



# LYNCHBURG REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE

— Chamber & Economic Development —

## - ANNUAL REPORT -

2024  
IMPACT  
REPORT

2025  
PROGRAM  
OF WORK

Powering the Possible: Talent, Opportunity, & Growth

# A LETTER FROM THE CEO & BOARD CHAIR

## LYNCHBURG REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we are proud to present the 2024 Annual Report of the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance. This year has been marked by significant advocacy wins, strategic economic growth initiatives, and a deepened commitment to workforce development—all designed to strengthen the foundation of our local business community.

At the heart of our work is the belief that all business is local. Every initiative we champion is focused on helping our members attract, build, and connect with impactful business relationships and customers. Whether through advocacy, workforce solutions, or economic development, our efforts are driven by the goal of creating opportunities for businesses of all sizes to thrive.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains unwavering: to position the Lynchburg region as a premier destination for talent, business, and innovation. Through collaboration, bold leadership, and targeted strategies, the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance and our Economic Development Partners are working to build a more competitive, dynamic, and thriving community—one that attracts investment, empowers talent, and enhances regional appeal.

We invite you to explore this year's accomplishments and join us in shaping an even brighter future for the Lynchburg region.

In Partnership,



**Chris Hughes**  
2024 Chair of the Board  
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance  
Public Affairs Manager  
Georgia Pacific

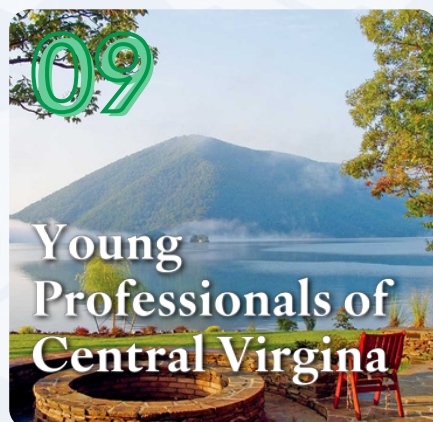


**Megan Lucas**  
CEO & Chief Economic Development Officer  
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance



**LYNCHBURG REGIONAL  
BUSINESS ALLIANCE**  
— Chamber & Economic Development —

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# THE LYNCHBURG REGIONAL BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Since 1883, the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, formerly the Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce, has promoted regional economic growth and enhanced the quality of life for all citizens. Accredited since 1973, the Alliance has maintained a prestigious Five-Star Rating from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce since 2006. The Lynchburg Region represents **Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell Counties**, along with the **City of Lynchburg**, serving as a key driver of economic and community development.

The Alliance focuses on business expansion, workforce development, advocacy, and leadership cultivation while supporting entrepreneurial startups, small businesses, and job creation. In 2016, it merged the Lynchburg Regional Chamber and the Region 2000 Business & Economic Alliance, uniting a 130-year-old chamber with regional economic development efforts to strengthen the area's economic future.



## Our Vision

Creating a region where businesses and individuals thrive.

## Our Mission

To lead regional economic development through:

1. Enhancing the Business Climate
2. Cultivating Talent
3. Generating Jobs & Investment
4. Promoting our Brand & Image Globally

## Our Core Values

- *Agile* – We embrace and lead change to enhance our impact and effectiveness.
- *Accountable* – We responsibly manage investments and keep stakeholders informed.
- *Beyond the Business Card* – We build genuine relationships by offering support beyond job titles.
- *Integrity* – We uphold honesty, sincerity, and collaboration in all we do.
- *Bold* – We think big, stay curious, and encourage others to aim high.
- *Champion Free Enterprise* – We advocate for a thriving free market where businesses succeed.
- *Southern Hospitality* – We create a welcoming, warm environment for newcomers and businesses.
- *Support Opportunity & Prosperity* – We seek solutions to bridge opportunity gaps and drive progress.



# MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



Richard Tugman, CEO of Centra, speaking at Business & Breakfast Event

**146**  
new members  
in 2024

**88%**  
of membership  
dues retained

**82%**  
of members  
retained

**890**  
total members  
representing  
65k Employees

**101**  
Premium  
Investor Partners

**83%**  
of our members with  
less than 50 employees

**367+**  
Jobs, Deals, News,  
Events & other  
content shared by  
members

**43**  
Ribbon Cuttings &  
Groundbreakings



Farmers Bank of Appomattox Ribbon Cutting



Alliance Ambassadors ready to #ShopSmall

**250+**  
Engagements,  
Opportunities, &  
Meetings held at  
the Alliance Office

**160**  
Conference  
Space  
Rentals

**87**  
Uses of  
Member Office  
Space

**3,879**  
Engaged  
Attendees

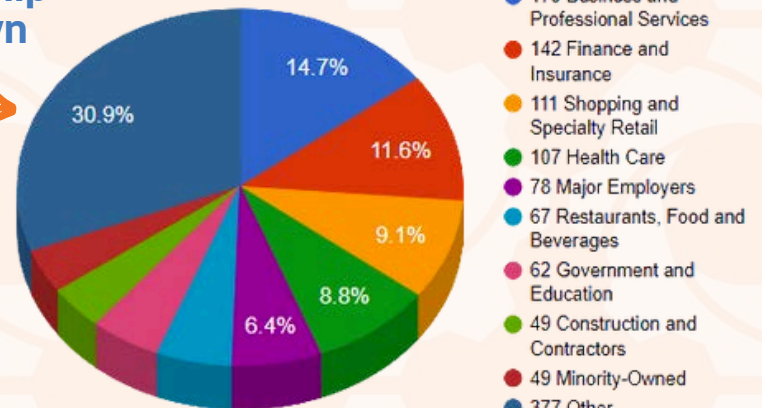
**346k +**  
Visitors to LynchburgRegion.org  
Membership Pages

**1.37 MILLION +**  
Hits on Google when a Member's  
Organization is Googled

**1,934**  
Ambassador Touches with Members

**989**  
"I'm Here" Cards left at member  
locations by Alliance Staff & Ambassadors

## Membership Breakdown



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY THE NUMBERS



Centra Groundbreaking

Expected to open in 2026, the Centra Simons Run Medical Campus (75,000 sq. ft.) will become the new home for the inpatient behavioral health and rehabilitation care currently provided at Centra Virginia Baptist Hospital, while also expanding access to these services to meet the increasing community need.



## MID CYCLE NUMBERS

**889**

New Jobs Created

**\$3.2 Billion**

in new capital investment in our region

✓ Became an Energy Alliance Community

✓ Completed the Central VA Rail Study & Nuclear & Energy Workforce Analysis

**198**

Industrial Site Consultant Meetings

**1**

Canadian Embassy Fam Tour



Members of the Canadian Embassy visited the LYH Region



New Regional Economic Development Brand

**22**

Business Retention and Expansion Visits

**8**

Business Investment Calls and Trips in the Continental U.S.

**263**

Industrial Inquiries



Launched new regional economic development brand and website.

[YesLynchburgRegion.org](http://YesLynchburgRegion.org)

**1**

New Regional Economic Development Brand

**84**

Economic Development Investors

**3**

Industrial Announcements

Solarix will invest \$63 million to establish a solar module manufacturing facility in Forest, Virginia. The company recently acquired the former TEVA Pharmaceutical building, where it will employ 104 people and begin advanced solar panel production by Q4 2025.

# ADVOCATING FOR YOU

## Tracking Key Bills Affecting Our Region

- 31 Priority Legislation bills
- 76 Economic Development bills
- 93 Workforce bills
- 20 Energy & Infrastructure bills
- 103 Transportation bills
- 30 Education bills
- 127 Budget amendments
- 132 Healthcare bills
- 586 Regulatory Reform & Taxes bills



Governor Glenn Youngkin participates in bill a signing ceremony for bill SB 436 at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, on April 10, 2024. Official Photo by Christian Martinez, Office of Governor Glenn Youngkin.

62

Meetings held with local, state, and national elects

7

General Assembly Candidate Virtual Interviews

10

Alliance Advisors sent

7

Sign-on Letters

3

Action Alerts Sent

1

City Council Town Forum with 10 candidates



Lynchburg City Council candidates gathered for a City Council Town Forum, in partnership with Cardinal News, to answer questions from topics submitted by member of the Lynchburg City Community.



LYH City Council Town Forum at Alliance Office

# SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS

## The Lynchburg Region in 2024...

996

Registered  
Attendees

20

Long Term  
Clients

136

Clients  
Counseled

10

Businesses  
Started

43

Events  
Hosted

173

Completed a  
Startup  
Toolbox



The Virginia SBDC Network, the largest business development program in the Commonwealth, supports entrepreneurs through 29 local centers offering advising, training, and resources. In Lynchburg, it facilitates CO.STARTERS, aiding 120 entrepreneurs over eight years, and provides 100+ hours of education for the Launch LYH grant program. The Startup Toolbox offers free monthly classes on business basics, while expert staff specialize in marketing, financial management, and food & beverage. Clients also access no-cost guidance from George Mason University on export readiness, mentorship, and product commercialization. Thousands receive advising and training annually, benefiting from a network that partners with the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University, and local organizations to drive business success.

The Center for Entrepreneurship (C.ENTR) is a hub for entrepreneurship in the Lynchburg region, offering space for collaboration, funding and planning support, business development, training, mentorship, and essential services. Within the Alliance's facility, 3,000 square feet will be dedicated to fostering a strong entrepreneurial community. C.ENTR publishes Vnetur e-magazine, supports regional business events, and is part of the Radically Rural biotech network. It also develops a support services network to help entrepreneurs succeed. A project of the Alliance and SBDC - Lynchburg Region, C.ENTR is funded by GO Virginia.



to schedule a  
confidential meeting  
today





# DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS & TALENT

35

Employers at the LYH Intern Connect with Regional Collegiate Talent

100+

High school students participated in the Beacon of Hope internship interviews



2024 EMERGE Women's Summit

10

Workforce Development meetings with Regional Employers

47

Participants in Welding Wars from the LYH Region

6

Customized Trainings for Members and Partners

92

Total Participants at the Educators Workforce Academy

400+

Ladies hosted at our Women, Wine & Wisdom and EMERGE Women's Summit programs

2,400+

Middle-school-aged students attended the Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo



Educators Workforce tour at Southern Air, Inc.



Worlds of Opportunity Career Fair at CVCC

7

Graduates from our LL2.0 program for seasoned executives

140+

Leaders attended "Difficult Conversations" Workshop with Jonathan Parker

16

Interns graduated from LL Leading Off Campus Program

17

Young ladies hosted for our inaugural SHE Week providing mentorship, leadership, and professional development to Middle & High school girls during the summer



Leadership Lynchburg 'Leading Off Campus' Graduates

# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA



2024 LevelUp YP Summit

## YPCV: A Space to Connect

The Young Professionals of Central Virginia (YPCV) is all about **connection**—helping you meet like-minded peers, expand your professional network, and build meaningful relationships. Our goal is to create **engaging, relevant, and accessible** opportunities for young professionals in our region to **connect, grow, and lead**.

This year, we're focused on bringing YPCV members together through:

- **Monthly "YP 5:35" networking socials**, designed to foster authentic connections in a relaxed setting.
- **Quarterly professional development workshops**, featuring topics that matter most to young professionals.
- **Exclusive social events**, including YPCV Night at the Lynchburg Hillcats and other unique outings.
- **Community engagement opportunities**, such as a nonprofit showcase to connect with local causes.
- **Commerce & Cocktails events**, where YPCV members can interact with employers and Alliance members in a casual setting.

**800+**

Total YPCV Members

**90**

New YPCV Members

**200+**

Active YPCV Members

**11**

YP Connect Opportunities



YP Christmas Party at The Music Hall

Whether you're looking to make new friends, grow your career, or get more involved in the community, YPCV is your go-to network for meaningful connections in 2025!



Commerce & Cocktails at The Crown's Ember



**Young Professionals of Central Virginia**

# Powering the Possible 2025

## Talent, Opportunity, Growth

### ENHANCING THE BUSINESS CLIMATE

#### Membership And Member Benefits

At the heart of our work is the belief that all business is local. We will continue to hone in on our strengths and remain dedicated to supporting our members through impactful business development opportunities. In 2025, every initiative we champion is focused on helping our members attract, build, and connect with impactful business relationships and customers.

#### Key Opportunities:

- **Regional Roundtable:** Bringing our members together by region with their regional representatives.
- **Procurement Day:** Connecting Alliance members with the region's largest employers.
- **Wisechoice Healthcare Alliance:** Continuing to support and promote additional healthcare options for employers with 2-50 employees.
- **Choose Local, Shop Local:** Championing the importance of supporting businesses that call our region home.
- Learning from **Benchmarked Communities:** In March, join the Alliance on our first Intercity trip to Greenville, SC, to explore how their entrepreneurial and economic ecosystem has made them a top mid-sized region.

#### Advocating for Our Members

The Alliance will continue to be a strong voice for the business community, advocating at the state and federal level to shape policies that foster a business-friendly environment. **Our efforts will focus on:**

- **Strengthening Regional Competitiveness** – Ensuring our region remains an attractive place for businesses to grow and thrive.
- **Supporting Job Growth** – Championing policies that drive economic expansion and workforce development.
- **Aiding Talent Retention** – Creating an environment where businesses and talent choose to stay and succeed.
- **Championing** for the rolling back of excessive regulation and regulatory burden on our businesses.
- **Preserving** the competitive tax provisions of 2017

Through proactive leadership and strategic advocacy, we will advance policies that empower businesses, drive economic prosperity, and elevate our region's standing.



#### Elevating Member Marketing & Visibility

The strength of our membership starts at the local level—because businesses thrive where people live and work. No matter where a company, product, or service begins, its real impact is felt in communities. After all, local is where life happens.

**In 2025, the Alliance will amplify member visibility and marketing impact through:**

- **Enhanced Digital & Social Media Visibility** – Expanding reach and engagement across platforms.
- **Exclusive Promotional Opportunities** – Offering members unique ways to showcase their brand.
- **Event-Based Marketing & Networking** – Creating meaningful connections and business growth opportunities.
- **Content & Thought Leadership** – Positioning members as industry leaders through strategic storytelling and insights.

These initiatives ensure our members stand out, connect, and thrive in a competitive marketplace.

# Powering the Possible 2025

## Talent, Opportunity, Growth

### CULTIVATING TALENT: BRAIN GAIN IS THE NAME OF THE GAME!

To address talent shortages, we are committed to proactive recruitment and retention strategies that strengthen our workforce. We will continue enhancing our talent-focused programs—Leadership Lynchburg, Leading Off Campus, Young Professionals, and the Educator-Workforce Academy—to develop and retain top talent. Our efforts will focus on attracting former residents back to the region, engaging young professionals, expanding leadership opportunities, and collaborating with businesses to align workforce development with evolving industry needs.



Educators Workforce tour at Delta Star

Refine and amplify impact of our major talent initiatives such as:

- **Worlds of Opportunity Expo** for middle school students.
- **Educator Workforce Academy** for school administrators, guidance counselors and teachers so they have a thorough understanding of our in-demand career sectors.
- **SHE Week** summer mentorship and leadership program for middle and high school girls.



Level Up YP Summit

- **Leading Off Campus** program for college students and interns working at employers during the summer.
- **Leadership Lynchburg 2.0** program for seasoned leaders, business owners and non-profit executives looking for a mastermind process to grow their network and learning of best practices across industry sectors.
- Launch robust **Talent website** to assist employers with resources to attract and retain talent.
- Enhance programming for **Young Professionals of Central Virginia** in order to attract and retain more talent in the region.
- The **Workforce Summit** brought together 83 young professionals for an engaging exploration of key topics in professional development and leadership.



Worlds of Opportunity Career Fair at CVCC

# Powering the Possible 2025

## Talent, Opportunity, Growth

### INITIATIVES FOR DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH & EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY

To strengthen our regional economy and enhance global competitiveness, we are launching key initiatives in 2025 that focus on job creation, business attraction, and industry growth.

- **Increase Job Creation** – Support existing businesses, attract new industries, and foster entrepreneurship to drive employment opportunities.
- **Spec Building Development** – Address the need for move-in-ready industrial and commercial space to accelerate business expansion and recruitment.
- **Site Consultant Familiarization Tour** – Host a strategic tour during peak leaf-peeping season to showcase our region's unique assets, workforce, and business opportunities.
- **Regional Nuclear & Energy Economic Development Strategic Plan** – Develop a comprehensive strategy to position Greater Lynchburg as a leader in the nuclear and energy sectors, leveraging existing expertise and infrastructure.



Tru Ball Archery

These initiatives align with our commitment to **thinking regionally, competing globally, and impacting locally**, ensuring sustainable growth and long-term economic success.



BWX Technologies, Inc.



Virginia MetalFab

# Powering the Possible 2025

## Talent, Opportunity, Growth

### PROMOTING OUR REGION'S BRAND AND IMAGE GLOBALLY

The Edge of the Blue Ridge brand is the result of our 2024 economic development branding and strategy, designed to position our region as a premier destination for business, talent, and investment.

Our footprint includes our thriving urban core and the four surrounding counties and our public sector economic development partners include The Counties of Amherst, Bedford and Campbell, the City of Lynchburg and the towns of Altavista, Amherst and Appomattox. By leveraging our new logo and messaging, we are strengthening our regional identity and enhancing our global presence.



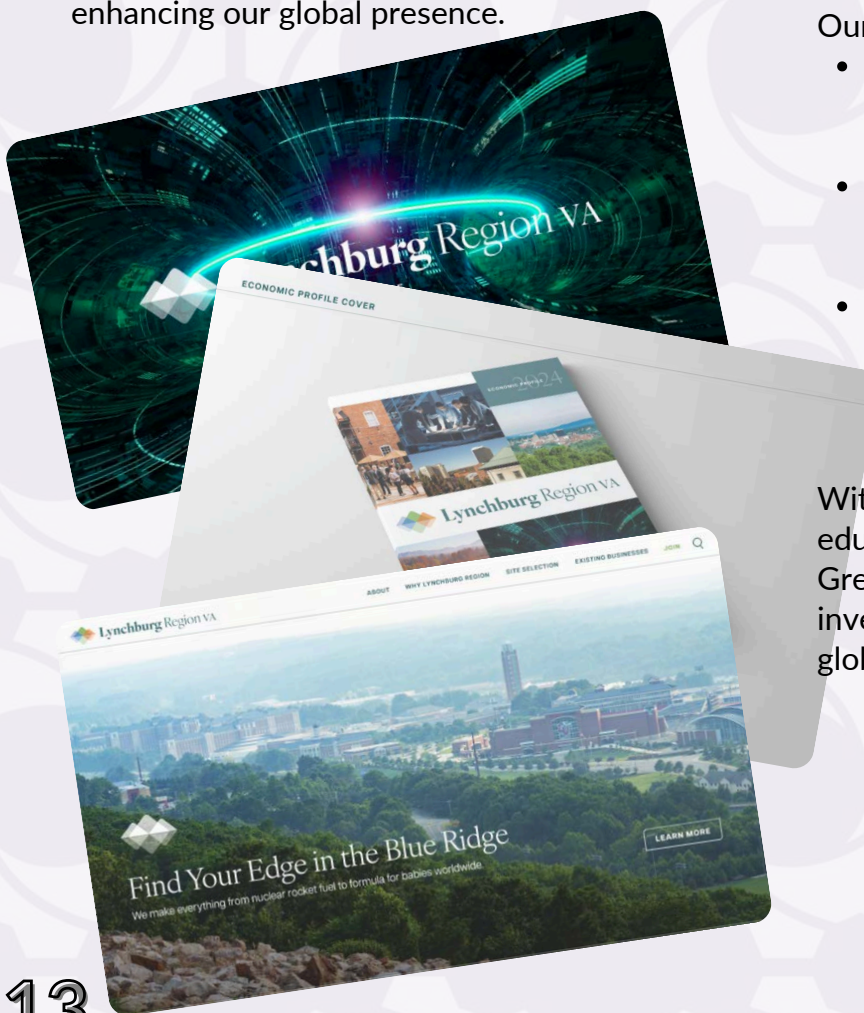
At the heart of our strategy is a simple yet powerful vision: Thinking Regionally, Competing Globally, and Impacting Locally.

Our brand is built on three key pillars:

- **Innovation Edge** – A leader in cutting-edge industries, producing everything from nuclear rocket fuel to baby formula.
- **Business Edge** – A pro-business environment with access to top talent from eight colleges and universities.
- **Adventure Edge** – A destination for outdoor enthusiasts, featuring the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Appalachian Trail, and the James River.

With a thriving business climate, world-class education, and unparalleled natural beauty, Greater Lynchburg is positioned to attract investment, retain top talent, and compete on a global scale.

**Find your Edge in the Blue Ridge.**



# ALLIANCE STAFF



**MEGAN LUCAS**  
CEO & Chief Economic  
Development Officer



**CHRISTINE KENNEDY**  
COO & Executive Vice  
President



**HEATH BARRET**  
Vice President of  
Membership Development



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Relations



**CORA COX**  
Leadership & Economic  
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**TORI GILMARTIN**  
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Workforce Development



**ANNA GRACE MAPLES**  
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**HAYDEN REGITZ**  
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Vice President of  
Finance



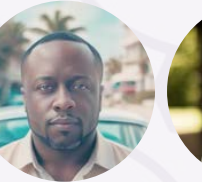
**LAVERNE BROWN**  
Member Specialist  
Retired

Thank you Laverne for  
27 years of service to  
the Lynchburg Region!  
Enjoy your Retirement!

# SBDC STAFF



**STEPHANIE KEENER**  
Vice President of  
Small Business &  
Executive Director



**JAWANA HALL**  
Branding &  
Marketing Advisor



**MARIA NIECHWIADOWICZ**  
Food & Beverage Advisor



**JORDAN REEVES**  
Finance &  
Planning Advisor

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**ALEC BREBNER**  
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**JEREMY BRYANT**  
Amherst County



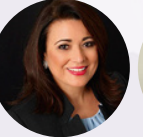
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BWXT



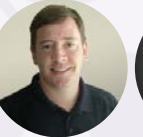
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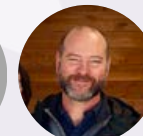
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FLDR Law



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Truist



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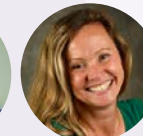
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Lynchburg Ready Mix



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Pyle Solutions LLC



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Innovative Wireless Technologies



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