

# JCDA

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JEFFERSON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY | [www.jcda.net](http://www.jcda.net) | 304.728.3255

Annual Report 2014



## THE YEAR IN REVIEW: A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# 2014

ESTABLISHED IN 1979, the Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) celebrated 35 years of economic development activity in 2014. The JCDA was chartered to “provide an increased and diverse tax base for Jefferson County, and to provide new employment



opportunities for our citizens through the attraction of new businesses, and through the retention and expansion of existing businesses.” Overall, 2014 has been a great year for the JCDA, and you’ll read the details of our many successes and achievements in the pages of this Annual Report.

During the year, four new buildings were constructed in the Burr Business Park, which is owned and operated by the JCDA. These projects total about 64,000 square feet, including 58,000 square feet of Class A office space and about 8,000 square feet of warehouse/manufacturing space. The buildings will house approximately 350 employees. In addition to this new construction, the JCDA also facilitated the sale and re-development of two buildings totaling 110,000 square feet.

Working with the Small Business Development Center, we hired a new business coach to work directly with small businesses and entrepreneurs. And we are partnering with the West Virginia Development Office (WVDO) to

enhance our business retention program. Both initiatives are mechanisms for small business growth in the County.

Through our board committee structure, the JCDA continues to advocate for improvements to infrastructure as well as the business climate. We have supported efforts to improve our roads and expand sewer infrastructure to address the EPA Chesapeake Bay nutrient requirements, and advocated for improvements to broadband and telecom infrastructure. In cooperation with the WVDO, Mountaineer Gas, the Region 9 Planning and Development Council, and the Berkeley County Development Authority, the JCDA spearheaded the effort to extend natural gas into the County. While this is a large project, the JCDA believes that natural gas infrastructure is crucial to growing our manufacturing base, further diversifying the economy, and providing long-term economic sustainability in the region. To date, the stakeholder group has funded a demand study and is now working on funding the project.

The JCDA actively monitors policy developments at all levels of government, thereby allowing Jefferson County to have a voice in shaping the important decisions that affect the business community. The JCDA was successful in advocating for a reduction in the commercial impact fees in Jefferson County and continues to push for the removal of barriers to business growth in the County.

In closing, I want to thank the many stakeholders involved in making Jefferson County a great place to do business. We look forward to additional success and prosperity in 2015.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Reisenweber". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

John Reisenweber  
Executive Director

## U.S. COAST GUARD EXPANDS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY



IN THE SUMMER OF 2014, the U.S. Coast Guard relocated its Operations Systems Center (OSC) and 300 employees to Burr Business Park. The OSC provides support for more than 60 Coast Guard information technology systems. Its new 43,000 square foot home, completed in just under a year, eased the crowding of more than 500 Coast Guard personnel that occupied several different locations in the Eastern Panhandle.

(L to R): Suzanne Bentzel, Appropriations Director, office of former U.S. Senator John D. Rockefeller; U.S. Senator Joe Manchin; Thomas P. Michelli, Deputy Assistant Commander for C4IT and Deputy Chief Information Officer, USCG; County Commissioner Walt Pellish; U.S. Senator Shelley Moore Capito; and JCDA Executive Director John Reisenweber.

**300** employees  
**43,000** sq ft

*“When selecting sites for our development projects, we require a predictable playing field and prefer an expedient approvals process. Jefferson County and the Development Authority delivered both.”*

*—OSC Facility Developer Noah Mehrkam, ARC-FD JV, LLC*



Photo: Courtesy U.S. Coast Guard

# HIGHLIGHTS

## New Companies

AS THE EASTERNMOST COUNTY in West Virginia, Jefferson County continues to attract new companies seeking a business-friendly environment and affordable land prices.

In 2014, the JCDA facilitated the relocation of a variety of businesses. All-State Career Inc., a Maryland-based technical school, leased space in Burr Plaza for its trucking program and also paid fees to the Citizens Fire Company in Charles Town to use its parking lot for vehicle operation training.

**Advanced Asphalt Technologies**, a small engineering company that specializes in providing state-of-the-art services to the asphalt paving industry, relocated its high-tech laboratory from Sterling, Virginia to Burr Business Park. Allied Defense Industries, Inc. also constructed a new facility in the business park while Valley Health Systems built a newer medical transport facility in Burr Plaza.

Photo: Benita Keller



Ramon Bonaquist, Advanced Asphalt Technologies COO.

## Eastern Panhandle Technology Innovation Center

AMERICAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY SYSTEM (APUS) established the Eastern Panhandle Technology Innovation Center (EPTIC) this year and appointed JCDA Executive Director John Reisenweber as a founding board member. Led by EPTIC's director Joe Rice, this new business incubator focuses on entrepreneurs, start-ups, technology innovators and small businesses.



*"We have a unique laboratory environment that has specific requirements for our relocation. After considering several sites in Loudon County, we found the Burr Business Park in Jefferson County had several pad-ready sites that were much more affordable than what was available in Northern Virginia."*

*—Ramon Bonaquist, Ph.D., P.E.,  
Chief Operating Officer of Advanced  
Asphalt Technologies*

## International Initiative

DEVELOPMENT ATTACHÉS from the **Embassy of Italy** toured Jefferson County in October, the result of our new initiative to visit foreign embassies in Washington D.C. to encourage foreign investment. Our proximity to the nation's capital and Dulles International Airport is one of many assets that make Jefferson County particularly attractive to international companies. Working in partnership with the international division of the West Virginia Development Office, we visited the embassies of France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland.



## Jefferson County Towns

A decade of collaboration between **Charles Town** and **Ranson** culminated this year as the towns and American Public University System (APUS) broke ground on \$100 million of community revitalization and sustainability projects, including a new APUS technology and multi-purpose center, infrastructure and historic preservation. Charles Town and Ranson's selection for the state's Municipal Home Rule Pilot Program further cements the collaborative relationship between the two towns.

**Harpers Ferry** updated its 2007 Comprehensive Plan to facilitate economic development, and the addition to Harpers Ferry Middle School was completed.

**Bolivar** also established a Comprehensive Plan this year.

In **Shepherdstown**, the JCDA has completed its four-year fiduciary oversight of the Environmental Protection Agency grant for a new library building. The work to remediate the former landfill has transformed 4.5 acres of contaminated brownfields land into useable property. At Shepherd University, the entrepreneurial program is flourishing under the leadership of Dr. Caroline Glackin. In November, Shepherd hosted the West Virginia Collegiate Business Plan Competition, a version of television's "Shark Tank," where participants compete for investment capital.

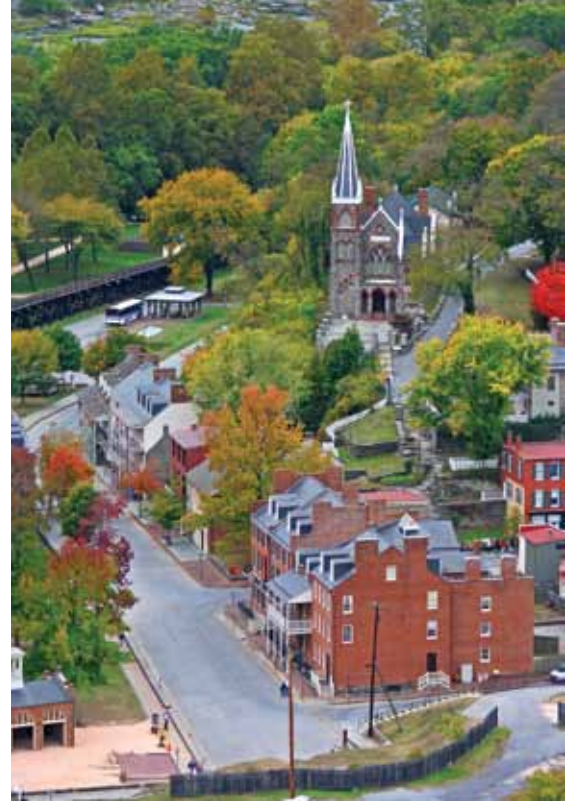


Photo: Eric Fargo

Historic Harpers Ferry and Jefferson County attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, generating significant revenue.

*"These projects demonstrate that **small towns** can dream big and accomplish big things by working with partners on sustainable community revitalization."*

—Ranson Mayor David Hamill

*"Charles Town and Ranson are pleased to participate in Home Rule and its concept of Community Economic Development Districts, which will encourage new development, help provide needed infrastructure and strengthen our cities."*

—Charles Town Mayor Peggy Smith

## Event Center at Hollywood Casino

The new "Event Center at Hollywood Casino" opened in July and has consistently sold out shows, all of which feature major entertainers, like Travis Tritt, Cheap Trick and LeAnn Rimes. The \$3 million venue has a custom-designed sound system and seats 1,200.

**\$3 million venue**  
**1,200 seats**

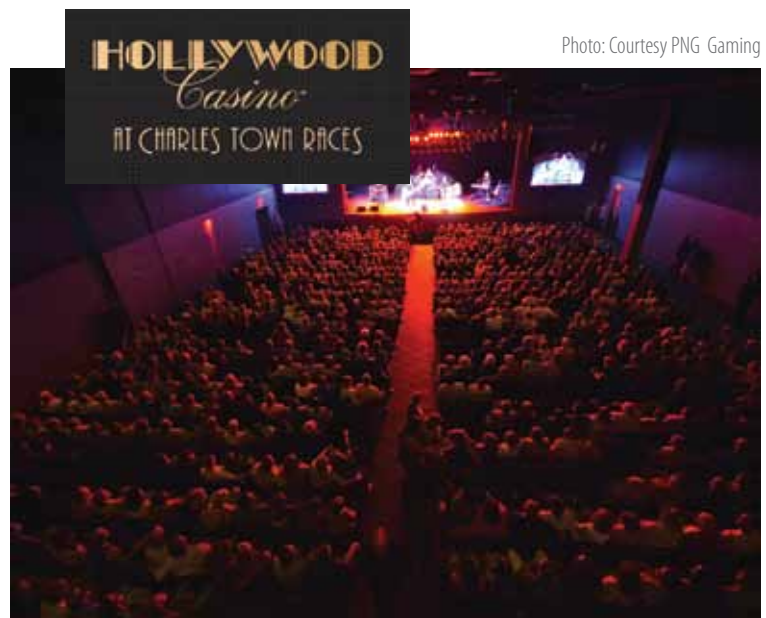


Photo: Courtesy PNG Gaming

## BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM

According to the Small Business Administration, an estimated 60 percent of new business is generated by a community's current commercial ventures. The JCDA recognizes that serving existing businesses is vital to the economy. JCDA staff, in conjunction with the West Virginia Development Office (WVDO), visit existing companies to learn about current conditions, future plans and ways we can assist. In 2014, the JCDA conducted 77 business retention visits, resulting in numerous opportunities to help our local businesses.

77 retention visits

### Public/Private Partnership Facilitates Industrial Expansion

A prime example of the success of our Business Retention and Expansion Program begins with the **Jefferson County Board of Education**. In cooperation with JCDA, the Board saved County taxpayers \$3 million in 2014 by re-purposing an existing 110,000 square foot facility in Burr Business Park for its bus garage, rather than constructing a new building.

An unused portion of the property was later leased to **UFP-Ranson Universal Forest Products** (UFP) for its expansion needs, which were discovered during a retention visit. Under a quick deadline, JCDA helped UFP locate the only existing industrial space in Jefferson County that allowed UFP to manufacture wood products for a major national retailer. UFP will provide significant revenue to the Jefferson County school system and create local jobs.



UFP expanded its Ranson wood processing operation into Burr Business Park.

### Major Employers

PNG Charles Town Gaming, LLC

Jefferson County Board of Education

Shepherd University

American Public University System

Jefferson Memorial Hospital

DALB, Inc.

Royal Vendors, Inc.

Department of the Interior (National Park Service)

Jefferson County Commission

*"The **Board of Education** deeply appreciates the great working relationship with the JCDA and their quick, capable expertise and assistance. The school system could not have navigated this real estate transaction with the private sector without the expertise, vision and business savvy of the JCDA."*

*—Jefferson County School Board  
President Scott Sudduth*

## BUSINESS SUPPORT

### Jefferson County Small Business Coach

Through a partnership with the West Virginia Small Business Development Center (WVSBDC), we hired Tom Halverstadt as the County's first business coach to provide one-on-one consultive services at no charge. Funded entirely by the WVSBDC and local business community partners, the coach serves Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan counties, with no cost to local taxpayers. Community partners are Bank of Charles Town, BB&T, Cities of Charles Town and Ranson, the Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Jefferson Security Bank, MVB Bank, Ours, Lawyers and Lewis Company, LLC, and United Bank.



### Eastern Panhandle Entrepreneurs

Small businesses and entrepreneurs are the backbone of the nation's economy, representing 97 percent of all commercial ventures in West Virginia, according to the West Virginia Department of Commerce. The Eastern Panhandle Entrepreneurs Forum (EPEF) supports those who sustain this business community by providing free networking and educational opportunities. The EPEF rotates among Jefferson, Berkeley and Morgan counties.



### JCDA 2.0

In 2014, the JCDA took full advantage of the Internet to develop our technology-driven, results-oriented marketing strategy. We continue to improve our website as new technology emerges. We use our website, a news distribution service and social media to tell the Jefferson County story. We successfully promote local businesses to regional and national media. RAI Properties, LLC, Kidz Kastle Child Care Center, and Schonstedt Industries are just a few companies we have promoted.

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JCDA **website** new user traffic up **44%**  
JCDA created a new **LinkedIn** GROUP  
**Facebook** users increased by **61%**  
One **Facebook** Story = 800 site clicks  
**TWITTER** followers increased by **90%**

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### Agriculture in Jefferson County

With the second largest amount of tillable land in the state, Jefferson County has more than 500 farms and 67,000 agriculturally productive acres, ranking first in the state in corn and wheat production. Farmers' markets continue to thrive, and the market value of agriculture-related products is an impressive \$35 million, the sixth largest in the state. JCDA offers revolving funds that allow local farmers to extend their growing season with the purchase of high-quality high tunnels.

Protecting agricultural land is the responsibility of the Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board and Administrator Elizabeth Wheeler, who assist the farming community by placing agricultural land under conservation easements in perpetuity. The Board is funded by Jefferson County's real estate transfer tax, and this year purchased easements on 137 acres, bringing the total to 4,023 acres of protected farmland.

67,000 acres  
500 farms



## The Jefferson Advantage

With a strategic Mid-Atlantic location just 60 miles from Washington, D.C. and ready access to major transportation routes, Jefferson County is ideally situated for business relocation and expansion.

### COMMUNITY PROFILE

2014 Total Jefferson Co. population	56,230
2014 Live in Jefferson Co., employed outside	15,620
Total labor shed population	1,044,836
Median travel time to work (minutes)	39.2
January 2015 unemployment rate	4.3
Distance to I-81 (miles)	10
Distance to Dulles International Airport (miles)	45
Cost of living index (140 in Washington D.C.)	90
2014 housing units	23,140
2014 median household income	\$61,9446
Bachelor degree or higher	35.9%
Two- and four-year colleges within 50 miles	56

Sources: US Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, ESRI, West Virginia Development Office.

## JCDA Board of Directors

**Eric Lewis, President** Ours, Lawyer, Lewis and Company, PLLC

**Debra Lee Hovatter, Vice President** Spilman Thomas & Battle, PLLC

**Mike Chapman, Secretary / Treasurer** Royal Vendors

**Andy Blake** City of Ranson

**Helen Dettmer** Town of Bolivar

**Shelli Dronsfield** Shepherd University

**Charles Ellison** Frontier Communications

**Annette Gavin** Jefferson County Convention and Visitors Bureau

**Conrad C. Hammann** President, Retired, Halltown Paper Board Co.

**Joshua Householder** Bank of Charles Town

**David L. Marshall** WVU Healthcare

**P. David Mills** City of Charles Town

**Howard Mills** Town of Shepherdstown

**Walter Pellish** Jefferson County Commission

**Michael Shepp** Allegheny Surveys, Inc.

**Andrew Skinner** Skinner Law Firm

**Lyle Tabb** Lyle C. Tabb and Sons, Inc.

**Karan Townsend** Town of Harpers Ferry

**Harry Wilkins** American Public University System

STAFF: John Reisenweber, Executive Director | Amy Ruth Allen, Program Manager | Janes Jones, Administrative Assistant

COVER: U.S. Customs and Border Control, Harpers Ferry; solar panels at American Public University System, Charles Town/Ranson; welder at DALB, Inc., Burr Business Park—by Eric Fargo.

INSIDE FRONT COVER: Benita Keller