Huntington named America's Best Community

After three years of competition facing off against 350 communities across the United States, the City of Huntington has been named America’s Best Community by a group of sponsors that includes Frontier Communications, Dish Network, CoBank and the Weather Channel. For its efforts, the city brings home a grand prize of $3 million along with bragging rights for its revitalization campaign.

“The Robert C. Byrd Institute proudly congratulates Huntington Mayor Steve Williams and his winning team’s efforts on being recognized as 'America's Best Community,” said Charlotte Weber, RCBI Director & CEO. “This acknowledgement is a rewarding fulfillment of the determined revitalization we see across our city. At RCBI we're excited to live and work
in a community that is as motivated as we are to usher in a renaissance of our economy. I look forward to even more growth and development as we continue working in partnership to move forward and enhance people's lives."

Read more about Huntington's recognition here and here.

(From left) U.S. Senator Joe Manchin; Earl Gohl, Federal Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission; Dennis Alvord, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs at the U.S. Economic Development Administration; Marshall University President Jerome Gilbert; Mary Hunt of the Benedum Foundation; and U.S. Rep. Evan Jenkins participate in the major economic development announcement.

RCBI awarded more than $4.7 million for economic development initiatives

The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) is launching major economic development initiatives to diversify the West Virginia economy and create jobs. The efforts - Appalachian Hatchery and Sprouting Farms - are supported by grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

Each initiative involves a network of partners including RCBI, Marshall University, community and technical colleges, career-technical schools, economic development groups, health care providers and others.

Read more

RCBI Director & CEO Charlotte Weber explains how the new initiatives will transform the economy of West Virginia.

Marshall Medical School lands $1.3 million health care grant

Marshall University's Joan C. Edward School of Medicine has been awarded $1.3 million by the Appalachian Regional Commission to create 26 permanent community health worker jobs and provide services directly to high-risk patients in coal-impacted communities across 10 counties in southeastern Ohio, eastern Kentucky, and central West Virginia.

The project streamlines delivery of healthcare services and improves health outcomes for patients suffering from diabetes, congestive heart failure and COPD - diseases that are disproportionately common in Appalachia.
The project is expected to serve at least 625 patients and leverage $780,000 in private investment. Dr. Richard D. Crespo, professor and longtime researcher at the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine, is leading the grant project.

Additional funding is being provided by the Sisters Health Foundation and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation.

**SUCCESS STORY**

**Quality registration opens doors of opportunity for Cogar**

With implementation assistance from RCBI, Cogar Manufacturing of Glen White has earned ISO 9001: 2015 certification, which will open new doors and present diversification opportunities in international markets.

"Diversifying business opportunities that create and sustain good jobs is a key aspect to strengthening our economy," said Charlotte Weber, RCBI Director & CEO. "We're proud that Cogar Manufacturing has committed to enhance its operations and customer service using the latest revision to the ISO 9001 standard. This quality approach will contribute to today's new manufacturing - a resurgent industry that continues to drive our economy."

West Virginia-based Cogar manufactures new equipment and rebuilds heavy-duty coal and aggregate crusher equipment, serving domestic and international industries that include coal, salt, gravel, potash and petroleum coke as well as mining and processing plants.

[Read more](#)

**U.S. manufacturers don't take full advantage of tax breaks**

Manufacturers save more than $6 billion a year through research & development tax deductions, but billions more are available to companies if they take full advantage of new and existing tax provisions. Learn what qualifies for a tax break in such areas as prototyping and IT development.

*Industry Week,* a leading magazine featuring the latest news about today's manufacturing industry, has answers about how innovative U.S. manufacturers can save even more money through incentives. Read the report [here](#).

[Read more](#)

**New Marshall University business dean to begin July 1**
Dr. Avinandan Mukherjee has been appointed Dean of the Lewis College of Business at Marshall University. Mukherjee, who is dean of the College of Business and professor of marketing and international business at Clayton State University in Atlanta, will assume his new position July 1. As dean at Clayton State, Mukherjee has overseen robust growth in enrollment and endowments; the creation of a number of new international partnerships; and successful five-year Maintenance of Accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International. He also established seven new academic programs, including M.B.A. concentrations in human resource leadership and sports and entertainment management.

**Embark on a new career in advanced manufacturing**

The Step Up for Women pre-apprenticeship program offered by West Virginia Women Work and RCBI is accepting applications for the next 10-week class in machining. Step Up for Women provides free manufacturing training to women entering or re-entering the workforce. Students are provided clothing, safety equipment, tools and partial travel reimbursement. Instruction and hands-on training are delivered by experienced machinist instructors at RCBI Huntington. Classes begin June 5. Experience is not required but applicants must be at least 18 years old, a high school graduate or have a GED, have reliable transportation and a valid driver's license.

The deadline to apply is May 15. For more information, contact Melinda Perron, program coordinator, at Melinda@wvwomenwork.org or call 304.528.9991.

The Step Up for Women pre-apprenticeship program is part of Apprenticeship Works, the National Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship Partnership at RCBI. Funding is provided through the U.S. Department of Labor's American Apprenticeship Initiative.

**Join us May 18 to explore the wide world of making**

RCBI will celebrate "making" and its own makerspace during an Explore the Vault event on May 18. Parents and children are encouraged to attend our event, which is part of Remake Learning Day, a regional effort to provide children and adults with engaging activities. Visitors will tour the Maker Vault (RCBI's community makerspace), see 3D printing in action and participate in interactive activities.

The RCBI Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center in Huntington is located at 1050 Fourth Ave.

For more information, contact RCBI Deputy Director Jamie Cope at jcope@rcbi.org or 304.781.1680.
Accelerator startups to pitch business ideas

Join us May 24 from noon to 4 p.m. at RCBI Huntington (1050 Fourth Ave.) as we present Demo Day for TEN50 -- West Virginia’s Business Accelerator.

The first group of participating startups in RCBI's accelerator will pitch their new businesses to prospective investors and community supporters, culminating three months of intense efforts developing and creating their products or services.

RCBI's TEN50 is part of the Global Accelerator Network (GAN), a worldwide network of business accelerators that share best practices, resources, investment opportunities and service providers. For more information on TEN50, contact Director Bryan Shaw at bshaw@rcbi.org.

RCBI to host demonstration of latest tooling technology

A tooling seminar is scheduled May 25 from 8 a.m. to noon at the RCBI Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center in Huntington (1050 Fourth Avenue).

Presented in partnership with Sandvik Coromant -- the world’s leading supplier of tools, tooling solutions and know-how to the metal-cutting industry -- and Sterling Supply Company, the event will showcase new technology that provides manufacturers high performance machining capabilities they need to solve production tooling concerns.

Representatives from Sandvik and Sterling as well as RCBI's experienced technical staff will demonstrate cutting tools and equipment as well as answer questions and offer insight.

Lunch will be provided and seating is limited, so register online by May 19. For more information, contact Brian Brown, RCBI Senior Manufacturing Engineer and Site Manager, at 304.781.1689 or bbrown@rcbi.org.

Workshops to focus on social media, marketing skills

RCBI is partnering across southern West Virginia to deliver a series of luncheon workshops where you’ll learn how to develop an effective marketing and social media strategy for your small business.

Each of the events - May 16 in Bluefield, May 23 in Logan and May 30 in Beckley - will kick off with a marketing session then finish in the afternoon with an overview of social media skills. Lunch is included.

Because seating is limited, participants must register online to attend. For more information, including our partners or to register, click here.
RCBI Bridgeport hosts SkillsUSA 3D Printing competition

Five teams from across West Virginia came to the RCBI Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center in Bridgeport earlier this month to participate in the 3D Printing competition at SkillsUSA. RCBI again played host to the state-level competition in 3D printing, as well as precision machining and computer-numerical-control machining. The team from Spring Valley High School in Wayne County won the 3D Printing competition and will compete in June at SkillsUSA's National Leadership and Skills Conference in Louisville, Ky.

Marshall-affiliated biotech firm secures major NIH grant

Progenesis Technologies, a Huntington biotechnology company, has been awarded a $1.96 million Phase II Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant from the National Institutes of Health. Progenesis was founded by two Marshall University School of Medicine faculty members, Dr. Richard Niles and Dr. Hongwei Yu, based on patented discoveries from Yu’s research on genetically engineered bacteria that produce the biopolymer alginate used in a variety of applications including textile manufacturing, food production, wound care and drug delivery.

“This grant provides funding toward the continued development and commercialization of unique polymers produced by non-pathogenic bacteria,” said Niles, chief operating officer for Progenesis and an emeritus faculty member of the School of Medicine. “Currently, these alginates are extracted from brown seaweed, but this compound has a fixed composition that limits its performance. The grant allows for additional work on our engineered alginates, particularly to enhance their performance in advanced wound care.”

THE VIDEO FILE

RCBI launches programs in southern W.Va.

In case you missed it, view our recent announcement of new programs to diversify and boost the economy of southern West Virginia. Representatives of the Appalachian Regional Commission, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the Benedum Foundation and members of Congress took part in the event.
**Video highlights RCBI's role as economic driver**

Watch our new video to learn how RCBI ensures the success of manufacturers, entrepreneurs and students while contributing to the diversification and growth of West Virginia's economy.

**Apprenticeships offer return on investment**

How much is the skills gap costing your business? Check out our recent webinar to learn how apprenticeships can reduce expenses, improve quality and boost your bottom line. The Apprenticeship Works approach makes apprenticeships more affordable for employers and more accessible to employees.

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### Upcoming events

**May 2017**
- May 10 - Machinist/CNC graduation, RCBI Bridgeport, 2 p.m.
- May 12 - Machinist/CNC, welding graduation, RCBI Huntington, 3:30 p.m.
- May 15 - Raspberry Pi User Group, RCBI Huntington, 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
- May 16 - Social Media/Marketing workshop, the Clover Club in Bluefield, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- May 23 - Social Media/Marketing workshop, So. W.Va. CTC in Logan, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- May 24 - Demo Day for TEN50 Accelerator class, RCBI Huntington, noon - 4 p.m.
- May 25 - Sandvik tooling demonstration, RCBI Huntington, 8 a.m. - noon
- May 30 - Social Media/Marketing workshop, The Hive in Beckley, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

*Call 800.469.7224 or email mfg@rcbi.org for more information.*

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**ABOUT US**

Our experts deliver innovative solutions with leading-edge technology to advance manufacturing and entrepreneurship. Learn more at [www.rcbi.org](http://www.rcbi.org).

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