

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Official Publication of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center
A Small Business Incubator

Yolanda Y. Hunter, Incubator Manager

December 2006 - January 2007

Promoting Business Success

The Competitiveness Center now operates two distinct programs: an incubation program through which its staff members and external service providers nurture start-up firms, and a collaboration program through which the incubator helps emerging companies partner with local mentors and organizations.

The key to success depends on selecting the right clients. Therefore, all prospective Incubator Center clients must pass a rigid review process, through which a tenant review committee examines the entrepreneur's business plan to help the incubator staff determine whether the business would be a good fit for the Center's program. Once clients are accepted into the program, they receive management advice, technical business assistance, and access to the facilities and infrastructure of the Competitiveness Center.

Perhaps most useful to clients, however, are the connections the incubator provides them. With a guarantee from the incubator, a start-up can receive funding through a revolving loan fund that allows it to develop its products at a critical stage. The incubator also assists in locating training courses for clients through local community organizations who help grow small business.

Rewards & Acknowledgments

REMSI New River Valley Training Center, located within the Competitiveness Center, has just received provisional accreditation from the Virginia Office of EMS.

This accreditation will allow the training center to provide advanced life support instruction to the 14 rescue squads of Planning District 4. This enhanced training will allow citizens of the New River Valley to receive a higher level of pre-hospital care.

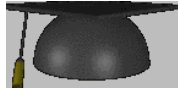
The accreditation allows REMSI to hold training courses not currently available in the New River Valley. The accreditation process has taken place over the last four years, a collaborative effort involving all of the rescue squads in Planning District 4. We are excited for REMSI and look forward to their first class in January of 2007.

Brontek Delta Corporation, headquartered in the New River Valley Competitiveness Center, is pleased to announce that the US Patent and Trademarks Office has granted a patent protecting Brontek's innovation to improve the production of integrated circuits, used in computers, cell phones, medical devices, etc. The patent approval process has been lengthy and stringent, but will provide broad protection for the company's innovation. The company president and CEO, Dr. Chris Klepper, says this is an important milestone in the company's business plan and a necessary step to get strategic or venture investment to start producing the equipment. The company hopes to be able to fund the venture locally and maintain the manufacturing in the NRV area. This will be clean manufacturing producing a few machines called "ion implanters", which will sell for about 2 million dollars each. The buyers are large computer chip makers like Intel and Advanced Micro Devices and world wide these chip makers spend about a billion dollars a year on such processing equipment. Congratulations to Brontek!

Local Community Incubator Support

✓ Chad Clark, owner of Hand-Crafted Log Homes, who provided the use of his power washing equipment and his time, gives the Center a new face-lift. The Competitiveness Center thanks him for his service and wishes him well as he continues to grow his local log home business.

✓ Ashley Minns, William McGough, and Carrie Childress, VA Tech Media Studies Students, who worked diligently to provide media packets and press releases for this newsletter for our graduating incubator tenants and a local business. The Competitiveness Center thanks you for being committed to our community and wishes you well in your studies and future endeavors.



Congratulations Graduates

New River Valley Competitiveness Center Sees Investment Blossom

Much like the rest of the world, the New River Valley Competitiveness Center (NRVCC) makes investments every day. But instead of stocks and bonds, the NRVCC invests in local businesses. This November, one such investment will pay off, as a local financial firm will set up shop in Blacksburg.

Aspen Investment Advisors (AIA), owned and operated by Barry Duncan, is a "full service financial planning firm offering the full complement of financial services," including retirement, higher education, and business needs planning as well as advanced asset allocation. AIA maintains an independent status without ties to any insurance company, which allows them to shop the most advantageous combination of financial services in order to fulfill a client's needs.

Duncan started his career in finances as a captive agent with AXA Advisors, but soon decided that he wanted to begin his own business endeavor. One year later, Duncan went independent and formed AIA. Although many challenges came with the creation of this new business, he admits that running your own company is "the toughest job you'll love."

In order to get over the obstacles that came with the creation of AIA, Duncan turned to the assistance offered by the NRVCC.

The Center provides business assistance, including information and referral services, financial assistance to service and manufacturing companies wishing to grow and expand. Duncan admits that he would probably be out of business had it not been for these services.

"I needed the support of a facility which bends the rules to help the up and comers," Duncan said.

Graduating in December, AIA will now be located in Colony Park, one of the most prestigious office parks in Blacksburg, where Duncan plans to expand the company and hire more brokers. This location also puts AIA right in the thick of the other prestigious financial advisors.

"If you are in the financial services market, you are located in Colony Park," said Duncan.

In terms of the future, while Duncan may not have a definite plan, he intends to keep things interesting and to keep his eye out for other business opportunities. "I need new challenges constantly," he said.

[Written by Will McGough]

Bell Tolls for Trenia B. and Company

Trenia B. and Company, a local business that specializes in custom window treatments, will finally take on its own identity as the company prepares to graduate from the New River Valley Competitiveness Center (NRVCC) this December.

"My staff and I make custom window treatments, bedcovers, slipcovers, and related items like pillows and table skirts," said Trenia Bell, who

started the company in the basement of her home. "We also sell designer drapery rods, wallpaper and fabrics."

While her business has flourished and developed over the past few years, the path was by no means an easy one for Bell.

After graduating from Radford University with a degree in interior design, Bell worked as an interior designer before her desire to be with her children motivated her to become self-employed. She started a home-based, single-person business that specialized in the sewing of custom window treatments.

Then, in June of 2005, Bell began to look for ways to expand her business. She found the help she needed at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center. It was here that Bell was able to learn and grow as a business leader.

"I would recommend the center to anyone that is starting up or expanding a business...I don't believe that the business could have possibly grown without being here at the Center," said Bell. "I've had a safe environment with business support in which to learn how to manage and train my staff."

In addition to physical space, the NRVCC provides business assistance, including information and referral services, financial assistance, and incubator and multi-tenant facilities. These as well as many other conveniences offered by the Center have helped Bell deal with the pressures and responsibilities of the business world.

"When I began here it was important to have something as simple as my incoming deliveries signed for when I was out on appointments," Bell said. "Having a copy machine and fax available was also important...the Center gave me a larger space to move to as I needed it without waiting for a lease to expire and then finding another."

Upon graduation, Trenia B. and Company will move into a retail shop and sewing studio located on Main St. in Radford. Bell said that this new shop will allow her company to increase the number of styles they offer to interior designer clients, as well as to have more trims and pillow stuffers in stock and to offer some styles in a fast delivery program.

"Graduation is very important to me...It is a point when I feel I'm ready as a business to go on to continue the growth of my business and not be a "new" company, but a viable company that is expanding," said Bell. "[It is a] huge difference from when I moved here as an individual ready to try to grow but completely unsure if I could accomplish that."

Armed with new business skills and a restored confidence, Trenia B. and Company hopes to be fully moved into their new location by the end of January. Even with all the excitement surrounding the graduation, Bell admits that she is still learning, and hasn't forgotten where she would be had it not been for the NRVCC.

"I would still be working in my basement by myself," Bell said.

[Written by Will McGough]

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Yolanda Y. Hunter, Incubator Manager

February - March 2007

From the Manager's Desk:

Over the last couple of years, I have noticed that in most small businesses, the business is the owner. Meaning your personal credit history is very critical when applying for a loan or a line of credit, it influences the bank when lending you money.

Access to capital has always been a challenge for micro and small business. However, if you have a clean credit history, your chance of securing a loan or credit is greater. Entrepreneurs are under the impression your banker, accountant or lawyer is the first place to begin when seeking a bank loan, but it is not, it begins with you!

Check your credit history from Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, the big three credit bureaus for missing data, mistakes, and exclusions. For example, you may have cancelled a credit card with a \$5,000 limit years ago but it can still be on your credit report. The bank will look at this as available credit and limit your loan size.

Remember, you can order a personal credit history report from these credit agencies for free once a year either via phone, mail or internet. If you have not checked your credit history in the last year, I urge you to do so before you go into a financial institution for a loan.

Please know a clean credit report is the first step in getting the cash you need for your small business. Again, I ask, how good is your personal credit history?

Woodworks Restoration and Remodeling, Inc.

Ed Dixon, Owner of Woodworks Restoration and Remodeling, announced the graduation and relocation of the company in December, 2006. Woodworks Restoration and Remodeling has been an incubator client of the Competitiveness Center since 2002. Woodworks provides full service remodeling, design/build, kitchens, baths, additions, custom woodworking, complete home restoration and preservation. The company has increased in size in its tenure at the Center, with over 12 employees on staff, starting with only three carpenters in 2002.

“We will miss the many amenities provided at the Center and the great people we came to know there. We recently moved to the historic district of Radford, and look forward to being a part of the Downtown community”, stated Dixon.

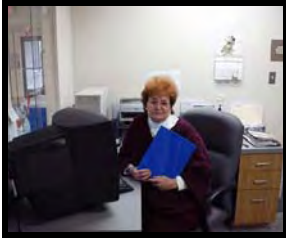
Woodworks Restoration and Remodeling new offices occupy a circa 1887 storefront space on 111 Third Avenue in Radford. The building owner, Bart Castleberry of Bondurant Realty, was very supportive in working with them to restore some features and bring the building up to code, also allowing them to design and construct a great workspace, adding new wood floors, trim, lighting, and heating system.

Above the 8' dropped ceiling they discovered a ceiling structure from the 1930's when the building was used as a retail store. Two feet above that, they found a pressed tin ceiling. They gave the building most of its height back, recycled much of the crown molding and lumber from the 1930's ceiling structure, and exposed a beveled cedar front wall. Last year Woodworks had to cut down a number of red cedars to make way for a drain field at a Claytor Lake project, that lumber is now a part of their upper back wall.

In the future, they have plans to restore the original tin ceiling, (which had to be temporarily removed to satisfy current building code), also the exterior brick & metal Cornice work. Having done that, it will mark their 5th historic downtown building restoration in Radford. Please visit them in their new location! Their new contact information is 540-731-0021, and their website is still under construction at www.woodworksrr.com.

Competitiveness Center Expands Services

The Competitiveness Center partners with Goodwill Industries Senior Community Service Employment Program, known as SCSEP of the New River Valley. Goodwill Industries provides workforce development programs which empower individuals to achieve and sustain a level of independence to participate more fully in life through dedicated, autonomous local organizations.



Judy King

As a project sponsor, the Center will provide training to Judy King. Ms. King will serve as the Competitiveness Center's Receptionist. The Center would like to welcome Judy to the Center and thank Goodwill Industries for continuing to build strong communities and creating economic energy.

The incubator has also developed a cooperative with a VA Tech Small Business Consulting class to provide research, marketing and business planning, and financial analysis to existing business tenants who are expanding their market. The new partnerships better reflect the incubator's mission to create jobs and diversify the local economy.

Space for Rent

We have space available here at the Center, with offices as small as 125 square feet to industrial bays that are approximately 2,000 square feet. Monthly rent could be as low as \$150 for the smallest office. All tenants have access to telephone services, office equipment, the Internet, conference and training rooms, resource library, and business assistance as part of their lease. Also included in the monthly rent are all utilities, including water, sewer, climate controlled space, convenient parking, and a large kitchen that is furnished with a refrigerator and microwave.

If you are looking for a space to grow your small business, or if you want to find out more about the Competitiveness Center, please contact Yolanda Hunter at (540) 633-6730 or by email yhunter@nrvc.org. The management staff is extremely proud of this facility and its wonderful location, and would like the opportunity to show you around. Come for a visit, you will be impressed!

Entrepreneur Express: Moving Your Business Forward

The Entrepreneur Express Workshops are a series of free workshops throughout Southwest Virginia that offer hands on lectures and exercises covering key elements of business practice, led by successful practitioners. Segments include: How to Start & Operate a Business; Growing Your Business/Marketing Strategy; Financing/Managing Resources; Available Resources & Resource Fair; and Starting and Operating a Tourism Venture. Please visit www.vastartup.org for a schedule of the ongoing series of workshops and sponsors in Southwest Virginia. Pre-registration is required.

Upcoming Events

√ New River Valley Competitiveness Center Graduation - January 30, 2007, at 11AM in the New River Room #335.

√ NBIA 21st Annual International Conference on Business Incubation - Seattle, Washington, April 1-4, 2007. Visit www.nbia.org for details.

√ NRV Job Fair Expo - Friday, March 30, 2007, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., NRCC, Dublin, VA.

For Competitiveness Center information contact:

Yolanda Y. Hunter, Incubator Manager

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April - May 2007

From the Manager's Desk:

IRS Tax Support

For those of you who are not aware, the IRS provides a Small Business/Self-Employed Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop. This extensive workshop is designed to help new and existing small business owners understand and meet their federal tax obligations. There are 10 lessons covered through the business Tax Workshop such as:

1. Setting up and running a new business
2. Paying your taxes using a computer (Sole proprietors, partnerships, Corporations, Charities/Non profits)
3. Retirement plans for owner & employees
4. Running your business out of your home
5. Federal Taxes when hiring employees/contractors
6. Salaries paid to: Indian tribal council, ministers, employees of non-profit organizations, and tips
7. Making tax deposits and filing payroll taxes
8. Federal unemployment taxes (FUTA)

To learn more about the Small Business/Self-Employed Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop, visit <http://www.irs.gov>.



National Business Incubation Association (NBIA)

Partner Programs

Deep Discounts, Helpful Products, Useful Services

As a client of the Competitiveness Center, you'll receive discounts on products and services from name-brand companies, including FedEx, QuickBooks, and Turnstone, a Steelcase Company. Take savings averaging 22 percent on FedEx shipping, as well as discounts on copying and printing at FedEx Kinko's. Save up to 20 percent on financial, customer or retail-management software from QuickBooks, including Quicken. Furnish your offices with style and value while saving more than 50 percent on small-business office furniture from

Turnstone. Take advantage of MyBusinessAssistant's wide range of back-office and business-support solutions at special prices. **These discounts and more are a benefit of our membership in the National Business Incubation Association — so they don't cost you a penny.**

FedEx - Ship and copy like the big guys (without the big prices)

As a client of the Competitiveness Center, you can save on average 22 percent on select FedEx Express, FedEx Ground and FedEx International shipping, as well as discounts on copying and printing at FedEx Kinko's.

QuickBooks - Fast, easy financial management -- for less

As a client of the Competitiveness Center, you'll save up to 36 percent on small-business financial management software from QuickBooks, including Quicken — and get free shipping to boot.

Turnstone - Enhance your image without emptying your wallet

As a client of the Competitiveness Center, you can outfit your offices with style and value with furniture from Turnstone, a Steelcase company — and enjoy savings of more than 54 percent off list prices.

MyBusinessAssistant - Get the help you need without hiring more help

As a client of the Competitiveness Center, you can enjoy special pricing on a wide range of back-office solutions and business-support services from MyBusinessAssistant, from Web site design and marketing to virtual office locations worldwide.

For details, contact Yolanda Hunter at 540-633-6730 or yhunter@nrvc.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

• **NBIA's 21st International Conference - On Business Incubation.** Don't miss the premier training event for incubation professionals, held April 1- 4, 2007 at Seattle Sheraton Hotel! For more information, visit www.nbia.org/nbia_events/conf2007/index.php, call (740) 593-4331 or e-mail events@nbia.org.

• **Entrepreneur Express: Moving Your Business Forward** - The Entrepreneur Express Workshops are a series of free workshops throughout Southwest Virginia that offer hands on lectures and exercises covering key elements of business practice, run by successful practitioners. Please visit <http://www.vastartup.org> for a schedule of the ongoing series of workshops and sponsors in the Southwest Virginia. Pre-registration is required.

• **Small Business: Fundamentals Workshops** - Managing Employees, Insurance and Risk Management on April 3, 2007 at Cross Roads Institute, Galax, VA, visit <http://www.vdba.virginia.gov>.



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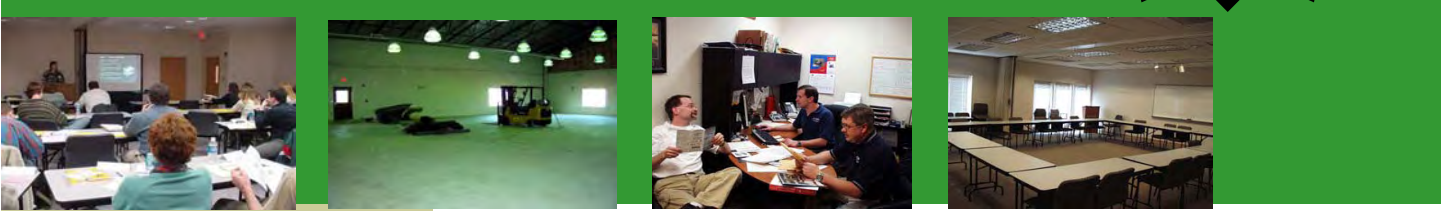
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NEW RIVER VALLEY COMPETITIVENESS CENTER



Valued Added Attributes

- Receptionist Services
- Receive Shipments
- Fed Ex Discount Program
- Telephone Services
- Office Equipment
- Internet
- Conference and Training Rooms
- Resource Library
- Manufacturing/Office Space
- House Keeping
- Business Assistance
- Tenant Review Committee

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The **New River Valley Competitiveness Center** is a 54,000 square foot facility designed as a "gateway" to the New River Valley and an example of innovative planning to incorporate a mix of uses. Developed by the New River Valley Development Corporation, the Center is part of an effort to enhance opportunities for businesses within the New River Valley. It serves as an initial seeding location for entrepreneurs and manufacturing/industrial companies wishing to expand.

Small Business Services:

- Business Planning Assistance
- Marketing Assistance
- Access Capital
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Small Business Training
- Technical Assistance
- One-to-One Consulting

CALL TODAY!



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June - July 2007

From the Manager's Desk:

Emergency Response Teams Honored at the NRVCC

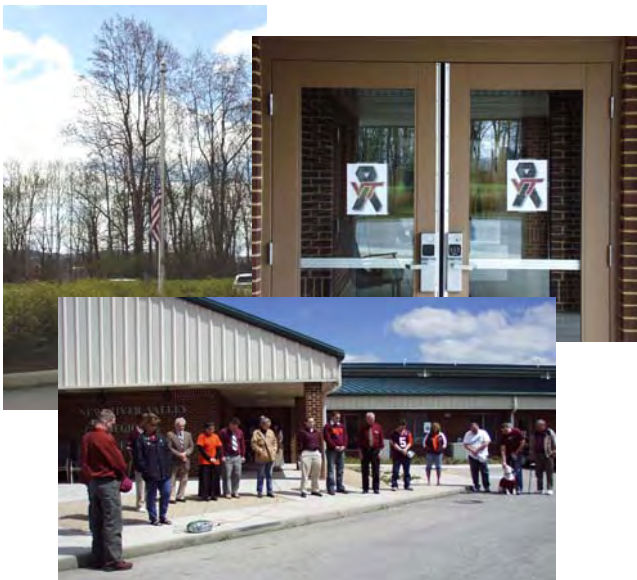
Sometimes we forget the jobs carried out by emergency response teams are different from most any other. Their ability to react quickly under tremendous pressure and make flawless decisions, keeps us safe and healthy. The staff and business tenants of the NRVCC honor the emergency response teams nationwide who delivered lifesaving emergency care during the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

We would also like to take this time to acknowledge the Center's very own Emergency Response providers - the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, REMSI, Western Virginia EMS, and Life Care, whose knowledge, training, and commitment to service greatly impacted our local communities and continue to ensure healthy and safe environments through their selfless efforts. **We honor and appreciate you!**

The Center Pauses for a Moment of Silence



In Memoriam



On Friday, April 20, 2007, the NRVCC participated in the statewide day of mourning declared by Governor Tim Kaine for the victims of Virginia Tech's April 16, 2007, tragedy.

At 11:50 a.m., staff, employees, and guests of the Center, donned in orange and maroon apparel, gathered around a half-mast flag pole as the state tuned into various broadcasting stations to hear prayer services, pause for a moment of silence, and the ringing of bells at 12 noon.

Virginia Tech Students Partner with the New River Valley Competitiveness Center

For a number of years, the applied small business consulting class has partnered Virginia Tech student teams of the Pamplin College of Business with local companies to tackle specific industry related issues. The partnership helps businesses that may not otherwise be able to afford outside assistance while providing students with real-world business experience. The business students help firms with everything from formulating business plans to determining whether to lease, build or buy additional space. This year the Center was a proud recipient of the program. Teams were assigned to work with Safe Water, Inc. and the New River Valley Development Corporation.

Safe Water, a family owned water analysis and business research company wanted their management team to help with marketing and advertising, to better position their company in the local marketplace. As a small business, mass advertising is very expensive. Yet by the time the Virginia Tech Management students finished giving their no scripted presentation, due to the unexpected tragedy on campus and a university community stunned, Safe Water walked away with valuable advertising strategies and a marketing plan.

As one of the owners of Safe Water stated at the student presentation, it's "above and beyond the call of duty" of the students work. We at the Center have a feeling of pride because the students handled our projects with passion and commitment – they wanted to deliver what they were assigned. Given this caliber of students, the New River Valley Competitiveness Center looks forward to a long and lasting partnership.

The New River Valley Development Corporation management team assisted in revamping the non-profit organization's business plan. The Development Corporation was formed in 1983 by the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford to provide business assistance to start-up and expanding small businesses. It wasn't the end of the semester project presentation the group had planned, but students forwarded the project to date to Reed Kennedy, one of the class's two instructors. Reed Kennedy offered to follow-up with the Development Corporation to conclude the project.



Virginia Tech students Erik Anderson and Christopher Love



Center Manager with Safewater, Inc., Virginia Tech students, and their Professor

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Association for Enterprise Opportunity (AEO) has a web resource, Successful Practices in Rural Microenterprise Development. The information on the site was generated from AEO's series of learning clusters related to microenterprise. You can access this information by visiting their web site at www.microenterpriseworks.org/services/ruraldevelopment/index.htm.



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August - September 2007

From the Manager's Desk:

Small Business Incubator

On a weekly basis, I come in contact with entrepreneurs who have never heard or know what a small business incubator is and what it could offer a new startup or expanding business. So I would like to take this time to answer the question, what is a small business incubator?

Incubators nurture young businesses, helping them to survive and grow during the start-up period and expansion period when they are most vulnerable. Incubators provide hands-on management assistance, access to financing, and exposure to critical business or technical support services. Incubators offer entrepreneurial companies shared office services, access to equipment, flexible leases, and expandable space – all under one roof.

Most new entrepreneurs are risk takers, have strength in a specific trade area, and are very passionate. As an incubator manager and consultant, I have found entrepreneurs generally lack the experience in the basics of running a business, i.e., the administrative skills to make things work. Business incubators give these bold new entrepreneurs and companies structure, credibility, access to knowledge, infrastructure (copy and fax machines), and contacts that are necessary for their business to take root and grow.

If you need help to launch your new startup or expanding business and could benefit from a value added environment, come visit us at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center.

New River Valley Competitiveness Center



Valued Added Attributes

- ✧ Receptionist Services
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- ✧ Fed Ex Discount Program
- ✧ Telephone Services
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- Marketing Assistance
- Access to Capital
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Small Business Training
- Technical Assistance
- One-to-One Consulting
- Tenant Review Committee

Local Community Incubator Support

Pulaski County, Ground Vibrations Consultants staff, and Joe Rakes provided the use of equipment and laborers to give the Center a new face-lift. The Competitiveness Center thanks these participants for their service and wishes them all well as they continue to support local community organizations.

TENANT UPDATE

Hall Developers

In June 2007, Hall Developers moved into new offices more than doubling the space the business occupies in the Center. Hall Developers credits the move to a continuing growth of business. The company now occupies approximately 500 square feet in two offices.

Safe Water, Inc.

Established September 20, 2004, Safe Water Incorporated (SWI) is a water analysis and Research Corporation that will provide bacteriological testing services for drinking water and wastewater as a Virginia State certified laboratory. Their services are offered to residents/homeowners as well as public waterworks owners. The Company intends to expand its services and has acquired a 130 square feet of new lab space within the Center.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The New River Valley Job Fair Expo will be September 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the New River Valley Mall in Christiansburg, VA. Employer booths are only \$95. Employers can register for the Expo at <http://www2.nr.edu/nrvjobfairexpo/>.

Entrepreneur Express Free Workshop – “Moving Your Business Forward”, September 13, 2007 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., New River Community College, Edwards Hall, Room 117, Dublin, VA.

Competitiveness Center Reminder

There is meeting space available at the Competitiveness Center for groups as small as two or larger than one hundred. If you need a place to meet, call or email as listed below. We will be happy to help you and your group have a good environment to advance your cause.

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As I was reading up on some of the hottest topics in business, I ran across a piece reminding us to think about strategy. It's necessary to take time away from the daily grind and see outside the business. Strategic thinking helps identify wrong assumptions, blind spots, and uncreative work that can disrupt your long-term vision. Take a few hours a month to do some strategic thinking. About.com, a small business information website, mentions strategic thinking can go a long way in the life span of your business. Remember, strategy isn't just for big corporations, it's for a one-person operation or a small business as well.

VIRGINIA NAMED "BEST STATE FOR BUSINESS" BY FORBES.COM FOR SECOND YEAR

Governor Kaine announced that Virginia again led the nation in Forbes.com's "Best States for Business" ranking. In its second year, the review examines multiple objective measurements, including business cost, regulatory climate, quality of the workforce, and economic growth. Forbes.com is the official Internet site of the Forbes family of business publications. For the Governor's full release, visit the following website: www.governor.virginia.gov/MediaRelations/NewsReleases/viewRelease.cfm?id=461.

VIRGINIA ONE-STOP: IMPROVING THE BUSINESS START-UP PROCESS

The Commonwealth is developing a "one-stop" website where start-up businesses can ultimately fill out just one form to incorporate, apply for a local business license, register for required professional licenses or permits, and establish a tax account. Team members from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance comprise a large part of the design team and are committed to streamlining a process that can be frustrating and time consuming for the entrepreneur –freeing them to spend more time building the capacity of their enterprises. The project will be completed in stages.

Entrepreneurs seeking to start a business in Virginia, benefit from relatively simplistic requirements with few licenses, permits and registrations. One obstacle that entrepreneurs face, however, is assessing which requirements apply to them. Every prerequisite is handled by an individual agency or office. For example, a start-up corporation must separately register using a paper or online form with the State Corporation Commission (SCC), the Department of Taxation, the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (if applicable) and the Department of Minority Business Enterprise.

Allowing a business the opportunity to register for all required forms in one place would greatly improve the customer experience in Virginia. Instead of making four or more phone calls, or reviewing four or more websites, the customer would enter all information and get all questions answered from a single service provider which would then forward required registrations to the appropriate agencies. The Virginia One-Stop promises a win-win for both citizens accessing Commonwealth business services and the agencies that seek to provide first-class customer service. For state agencies, the One-Stop will improve efficiency by submitting applications to the agency that are

complete and correct in a uniform format. There is the potential for less paperwork and greater use of online tools.

Several other states, including Utah and South Carolina, have successfully implemented the “one-stop” concept with minimal transition issues and positive reviews from customers.

VIRGINIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFERS GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES

All businesses are at risk to emergency situations. Whether it’s a hurricane or a bomb threat, terrorist activity or a chemical spill – businesses and their employees need to be prepared. The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) offers a tool to help businesses prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. It explains types of emergencies and the problems they pose; provides information on how to prepare for them and how to recover from them; and helps business owners put it all together in an emergency preparedness plan. For an online version of the guide, visit: www.vaemergency.com/business/index.cfm. Businesses interested in receiving copies can email the VDEM Public Affairs Office at pio@vdem.virginia.gov.

VIRGINIA JOBS INVESTMENT PROGRAM (VJIP)

In an effort to support the success of small, woman and minority-owned (SWAM) businesses in the Commonwealth, the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (VDBA) is targeting companies to offer the program’s training, recruiting and funding resources at no cost. For further information, visit www.dba.state.va.us.

TENANT NEWS

Smiling Bulldog Enterprises continues to grow. In September 2007, the company leased an additional 622 square foot light-manufacturing bay in the Center to package and ship their tailgate and related products. The company now occupies approximately 1000 square feet.

ANNOUNCEMENT

- NBIA 17th Fall Training Institute, October 30-November 1, 2007. Location: Nashville, Tennessee. Information: www.vbia.org.



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