

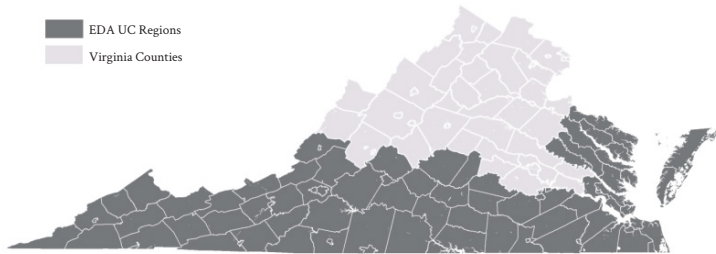
The Virginia i3 Regional Resilience Project

Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement

(with Virginia State University, Consortium Partner)

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 implement the Virginia i3 Regional Resilience Project (i3). The i3 Project enhances regional economic ecosystems and supports private sector job creation and capital investment in the largest areas of the state experiencing economic distress.



Ongoing Projects

Southwest Virginia

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 \$500,000 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 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.

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



CEO of FasTech Alan Pearce leads Tech Hub consortium members on a tour of the FasTech facility at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville.



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.

Southern Virginia

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 Tech Hubs submission. Focused on advanced pharmaceuticals manufacturing, the region will have the opportunity to compete for \$40 million to \$70 million in implementation funding in the next phase of the Tech Hubs competition.



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.

Coastal Virginia and Hampton Roads

Hydrogen Tech Center

A landmark [hydrogen production lab](#) is emerging in Virginia, backed by \$1.6 million in GO Virginia funding and \$5 million from industry and local government partners. This innovative clean energy initiative unites major players including the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, energy providers Dominion Energy and Virginia Natural Gas, and industry leaders Ferguson and Cox Communications in advancing Virginia's sustainable future. VT CECE provides leadership and support to drive this collaborative effort forward.

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.



A demonstration lab for the production of green hydrogen fuel will be housed in Building 2, currently under construction, at the Tech Center Research Park in Newport News. Photo courtesy of W.M. Jordan Co.



Sarah Matheson-Harris (at left) shares information about Matheson Oyster Co. with the CECE team. Matheson Oyster Co., an oyster supplier in Gloucester County, is an industry partner for the Promoting Careers in Aquaculture project.

