



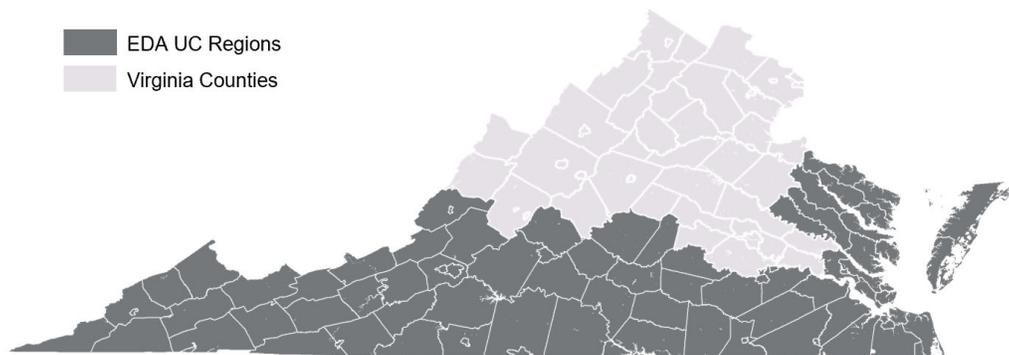
**CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
VIRGINIA TECH.



Solving Problems, Connecting Resources, and Engaging Communities to Build Economic Resilience in Virginia

*Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement
with Virginia State University
U.S. Economic Development Administration University Center*

Through the Economic Development Administration's (EDA) University Center program, Virginia Tech's Center for Economic and Community Engagement (CECE), partners with Virginia State University (VSU) to support private sector job creation and capital investment in the largest areas of the state experiencing economic distress.



What we do

- Connect companies to university resources
 - Engage university faculty in supporting private sector growth
 - Facilitate and support regional collaboration
 - Conduct applied research and technical assistance projects
 - Help start and grow new programs and initiatives
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Ongoing projects

Southwest Virginia



Emily Mayo, Damascus Trail Center supervisor (at left), speaks about the impact of Hurricane Helene with Allison Mays and Dylan Andrews at the Trail Center in Damascus, VA.

Setting Appalachia’s Workforce on Track to Adapt to the Changing Construction Landscape

Central Appalachia is poised to be a national leader in industrialized construction and meet the demand for affordable and market-rate housing that attracts workers and companies to the region. VT CECE is working with faculty from the Virginia Tech College of Engineering on an [Appalachian Regional Commission-ARISE grant](#) that will drive large-scale, regional economic transformation through multistate collaborative industrialized construction projects across Appalachia.

Virginia’s Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials Tech Hub

With the New River Valley Regional Commission, VT CECE helped develop a consortium of public and private sector partners to successfully compete for a strategy development grant of \$450,000 under the [EDA’s Tech Hubs program](#). The project was one of just two Virginia winners among 31 tech hubs and 29 strategy development grant recipients nationwide. The project focuses on growing the advanced materials and additive manufacturing sectors in the New River Valley (Blacksburg MSA) and Danville regions. The New River Valley Regional Commission and VT CECE also secured additional funding support for the project through the state’s GO Virginia program.

Wellspring Foundation Creeper Trail Economic Impact

Hurricane Helene’s damage to the Virginia Creeper Trail has impacted the livelihoods of people who live and work in the area. CECE is working with the Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia to understand how the damage sustained after Hurricane Helene will affect communities such as Damascus.

Southern Virginia



Economic development specialists Ashley Posthumus (left) and Dylan Andrews worked on a project in the Danville-Pittsylvania region to address child care gaps in the area.

Controlled Environment Agriculture Hub Project Development and Application Assistance

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville is working to accelerate and support growth in the controlled environment agriculture industry. VT CECE is helping the Institute to develop a [Controlled Environment Agriculture Hub](#) that will expand awareness of the industry, increase technical assistance offerings to firms, policymakers, and economic developers, and enhance workforce development and talent attraction activities.

Childcare Needs Assessment

Virginia's economy is feeling the pinch from a widespread lack of affordable child care options, forcing many parents to reduce their working hours, pass up promotions, or leave the workforce entirely. The impact is particularly severe in the Danville-Pittsylvania County region, where over half of child care centers report waitlists. The Partnership for Prosperity, a civic think tank serving the Danville and Pittsylvania County Region, reached out to VT CECE to find ways to [address child care gaps in the area](#).

Alliance for Building Better Medicine

Virginia State University is continuing its active partnership in the [Alliance for Building Better Medicine consortium](#) focused on the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector. This includes partnership in the Richmond-Petersburg consortium's successful NSF Engines grant submission. The proposal titled "Rapidly Mobilizing Pharmaceuticals in Central Virginia Project (RAMP-CV)" aims to build an innovative, first of its kind, end-to-end advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing Engine focused on addressing acute drugs shortages affecting Central Virginia and expanding its processes and technology for the purposes of driving down national drug shortages.

Coastal Virginia and Hampton Roads



Michael Congrove, owner and operator of Oyster Seed Holdings, shows baby oysters to the CECE team.

Promoting Careers in Aquaculture

[Promoting Careers in Aquaculture](#) increases high school juniors and seniors' understanding of what jobs are available in the aquaculture industry, expands educational opportunities that meet employers' needs, and supports internship opportunities. VT CECE provides leadership to the project with Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research Extension Center, Rappahannock Community College, Eastern Shore Community College, Virginia Peninsula Community College, and VSU Extension faculty.

Virginia Peninsula Innovation District

When approached to support launching an innovation district on the Virginia Peninsula, a CECE graduate student jumped into action to develop a report comparing and contrasting nationwide models. Championed by the Virginia Peninsula Chamber, this initiative garnered support from the Cities of Newport News and Hampton, Jefferson Lab, NASA Langley, Canon, higher education institutions, regional economic development groups, and many more community leaders.

Support our work

Your investment in the Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement means more access to resources for communities across the Commonwealth.

CECE provides expertise, resources, and project support to catalyze action that benefits local communities and economies, specifically in economic, community, and workforce development. CECE's evidence-based research and university connections help to address needs identified at the local level through strategic partnerships and direct services.

Give.

<https://cece.vt.edu/about/give.html>
