RCBI launches statewide business accelerator

The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) has launched Ten50 Accelerator - a full-service business accelerator in downtown Huntington - to hasten the creation of new businesses and jobs by helping entrepreneurs overcome traditional hurdles that startups face.

RCBI has been accepted into the prestigious Global Accelerator Network (GAN), a worldwide collaboration of more than 70 mentor-based accelerators. RCBI's Ten50 Business Accelerator is the only West Virginia member of GAN, and Huntington is one of the smallest U.S. cities to receive the designation.

The director of the new accelerator is Bryan Shaw, a business development expert from Hurricane.

Bombardier plans expansion at Bridgeport Air Center

Bombardier plans a major expansion of its West Virginia Air Center in Bridgeport.

Slated to begin in spring 2017, the project will double the size of its facility. The number of service lines will go from nine to 20.

State officials say the move may lead to an additional 150-300 jobs at the company's facility in north central West Virginia.

Maker Vault named finalist in national competition
The Maker Vault, the makerspace at the Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI), is a finalist in a national contest sponsored by Bernzomatic. Top prize winners of $15,000, $7,500 and $5,000 will be determined by a national vote. These winners also receive up to $1,500 in Bernzomatic products.

In addition to the $15,000 prize, the top vote getter receives a visit from do-it-yourself guru Nicole Curtis and volunteers from Bernzomatic, who help complete improvements to the makerspace.

Everyone is encouraged to vote online for RCBI's "Investing in the Maker Vault" project. You can cast your vote once each day through Dec. 31 by going here.

RCBI announces after-school coding club for youth

A new computer coding club at RCBI Huntington will introduce young people to popular and versatile computer programming languages through games, puzzles and other activities.

Learning to code also prepares young people for the world we live in today and for the future. Programming is important to many industries, including manufacturing, engineering and robotics. To help prepare for careers in these industries and others, RCBI is launching an after-school coding club in partnership with Cabell County Schools.

Beginning in January 2017, students will meet at RCBI Huntington to learn computer code through games and other engaging activities. The program is an extension of RCBI's summer 2016 camps in which students learned Python, a versatile coding language.

At the after-school club, students will learn Python, as well as Swift - a language developed by Apple. Students also will explore RCBI's makerspace, called the Maker Vault, and work in RCBI's Design Works lab.

For more information on the coding club, contact Becky Calwell at bcalwell@rcbi.org.

Marshall, RCBI assist governor-elect with transition

More than 20 Marshall University faculty and staff members, including two from the Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI), are serving on Governor-elect Jim Justice's transition policy committees. The eight committees include a diverse group of experts charged with making policy recommendations to the governor-elect. Charlotte Weber, Director & CEO of RCBI, and Bill Woodrum, the project coordinator of Agricultural Innovations at RCBI, serve on the economic development committee.

Read more
The AshBots will compete at the FLL World Championship in April in St. Louis.

Huntington team headed to world robotics championship

The AshBots, a FIRST LEGO League (FLL) Robotics team from Huntington, will represent West Virginia in the FLL World Championship after capturing the state title Dec. 2 in Fairmont.

Ramsey and J.R. Ash edged out 47 other teams from across West Virginia to win the Grand Championship. In addition, the AshBots captured third place for Robot Performance.

The winner of RCBI's State Qualifier, the Putnam Pink Ladies, picked up two awards at the WV Championship: first place Project Award and second place for Robot Performance.

Showcases highlight cutting-edge agriculture technology
More than 700 individuals attended the 2016 West Virginia Agriculture innovation Showcases in Moorefield and Huntington. Participants learned about cutting-edge agriculture technology and innovative farm management practices from more than 40 experts in agriculture, technology and manufacturing. The featured technology company was Scott's Miracle Gro, which offers the Connected Garden platform. The product offers real-time monitoring of weather, moisture, plant growth and other factors.

Jennifer "Tootie" Jones, owner of Swift Level Farm, addresses the crowd at the Agriculture Innovation Showcase at Marshall University.

NIMS recertifies Bridgeport machinist technology program

The Machinist Technology/CNC Program offered at the Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) in Bridgeport has earned reaccreditation from the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS). The five-year recertification followed a rigorous examination that determined the RCBI program continues to meet or exceed benchmark quality standards established by NIMS on behalf of the nation's precision manufacturing industry.

Partners celebrate Apprenticeship Works successes
Thomas Kivlehan of Fortress Firearms (right) signs the Standards of Apprenticeship. He is joined by Ken Milnes of the U.S. Department of Labor, left; John Maher of Marshall University Research Corp.; Lucinda Curry, director of Apprenticeship Works; and Charlotte Weber, director & CEO of RCBI. During National Apprenticeship Week, RCBI celebrated the first year of Apprenticeship Works, the Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship Partnership at RCBI. RCBI was joined by many of its partners, including Tooling U-SME, Marshall University Research Corp., Work Scouts, the U.S. Department of Labor, West Virginia Women Work, the National Coalition of Advanced Technology Centers, and others, for the signing of the Standards of Apprenticeship. Tooling U also honored RCBI with the 2016 Tooling U-SME Platinum Education Center (TUPEC) Award, which recognizes RCBI's innovative workforce programs.

THE VIDEO FILE

Online tutorial explains federal funding
The U.S. Small Business Administration offers an online tutorial that explains the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and the Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. The video series will be of interest to entrepreneurs, inventors and others who want to learn more about this funding opportunity.

Ceremony marks first year of apprenticeship effort
The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) celebrated the first year of the Apprenticeship Works with the signing of standards.
**Upcoming events**

**December 2016**
Dec. 15 - Raspberry Pi User Group, RCBI Huntington  
Dec. 16 - WV Maker Network, RCBI Huntington

**January 2016**
Jan. 10 - Workshop on branding for small business, Matewan - UMWA Hall  
Jan. 16 - Raspberry Pi User Group, RCBI Huntington  
Jan. 21 - VEX Robotics tournament, Marshall University  
Jan. 24 - Workshop on branding for small business, Logan - Southern WV CTC

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

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**ABOUT US**

The Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) provides leading-edge equipment, specialized training and staff expertise so entrepreneurs and manufacturers of all sizes can innovate, create jobs and thrive. Learn more at [www.rcbi.org](http://www.rcbi.org).

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