

### **BRCEDA Garners Attention From Across the Commonwealth**

Economic development is a collaborative effort. BRCEDA and its partners in the community have achieved a great deal, but little of it would have been possible without the support of a number of state and federal organizations. Over the past few months, a number of these organizations have sent representatives to visit the Twin Counties, where local leaders thanked them for their efforts and told them about the road ahead.

Virginia Secretary of Commerce Jim Cheng and Deputy Secretary for Rural Economic Development Mary Rae Carter came to the Crossroads region in late April. Secretary Cheng was responding to an invitation forwarded by Delegate Bill Carico. Mr. Cheng and Ms. Carter attended a presentation given by BRCEDA emphasizing the organization's past successes and future collaboration initiatives.

The next important visit occurred in late June, when a group from the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, headed by ARC co-chair and presidential appointee Ray Gohl, stopped by the Crossroads Institute on a trip through the region. BRCEDA Board Chairman Mike Maynard gave a presentation which laid out the region's economic development plan, discussed some of the challenges the Twin Counties face, and celebrated the region's economic development successes. Mr. Gohl and the other guests were then given a tour of the Crossroads Institute by institute director Oliver McBride.

Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling stopped by the Crossroads Institute on June 29 while on a three-day trip through Southwest Virginia. He joined Delegate Bill Carrico in celebrating a \$1 million dollar grant received by the Town of Fries to support its downtown revitalization efforts. Mr. Bolling also took the time to discuss with a crowd of local officials and citizens the current administration's economic development efforts and their effect on the Twin Counties.

***The Blue Ridge Crossroads Region is Virginia's "Entrepreneurial Region."***

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Most recently, in August, BRCEDA traveled to Richmond to meet with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. As part of this visit, BRCEDA met with Deputy Secretary Carter and Assistant Secretary of Commerce & Trade Jimmie Rhee to describe the region’s economic development model and detail its accomplishments.

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