



WV Career Collaborative and First2 Network Spring 2026 Co-Conference

Funded by Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Award #PW-21904-IM



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

Appalachian Regional Commission, POWER Initiative

Partnerships for Opportunity
and Workforce and Economic
Revitalization

- targets federal resources to expand economic opportunities for coal communities

ARC POWER PW-21904-IM (Our Grant)

Build and develop a collaborative group to address important issues in the region by connecting people in different parts of the career pipeline

- Bring educators and industry together
- Improve student/jobseeker retention in our communities



Why is this initiative needed?

During our planning phase for the grant, we spoke to over 30 regional employers about the challenges they were facing

- Fragmented Silos
- Weaknesses in the Workforce Pipeline
- Low Career Awareness



In Memoriam: Cliff Jackson



Efficiency is great, but it is not the goal

Project Objectives



1. Improve the Regional Workforce Ecosystem

Create a coordinated network connecting students, education, industry, and other workforce partners



Core Executive Team (CET)



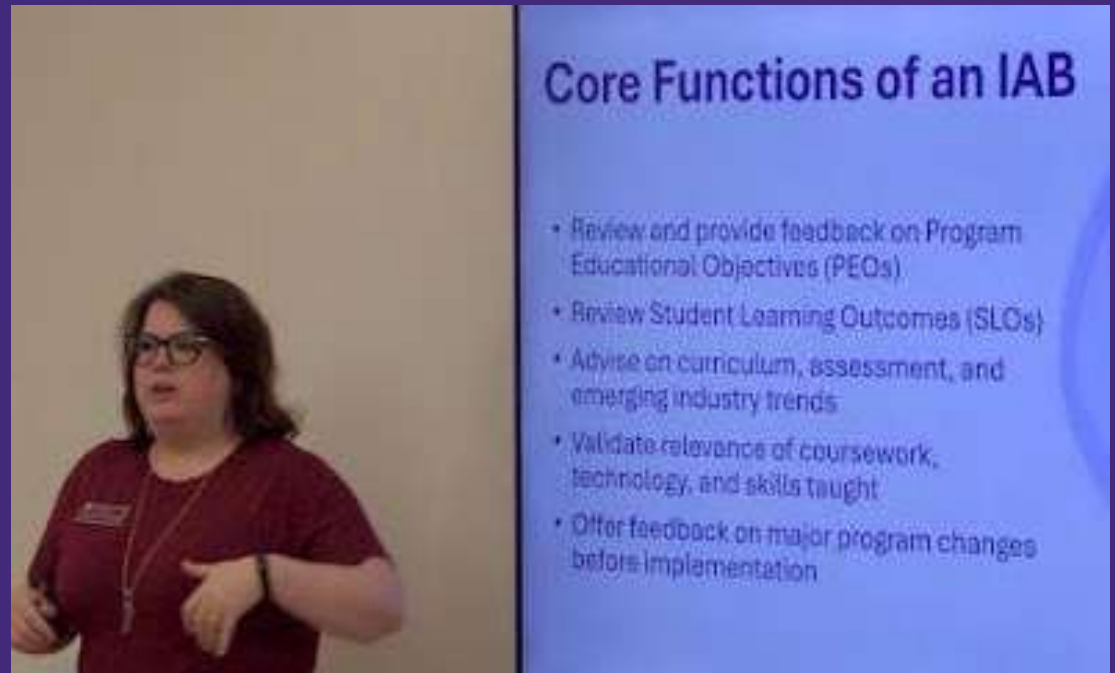
County Networking Events



Regional networking events in partnership with local Economic Development entities

2. Strengthen Education-Industry Alignment

Create and/or improve Industry Advisory Boards



Educator Field Trip Series

June 29-July 1 at Glenville State University

Site visits to look at STEM career opportunities in the region

- Participate in a dedicated WVSTA session about implementing what they learned in their classrooms
- Receive continuing education credit (pending the completion of a project).



3. Expand Work-Based Learning (WBL)

Develop structured internship, job shadowing, and micro-internship opportunities



4. Increase Career Awareness

Create VR Job Shadow Tours of Local Industries

- Show students what's out there



WV Career Collaborative STEM Entrepreneurship Seminar

Join us for an engaging seminar focused on entrepreneurship, innovation, and career pathways in West Virginia

- Date: July 16, 2026
- Location: White Hall Event and Conference Center

Scan for more info →



- Connect with entrepreneurs & business leaders
- Engage with students & educators
- Explore partnerships & community impact
- Learn about innovation in Appalachia



5. Support Students and Workers

PowerUP interns (18 internships so far):

- Provide Work Experience AND soft-power-transferable-essential skills



Questions, Comments, Ideas?

Contact the WV Career Collaborative Core Executive Team!



The WVCC CET:
Tracey Kennedy, Lloyd Ford, Maggie Sorensen, Logan Harrison

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." — *Margaret Mead*

