

Conference Center, 3700 Candler Mountain Rd, Lynchburg, VA 24502

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://viriniatech.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN__kolZuINRxen2VYMxyAcRA

October 7, 2021: New River Valley Regional Meeting, 3:30-5:00 PM, Concept Room, Suite 2018, in the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, 1880 Pratt Dr, Blacksburg, VA 24060

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://viriniatech.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_fDc3aSwRTVC41nwSHvukZA

GO Virginia Region 2 Council Meetings

October 21, 2021: GO Virginia Region 2 Executive Committee Meeting, 1-3 PM, Room 709 at the Roanoke Higher Education Center, 108 N Jefferson St, Roanoke, VA 24016

October 27, 2021: GO Virginia Region 2 Full Council Meeting, 1-3 PM, at the Shenandoah Room of The Hotel Roanoke, 110 Shenandoah Ave NE, Roanoke, Virginia 24016

Next Submission Deadline, October 1, 2021

The deadline to submit your GO Virginia Region 2 proposals for this quarter is October 1, 2021. For FY 2022, there are \$2.2 million in implementation grant funds available for Region 2 focused projects, and additional statewide competitive funds are available for multi-regional proposals. There is very limited Region 2 money available for Enhanced Capacity Building (planning) projects. Relaxed match requirements of 2:1 with a waived local match remain in effect during quarter one; however, local participation is still required.

Learn more on our website: <https://cece.vt.edu/GOVAR2/RequestforProposals.html>.

Meet GOVA Region 2 Grantees: Christopher Bryant and Jason Ferguson, Central Virginia Community College CTE Academy

The Central Virginia Community College CTE Academy is a GO Virginia Region 2 project that is delivering necessary workforce training for individuals in Central Virginia Community College's service region. I spoke with Christopher Bryant, Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Central Virginia Community College, and Jason Ferguson, Associate Vice President of Professional & Career Studies at Central Virginia Community College, about their project.



1. What is your career background and what led you to your current role?

CB: I have been in marketing and non-profit work for all of my career. Being able to gather resources to provide opportunity to those in need is important to me.

JF: My background is in public safety, and I have been involved in many aspects including law enforcement, fire services, and EMS. I came to Central Virginia Community College in 2005 to run the public safety education programs and in doing so, gained a better understanding of how to plug workforce-related activities into college's academic side.

2. What gave you the idea for this project?

CB: The idea goes back to more than a decade in this region. In this area, we have a great need for developing a pipeline for talent. Our president, Dr. John Capps, is very in tune with the leaders of this community and region. Everybody leans on us because Central Virginia Community College is well-positioned to be in the middle of the training pipeline. This initiative truly is Dr. Capps' idea, but he would say it is the region's need that brought this project to life.

3. How does this project hope to address the challenges of retaining talent in the region?

JF: We want to be a hub to connect students, getting them educated, trained, and placed in jobs to serve the local workforce. The best way to retain talent is by working together. We will align students with some of our businesses, helping them find opportunities and jobs that fit their skill sets best. When they realize they can find opportunity right here in the Greater Lynchburg area, they know they need to look no further.

4. What are some examples of the skills and certifications students will learn through the workforce academy?

CB: We did a two-year planning study prior to applying for the GO Virginia grant. In that study, we brought industry and community leaders to the table to help us plan for the regional CTE Academy, which put us in a good position. Those leaders suggested dedicating more time to the soft skills required for basic employment, including interviewing well and showing up on time. We also heard about the specific training needed in the area.

JF: The critical industries our credential programs are focused on include mechatronics, computer networking, IT, cybersecurity, machine tool welding, and electrical and industrial maintenance. There are several embedded credentials, which means when students complete academic courses, they may be able to get certain certifications as well, including MT1, computer numeric control, and National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER). To expand soft skills, we are in the process of adding SkillsUSA to our curriculum.

The goal for us is to make sure everyone knows Career and Technical Education is a viable career path. For so long, we've promoted academia and four-year degrees as the standard, but there are so many different opportunities where people can get trained and go into the workforce quickly. The CTE Academy's certifications and credentials will lead to that result.

5. What have you accomplished through your project so far?

CB: Even though we've done planning, we've just gotten started on the GO Virginia portion of the project. We've hired a Coordinator of Business Partnerships and a Coordinator of CTE Initiatives, who are directly accountable for the work that needs to be done. We have also held our first general stakeholder's meeting, which far exceeded our expectations. That meeting had around 150 people on the call, including local CEOs, presidents, and superintendents.

JF: The right people were at that stakeholder's meeting, and you could see the excitement it generated.

6. What do you plan to accomplish with your project within the next year?

JF: We're trying to increase enrollment, the number of credentials produced, and business involvement, which will lead to more talent that's readily available. We want Central Virginia Community College to be the education institution people think of when they need job and skills training.

7. What organizations have you partnered with and what do you enjoy most about working with them?

CB: We are most adjoined with the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, which serves as our chamber for this geographic area. We've worked with Virginia Career Works, our local employment engine that finds under or unemployed jobs in the region. The local planning district commission, along with investing their time and talent, stepped up to do the 1/3 match. We also work with industry leaders and our K-12 partner schools, including the superintendents for all five of our local school districts. There are hundreds of groups represented in those K-12 partners and industries, and they're some of our favorites to work with.

8. So far, what has been your favorite part of being a GOVA Grantee?

CB: The GO Virginia resources have given us the ability to focus our time and energy on what we truly believe will move the needle for job creation and career retention in the area. It's great knowing we've got a supporter in our back pocket that will make sure we have the resources we need.

9. What advice would you give to a student who was unsure what they wanted to do for a career?

CB: That's the beauty of our community college system and what Central Virginia Community College is tasked with doing. After you receive a certification, you can immediately start the next step and get another stackable certification if you decide that's a career path you enjoy. If you didn't like what you had started, you would only have invested several weeks of your time, and you can change courses. We are the grounds for career exploration; we can help you with your pathway, regardless of what it looks like now.

10. What hobbies/activities do you like to do in your spare time?

CB: I love golf and volleyball. I also enjoy anything music-related, so singing and dancing are fun for me. Most importantly, I love the outdoors; I do a lot of camping, hiking, and boating with my sons.

JF: Spending time with family and close friends. It's important to me to keep those relationships strong.

Meet a GOVA Region 2 Council Member: Pat Huber, President of New River Community College



1. What was one of the best lessons you learned in college?

I majored in English at Emory and Henry College, and one of the best lessons I learned was organization and time management. Being an English major, there are lots of writing and reading assignments, and so I learned how to prioritize and accomplish tasks.

2. What made you interested in working in higher education?

I had always wanted to be a teacher when I grew up. After getting my Master's Degree from West Virginia University in secondary education, I taught English at Pulaski County High School. I also started teaching a night class at New River Community as an adjunct and fell in love. I myself am a community college graduate from Wytheville Community College, so I was familiar with the community college system and was excited to have the opportunity to teach. It's not just about being in higher education for me – it's about being in the community college segment. That's what I love.

3. What is your favorite part of being president of New River Community College?

The people -- students, faculty, staff, and our community. I enjoy being part of the vibrancy of a community college campus and the connection we have with the surrounding area.

4. Is there an accomplishment you are most proud of in your time at New River Community College?

I've worked here full-time for over twenty-five years. When I look over my time here, I would say I am most proud of the can-do attitude and the teamwork across the campus as we serve the needs of our students and the people of the New River Valley. If I had to cite a particular incident since my presidency, I would say it's what we're doing right now: educating through the pandemic and staying true to our mission of teaching and learning, even in difficult circumstances.

5. What made you interested in serving on the GO Virginia Region 2 Council?

I received a call from one of the council members asking me if I would want to serve on the council. I was familiar with the big picture of GO Virginia, and when I began reading some of the documents, I became more and more interested. Part of what I enjoy about GO Virginia is the regionalism piece.

The community college system is a prime example of how regionalism works. In 1966, the Virginia community college system was founded, and a network of 23 community colleges was created across the

state. The community colleges were founded under the idea that any resident in the state of Virginia should be able to reach an institution of higher education within a 45-minute drive.

Within GO Virginia Region 2, we have the New River Valley, Roanoke Valley, Alleghany Highlands, and the Lynchburg region, and in each of those areas sits a community college. I'm proud that the community colleges are recognized as assets in the growth and sustainability of our region. I believe in the regional approach, while still recognizing and appreciating the distinct differences of each area.

6. What skills have you found important in your role as a GO Virginia Region 2 council member?

A few skills include taking a proactive approach and defining the needs of the region for the future. An ability to analyze data and then connect those ideas to the big picture is also important.

7. Do you have a favorite part or memory from being on the GOVA Region 2 Council?

I enjoy the networking opportunities with people from areas outside of the New River Valley. We're involved now in updating our Growth and Diversification plan, and I'm enjoying participating in and learning from those workshop sessions. Also, I have liked thinking through how the ideas, data, and opportunities from GO Virginia translate into what we do in our programming here at New River Community College.

8. What has GO Virginia Region 2 planned for the future that are you looking forward to?

I look forward to seeing where we go as a region. I appreciate the opportunity to be part of the GO Virginia Region 2 Council. It's a great growth experience for me and for our college. I'm so proud that New River Community College is a viable player in the growth initiative, along with Central Virginia Community College, Virginia Western Community College, and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, the other three community colleges in Region 2. There is a lot of possibility with the four areas of Region 2 working together.

9. What activities do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I enjoy cooking, baking, housework, and spending time with friends and family. Being an English major, I also enjoy reading. Two of my favorite genres are historical fiction and Appalachian literature.

10. Who are key leaders or mentors in your life that have inspired you?

I think it started with my parents and family who instilled in me ambition and a strong work ethic. Through the years, colleagues have inspired me. Two, in particular, were Dr. Charlie White and Dr. Ed Barnes, both community college presidents. Dr. Charlie White was my immediate supervisor when I was faculty at New River Community College. Something I learned from him was a common-sense approach to problem-solving and working with people.

Dr. Ed Barnes was president here when I was hired. He had strong emotional intelligence and I learned a lot from him in his approach to understanding people. Dr. Barnes was also involved in the community and was a part of the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance, which grew into what is now Onward NRV.

Both Dr. Barnes and Dr. White were unique individuals, different in many ways, but very much the same in their commitment to their core ethics, beliefs, philosophy, and mission. These leaders provided such tremendous opportunities and encouragement for me and I appreciate them immensely, along with many others.

Learn about the GOVA Region 2 Projects on our website: <https://cece.vt.edu/GOVAR2/GOVirginiaFundedProjects.html>.
