



## 2011 Virginia Rural Summit

The annual Rural Summit was held September 12-13, 2011

Attendees considered the “Realities of Rural . . . Realities of the People . . . Realities of the Community”

Challenging times compel rural regions of the Commonwealth. Bringing the need to assess resources, be innovative, create opportunities and find solutions was the driver for the annual Rural Summit. The Summit featured many networking opportunities, speakers who identified issues and shared best practice solutions, interactive panel discussions, facilitated group forums and opportunities for individuals to ask questions and share their point of view.

### Objectives for the Virginia Rural Summit were determined by the planning committee were:

1. To consider the realities of rural region-by-region.
2. To consider three economic sectors including Manufacturing, Health and Energy.

**Realities of the Regions** based on regional business and job development issues faced by communities and by the people.

- The Rural Center wanted to know the “World View” - national, state and local. How do people on the outside looking in see rural Virginia?

### We wanted to know:

How regions determine the selection elements used to market their locality, as well as what employers from outside of rural see when they consider locating in a given area? How do we mesh the two?

### Considering regional realities, how to:

- Successfully determining assets, challenges, gaps and opportunities
- Identify and recognize barriers, and have a plan to take care of the problem.
- Identify the “not talked about” issues – talk about them, come to terms on solutions, thus overcoming obstacles.

The event showcased best practices from successful rural communities that have created partnerships and engaged citizen involvement in economic development. Practical examples that demonstrated how the same processes are possible in other areas have already materialized and are getting attention from listeners who said, “We can do that too!” A chief objective for the Rural Center was to identify and connect attendees to working models that any rural community can replicate to develop their local economy.

Regional collaboration, leveraging resources, action planning, creating a structure for economic successes and connecting groups at all levels continually came through as key ingredients for success as did identifying and connect existing community assets to generate critical buy-in for:

- How rural Virginia invests in helping individuals prepare for economic change by gaining marketable workforce skills
- How communities look at themselves and focus their energies and resources to create jobs.
- How rural regions progressively move back to the front economically.

Presenters who promote growth in current industry, new job creation and attracting new employers did not say what they're doing is an easy task! Forming strong alliances requires a great deal of time and a willingness to work for the good of the community. Working together to focus on the challenges of plan development and beyond requires moving the group processes step-by-step to engage in interviewing individuals and businesses who may locate in their region. This is chiefly done by selling many facets of a local rural region.

Leigh Cockram, Executive Director of the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance said, “The Alliance is responsible for marketing the region globally as a great place to live, work and play as they focus on recruiting new industries into the area. The **opportunity** is to ‘brand’ ourselves as a vibrant, progressive manufacturing region. We must continue to build regional **partnerships** and trust one another more every day. Along with opportunity comes **challenges** such as, **overcoming** the perception that rural is abandoned, obsolete and poor, lacks interstate infrastructure, and we must market raising educational attainment rates; not difficult times of the past.” The Southern Virginia Regional Alliance (SVRA) is a marketing partnership between Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania and Halifax counties and the cities of Martinsville and Danville. SVRA is a regional marketing partnership created to promote economic development and job creation in southern Virginia.

Attendees heard a number of speakers emphasize the importance of framing assets to help grow the economy and create jobs through innovation and competitiveness.

The Rural Center asked speakers to address best practices examples that have:

- Found consensus on things that need to be done and agreed that they could be done;
- Identified and gathered the People and the Process to turn conversation into Resources and Actions.

Assessing the realities of people and place include aligning assets, opportunities and capacity according to state policy, regional policy and local policy. Assessing jobs and workforce needs must include start-up businesses, entrepreneurial and Innovative small and large business willing to expand, as well as attracting new businesses to the region.

## Following is a Word and Picture Brief of the 2011 Virginia Rural Summit.

**Ward Stevens**, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and Chairman of the Council for Rural Virginia led the two day event.

**Senator Frank M. Ruff, Jr.**, Senate of Virginia and Chairman of the Center for Rural Virginia greeted attendees and invited them to actively participate over the next two days.



Chairman, Ward Stevens  
Ellen Davis-Council Board  
Carlyle Wimbish-Council Board



Senator Frank Ruff



Glen Sink and  
Lt. Governor Bolling

**Glen C. Sink**, Executive Director of Va Rural Center opened the event with a report to attendees of the Rural Center's accomplishments over the last year and then talked about current and future needs.

## Realities of Rural

### Economic Realities Facing Rural Virginia

Opening Keynote: **Ted W. Abernathy Jr., CECD**, Executive Director of the Southern Growth Policies Board talked about *Economic Development and Job Growth* and gave attendees an eye-opening look at where Virginia stands among the 13 Southern states that makes up SGPB. His challenge was from a state and regional perspective and can be seen in his PowerPoint presentation.

#### [Economic Realities Facing Rural Virginia](#)



Many questions for Ted!

## Realities of the Community



Laurie Moran

### Growing regional economies and creating jobs through innovation and competitiveness

**Moderator: Laurie S. Moran, CCE**, President, Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce – Laurie is president of the National Association of Workforce Boards and a Council for Rural Virginia Board Member.

#### The Honorable Bill Hazel

Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Bill Hazel attended the Rural Summit to brief attendees on health care in Virginia and to recognize **Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O., F.A.C.O.F.P.**, *Dean and Executive Vice President*, Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine – Virginia & Carolinas Campus. Each year, the American Osteopathic Foundation (AOF) recognizes an Educator of the Year to honor an individual who exemplifies the osteopathic medical profession's highest standards of excellence in teaching and long-standing contributions to academic advancement. This year's recipient was Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, D.O.

*Dr. Hazel and Dr. Tooke-Rawlins*



#### Panel

**John Rhodes**, Senior Principal - Moran, Stahl & Boyer, Lakewood Ranch, FL  
**Thomas O. Loehr**, Executive Vice President, Crosspointe, Rolls-Royce North America  
**Dr. Allen R. Perkins**, Department of Family Medicine, University of South Alabama College of Medicine, Mobile, AL

**PowerPoint: John Rhodes**  
[Economic Opportunities For Rural Virginia Through Innovation & Technology](#)



John Rhodes



Tom Loehr



Dr. Allen R. Perkins

**PowerPoint: Dr. Perkins**  
[Access and Availability of Healthcare Providers](#)

## Economic Development by Sectors

### Moderator:

Jay Poole, Principal, Common Sense Strategies  
Jay is a Center for Rural Virginia Board Member and takes an active role in contributing to the Center and to rural Virginia.

### Panel

#### Programs to Enhance Health

**Jeremy Greenfield**, Director of PAC & Advocacy, VA  
Hospital and Healthcare Association

[PowerPoint](#)



Jay Poole



#### Programs to Enhance Energy

**C. David Hudgins**, Director, Member & External Relations,  
Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC)



Jay and Diane Sutphin  
VCOM Exhibit

#### Programs to Enhance the Workforce

**David R. Lohr**, President & Executive Director,  
Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM)

[PowerPoint](#)



## Realities of the People

### People: Rural's Greatest Resource

**Moderator** - Honorable F. Woodrow (Woody) Harris  
District 4, City Council, Emporia, VA  
Center for Rural Virginia Board Member

### Panel

#### Capacity of Rural People and Rural Communities

**Karl N. Stauber**, President & CEO, Danville Regional Foundation

[PowerPoint](#)



Woody Harris, Gary Keener and Dave Whittington,  
County Administrator, Greenville County, VA

#### Opportunities for Rural People and Rural Communities

**David J. Prior**, Chancellor, The University of Virginia's College at Wise

**Shannon R. Blevins**, Director of Economic Development at UVA-Wise

Gave the presentation for Dr. Prior.



Shannon Blevins, UVA, Wise  
Jeff Merriman, Verizon



Dr. Stauber and Ellen Davis, Virginia State Director, USDA Rural  
Development and Council for Rural Virginia Board member

## Open Forum



Tom Silvestri and Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling



Lt. Governor Bolling, Barry E. DuVal, R. Bryan David

### **Linking Economic Essentials to Innovative Programs for a Competitive Advantage**

<b>Economy</b> <b>Community Capacity</b> <b>Education - Workforce Skills</b>	<b>Ag &amp; Natural Resources</b> <b>Infrastructure</b> <b>Health</b>
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**Moderator: Thomas A. Silvestri**

President and Publisher, Richmond Times-Dispatch

#### **Projected Sector and Workforce Needs**

#### **Virginia – Administration’s Policy on Economic Development**

**The Honorable Bill Bolling**

Lieutenant Governor of Virginia

[PowerPoint](#)

#### **Regional - Policy on Economic Development**

**Barry DuVal**, President, Virginia State Chamber of Commerce

#### **Local - Policy on Economic Development**

**R. Bryan David**, Executive Director, Economic Development,  
Virginia Region 2000 [PowerPoint](#)

## Rural Forum

### **The Workforce and workforce skills**

**Facilitated by: Thomas A. Silvestri**

President and Publisher, Richmond Times-Dispatch

The workforce and workforce skills session focused on advanced manufacturing, health and energy with the question:  
Where does rural Virginia stand?

The work-world is changing.

Do Virginia’s competencies and skills align with education, workforce development and economic development?

[PowerPoint](#)

#### **Questions for the attendees included:**

- What will be your key take away?
- Where does rural Virginia stand in the job creation game? Are we winning or losing?
- Does rural have the will to provide for k-16 education and workforce training to attract high-technology jobs?
- What is your advice to Va Rural Center – Where do they go from here?

### **The Honorable Edward T. “Ed” Scott Virginia House of Delegates**

Reflection ~ Day One Summary

Delegate Scott serves on the Center for Rural Virginia Board of Trustees.



Delegate Scott listens

# Networking Reception & Presentation of Rural Awards



**Basil Gooden** Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is the Awards Committee Chairman. He and Gary Keener lead the awards selection process. Basil serves on the Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors



**Gary S. Keener**, Vice President Continuing Education & Workforce Services Dabney S. Lancaster Community College - He serves on the Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors

**The Virginia Rural Summit planning committee hosted the Rural Summit Awards.**

*A Special "Thank You" to the committee members!*

Dr. Oliver McBride, Crossroads Institute  
 Woody Harris, City of Emporia  
 Dee Walton,  
 Jay Poole, Commonsense Strategies  
 Robin Sullenberger, Shenandoah Valley Partnership  
 Laurie Moran, Danville/Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce

## Council for Rural Virginia Award: Peggy Whitehead Executive Director



Blue Ridge Medical Center, serving the rural areas of Nelson and Amherst Counties. This award recognizes outstanding individual commitment and service to the advancement of rural communities and/or issues in Virginia. Contact Peggy Whitehead.  
 Beth O'Connor, Executive Director, VRHA/VRHRC accepts for Peggy

## Best Practices Award: Shenandoah Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (SVWIB)



SVWIB serves the following rural areas: Counties of Rockbridge, Alleghany, Northern Botetourt, Bath, Highland, Augusta, Rockingham, Page, Shenandoah, Frederick, Clarke, Warren, and Clifton Forge, Covington, Lexington, Buena Vista, Waynesboro, Staunton, Harrisonburg, Winchester. This award recognizes a program or institution that exemplifies commitment and service to the advancement of rural communities and/or issues in Virginia.  
 Contact Don Robin Sullenberger.



Teresa W. Walker

## Friend of the Council Award: Virginia Community Capital, Inc.

Virginia Community Capital's work covers the entire state. This award recognizes a program, institution or individual that has advocated for or aided the Council in support its mission. Contact Jane Henderson.

## From the Biscuit Maker!

## Emergen Cies

**What we need . . .** What do we "**C**" in *Emergen Cies*

**C**ollaboration

**C**ommitment – People must commit

**C**ontinuous Creativity – Innovation, discover the resources we have; be creative with how we look at and use them . . .

**C**onnectivity – Connections ~ each other, broadband, transportation, roads . . .

**C**ompetencies – Education/Workforce . . . educate people

Participate together

Make good decisions

**C**ooperation – Working together works!

**C**ash & **C**an = Resources and will

Align cash (resources) with will ("we can")

**C**ourage – If we can find the courage to do the things we need to do:

We are being **C**hallenged!

Look, see the Emerging "**C**"s !



Dr. Oliver McBride

Dr. Oliver McBride, Crossroads Institute, Galax, VA has become known as the *Rural Center's "biscuit maker"* due to an analogy he made a few years back about people who are waiting for the biscuits to bake. He determined and rightly so that Virginia's rural leaders are the Biscuit Makers . . . not the ones who wait for the biscuits to bake. His in-depth analogies have become something to look forward to. Oliver is a past chairman of the Council, currently serves as Advisor to the Council Board of Directors and is a board member.

# Bringing It All Together

## Recognition of Virginia Economic Developers and Planning District Commissions

### Framing Rural Assets and Rural Realities

#### Finding Solutions to Create Action

**Liz Povar, Director, Business Development** [PowerPoint](#)

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

#### Panel Representatives

**Leigh Cockram, Southside** [PowerPoint](#)

Executive Director, Southern VA Regional Alliance

**Robin Sullenberger, Valley** [PowerPoint](#)

CEO, Shenandoah Valley Partnership

**Shannon R. Blevins, Southwest** [PowerPoint](#)

Director of Economic Development, UVa-Wise



### Open Forum

**Taking It Home . . .  
Putting Plans into Action**

**Taking It Home . . . Putting Plans into Action**

**Moderator, Mary Ruth Burton**, President, Burton Fuller Management

Burton~Fuller Management is a woman-owned business founded in 1987. The combined experience of our consultants brings a vast wealth of knowledge and expertise to your organization. Burton~Fuller Management works with individuals, teams, and organizations to help them function to their fullest potential within changing organizations.

Source: <http://burtonfuller.com/who.htm>

Mary Ruth used the struggles and success of Virginia Commonwealth University's basketball team's trip to the final four to verify that defining the problem and looking for opportunity to overcome difficulty are the assets needed to deal successfully.

**Challenge** from Mary Ruth Burton

*"Pull back the blinders and think regionally, if not globally"*

VCU's basketball team overcame!

It took them to the final four.

- They overcame apathy
- They learned how to work and deal in crisis
- They learned to moderate
- They used their talent level

### Panel

**Framing Issues . . .  
Building Strong Partnerships**

**Linkage of workforce, entrepreneurship  
and industry**



**Bobby Thompson**, Sr. Vice President for Administration & Treasurer, Ferrum College

Bobby spoke of the momentum and high level of excitement on the Ferrum College campus due to a 60% increase in enrollment and new construction getting underway.

**Quote from the Roanoke Times:**

Many of the projects have been in the works for years, but funding and timing finally fell into place recently, said Bobby Thompson, vice president of administration and treasurer.

"While other private schools are trying to maintain enrollment, Ferrum is growing," Thompson said. "We feel blessed that we have enjoyed several years of growth, which has resulted in growth in facilities and programs."

Bobby's theme was reoccurring throughout the rural Summit - **"partnerships."** He asked attendees, *"look at what your assets really are - identify them and determine if they can be developed."*



**Bridging Rural and Urban**

**What we see ~ what we need**

**Stephen W. Williams**, Executive Director, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and serves on the Council for Rural Virginia Board of Directors.

**Framing Issues ~ Creating a Competitive Advantage**

**Natalie Slate**, Deputy Administrator, Greensville County, VA  
“A Ready Park”



Companies move much faster than in the past when making site location decisions. That’s why they want sites that are ready-to-go. Certifying a site lets them know that your site offers the lowest possible risk. Ready sites indicate that economic development has done the pre-work; understand ownership issues, engineering issues and are attuned to resolve obstacles. They know the cost and time to bring infrastructure to the site.

Standard certification programs address three major items.

- Control of the site.
- Designs in place to be fully served by utilities.
- Developable and free of all easements and right of way issues including pre-clearance from permitting agencies.

**Participating in Policy Decisions**

**Takeaway ~ Regional Action**

**Robert A. Crum, Jr.**, Executive Director,  
Richmond Regional Planning District  
Commission

[PowerPoint](#)



**A. Fletcher Mangum**

**Mangum Economic Consulting**



**Strategic Decisions  
Economic Consequences**

The challenge - Dealing with the “Realities of Rural”?

Contact Fletcher at: 50 Pear St., Richmond , VA 23223

**Phone:** 804.771.5338

**Email:** [fletcher@mangum-consulting.com](mailto:fletcher@mangum-consulting.com)

**Stephen W. Williams continued .... from pg-6**

Stephen noted that Charlottesville and Albemarle County are about 50% Urban and 50% Rural.

Rural projects have their own unique needs – one size doesn’t fit all, but

It is important that:

- Capable people address the needs.
- They ask themselves; “are we using the resources we have the way they’re intended to be used?”
- Are we willing to looking at issues in a clear cut way to determine what needs to be done?
- Are we willing to do what it takes to carry out that plan?

**Virginia’s Rural Challenge  
The Governor’s Vision**

**Martin Kent**, Chief of  
Staff to Governor  
**Robert F. McDonnell**



**What’s ahead for rural  
Virginia?**

The Chief of Staff spoke of the Governor’s efforts to build relationships regionally and statewide, and in new jobs creation and workforce training needs. He made reference to Mary Rae Carter, Virginia’s first Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Trade for Rural Economic Development and how she has traveled the state reaching out to rural people in Southside, Southwest, and the Eastern Shore. Additionally, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, Todd Haymore is holding town hall meetings around the state, and other cabinet secretaries are reaching out by sector to areas with specific needs. (i.e., transportation, health and agriculture).

**Special Drawing** - A Special Drawing was held for a two night complimentary stay with dinner for two in the Glen Restaurant at the Wyndham Virginia Crossing Hotel and Conference Center. The vacation give-away was compliments of the Rural Summit’s host hotel . . . and part of Va Rural Center’s “Thank you” for attending the 2011 Rural Summit.

*The winner was Crystal Tyler-Mackey, Virginia Cooperative Extension Service  
“Thank You to Wyndham Virginia Crossings” and to Council and Center Board members!*

**Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance (SAFER), Southern Growth Policies Board, the Institute for Advanced Learning & Research, and the Center for Rural Virginia**

On September 13, 2011, the Southeast Agriculture & Forestry Energy Resources Alliance (SAFER), Southern Growth Policies Board, the Institute for Advanced Learning & Research, and the Center for Rural Virginia hosted the Virginia State Policy Dialogue on the Bioeconomy. This meeting held in conjunction with the Center for Rural Virginia’s annual conference brought together over 45 people to talk about how the state of Virginia can take advantage of the economic development opportunities of the bioeconomy. The white paper, “[The Opportunities & Challenges of Virginia’s Bioeconomy](#),” is the result of that meeting.

Access the power points at: <http://saferalliance1.wordpress.com/2011/10/03/the-bioeconomy-in-virginia/>  
[... top](#)

