinar [Good Practices in MPO Freight Planning](#) as part of its monthly Talking Freight web seminar series. For more information on freight professional development opportunities, visit the FHWA [Office of Freight Management and Operations website](#).
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) [National Flood Insurance Program](#) will be hosting a webinar this week on **the impact of recent FEMA mapping changes on property owners and insurance holders**. Issues affected by the mapping changes will be highlighted including policy rates, premiums, and mandatory purchase of flood insurance. The

webinar is scheduled for **December 14 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. ET**. Registration is available [here](#).

- As part of its Resilient Counties Initiative’s effort to create a Disaster Toolkit for Counties, [NACo](#) will host a [Disaster Response and Recovery Social Media Day](#) on **December 13** to **showcase how counties have responded to and recovered from disasters and have strengthened resilience within their communities**. Throughout the day, NACo will share examples of county accomplishments, disaster resilience tools, and resources for counties. Join NACo by posting links to or short summaries of your county’s disaster response and recovery projects, resources, lessons learned, tips, and innovative efforts on [NACo’s Facebook page](#) or on Twitter ([@NACoTweets](#)) using the hashtag [#ResilientCounties](#). Click [here](#) to learn more.

A Dose of Inspiration

- The [Green Mining Model Business Program](#), located out of [West Virginia Regional Technology Park](#), has the goal of “reclaiming abandoned mine sites and other acreage throughout the region...**to grow and harvest lavender while recreating jobs for our miners and their families** through training and continued resources.” Click [here](#) to watch a video and learn more about the program.



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