



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
**GROWTH &
OPPORTUNITY**
IN EACH REGION

COLLABORATION
INSPIRATION
SUCCESS

November 26, 2024

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Next Submission Deadline: December 20, 2024 by 5 p.m

There is \$1.5 million available for Region 2 grants, with up to \$250,000 for planning grants.

[Learn more on our website.](#)

Mark Your Calendar for Upcoming Meetings

December 5, 2024: GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting, 3:30-4:30 PM

[Join Zoom webinar.](#)

Webinar ID: 898 3738 1050

Passcode: 859144

January 29, 2025: GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting, 1-3 PM, Roanoke VA.

April 23, 2025: GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meeting, 1-3 PM, Roanoke VA.

Meet a GOVA Region 2 Grantee: Angela Joyner, Developing IT & Cybersecurity Certification Pipeline to Advance Cluster Growth



Angela Joyner spent the first part of her career in marketing and general management, working at Hanes, Hallmark, Mattel, and ConAgra Foods. In 2016, she stepped into the role of executive director for the Center for Career and Talent Development at Radford University, and since then, has served as the university's chief innovation officer, interim chief of staff, interim vice president for enrollment management, and now as the vice president for economic development and corporate education.

Joyner has a bachelor's degree in textile and apparel management from North Carolina State University, a Master of Business Administration from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, and a Ph.D. in organizational leadership from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

Joyner's GO Virginia Region 2 project is in collaboration with New River Community College, Virginia Tech, the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council, VERGE, and Onward NRV.

1. Over the course of your career, what is your proudest accomplishment?

One of my proudest accomplishments is reimagining the Center for Career and Talent Development at Radford University. Another is having the opportunity to create The HUB at Radford for Economic Development. I am proud of taking my previous experience in business and marketing and leveraging that to build partnerships for our students and Radford University in the region. I love helping students dream big and see what's possible in their careers as well as having a positive impact on our communities.

2. What is your favorite part of your job as vice president for economic development and corporate education at Radford University?

My favorite part of my role is connecting people to the university and empowering our students through internships and work-based learning opportunities. I also enjoy helping to build thriving communities in Southwest Virginia and beyond.

3. Can you talk about the inspiration behind your GO Virginia Region 2 project and why creating an IT and cybersecurity certification pipeline is important?

As we thought about both the needs of our students and of the state, we saw emerging IT and cybersecurity jobs were continuing to grow across Virginia. We saw an opportunity to increase student awareness of the importance of certifications while also better understanding the needs of employers. That inspired us to think about building a certification center, which would be in closer proximity to Radford University, New River Community College, and Virginia Tech. The location of the center would remove barriers for students who would otherwise have to travel to Roanoke or Wytheville to obtain career changing certifications. We also wanted to open the certification center up to the wider community.

The other opportunity we saw was giving our faculty who are training the next generation the chance to engage with industry experts to learn what's happening in IT and cybersecurity as we're developing these talent pipelines. This would allow our industry experts to inform curriculum as well as potentially hire students as interns in the field of IT.

4. What do you hope the impact of your GO Virginia project will be?

I hope we significantly increase the number of students coming out of their IT and cybersecurity programs with certifications pre-graduation and that they're filling the jobs that the commonwealth needs. Secondly, I'd love to find other opportunities to expand the certifications, licenses, or credential offerings that can help upskill our current workforce to meet the demands of jobs in the future.

5. What is the most memorable place you have ever visited?

My favorite place I've visited would be Florence, Italy. I love the culture, the food, the language, and the art history. I also love Cape Town, South Africa for very similar reasons in terms of the culture, the wildlife, and the people.

6. What hobbies and activities do you like to do in your spare time?

I have a seven-year-old daughter, and I love spending time with her and our two puppies. We enjoy traveling, hiking, camping, backpacking, and being outdoors. We feel incredibly blessed to live in this region of the state and enjoy the natural resources it offers.

7. What was the last book you read that you would recommend?

Daisy Darker by Alice Feeney. It's a psychological thriller.

Meet a GOVA Region 2 Council Member: Amy White, Virginia Western Community College



Amy White is the Dean of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Workforce Solutions at Virginia Western Community College.

Before White worked in education, she worked for a consulting firm in Charlottesville focused on environmental toxicology. She has taught biology at Hollins University, James Madison University, and Virginia Western Community College.

White has a bachelor's degree in biology from James Madison University, a master's in microbiology and immunology from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Certificate in Field Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She grew up in Botetourt County.

1. What is your proudest accomplishment over the course of your career?

My proudest accomplishment would be the team of faculty we have at Virginia Western and some of the programs we have started, namely programs that were not in place prior to me working at this level. We have started an agriculture program as well as a biotechnology program. I'm really proud to bring these programs and these opportunities to our community.

2. What made you interested in working in education?

It was rather on accident. I am very passionate about biology. I started teaching at Hollins just to try it out, and I ended up loving it. I had two wonderful years teaching at my alma mater, James Madison University. It was super exciting to be teaching there, but I was living in Botetourt County and the commute wasn't sustainable. I applied to an open position at Virginia Western and was fortunate enough to be offered a full-time role. I quickly realized the power of the community college, which I had not been exposed to prior to getting the job.

3. What is your favorite part of your role at Virginia Western Community College?

The faculty I get to work with. They're so passionate about the content they deliver. It's powerful that we have a team so committed to excellence in STEM education and that we offer opportunities to students that may not be seeing those opportunities elsewhere.

4. What projects are you currently working on at Virginia Western?

One of the most exciting projects is a merger where we are bringing workforce into our academic programming. We're calling it a "one-door" approach to education. I like to think we offer a spectrum of opportunities. I am working on establishing workflows that offer students a seamless opportunity to better themselves and reach a new academic level, whether that's a certificate they can use in the workplace, a degree they can use to transfer to a four-year school, or something in between.

I'm also working on a regional biotechnology effort and creating pathways and opportunities through that program. In this project we have been able to enhance our programming at the College, as well as participate in multiple outreach activities with our K-12 partners.

Lastly, we received a [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) grant](#) to create curriculum and career pathways for agriculture technicians. Through this grant, we are merging our agriculture program with our mechatronics program to offer students the opportunity to learn the skills needed for technicians that work in agriculture. Food security is very near and dear to my heart, and this is a really exciting opportunity for future students.

5. I saw you received the [STEM Goes Red "Roanoke Women in STEM" Award](#) from the American Heart Association. What was your reaction to hearing you had received this award and what does it mean to you?

I was very humbled and flattered. I work very hard to make sure Virginia Western is well-known in the community, but I don't do any of this work for the accolades. To have that honor bestowed on me was a real accomplishment, and it was very touching because I loved working on the STEM Goes Red program in conjunction with the AHA.

6. What are you looking forward to learning more about as a GO Virginia Region 2 council member?

One thing that excites me about this work and this initiative is that I like to think and work regionally. I look forward to seeing what is going on in other parts of the region and offer support where I can.

7. What is one of your favorite parts of living in GO Virginia Region 2?

The outdoor assets. I'm very agriculturally focused, and we have such amazing natural resources and beautiful landscapes.

8. What activities and hobbies do you like to do in your spare time?

I am an avid gardener. I love to do that on our farm in Botetourt. My children are very interested in our family farm as well, and I like to support that in every way that I can.

9. What is the most memorable place you've ever visited?

The Galapagos Islands. The rawness, primitiveness, and wildness of that land was life-changing.

Thanks for Celebrating GO Virginia Region 2 With Us!

GO Virginia Region 2 held events to celebrate success in Blacksburg, Roanoke, and Lynchburg. The events were a place for Region 2 grantees, council members, and the community to gather and learn more about the program and its impact.

November 1, 2024: Blacksburg Celebrate Success event at the Virginia Tech Data & Decisions Building



(From left) Tatyana SaintHilaire, student ambassador for the Blue Ridge Partnership for Health Science Careers and Emmalee Wagner, project coordinator for the GOVA Region 2 Talent Pathways Initiative speak with Emily Gibson, director of local government and community relations for Virginia Tech.

November 7, 2024: Roanoke Celebrate Success event at Virginia Western Community College



(From left) Marc Nelson, director of economic development for the City of Roanoke; Erin Burcham, president of Verge; Raymond Smoot, GO Virginia Region 2 Council member and founding chair; and William E. Amos, chair of the Region 2 council, talk with one another at the Roanoke event.

November 13, 2024: Lynchburg Celebrate Success event at Randolph College



Attendees at the Lynchburg Celebrate Success event watch the ribbon cutting for a new robotics lab at Randolph College [that was funded by GO Virginia](#).

Region 2 In the News

['Curious Conversations' podcast: James Harder talks about emerging tech and entrepreneurship](#) (Virginia Tech News)

[Project providing clean manufacturing space comes to Roanoke](#) (Cardinal News)

[Randolph holds ribbon cutting for new robotics lab](#) (Randolph College News)

[Randolph receives Go Virginia funding for new major](#) (Randolph College News)

[Tech entrepreneurship takes root](#) (Virginia Tech News)
