



# Virginia Community Economic Network:

## Connecting the Commonwealth's Entrepreneurial Development Ecosystem

Virginia Main Street Summer Toolkit Meeting

Farmville, VA

July 16, 2014

# Who we are & What we do

- ❖ Consortium of public & private sector organizations and professionals working to promote small business & entrepreneurship-based approaches to community revitalization and economic development
- ❖ Created in 2013 from the Virginia Microenterprise Network
- ❖ Goals:
  - ❖ Demonstrate the collective impact of Virginia's community economic development organizations
  - ❖ Enhance awareness of and investments in innovative and successful practices
  - ❖ Increase collaborations among stakeholders on value-added initiatives
  - ❖ Connect entrepreneurs to organizations who can provide resources to help them grow
- ❖ Initial funding and in-kind support from:
  - ❖ State agencies (VDHCD, VDBA, VTC, VHDA, VEDP)
  - ❖ Community development bankers (VCC, Capital One, Wells Fargo)
  - ❖ Membership associations (VDDA, VBIA, VSBDC)
  - ❖ Universities (VT KnowledgeWorks, Mason Enterprise Center)

# VCEN & DHCD Stakeholders

- \* DHCD has strategically positioned itself as the “first rung” of the Commonwealth’s entrepreneurial development system by focusing on building community capacity
- \* DHCD’s existing programs (ex. ARC, BCC, BEE, CDBG, VEZ, VMS, etc.) leverage entrepreneurship-based development to drive community revitalization
- \* DHCD’s investment in and partnership with VCEN will enhance its efforts to provide information to practitioners and community leaders
- \* VCEN can help inform policymakers about investing in effective approaches to entrepreneurship & small business development to increase economic development & community revitalization

# Key Projects

1. Statewide conference on June 2-4, 2014 in Roanoke that shared best-practices and provided professional networking opportunities for SBDCs, CDFIs, Microenterprise, Main Streets, PDCs, Universities, Angel Investors, Business Incubators, local & state agencies, CAPs, etc.
2. Building an interactive website with a searchable resource database, events calendar, blogs, information to connect entrepreneurs to resource providers (US SourceLink model)
3. Applied research to demonstrate the impact of community economic development programs and mapping the Virginia entrepreneurial support ecosystem to document existing practice models and identify gaps
4. Creating Pilot Initiatives with local and regional partners to test out promising practices
5. Providing interactive learning opportunities for community economic development professionals

# Why US SourceLink

- ❖ In 2013, VCC survey of 70+ practitioners:
  - ❖ Creating a website where individuals could find business building resource organizations in Virginia, searchable by geography and services offered
  - ❖ Creating a shared online calendar of trainings and community events, searchable by location
  - ❖ Creating an online directory of organizations involved in community development initiatives, searchable by location and category
- ❖ Over the past 5 years, several Virginia state agencies and regional development groups identified the need for an online resource database as part of their entrepreneurship strategies
- ❖ US SourceLink – started by the Kauffman Foundation & UMKC – emerged as the most attractive option. Loudoun County became the first local Virginia affiliate.

# About “SourceLink Virginia”

- ❖ VCEN is the official statewide affiliate of US SourceLink
- ❖ VCEN’s SourceLink Virginia program will include:
  - ❖ Interactive website with calendar, blogs, and information
  - ❖ Online database (Resource Navigator)
  - ❖ Toll-free telephonic Referral Center (if needed)
  - ❖ Client Management System/CRM (Biz-Trakker)
- ❖ SourceLink Virginia service providers are:
  - ❖ **Any nonprofit, university or governmental organization that provides direct services to entrepreneurs and small businesses**
  - ❖ VCEN and US SourceLink are exploring ways to include for-profit service providers that meet certain parameters.
- ❖ **SourceLink Virginia is provided free of charge to both service providers and businesses**

# Resource Navigator

List View

Map View

## Narrow Your Search

### Distance

Show All

### Zip Code or City, State

78205

### Area of Assistance

Selling to the Government

### Specific Need

Registration Assistance

### Industry

Construction

### Business Stage

Established Business



Page size: 10

1 items in 1 pages

Sort By

Distance (closest first)

Export Results

### Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)

*Distance: 6839.8 Miles*

Assists small businesses seeking to market goods and/or services to federal, state, and local governments. PTAC also offers free bid-matching for prime contracting and subcontracting opportunities



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Results can be filtered down by such options as business stage, industry, location, and assistance needed...**the Right Resource at the Right Time!**



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# Classes & Events

Subscribe to our calendar feed  
Select All

## Event Categories

- Business Planning
- Default Calendar
- Funding/Accounting
- Human Resources
- Import/Export
- Marketing
- Networking
- Sales/Procurement
- Startup
- Technology

← → today ▾ feb, 2014 DAY WEEK MONTH TIMELINE

| Mon                         | Tue   | Wed                           | Thu                             | Fri                         | Sat                          | Sun |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----|
| 27                          | 28  | 29                            | 30                              | 31                          | 01 Feb                       | 02  |
| <b>C Entrepreneurial</b>    | <b>Commercial</b>                           | <b>Overlark</b>               | <b>Business Before Hours</b>    | <b>5th Friday Coffee</b>    | <b>KCSV Presents From</b>    |     |
| <b>Kauffman Labs Coding</b> | <b>Morning Coffee with</b>                  | <b>C 1 Million Cup</b>        | <b>Janu</b>                     |                             |                              |     |
| <b>Operation First Step</b> | <b>FastTrac NewVenture</b>                  | <b>Grow Your Business</b>     |                                 |                             |                              |     |
|                             | <b>Review of EU Medical</b>                 | <b>Winning Federal</b>        | <b>Ola</b>                      |                             |                              |     |
|                             | <b>The Road to</b>                          | <b>Icehouse</b>               | <b>Pitc</b>                     |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   | <b>Understanding Your</b>     | <b>WATT</b>                     |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   | <b>The Polsky Practical</b>   | <b>Essential Social Media</b>   |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   |                               | <b>Business</b>                 |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   |                               | <b>Temporarily Moving</b>       |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   |                               | <b>Leavenworth-Lansing</b>      |                             |                              |     |
|                             |   |                               | <b>SMCKC &amp; Big Brothers</b> |                             |                              |     |
| 03                          | 04  | 05                            | 06                              | 07                          | 08                           | 09  |
| <b>C Entrepreneurial</b>    | <b>FastTrac NewVenture</b>                  | <b>Startup Rewind</b>         | <b>Childcare Business</b>       | <b>From Social Media to</b> | <b>Operation First Step</b>  |     |
| <b>Business 101: Legal</b>  | <b>QuickBooks</b>                           | <b>Public Policy Up Close</b> | <b>The Resilient Summit</b>     | <b>South KC Chamber's</b>   | <b>QuickBooks for</b>        |     |
| <b>Operation First Step</b> | <b>QuickBooks Pro/Premier: Introduction</b> |                               |                                 | <b>Midwest Small</b>        | <b>Grant Writing Finally</b> |     |
|                             |   | <b>C 1 Million Cups</b>       | <b>Kansas Sales, Use and</b>    | <b>Doing Business in</b>    | <b>Building a Website</b>    |     |

Resource Partners gain access to directly upload their classes and events, increasing their marketing exposure!

# Sneak Preview

Go to:

<http://va.ussourcelink.com/resources/find-a-resource>

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Virginia Community Economic Network (VCEN) Resource Navigator. The browser's address bar shows the URL [va.ussourcelink.com/resources/find-a-resource](http://va.ussourcelink.com/resources/find-a-resource). The website header includes the VCEN logo and tagline "Linking Virginia Businesses to the Right Resources at the Right Time". A navigation menu contains links for Home, Startup, Growth, Tech, Resources, Calendar, and Blog. A search bar is located in the top right corner with the text "Need help? Call us! 804-793-0985".

The main content area is titled "Resource Navigator" and features a "Narrow Your Search" sidebar on the left. The sidebar includes filters for Distance (Show All), Zip Code or City, State, Industry, Area of Assistance, Specific Need, Business Stage, Minority Owned, Women Owned (Yes/No/Show All), Completed Business Plan (Yes/No/Show All), and Organization Name. The main content area displays a list of resources, currently showing 27 items in 3 pages. The first two items are:

- Alexandria SBDC**: Provides free tools, resources, and confidential assistance to help small businesses located in the City of Alexandria to start, manage and grow. Contact: Bill Reagan, 625 N. Washington St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314, Phone: (703)778-2958. Website | Email.
- Altavista On Track**: Altavista On Track (AOT), also known as the Altavista Community Development Corporation, is a 501 (c) 3 agency that works with community and economic revitalization, in cooperation with the Town of Altavista. Contact: Linda Rodriguez, 510 7th Street, P.O. Box 283, Altavista, VA 24517, Phone: (434)401-9729. Website | Email.

The third item, **Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority**, is partially visible at the bottom of the page. Contact: Mandy Archer, 1117 East Stuart Drive, Galax, VA 24322.

# How You Can Help

- ❖ The SourceLink program is designed to be low-impact on Resource Partners.
- ❖ Each organization goes through an initial intake process where information is gathered about their program and service offerings (paper, electronic and/or online)
- ❖ Partner organizations will have the option of posting their classes and events to the SourceLink Virginia website
- ❖ VCEN will co-host periodic Resource Partner meetings with regional champions around the Commonwealth
- ❖ Resource Partners are asked to promote SourceLink Virginia when possible.
- ❖ SourceLink Virginia is designed to be easily integrated into existing local entrepreneurship and economic development initiatives (ex. My SWVA Opportunity, RVA Works, Loudoun SourceLink, etc.)
- ❖ SourceLink Virginia will complement, not duplicate, the Commonwealth's Business One-Stop Program

# What's in it for you?

- ❖ Free marketing of your services and events
- ❖ Qualified client referrals, based on the criteria you establish
- ❖ Greater public awareness of your organization
- ❖ Increased knowledge of potential partners and collaboration opportunities
- ❖ Identification of gaps in Virginia's entrepreneurial & economic development ecosystem that can lead to program creation, reform or expansion

# For more information

## Contact:

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## On the Web:

<http://www.vcen.org>

## Social Media:

<http://www.twitter.com/SourceLinkVA>

<http://www.facebook.com/vcen.org>

<http://vcen.tumblr.com>