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ARC SPOTLIGHT

The Roads to Appalachian Success
The Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS), which is 90% complete, spurs economic development in the Region.

Addressing Appalachia’s need for critical infrastructure is one of ARC’s strategic investment goals. This continued commitment to infrastructure, including safer roads, dependable broadband, and reliable water and sewer systems, helps our Region’s communities expand their local, regional and global connections, improve health and safety, and spur economic activity.

ARC’s annual report on the status of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) illustrates ARC’s ongoing role in building a safe, modern network of roads across the Region. At the end of FY 2016, a total of 2,794.7 miles, or 90.4% of the 3,090 miles authorized for the ADHS, were either complete, open to traffic, or under construction. The report includes detailed maps showing the progress of the ADHS, including breakdowns of data in each of the 13 states spanned by the ADHS. In addition to the status update, the annual report covers history of funding along with information regarding anticipated economic impacts of the ADHS for Appalachia and the rest of the nation. One example of the ADHS at work is Corridor H, the newest section to
open in November 2016, which connects three of the state’s more remote counties—Grant, Tucker, and Hardy—with the rest of the Region. Corridor H allows manufacturers to more directly and efficiently transport goods to inland ports, which will help to expand markets for West Virginia products. Tourists can use Corridor H to visit the area’s Civil War battlefields, historical sites, and natural attractions, and local residents will use Corridor H to safely and easily travel between their homes, jobs, schools, and communities.

**APPALACHIA IN THE NEWS**

**Erwin Fiber Triples Reach in 2016**, *Johnson City Press*, Johnson City, Tennessee

**March 9, 1965: President Johnson Signs Bill to Create Appalachian Regional Commission**, *West Virginia Public Broadcasting*

**Launchpad Event Gives $100K to Entrepreneurs**, *Franklin County Times*, Franklin County, Alabama

**Hospital in Drug-Ravaged Appalachia Provides Hope and Jobs**, *Modern Healthcare*

**Dig These Digs: SustainU Apparel Stands Out**, *MLB News*

**Learning to Code in Coal Country**, *Medium*
INVESTMENTS IN ACTION

Linemen Program Gets Power

As swaths of skilled power linemen retire, a critical void has opened up in the job market. Seeking to capitalize on an opportunity to give new career options for the local community impacted by the decline of the coal industry, Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) earned an ARC POWER grant to develop the curriculum for a new power lineman training program in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. Now, the office of Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe has announced additional funding to put the final touches on this workforce development program that will serve a four-county area in southwest Virginia.

MECC is working with regional power industry employers to develop and implement the program to prepare trainees for entry-level employment as apprentice utility line workers, leading to a career pathway as journeyman-level power linemen. Participants will receive intensive training across a variety of competencies and certifications requested by employers over the course of...
14–15 weeks. The program will use the outdoor instructional facilities of the Flatwoods Job Corps Center. Once it is up and running, the power lineman training program will provide a workforce for high-demand, well-paying jobs and help to diversify and bolster the regional economy.

MECC to launch power lineman training program.
Photo Source: WCYB/Virginia’s Community Colleges

UPCOMING EVENTS

Economic Strategies for Rural West Virginia Webinar
March 15

SOAR Obesity and Diabetes Roundtable
Barbourville, Kentucky
March 16

Aspen Institute "Supporting Entrepreneurial Economies" Panel Discussion
Washington, D.C.
March 17
The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is an economic development agency of the federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 420 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC’s mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia to help the Region achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation.