

ONWARD NRV ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023





ONWARD NRV



MISSION & VISION

Onward NRV is a public/private, regional economic development organization whose mission is to attract and retain world class jobs, investment, and talent in Virginia's New River Valley. It's a movement where leaders from business, government, and higher education work together to promote the economic vitality of the region.

Onward NRV is always striving to move the region forward. It is an organization that gets things done. This is embodied in the action-oriented name and branding of our organization. The movement of the red arrow in our logo is symbolic of Onward NRV, which pulls people and ideas together to move the region forward. Leaders in business, government, and higher education have a role to play in economic development. We're here to help them Join the Movement.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

To create economic success for Virginia's New River Valley, Onward NRV began a new five-year economic development strategy called Onward 2028 on July 1, 2023. We use a holistic approach to economic development to focus our organization's work on four main goals: (1) Talent, (2) Business, (3) Marketing, and (4) Regionalism. As you read through the annual report, you will see the progress and results from our last strategic plan, Onward 2023.

OVERARCHING GOALS



ONWARD 2028: JOIN THE MOVEMENT

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

FY24

Attract and retain talent to support regional growth by promoting scaling & cross pollination of best practices across the region by hosting an annual talent summit.

FY25

Market Virginia's New River Valley as a competitive destination for talent and companies by producing and releasing a livability video highlighting regional assets.

FY26

Attract and retain talent to support regional growth by promoting job openings and in-demand careers by compiling a "Work in the NRV" package to share with K-12 educators.

FY27

Attract and retain talent to support regional growth by expanding and enhancing videos showcasing in-demand careers in Onward NRV's four targeted industries.

FY28

Attract and grow business to stimulate new jobs and investment through supporting existing business competitiveness by developing a regional supplier/manufacturing matching portal.

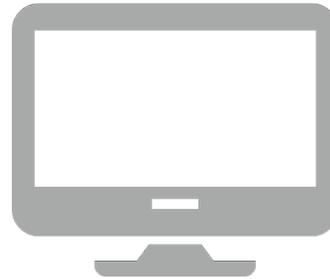
FIVE YEARS OF PROGRESS

When Onward NRV began the Onward 2023 strategic plan in July 2018, we set specific goals for our organizational metrics. Below are the results from the completion of the five-year strategy.



200

NEW PROSPECTS
(121% of 5-Year Goal)



362K

WEBSITE VISITS
(307% of 5-Year Goal)



48

PROSPECT VISITS
(73% of 5-Year Goal)



494K

SOCIAL
ENGAGEMENT
(1098% of 5-Year Goal)



111

INVESTORS
(93% of 5-Year Goal)



492

REGIONAL
BLOG POSTS



VIRGINIA'S
NEW
RIVER
VALLEY

FIVE-YEAR REGIONAL IMPACT

FIVE-YEAR REGIONAL SUCCESS:



During the past five years, Virginia's New River Valley surpassed the regional economic development goals originally set in the Onward 2023 strategic plan. Twenty-four new or expanding companies announced plans to create 2,530 jobs and invest over \$551 million in the NRV.

FIVE-YEAR REGIONAL RESULTS:

INDICATOR	Five-Year Results	Five-Year Goal	% of Five-Year Goal
New Primary Jobs	2,530	1,720	147%
New Secondary Jobs	1,297	1,768	73%
Total Direct Payroll	\$193,018,121	\$152,038,027	127%
New Capital Investment	\$551,270,300	\$180,000,000	306%

Source: IMPLAN courtesy of Appalachian Power

FY 2022-23 REGIONAL ACCOLADES

Winners in Multiple Categories for Best of Virginia (40) -Virginia Living
Best Music Festival (FloydFest) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Winery (Chateau Morrisette) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Restaurant (Floyd Country Store) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Waterfall (Cascade Falls) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best ADA Outdoor Experience (New River Trail State Park) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Best Public Lands (Blue Ridge Parkway) -Blue Ridge Outdoors
Top 12 Best Small Towns in Virginia (Floyd) -Travel & Leisure
#7 Lowest Cost of Living in Virginia (Narrows) -Niche.com
#18 Lowest Cost of Living in Virginia (Elliston) -Niche.com
#19 Lowest Cost of Living in Virginia (Pearisburg) -Niche.com
Top Affordable College Towns (Blacksburg) -New York Times
#8 Best Place to Live in Virginia (Blacksburg) -HomeSnacks.net
#3 Most Affordable Places to Live in Virginia (Pulaski) -HomeSnacks.net
#5 Safest Cities in Virginia (Blacksburg) -SafeWise
#13 Best County to Raise a Family in Virginia (Montgomery County) -Stacker.com
#12 Best Frozen Waterfall in the US (Cascade Falls) -Fodor'sTravel
Best Wedding Venues (Mountain Lake Lodge & Nesslerod) -TheKnot.com
#10 Best Place to Raise a Family in Virginia (Radford) -Homesnacks.net
#2 Best Value Colleges in Virginia (Virginia Tech) -SmartAsset
#8 Best Value Colleges in Virginia (Radford University) -SmartAsset
#12 Top Golf Courses in Virginia (Pete Dye River Course) -Golf Digest
First Digitally Well University (Virginia Tech) -Digital Wellness Institute
Top 100 Donuts in the Country (Carol Lee Donuts) -Yelp
Top 100 Best College Town & Cities (Blacksburg) -Wallethub
Top 100 Towns in Virginia for Small Business (Montgomery & Floyd) -LendEDU
Top 20 County in Virginia to Buy a House (Giles) -Niche.com

VIRGINIA'S

NEW
RIVER
VALLEY

FY2022-23 REGIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Company	Jobs	Investment	Location
SWVA Biochar	15	\$2,600,000	Floyd County
Hollingsworth & Vose	25	\$40,200,000	Floyd County
Grucci	45	\$5,500,000	Pulaski County
TOTALS	85	\$48,300,000	

GOAL 1: INDUSTRY

Attract and grow industry to stimulate new jobs and investment in the region

EXISTING INDUSTRY



VEDP Business Investment Tour

Onward NRV hosted the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) Business Investment Team on a familiarization tour of Virginia's New River Valley in March 2023. The Business Investment Team explored all five NRV communities and learned why the region is a great place to live, work, and do business.



Virginia Secretary of Commerce & Trade Visit

Onward NRV hosted Virginia Secretary of Commerce & Trade Caren Merrick and Virginia Economic Development Partnership President and CEO Jason El Koubi on a tour of the NRV in July 2022. The goal of the visit was for the guests to explore the region, hear from local leaders, and learn more about the business advantages of the NRV.



VEDP International Team Visit

The Virginia Economic Development (VEDP) International Team visited Virginia's New River Valley in January 2023. Onward NRV gave a presentation to the team about why the NRV is a great place to do business. The VEDP International Team was excited to hear that the region is home to a growing number of foreign corporations and technology companies.



MFG & Tech Industry COVID Survey Follow-Up

In May 2022, Onward NRV partnered with the NRV Regional Commission to conduct a follow-up survey of the manufacturing and technology companies in the NRV. The goal was to better understand how COVID-19 affected businesses throughout the region. The results show that both industries displayed resilience during COVID-19 and continue to be strong contributors to the region's economy.

BUSINESS ATTRACTION



SelectUSA Investment Summit

Onward NRV attended the 2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit, the highest-profile event dedicated to promoting foreign direct investment in the United States. Onward NRV's goal for the exhibition was to make new contacts with businesses looking to expand to the U.S. and encourage them to consider the NRV as a potential business location. Executive Director Katie Boswell and Floyd County Community & Economic Development Director Lydeana Martin attended the 2023 SelectUSA Investment Summit where they were able to connect with over 35 different organizations.



AUVSI Xponential Trade Show

Onward NRV attended the annual AUVSI Xponential Symposium on Uncrewed Systems in May 2023 in Denver, Colorado. Onward co-sponsored the Virginia booth with the Virginia Unmanned Systems Center at VIPC and other Virginia-based economic developers. Onward NRV Senior Director of Business Engagement Samantha Livesay attended on behalf of Onward NRV.

FY 2022-23 PROSPECT DASHBOARD



4

Prospect Visits



35

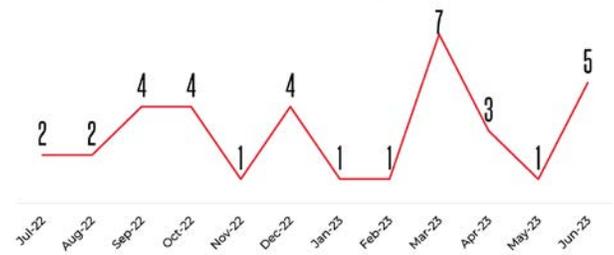
New Prospects



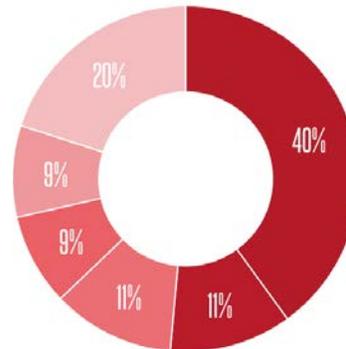
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Marketing Engagements

Prospect Monthly Trends

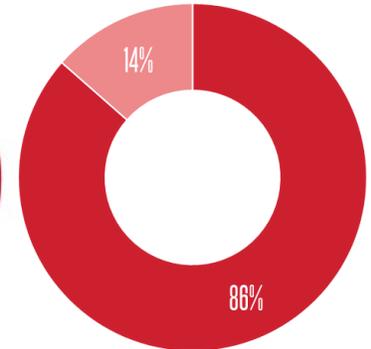


Prospect Industry



- Manufacturing (40%)
- Agriculture (11%)
- Energy-Related (11%)
- Food & Beverage Processing (9%)
- IT/Tech (9%)
- Other (20%)

Prospect Type



- New Recruitment (86%)
- Existing Industry (14%)

GOAL 2: TALENT

Attract and retain talent to support and grow our targeted industries and communities

TALENT



Posters Promote Industries to Students

Onward NRV recently created posters to promote tech and manufacturing jobs to students throughout the region. Onward NRV staff collaborated with the team at New River Community College as well as Career and Technical Education directors from the Floyd County, Giles County, Montgomery County, Pulaski County, and City of Radford school systems to distribute the posters around the region.



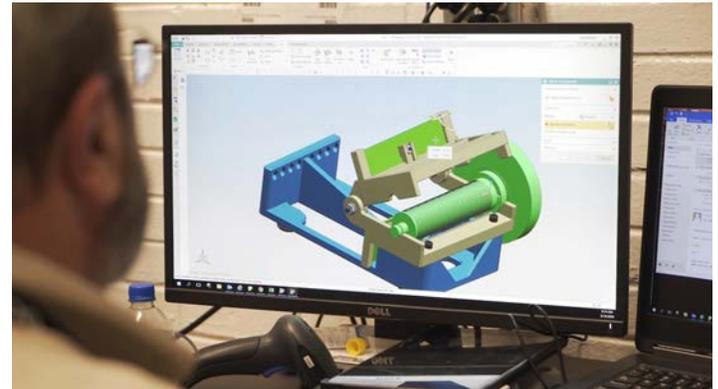
Regional Career Fairs

Onward NRV represented Virginia's New River Valley and its job opportunities to local college students at career fairs at Virginia Tech, New River Community College and Radford University. Onward promoted the region to prospective graduates with hopes of attracting and retaining talent in the region.



Tech Talent Digital Marketing Campaigns

Onward NRV ran two tech talent digital marketing campaigns during FY 2022-23. The goals of the campaigns, run in November and June, were to attract and retain IT/Tech talent in the NRV. The campaigns reached a total of 1,043,788 people, had 495,107 video views, 139,761 engagements, and generated 1,717,138 impressions. Our TheNRV.org/techjobs webpage received 3,679 visits.



MFG Talent Digital Marketing Campaign

During the months of December and May, Onward NRV ran manufacturing talent digital marketing campaigns utilizing Onward's manufacturing videos. The campaigns generated 1,234,898 impressions, reached 719,615 people, had 204,099 engagements, and had 512,646 video views. TheNRV.org/MFG webpage was visited 3,531 times.

NRV EXPERIENCE



NRV Experience 2023 Cohort

Onward NRV hosted the fourth cohort of the NRV Experience, a program designed to enhance the experiences of students completing summer internships in the NRV.

The NRV Experience encourages interns to consider living and working in the region after graduation. This year's cohort saw 51 enrolled interns from 11 participating companies representing 15 different colleges and universities, making it the largest registered cohort ever.

Throughout the summer, interns participated in weekly excursions that showcased the amenities available in each of the NRV communities. In addition, the interns received weekly career development sessions hosted by professionals from around the region.

COMMUNITY EXCURSIONS

FLOYD

Art Classes at the Floyd Center for the Arts
and Music with Floyd Country Store
6/22/23

GILES

Outdoor Activities at
Mountain Lake Lodge
6/29/23

PULASKI

Water Activities at
Claytor Lake
7/13/23

RADFORD

Historic Movie Theatre
7/20/23

MONTGOMERY

Float the New River
7/27/23

NRV EXPERIENCE 2023 DASHBOARD



51
Enrolled
Interns



15
Colleges &
Universities

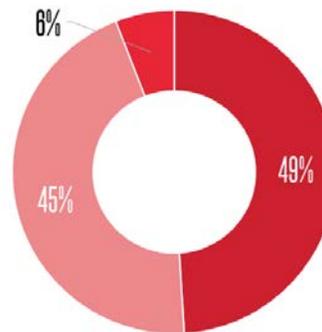


11
Participating
Companies

Interns by Country (38 interns responding)

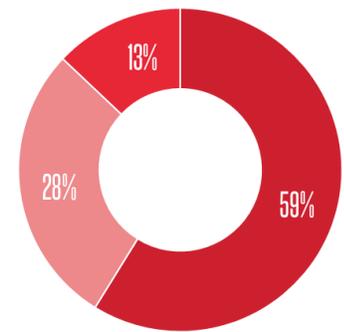


Interns by Industry



- Manufacturing (49%)
- IT/Tech (45%)
- Other (6%)

Interns by Major



- Engineering (59%)
- Computer-Related (28%)
- Other (13%)

GOAL 3: PLACEMAKING

Cultivate regional brand to foster economic vitality

REGIONAL BRANDING



NRV Bus Wrap Wins SEDC Award

Onward NRV is proud to have received an award from the Southern Economic Development Council for Onward's "NRV Bus Wrap Project." The project won the 2022 Special Judges Award for Creativity. The Virginia's New River Valley branding initiative has been wildly successful and has effectively enhanced the visibility of our region as a great place to live, work, and do business.



Regional Impact Awards

Onward NRV awarded the 2022 Regional Impact Award to Phoenix Hardwoods at the organization's Annual Dinner in September 2022. Phoenix Hardwoods announced an expansion in January 2022 resulting in eight career-focused positions and \$100,000 in capital investment in Floyd County.

QUALITY OF PLACE



Livability Digital Marketing Campaign

With access to the Blue Ridge Mountains, the New River, the Appalachian Trail, Claytor Lake, and a variety of other attractions, there is always a place to find your escape in the NRV. With breathtaking views, the outdoors in the NRV provides the perfect place to recharge and relax. Onward NRV promoted the livability of Virginia's New River Valley through a strategic campaign that marketed to people living in the larger cities close to the NRV in June of 2023.

The message of the campaign was that the NRV is a great place to live and work because of the easy access to outdoor amenities. The campaign highlighted the region's connection to nature and the great outdoors by using Onward NRV's "NRV Outdoors: Find Your Escape" full-length video and smaller video clips that included paddle boarding, trail running, mountain biking, and fishing.

The results of the campaign are below:

Total Impressions: 687,987
Total Reach: 357,268
Total Engagement: 39,353
Total Video Views: 156,300
Total TheNRV.org/outdoors Website Visits: 3,057

The livability digital marketing campaign is part of Onward NRV's strategic plan goal to attract and retain world-class talent by showcasing the region's outdoor benefits and attractions.

NRV REGIONAL BRANDING DASHBOARD

VIRGINIA'S

NEW
RIVER
VALLEY



www.TheNRV.org



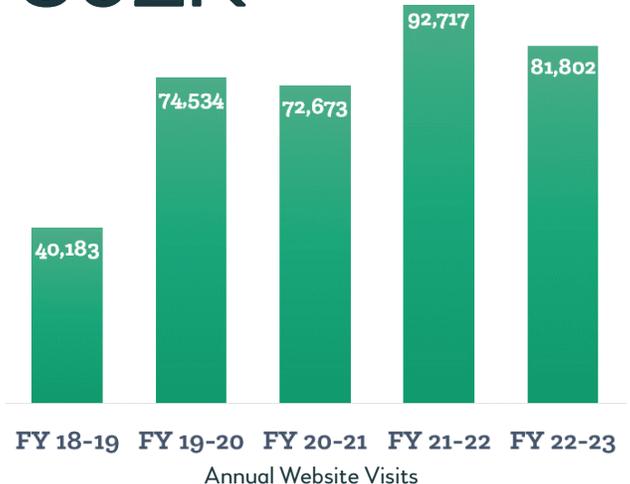
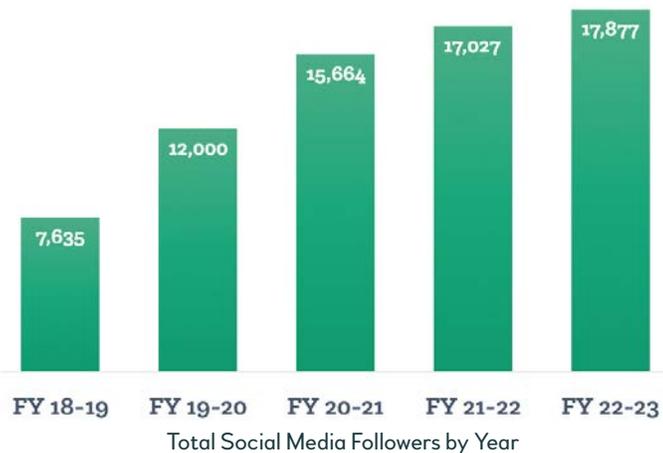
@newrivervalley



@NewRiverVA

18K Five-Year Total
Social Media Followers Added

362K Five-Year Total
Website Visits



16
Digital Marketing
Campaigns Promoted
(Five-Year Total)



4.7M
People Reached with Digital
Marketing Campaigns
(Five-Year Total)



861K
People Engaged with Digital
Marketing Campaigns
(Five-Year Total)

GOAL 4: ORGANIZATION

Be a high-performing regional economic development org.

INVESTOR RELATIONS



Onward 2028 Strategic Plan Kick-Off Event

Onward NRV launched their new 5-year strategic plan at their Summer Investor Event held at the newly opened Highlander Hotel in June 2023. The plan, called Onward 2028, supports Onward's mission to attract and retain world-class jobs, investment, and talent in the NRV.



Investor Events

Onward NRV hosted their quarterly investor events in Fall 2022, Winter 2022, and Spring 2023. Investors spent time networking and receiving updates on Onward's activities. The Annual Dinner in September featured special guest Crystal Morphis and celebrated regional leaders with an awards ceremony. At the Winter Event, Dr. Pat Huber talked towards the important role that education plays in economic development, and at the Spring Event, Dr. John Provo spoke about talent retention in the NRV.

OUTREACH



Community Presentations

Staff presented about Onward's mission and goals to various groups throughout the region, including local chapters of the Kiwanis Club and the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce's Eggs & Issues Economic Development panel.



Onward NRV in the Media

Onward NRV had several opportunities to raise the organization's visibility through media interviews. A variety of media outlets turned to Onward NRV as thought leaders about the New River Valley. Onward NRV staff was featured in a *Virginia Business* article on retaining talent, a WSLs 10 news story on Site Development Grants, and a *Virginia Business* article highlighting the regional collaborations that drive the economic development in the NRV.

OUR INVESTORS

FY 2022-23

Thank you to all of the organizations that make the work of Onward NRV possible!

CHAIRMAN



PRESIDENT



DIRECTOR



For a complete list of our investors, please visit www.OnwardNRV.org/Our-Investors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD MEMBERS FY 2022-23

Scott Blankenship, Chair | Carilion NRV Medical Center

Mark Woolwine, Vice Chair | Brown Edwards

April DeMotts, Treasurer | Montgomery County

Cora Gnegy, Secretary | Giles County

Brian Alexander | IV Labs

David Bennett | Appalachian Power

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John Cox | Radford University

Lauren Dudley | HCA LewisGale Hospital Montgomery

Sara Eaton-McDaniel | BAE Systems

John Gardner | Branch Builds

Brian Hamilton | Montgomery County EDA

Vince Hatcher | Hollingsworth & Vose

Marty Holliday | Floyd County EDA

Trip Kellam | Lawrence Companies

Chris Lawrence | Town of Blacksburg

Linda Millsaps | Floyd County

Richard Mitchell | Celanese Corporation

Andrew Owens | Pulaski County EDA

Craig Parrent | Atlantic Union Bank

Grayson Patterson | Truist

John Provo | Virginia Tech

Brandon Quesenberry | Citizens Telephone Cooperative

Kim Repass | City of Radford

Scott Ross | Salem Stone Corporation

Mark Rowh | New River Community College

Laura Walters | Pulaski County

Lee Wheeler | Giles County EDA

Wayne Whitlock | 1901 Group

Abram Williams | City of Radford EDA

Randy Wingfield | Town of Christiansburg

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FY 2022-23

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Keith Boyd | Hurt & Proffitt, Inc.

April DeMotts | Montgomery County

Cora Gnegy | Giles County

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