



# WYTHE Economic Development News

**JOINT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
OF WYTHE COUNTY, WYTHEVILLE, AND RURAL RETREAT**

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## Note from the Executive Director

The Joint Industrial Development Authority is back to full staff strength with the naming of Patrick Burton as associate director and Virginia Goodwin as administrative assistant. With both being hired during the past two months, we're still getting to maximum productivity levels, but are well on our way to having a well-oiled team that looks forward to working

with our sponsoring jurisdictions, partners, clients, and other stakeholders.

We were sorry to lose Danielle, but Wythe County retains her skills as part of the public school system. Staff turnover is especially difficult in a small operation, but with the help of my dedicated board of directors in the recruitment and selection process, I'm convinced that we have assembled a first-class team that will perform at a high level.

Please join me in welcoming Patrick and Virginia. We look forward to improving the quality of life in Wythe County through economic development.

*A lan Hawthorne*

*Getting off to a quick start, Patrick attended the UNC Basic Economic Development Course during the first week of August where he and others from several states gained key economic development skills.*

Onboard since July 1, Patrick looks forward to more fully getting to know our various partners as well as understanding the needs of our existing industries.

## Joint IDA Welcomes New Administrative Assistant

Virginia Goodwin joined the Joint IDA as its administrative assistant on August 1. Selected from a large pool of applicants, Virginia brings important skills to the Joint IDA. She recently completed associate degrees in both accounting and business management at Wytheville Community College. In addition to having prior experience in the retail and service sectors, Virginia most recently worked in the manufacturing sector, thus bringing valuable insights

from the prospective of a key client sector. Ginny looks forward to working with all of our partners and clients.



*New Joint IDA Administrative Assistant Virginia Goodwin*

## Joint IDA Welcomes New Associate Director

The Joint IDA is pleased to welcome Patrick Burton as its new associate director. Patrick received both his master's degree and bachelor's degree in Urban Affairs from Va Tech. Having most recently worked as a planner in the Salem office of VDOT, Patrick also has previous experience working as a staff member with both the New River Planning District Commission and the Mt. Rogers Planning District Commission.



*New Joint IDA Associate Director Patrick Burton*

The Joint IDA's associate director has lead responsibility for the existing industry program as well as key research and support roles for recruitment efforts.

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## Good Luck, Danielle

Danielle Skeens, the Joint IDA's administrative assistant for the past 30 months, has accepted a position with the Wythe County Technology Center. This position will allow Danielle to have the summers off to spend with her three boys. We wish Danielle the best as she helps to educate the youth of Wythe County. It was a pleasure working with her at the Joint IDA.

## State Advisory Committee Appointment

The State Board of Education has appointed Alan Hawthorne, Executive Director of the Joint IDA, to a three-year term on the Virginia Advisory Committee for Career and Technical Education. This committee plays an essential role in advising the Board of Education on issues related to career and technical education. Having served on the New River-Mt. Rogers Workforce Investment Board since 2000 and being sensitive to the employment needs of both existing and recruited industries, Dr. Hawthorne is well-suited to help advance Virginia's career and technical education programs.

## New Water Plant Nears Completion

The New River Regional Water Authority's new plant that will serve Carroll County, Wythe County, and the Town of Wytheville will soon be producing water. The new facility will serve Progress Park and provides plenty of capacity for users in the park. The initial water plant can provide 4 MGD with the ability to expand to 10 MGD.



*New River Regional Water Plant. Operation will begin in early 2009.*

## “Unleashing the Celtic Tiger” Conference to Be Held in Wytheville

Congressman Rick Boucher will be hosting a conference titled “Unleashing the Celtic Tiger” on September 15 at the Wytheville Meeting Center. The conference will focus on Southwest Virginia's shared heritage with Ireland and western Europe and on promoting the economy of our region through collaborations in technology, commerce, education, and tourism. The keynote speaker will be The Honorable John Bruton, former Prime Minister of Ireland and current European Union Ambassador to the United States. The afternoon roundtable sessions will be led by Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade Pat Gottschalk, Virginia Secretary of Technology Aneesh Chopra, The Honorable John Edwards, Chairman, Virginia Senate Subcommittee on Higher Education, and President of the Virginia Tourism Corporation Alyssa Bailey. The conference will seek to learn if there are key policies and initiatives of the “Celtic Tiger” economy that might serve as a model for Southwest Virginia and to formulate specific strategies to be pursued after the conference.

## Local Company's Invention Could Save Billions

The Venturi Vent Technology (V2T™) developed by Wytheville's Acrylife, Inc., in collaboration with Va Tech, uses increasing wind speed to hold membrane roofs tighter to the deck. If widely used in hurricane prone areas, the technology has the potential to save billions of dollars in damage. Brothers Chuck and Pat Johnson are the principals in Acrylife, located in the Fairview Industrial Park.



## Regional Unemployment Rates

Location	Apr-07	Apr-08	May-07	May-08	Jun-07	Jun-08
Wythe	4.2%	3.9%	4.8%	4.5%	4.6%	6.2%
Bland	3.7%	3.4%	3.8%	4.4%	4.2%	5.5%
Smyth	4.8%	5.0%	5.0%	5.5%	5.4%	5.8%
Carroll	5.1%	4.4%	5.4%	5.8%	5.6%	7.3%
Grayson	4.8%	4.5%	4.8%	6.9%	4.6%	6.7%
Pulaski	5.7%	4.1%	6.8%	4.7%	6.4%	8.5%
Galax	5.0%	4.0%	4.8%	6.0%	5.0%	6.1%
Virginia	2.7%	3.3%	2.8%	3.8%	3.1%	4.2%
US	4.3%	4.8%	4.3%	5.2%	4.7%	5.7%

## Presentations Available

If your civic or other community group would like to have a presentation on Progress Park or on Wythe County economic development in general, please contact the Joint IDA office to schedule a presentation for your organization.

**Wythe Economic Development News** is published quarterly by the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County to inform interested parties of industrial development activities in the county and its incorporated towns. If you are not on the distribution list and would like to be added, please let us know at [JointIDA@wytheville.org](mailto:JointIDA@wytheville.org) or call (276) 223-3370.