



Updates from the Office of Economic Development

OED Welcomes New Team Member

Following an extensive search process, OED is pleased to announce that Matt Johnson will join the team in the role of Assistant Director beginning in October. Initially, the position will focus on growing City businesses through assistance provided by the business retention and expansion program as well as marketing and communication efforts in support of the recently completed Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Matt most recently served as Deputy Director for the York County Department of Economic & Tourism Development. Before his time with York County, Matt held the position of Economic Development Manager in the City of Newport News Department of Development, where he was in charge of Project & CIP Coordination. In total he worked with the City of Newport News for over 15 years, during which he also served as a Senior Project Coordinator, Business Retention Coordinator, and in several purchasing positions. Matt's professional experience includes time in the non-profit sector working for Peninsula Council for Workforce Development as their Senior Manager for Workforce Development, and as Associate Campaign Director for United Way of the Virginia Peninsula.

Matt is a graduate of Christopher Newport University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. Originally from Roanoke, Virginia, Matt has lived on the Virginia Peninsula for the past 27 years. He and his wife are the proud parents of two daughters.

Charlottesville Named One of the Top 15 Happiest Towns

Outside Magazine recently released its annual list of Happiest Towns and Charlottesville is a top finisher. In addition to an abundance of parkland and restaurants, the entrepreneurial culture of the area is highlighted in the write-up with a call out to the Community Investment Collaborative for their work helping to launch and support startups. The full article can be accessed [HERE](#).

Historic Wall signs Restored Downtown



Recently Friends of Cville Downtown hosted a celebration to unveil a series of rehabilitated wall signs at the corner of Third and Main Street downtown. The project was initiated by Friends of Cville Downtown and funded by Coca-Cola Consolidated. Artist and painter, Scott Allred spent two weeks bringing the historic signage back to life. His company Brushcan Murals and Sign specializes in restoration of ghost signs which are often over 100 years old. Congratulations to Friends of Cville Downtown for spearheading this effort to further add interest and enliven downtown.

September is Workforce Development Month

Each September, states across the country join efforts to recognize the contributions of workforce professionals and highlight events and initiatives which support job seekers and employers. The U.S. Senate passed a resolution naming September Workforce Development Month. Read the full resolution [here](#). Workforce development is a powerful driver of economic progress. For every dollar invested in workforce

development programs, there is an estimated return of \$4.41 in increased productivity and decreased social assistance costs. OED offers several workforce development programs including GO HIRE, GO Cook, Ready To Work and Customized Workforce Solutions. You can learn more here. In a world of constant evolution, workforce development isn't just an option – it's essential. Let's invest in upskilling, fostering innovation, and building stronger communities together.



Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce Vanguard Award Recipients

Congratulations to Beyond Fitness with Sabrina and Culinary Concepts AB for receiving the 2023 John F. Bell Sr. Vanguard Award by the CRCC. CRCC says the award recognizes outstanding minority businesses who support and promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the business community. Read the full announcement here: <https://bit.ly/3sCW3sd>

Workforce Development Program Manager Earns CWDP



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
PROFESSIONALS**
CONNECT, ADVANCE, INNOVATE

Earlier this month OED's Workforce Development Program Manager, Jenny Biche, earned her Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP) certification through the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP). The NAWDP is a professional association representing individual workforce development and human resources practitioners, who connect

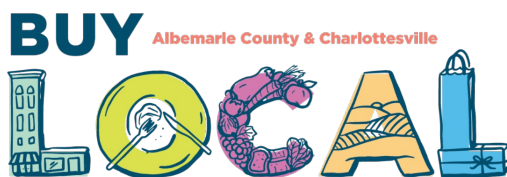
jobseekers, educators and companies to advance the American economy. Their mission is to enrich the workforce development community by connecting and advancing workforce professionals and through building innovative partnerships. NAWDP developed the CWDP certification using research based on the job requirements of a wide range of workforce development roles. The results have been validated by professionals across the nation in a variety of settings as representative of the skills and competencies required for success in the industry.

To ensure that credentials holders maintain their skills and expand their base of knowledge and expertise, the CWDP certification must be renewed every three years. To learn more about the CWDP click [here](#). Congratulations Jenny.

OED Fun Fact

The first issue of *The Daily Progress* was published on September 14, 1892. The paper was founded by James Hubert Lindsay and his brother Frank Lindsay and was owned by the family for 78 years. Today the paper is published in print three days a week, and in a digital format daily.

Free Business Resources



The Albemarle County & City of Charlottesville Buy Local campaign highlights small businesses within the Charlottesville-Albemarle area through a multi-channel, multimedia promotional and educational campaign. To learn more about the



The Central Virginia Small Business Development Center is a team of business and technical experts available to advise and assist

campaign, click [here!](#)

entrepreneurs, confidentially and free of charge. They offer 1:1 assistance, curated research, access to technical experts and professionals, and timely events/training. To see upcoming SBDC events, click [here!](#)

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