



Virginia Rural Leadership Institute

PRESENTED BY THE



Rural Center

Partnership of the Center for Rural
Virginia and the Council for Rural Virginia

2023 Cohort

Community Impact Projects

John Patrick Clair

Marion

Town of Marion, Chief of Police

Title: Stratified Policing Crime Reduction

Goal: To reduce the impact of crime on residents of our community



Donna J. Dagner

Victoria

Community Resources Services, Executive Director

Title: Relocate and Expand the Community Resource Services Food Pantry

Goal: Identify gaps to address inequities and increase economic mobility through construction of a new facility that will offer wrap around services, serve as a community hub, and address other barriers, mental health, physical health, and housing.

Community Resource Services, Inc.
Brings Food & Knowledge
To Community in Need



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Jackie Davis

Farnham

Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board, Executive Director

Title: Community Youth Project

Goal: Provide individuals with resources to help reduce the dependency on community supports



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Jessica K. Drake

Suffolk

Filanthropic Consultancy, Founder & Principal

**Title: Refreshing Middle School
Technology Education in Rural Public
Schools**

**Goal: Research, select, purchase, install,
and implement 1 Pilot Middle School
Technology Lab in Public Schools and
Plan Full Implementation in a rural
Middle School**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Jarrold Elwell

Doswell

Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Community Development Regional Manager

**Title: CDC/CDFI Community
Readiness Assessment**

**Goal: Support rural communities
in determining if there is need
and support to create a CDC or
CDFI in their community.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

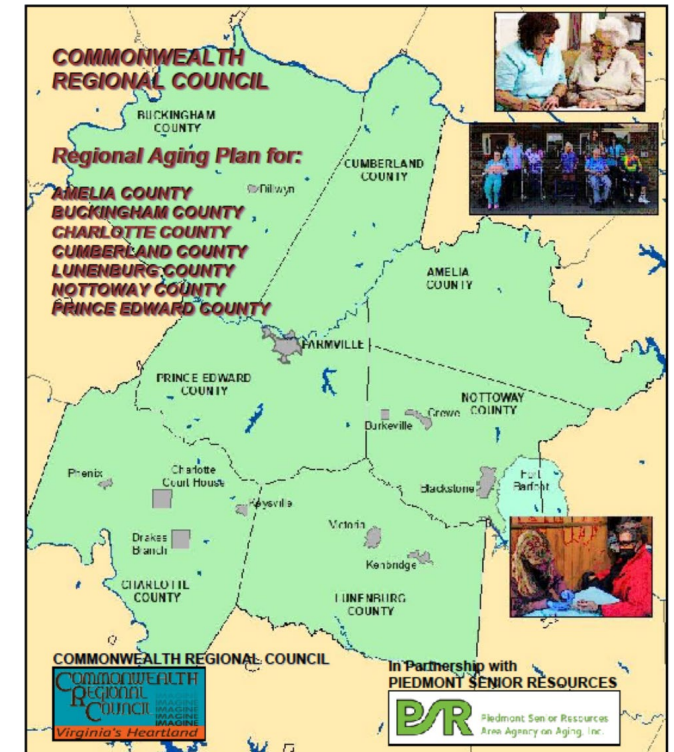
Todd Fortune

Farmville

Commonwealth Regional Council, Deputy Director

Title: **Regional Aging Plan for Commonwealth Regional Council**

Goal: **Develop a resource for the region's Area Agency on Aging to identify gaps in service to the region's elderly population and strategies to address those gaps.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Olivia Garrett

Henry County

New College Institute, Director of Institutional Advancement

Title: Martinsville Young Professionals

Goal: To engage young (or young-at-heart) professionals in Martinsville-Henry County in professional development and networking in order to better recruit and retain a strong workforce and community.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Josh Gillespie

Louisa County

County of Louisa, Director of Community Development

Title: **Country Store Restorations**

Goal: Inventory old country stores and their current use(s) with the goal to highlight their historical and community significance with the goal to restore them to active use. The inventory will catalogue their physical, legal and market conditions, and the opportunities and factors in a restoration.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

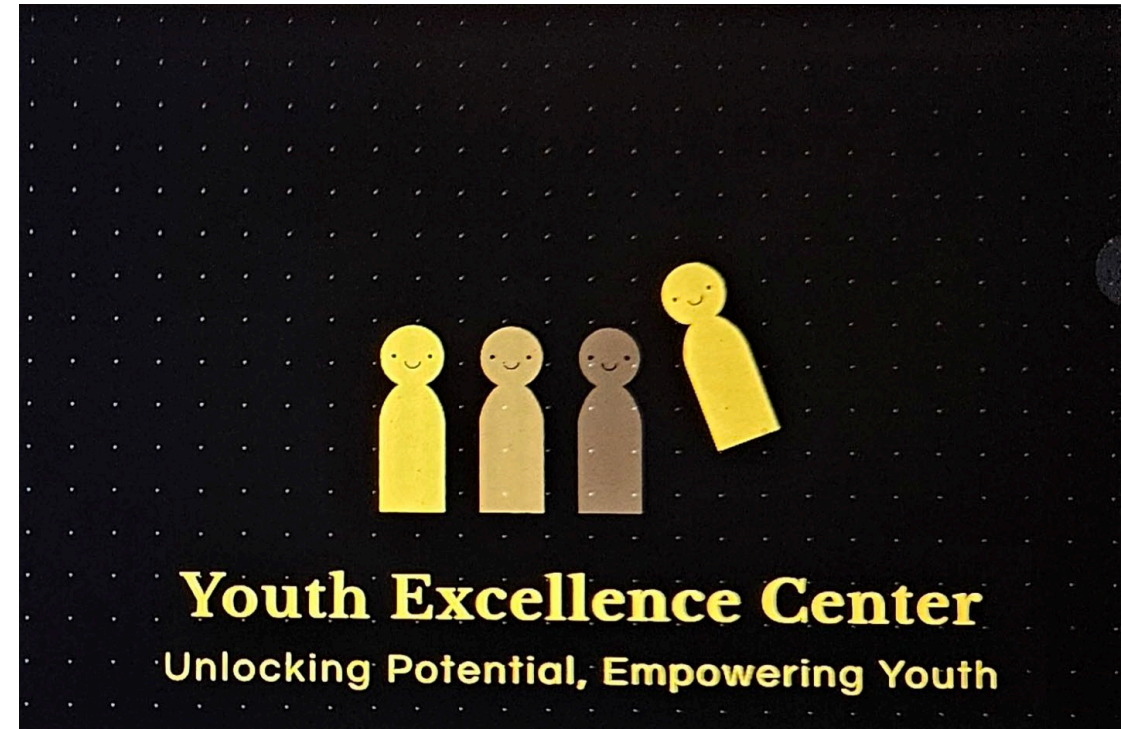
Courtney L. Harper

South Hill

Building Blocks to Success, LLC, CEO and Occupational Therapist

Title: Youth Excellence Center

Goal: Increase the accessibility of our programs and services to empower 90% of youth participants aged 5-21, including those with disabilities, with essential life skills, emotional intelligence, career readiness, and executive functioning capabilities within the next year.



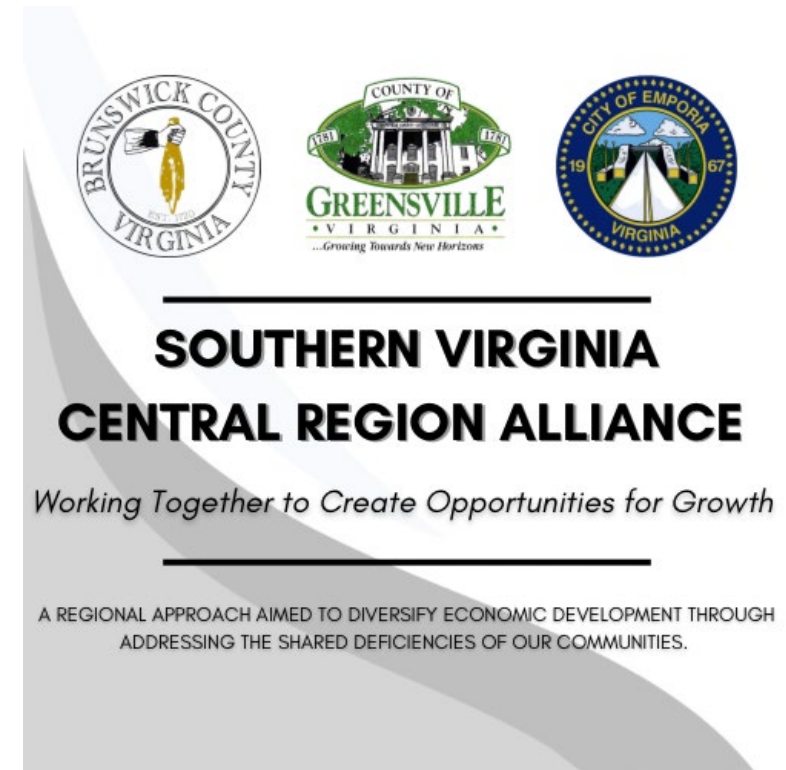
Darren Hays

Freeman

Spotts Fain Consulting, Government Relations Assistant

Title: **Regionalism: Workforce and Economic Development**

Goal: **Create a plan to work collectively with the City of Emporia, Greensville County and Brunswick County to create a better workforce and economic development opportunities.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

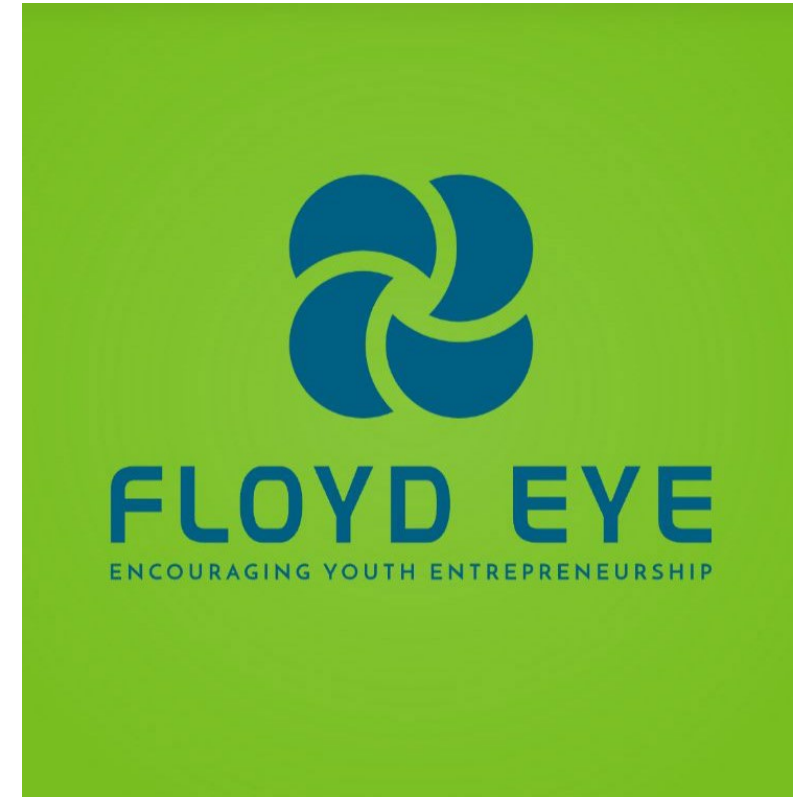
Tabitha Hodge

Christiansburg (Floyd County)

Assistant Director of Community and Economic Development

Title: Floyd EYE: Encouraging Youth Entrepreneurship

Goal: Launch an 8-week program by Summer of 2024 with targeted participation of 15 young entrepreneurs with at least 6 participating in the business pitch competition at the end of the program for an opportunity to win prize money for their business.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

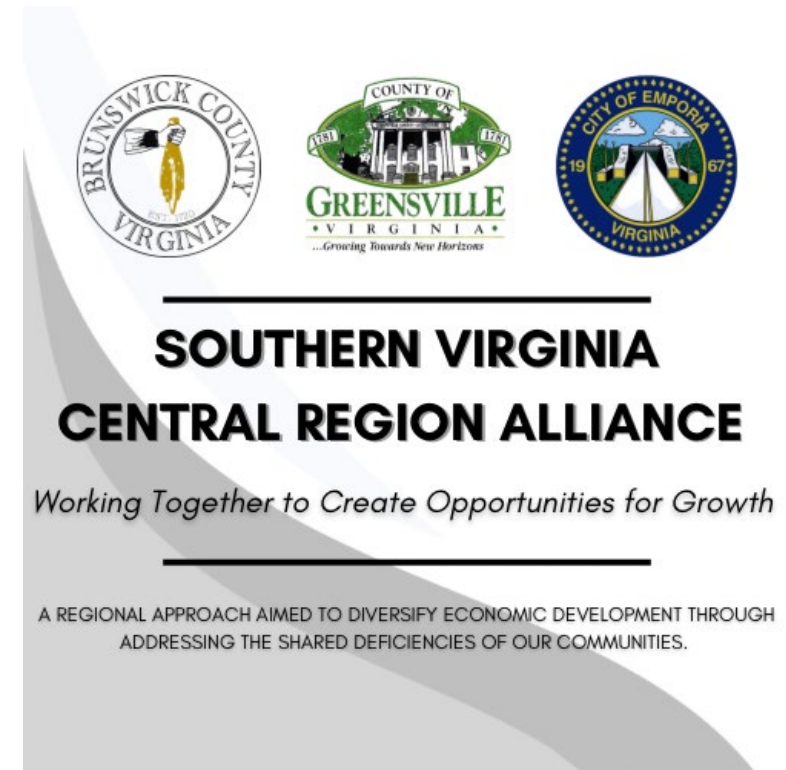
William Johnson, III

Emporia

City of Emporia, City Manager

Title: **Regionalism: Workforce and Economic Development**

Goal: **Create a plan to work collectively with the City of Emporia, Greensville County and Brunswick County to create a better workforce and economic development opportunities.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Stephanie Lillard

Luray

Shenandoah County Business Retention & Expansion Manager

Title: Improving Luray's Entrepreneurial Landscape

Goal: Enacted Ordinance as proposed that in turn fosters expanded and new development that is most complimentary and responsive in Luray's business corridor.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Jamie Lynn Anderson Lindley

South Boston

Comfort Systems USA MidAtlantic, Outreach, Recruiting, & Training Manager

Title: CTE Stakeholder Summit

Goal: To help bridge the gap between key members of a child's K12 Education Experience and the opportunities outside of a 4 year degree path. Provide students an overview of various programs within CTE, and introducing them to local career opportunities that benefit from the CTE program.

CTE Educator's Summit

COLLEGE WAS ONCE SEEN AS STEAK WHILE CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION WAS SEEN AS HAMBURGER. TODAY, COLLEGE IS STILL STEAK BUT CTE HAS BECOME LOBSTER. IN THE IDEAL K-12 SCHOOL SETTING, ALL STUDENTS WOULD BE ENGAGED IN HIGH QUALITY 'SURF N' TURF.'

-MICHAEL ARMBUSTER



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Vanesa Livingstone

Warsaw

Richmond County Department of Social Services Director

Title: Community Youth Project

Goal: Provide individuals with resources to help reduce the dependency on community supports



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Craig McCroskey

Bassett

United Way of Henry County & Martinsville,
Director of Financial Stability Programs

Title: **Financial Opportunity Center®
for MHC**

Goal: **Building lasting relationships
with community members that have
historically struggled to get to a point
in their financial lives where they are
able to save money and build wealth.**



Angela McPhaul

Waverly

Town of Waverly Mayor

**Title: Miles B. Carpenter Museum Artist
in Residency**

**Goal: The Town is working to renovate
and furnish the home to accommodate
artists. The home will include a kitchen,
full bathroom, bedroom, living space and
studio. I plan to have a contract in place
with an artist by the summer of 2024.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Nick Minor

King George County

King George County Director of Economic Development

Title: King George Economic Development Strategic Plan

Goal: A three year, five objective strategic plan that involves the communities economic development stakeholders, agreeing upon targeted goals that will set the framework for the County's economic development success.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Alex Rendon

Henrico County

Dominion Energy, External Affairs Representative

Title: Careers in Solar Events

Goal: Provide a clear look at career pathways in the solar industry to high school and college students in rural Southside Virginia by hosting solar career fairs in the region.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

AJ Robinson

Tazewell County

Tazewell County Director of Communications and Tourism

**Title: VRLTA - SWVA Region
Chapter**

**Goal: Active chapter in SWVA of
VRLTA**



VIRGINIA
RESTAURANT • LODGING • TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION
HEART OF APPALACHIA CHAPTER

2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Jennifer Schmack

Fluvanna County

Fluvanna County Director of Economic Development

Title: Fluvanna/Louisa Farm Tour

Goal: Increase Awareness of Agritourism Opportunities in Fluvanna and Louisa Counties by conducting interactive, experiential farm tours.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Beth Simms

Patrick County

Patrick County, County Administrator

**Title: Local Government Youth
Development Council**

**Goal: To engage Patrick County's
youth in local government
processes and plant the seed for
future careers**

Local Government Youth Development Council



#pcpride

Kim Smith

Russell County

Heart of Appalachia, Executive Director

Title: Three Rivers Destination Center

Goal: Develop the Three River Destination Center, near the Town of St. Paul, which will serve the 7 Coalfield Counties and City of Norton by guiding tourists further into the region to increase the estimated annual tourism value of \$253M in this region.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Joe Sumner

Martinsville

New College Institute, Executive Director

Title: IndustryReady

Goal: Provide 1 week of fundamental skills training to 15 high school students to prepare them for entry-level industry positions and expose participants to industry careers.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

Rhett Weiss

Farmville

DEALTEK, Ltd, Chairman & CEO

Title: **Building a Solid Future for Rural Virginia**

Goal: **By the end of this academic year, identify and add experiential components to the state-approved Real Estate Course curriculum, to be ready for the 2024-2025 school year to: (1) Launch in at least one rural Virginia public school system; (2) Enroll around 15 - 25 high school seniors; and (3) Pursue the first real estate project.**



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

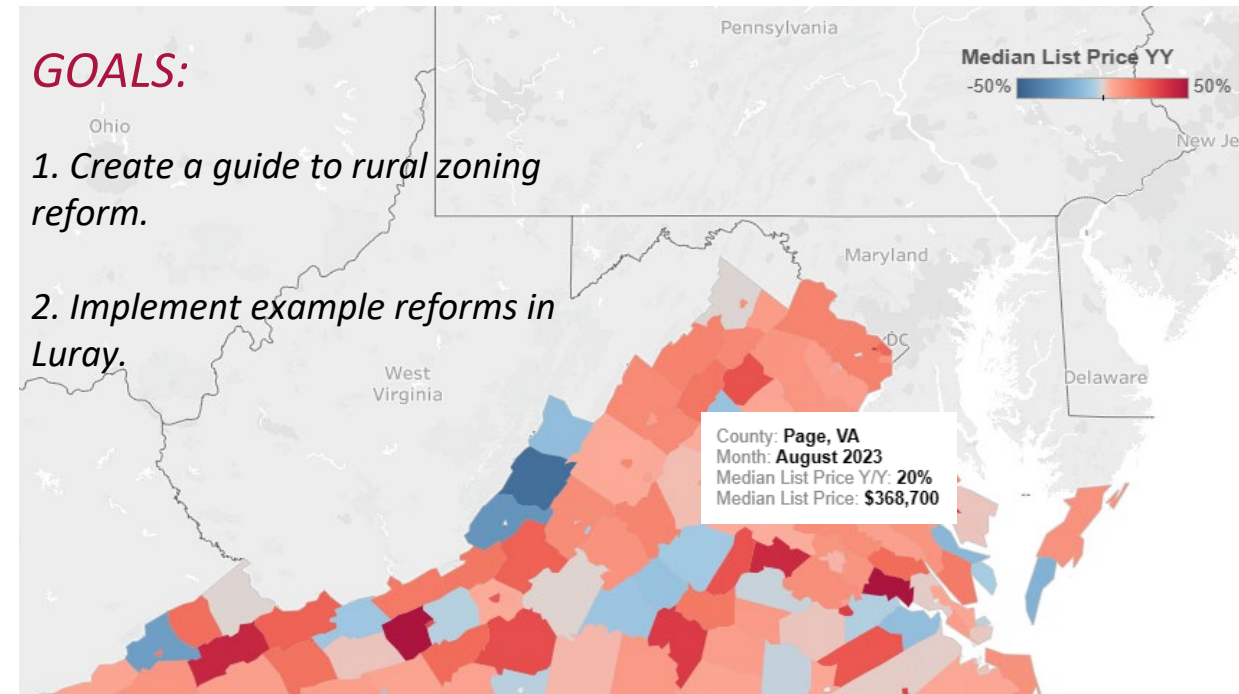
Alex White

Luray

Town of Luray Councilman

Title: **Keeping Rural Areas Affordable**

Goal: **Issue a research-driven decision brief to create a guide to rural zoning and implement example reforms in Luray.**



Dr. Kendra Wood

Aylett

Rappahannock Community College, Dean of Strategic Enrollment Management

Title: Creating a Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula College and Career Network

Goal: Create a network of employers connected to Rappahannock Community College to collaborate on connecting students to internships, work-based learning opportunities and careers. One tangible outcome related to this goal is to facilitate a specialized trades career fair in spring/summer 2024.

Specialized Trades Career and Mentor Program

Dr. Kendra Wood

• History and Context

- Rappahannock Community College
 - Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula Regions
 - VCCS and State of VA Priorities
 - Title III Grant
 - DOL Grant
- Expansion of Welding, Diesel, HVAC and Healthcare workforce training programs

• Goals

- Specialized Trades Career Fair
- Career Mentor Program
 - Industry Leaders/Students
- Increased Internship, Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship Opportunities for Rappahannock Community College Students



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects

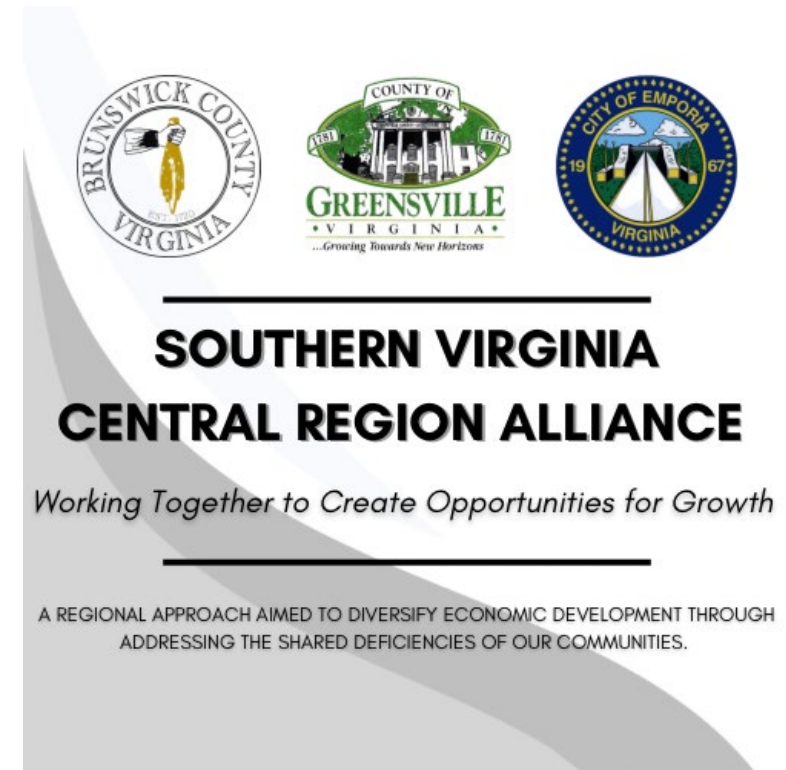
Dr. Terrence M. Wood

Greensville County

Greensville County Director of Human Resources

Title: Regionalism: Workforce and Economic Development

Goal: Create a plan to work collectively with the City of Emporia, Greensville County and Brunswick County to create a better workforce and economic development opportunities.



2023 VRLI Cohort Experience & Community Impact Projects