

**University of Virginia**  
**Partnership with Southwest Virginia**



**Annual Report on Economic Development Action Plan**  
**FY07**

**September 1, 2007**

## **BACKGROUND:**

As part of the restructuring management agreement with the Commonwealth, the University of Virginia (UVA) is required to establish a formal partnership with an economically distressed region in Virginia, and to “work meaningfully and visibly” to stimulate economic development in that region. UVA has selected the Coalfield Region, and will be partnering with the University of Virginia’s College at Wise (UVA-Wise) and the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority (VCEDA) in this effort.

The Coalfield Region is defined as the area encompassed by VCEDA (Planning Districts 1 & 2). It includes the City of Norton and the Counties of: Lee, Scott, Wise, Dickenson, Russell, Tazewell, and Buchanan.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

The University submitted an economic development action plan to the Governor and General Assembly on December 20, 2006. In accordance with Article 2, Section 2.2.1, Part 3, UVA is required to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by September 1 of each year, outlining its progress in implementing the action plan during the prior fiscal year. This report covers activities for July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007 (FY07).

## **ACTION PLAN SUMMARY:**

Extensive discussions were held with stakeholders in the Coalfield Region to gain an understanding of the area’s goals and the barriers to achieving those goals. Southwest Virginia is focused on transforming their economy from one centered mainly on tobacco, coal, and timber harvesting, to one that includes information technology, education, and energy. To attract companies, local leaders recognize that they must have an infrastructure that includes an educated workforce, strong schools, and widespread access to medical care.

This context was used in developing UVA’s action plan. The three main categories for collaboration between UVA and Southwest Virginia include business support, access to health care, and support for K-12 education. A website dedicated to this collaboration can be found at: <http://www.virginia.edu/vprgs/industry/southwestva.html>

## **PROGRESS REPORT:**

### **1. Business Support.**

*Goal:* Cultivate a strong base for Southwest Virginia's new economy

*Metrics:* Number of students enrolled in IT-related programs  
Number and amount of research activities

*Primary partners:* Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority, UVA's College at Wise, LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Business Support Programs:

- **B.S. in Software Engineering at UVA-Wise**

UVA-Wise is offering a new degree in software engineering, which will support the workforce needs of new companies in the region requiring IT skills (e.g., Northrop Grumman, CGI, Holston Medical Group, etc.). The program was formally launched Fall 2006.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) is serving as a resource for UVA-Wise as they develop their software engineering program. During the approval process with SCHEV, SEAS provided curriculum expertise and included a letter of support in the application package. As UVA-Wise builds its engineering faculty base, SEAS has offered to provide courses, via distance education, for advanced subjects. Support will continue to be provided on an as-needed basis.

*Status:* The software engineering program was officially launched Fall 2006. During the 2006-07 academic year, 67 students enrolled in an introductory computer science course, which serves as a pre-requisite to the computer science, MIS, and software engineering programs at UVA-Wise. Some portion of these students will declare a software engineering major in the upcoming years.

Number of UVA-Wise students enrolled in IT-related programs: 8 (software engineering).

- **PRODUCED in Virginia (Providing Undergraduate Connections to Engineering Education in Virginia)**

PRODUCED in Virginia is an academic outreach initiative of the UVA School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS). Through this program, students can earn a bachelor's degree in engineering science from the University of Virginia without leaving

their communities. UVA partners with local community colleges to satisfy preliminary course requirements.

*UVA Contribution:* SEAS is providing the planning and coordination for this project, including curriculum development. UVA faculty will be used to teach classes during the last two years of the program.

*Status:* SEAS is in the early planning stages, and is working with UVA-Wise and the local community colleges to finalize the curriculum. Course offerings for the B.S. degree will likely begin in 2010 or 2011. (Matriculation in an Associate of Science program at one of the community colleges can begin sooner than that, and will take 2-3 years to complete. An Associate of Science degree is a prerequisite for the program).

Number of UVA students enrolled in IT-related programs: 0 (program is still in planning stage).

- **Research Center in Abingdon**

A proposal is being developed for the construction of a regional research center, to be located at Southwest Virginia Higher Ed Center (SVHEC) in Abingdon, Virginia. The facility is intended to host multiple universities and a variety of research activities.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA provided language for the Tobacco Commission proposal that outlined potential areas of research for the center, based on University strengths and corporate activities in the Coalfield Region.

*Status:* A consultant has been hired by UVA to conduct a feasibility study, which will address potential research topics, funding, etc. A site visit to the area by the consultant was held on August 6-7. Meetings were held with representatives from the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center, the LENOWISCO Planning District Commission, the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission, U.Va.'s College at Wise, area community colleges including the Mountain Empire Community College and the Southwest Virginia Community College, the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority and regional health information organizations including CareSpark and the Holston Medical Group. Identified opportunities may be in the fields of health care, nanotechnology and engineering. The report on the types of UVA research that could be housed at the center is anticipated Fall 2007.

Number and amount of research activities: 0 (program is in exploratory stage).

## 2. Access to Health Care.

*Goal:* Improve access to health care in Southwest Virginia

*Metric:* Number of patients treated

*Primary partners:* Graduate Medical Education Consortium, UVA's College at Wise, St. Mary's Health Wagon, Wise County Health Department

Access to Health Care Programs:

- **Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic in Wise**

The RAM-Wise clinic offers free medical care to over 3,000 people from Southwest Virginia and surrounding states. The clinic is held at the Virginia-Kentucky Fairground in Wise, VA over a three-day period.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA provided supplies, time, and coordination of over 100 faculty, staff, and students from the Schools of Medicine and Nursing and the Medical Center.

UVA offered digital mammography, neurological screening, colon cancer screening, ENT, audiology services, gynecological procedures, and comprehensive screening for diabetes and hypertension. UVA also had physicians on call for telemedicine appointments, a two-way remote method for consulting in real-time on a variety of medical conditions. Patients at RAM are able to be followed up via telemed. UVA paid for or was responsible for collecting all the drugs that were dispensed and our pharmacy was the coordinator for that service.

*Status:* Completed July 28-30, 2006.

Number of patients treated (2006 RAM): 1,122 through 5,379 general medicine encounters; 1152 prescriptions filled and 458 prescription vouchers distributed.

*Note:* This is an ongoing activity. It serves to demonstrate need, but is not viewed as a long-term solution for access to health care in SW Virginia.

- **Mini Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic in Buchanan County**

This Mini-RAM clinic offers free medical care to approximately 100 patients in Grundy.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA provided supplies, time, and coordination of 30-40 faculty, staff, and students from the Schools of Medicine and Nursing and the Medical Center.

*Status:* Completed October 2006.

Number of patients treated (2006 mini-RAM): 109 patients treated through 1,218 general medicine encounters.

- **Pediatric Subspecialty Field Clinics**

UVA Health System conducts pediatric subspecialty clinics throughout SW Virginia, through Care Connection for Children, a program sponsored by the Virginia Department of Health.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA provides physicians, nurses, and staff for pediatric subspecialty clinics at multiple SW Virginia sites. Clinics include: neurology, cystic fibrosis, cardiology, maxillofacial, neurodevelopmental, orthopaedic, and genetics.

*Status:* Ongoing.

Number of patients treated (2006-07): 933.

- **Adult Specialty Clinic**

A pilot nephrology clinic was created to serve patients needing specialty care. It is staffed by Dr. Ross Isaacs and is held 2 days/month at the Wise County Health Department. Patients can be seen for kidney disease and related ailments.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA provides physician services two days a month for indigent patients, as well as for those who have health insurance. Dr. Ross also conducted Grand Rounds at the community hospital in Norton.

*Status:* Initiated March 2007. UVA is exploring the feasibility of offering other specialty clinics (endocrinology, etc.).

Number of patients treated (March-June 2007): 50.

- **"Head for the Hills" annual rural medical conference**

Organized by Graduate Medical Education Consortium (GMEC), this annual rural medical conference is held in Dickenson County, at Breaks Interstate Park. It is a three-day continuing medical education event attended by physicians and residents in primary care.

*UVA Contribution:* A speaker is provided by UVA Health System to lecture on a topic relevant to primary care physicians.

*Status:* Craig Seto, MD spoke at the October 2006 conference on Musculoskeletal Radiology. Ross Isaacs, MD is scheduled to speak at the October 2007 conference.

Number of health care providers in attendance (Oct 06): 110.

- **"Healthy Appalachia" proposal**

Southwest Virginia Graduate Medical Education Consortium (GMEC) issued an RFP to develop a strategic plan for improving the health of people in the Coalfield Region and to create an institution charged with conceiving and planting initiatives against persistent health problems in central Appalachia.

*UVA Contribution:* UVA's Department of Public Health Sciences was identified as the appropriate unit within UVA to submit a proposal to GMEC. If accepted, this proposal would require significant community service hours and in-kind services on the part of UVA faculty and graduate students.

*Status:* Proposal for "Healthy Appalachia" is being developed by UVA's Department of Public Health Sciences, to be submitted Aug 07.

### **3. K12 Education.**

*Goal:* Support teacher and student development in grades K-12

*Metric:* Number of teachers served

*Primary partners:* Center for Teaching Excellence, UVA's College at Wise

K12 Education Programs:

#### **Project LEAD (Leadership Enhancement and Development)**

Project LEAD is the overarching title of a major grant effort designed to build a solid infrastructure for K12 education instruction and leadership. This fully integrated initiative encompasses both degree and non-degree programs. The degree programs include master's level coursework in instruction and administration & supervision. The non-degree component includes leadership development and provisions for developing a community of practice that will be sustained long after involvement by any one institution. The components of Project LEAD are described below:

- **M.Ed., Instruction**

This degree program is designed primarily for individuals who want to broaden their knowledge of instructional practices. In brief, it "takes good teachers and makes them better."

*UVA Contribution:* School of Continuing & Professional Studies provided program design and implementation, as well as academic and administrative coordination. UVA Faculty will teach selected classes.

*Status:* Curriculum design is complete and administrators are preparing for course launch. Program has 18 applicants as of 7/12/07. Classes will begin October 07, and will be taught in Abingdon and Wise.

Number of teachers served: 0 (cohort is not finalized).

- **M.Ed., Administration and Supervision**

This degree program is designed for individuals seeking preK-12 endorsement in school administration and supervision, or an advanced degree, with or without endorsement. In brief, it prepares teachers for administrative roles.

*UVA Contribution:* School of Continuing & Professional Studies provided program design and implementation, as well as academic and administrative coordination. UVA Faculty will teach selected classes.

*Status:* Curriculum design is complete and administrators are preparing for course launch. Program has 31 applicants as of 7/12/07. Classes begin in August 07, and will be taught in Abingdon and counties of: Russell, Wise, Scott.

Number of teachers served: 0 (cohort is not finalized).

- **SCOPE Southwest (Statewide Communities of Practice for Excellence)**

This program is designed to develop effective leadership skills for intact cohorts of individuals from participating school divisions. In brief, it provides continued professional growth for administrators, while establishing communities of practice for excellence.

*UVA Contribution:* School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS) co-planned program with SWVA superintendents, and wrote the technical portion of the grant (rationale, content of seminars, schedule, and demonstration of coherence with formal master's degree program). SCPS faculty will be part of the teaching team and will provide academic and administrative coordination.

*Status:* Program design is complete and administrators are preparing for course launch. There were 87 expressions of interest as of 7/12/07. Classes begin September 07, and will be taught in Abingdon and counties of: Wise, Russell, Scott, and Smyth.

Number of teachers served: 0 (cohort is not finalized).

## **NEXT STEPS:**

This report is the first in a series of annual reports that will record progress on UVA's economic development action plan for Southwest Virginia. The plan, collaboration between faculty, staff and students at the University of Virginia and our colleagues in Southwest Virginia, provides a framework for strategic involvement, while allowing flexibility for new and emerging needs. As relationships mature, and new pathways surface, we anticipate a steady increase in the quantity and effectiveness of our joint activities. It is our intention that this series of projects will stimulate economic development in the Coalfield Region, while continuing to build deep and lasting ties between our communities.

The focus for the upcoming year (FY08) will be to solidify current efforts, expand on programs that will benefit from additional resources, and explore new opportunities. Specifically we will be investigating additional health care options, distance K12 consultative services for teachers, and corporate leadership development.

For more information on any of the initiatives included in this report, please contact:

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**APPENDIX A**  
**RELATED ACTIVITIES**

**Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service – Southwest Office<sup>1</sup>**

This office continues to be a major influence in Southwest Virginia public affairs. Led by Sim Ewing and Art Mead, the Cooper Center serves as a resource and provides support to a diverse regional community. Sim and Art are supported by Travis Perry and Wilma Flanary. Essentially, three types of service are provided in addition to serving as the focal point to the Southwest legislative delegation. The service types are; multi-jurisdictional applied research, individual and group training and development, and community consultation.

It should be pointed out that Sim Ewing also serves as the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Government Relations for the UVa College at Wise.

**Economic and Operational Studies**

- \* Feasibility Analysis of Activities and Wellness Center - Big Stone Gap, VA
- \* Estimated Economic Impact of a Dental School - Wise County, VA
- \* Community Assessment Report - Kids Central, Inc (Head Start)
- \* Comprehensive Plan update - Town of Coeburn, VA
- \* International Education Faculty/Student Surveys and Analysis (twice) - Int'l Education, SW VA Higher Ed Ctr (George Hiller)
- \* Wage/Benefit Survey of SW VA Municipalities (PDCs 1, 2, 3)
- \* Wage/Benefit Survey of Appalachian Region Head Start/Early Head Start
- \* Survey Analysis of Distance Learning Initiative - Barter Theatre
- \* Local Area Population Density Analysis - Wise County School Board

**Applied Research**

Economic Transformation through Technology. The Office worked with Russell County and the Commonwealth of Virginia on establishing a technology training center in Lebanon to support the location of Northrop Grumman and CGI. Additionally, this facility will provide support to the technology sectors of companies located in, and locating to, southwest Virginia.

Clean Coal Technology Power Plant. The Center continues to work with Wise County on issues of importance surrounding the location of a Clean Coal Technology Power Plant in Wise County.

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<sup>1</sup> Report provided by Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service – Southwest Office. These activities are initiated by Southwest Virginia, and support the overall economic development goal in the Coalfield Region.

Governor Kaine's Regional Cabinet Meeting. Worked with the staff of Governor Kaine to facilitate a regional meeting of the Governor's Cabinet on the campus of UVA-Wise.

Nano Technology Development. Working with the Wise County Industrial Development Authority on locating a company which will use nano technology to enhance utilization of coal as a clean fuel.

Lt. Governor Bolling's Regional Initiative. Worked with Lt. Governor Bolling and his staff for a regional focus group on issues of importance to southwest Virginia.

School of Dentistry. Facilitated meetings with the regional medical community and economic developers in order to examine the potential for establishing a School of Dentistry in the region. This led to language in the Appropriations Act requiring SCHEV to provide an official study and recommendation to the General Assembly prior to the 2008 Session. From the session, further language was developed which allowed for the development of a health zone to enhance specialty clinics, which the office is working with.

Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Research Center. Worked as part of group consisting of legislative leaders, economic development officials and higher education on the development of a research component to the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center.

Regional Arts Center. Worked with the William King Regional Arts Center to insure funding stability with the Commonwealth. Assisted in the coordination of activities between the Arts Center, SWPEC and the Commonwealth of Virginia. This is an on-going program called Van Gogh.

Local Government Managers. Met monthly with local government managers/administrators from Wise, Lee, Scott Counties and the City of Norton.

Grayson County Technology. Worked with Congressman Boucher on the development of a Grayson County Technology Plan and a Tourism Development Plan.

Local inquiry support. Provided consultation and advice to various managers, administrators and staff members on issues and questions facing their jurisdiction.

## **Memberships**

Member, Virginia Coalfield Water Development Fund. This fund, which now has over \$14.5m in funds, is to distribute to water projects to bring potable water to the Coalfield region of Virginia. This is a Federal EPA and Virginia Department of Health demonstration project. Specific work included aid in compliance with legislative and technical operation issues. Currently Chair of the Finance Committee and member of the Executive Committee

Southwest Virginia Public Education Consortium. Assisted the SWPEC on issues of educational significance to the region with the legislative delegation. Provided guidance to the Board on issues affecting their financial operation.

Legislative delegation. Worked with the Southwest Virginia Legislative Members specifically on issues related to economic development, coal severance taxation, education and local government operation.

Tobacco Commission. Worked as a liaison between the region's legislators and economic development teams and the Tobacco Indemnification Board. Provided guidance on types of programs that may have long-term impact on the region from funds expended through the Commission.

### **Professional Support for Jurisdictions**

Wise County, Wise County IDA & City of Norton. Provided mediation on development of an area of municipal sewerage coverage to aid in the economic enhancement of a retail corridor.

Facilitation. Mediation work was done with councils of: Stasburg, Big Stone Gap, Pearisburg, Amherst, and Pulaski on issues effecting the operation of local government, ranging from utility operations and budgeting to relationship development.

Town of Coeburn. Led discussions with the town council and planning commission to facilitate long term strategic planning.

Grayson County. Led the transition to the operational phase of the broadband project, which was a recommendation of the Commission headed by Congressman Boucher.

Giles County. Prepared an analysis of 2004 VA student SOL scores ( % passing) for VA high schools in Planning District Commission 4 (New River Valley) and other selected school divisions with comparison to school division scores from other parts of the state. Selected topics were writing, geometry, algebra II, biology & chemistry.

Scott County. Prepared a similar analysis of VA school divisions located west of Interstate 77 in southwest VA with comparison to each other and school division scores from other parts of the state. Selected topics were writing, geometry, algebra II, biology & chemistry.

School appropriations. Prepared synopsis of Senate and House budget amendments before the General Assembly affecting school appropriations and capital projects in southwest Virginia.

Scott County PSA. Assisted with preparation of FY '07 budget including personnel addendum, debt schedule and financial report form for internal use by board

Town of Appalachia. Assisted with preparation of FY '08 budget including personnel addendum, debt schedule and financial report form for internal use by board.

Bluefield Recreation Center Project. Critique of the document on the Community Recreation Center Market Analysis. Organized committee visits to similar projects in the region and West Virginia. Facilitated discussions with the Town and Bluefield College on the project being a joint venture.

VLGMA. Served as facilitator of the group of “non-managers” within the Virginia Local Government Management Association.

Glade Springs. Citizen group discussion focused on Freedom of Information and Zoning issues of fundamental local governance in Virginia.

Gate City. Assisted in the transition to a new town manager.

LEAD VIRGINIA Served as moderator and travel escort during the SWVA segment of program. Introduction of speakers, narrative during transit and assistance to bus driver was provided for the participants during their two day visit.

Town of Coeburn, LENOWISCO, Wise County. Facilitation of an exploratory discussion focusing on housing improvement in Coeburn.

Wise County. Arranged meeting time and space for the Board of Supervisors with the State Secretary of Transportation, State CIO, and Director of the State Department of Corrections.

Goochland County. Served as facilitator for one-day retreat with Fire/Rescue Officers. Topics ranged from facilities and apparatus replacement scheduling to personnel recruitment and retention to 3rd party billing.

Virginia County Board Chairperson Institute. Assisted with delivery and served as presenter with Mike Chandler, VA Tech Emeritus Professor, at VACo's program for newly selected county board chairs.

Wise County. Participated with approximately a dozen local government officials at two-hour brain storming session focused on the rehabilitation of the Town of Appalachia's governance.

Virginia Mayor's Institute. Provided leadership for the Virginia Mayor's Institute and session leader.

Virginia County Board Chairman's Institute. Provided leadership for the Virginia Mayor's Institute and session leader.

Grayson County. Served as primary facilitator of four events for the Economic Task Force's "Tourism Committee."

Citizens Planning Education Assoc. of VA (CPEAV). Serve as president of the statewide organization of local planning commission officials.

- ❑ As Chair, set stage to recommend to full membership a restructuring of board in which number of districts is reduced from 23 to 8 with each district encompassing 3 or 4 PDC's rather than one.
- ❑ Chaired Board meeting and annual retreat, approved budget for 2006, and identified goals for 2006 in areas of fund raising, board reorganization and the creation of a foundation.
- ❑ Chaired quarterly board meetings

**Presentations:**

Bluefield AM radio talk show. Participated in one-hour morning interviews on a variety of topics:

- Lessons from Virginia's local Government consolidation experience in tidewater that might apply in West Virginia.
- Implications of the 300 million population milestone for slower growth region like West Virginia and southwestern Virginia.
- The new transportation funding package produced by the General Assembly – how it would work and its importance to the economy of Virginia.
- Hispanic immigrants in the poultry industry of Rockingham County and their children enrolled in English as Second Language program in the City of Harrisonburg school system – a small part of the national debate.

City of Norton/Wise County Chamber of Commerce. Presentation to the 2007 Leadership Class on "The financial and demographic profile of the City of Norton and Wise County relative to the balance of VA"

Tazewell Soil & Water Conservation District "Tour Du Parc" for county middle school children at Graham Recreation Park. Served as one of thirteen learning station speakers. The topic was a history of the park's development and the impact that an individual can have on community projects.