



**2023  
IMPACT  
REPORT**

**2024  
PROGRAM  
OF WORK**

**BOLD IDEAS FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE**

# A Letter from the CEO & Chair

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance has been the voice of the Lynchburg region's business and industry for 141 years. Day after day, year after year and century after century we are in the business of creating a bright future for everyone to thrive. And the best is yet to come. With 2023 in the rear-view mirror, let's reflect on the Alliance's impact.

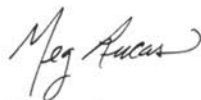
Over the past year we celebrated many successful engagements, programs, and initiatives. In 2023 we added 135 new members, 84 Building Our Future 2027 investors and announced the launch of the Center for Entrepreneurship. Through programming such as our catalytic Summits, business development opportunities, and advocacy we have helped connect businesses to resources enabling them to collaborate and prosper.

In the face of unprecedented times, our collective resilience and dedication have paved the way for continued growth and prosperity in our region. This report serves as a testament to the collaborative spirit that defines our community and the strides we have taken together.

Thank you for your unwavering support. We invite you to delve into the pages that display the impact of our shared commitment to economic progress and innovation.

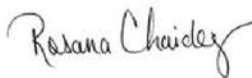
Not one to rest on our laurels, our work will continue unabated if we are to truly reach the pinnacle of success for our region. As we move into next year, we want to take a moment to thank each of our members and investors – leaders who have embodied the Alliance's purpose of creating economic prosperity by facilitating community leadership. You and the businesses you represent are the heart of our region's success. With your partnership and support, together we build a prosperous future. We believe that the best is yet to come!

Warmest,



**Megan Lucas**

CEO & Chief Economic Development Officer  
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

**Rosana Chaidez**

2024 Chair of the Board  
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance  
President & CEO  
N.B. Handy



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Alliance & SBDC Staff



2023 Welding Wars at CVCC



The 140th Annual Meeting

Women, Wine, & Nine Golf Clinic





*We love our members so much - it makes us a little crazy . . .*



## OUR VISION

Creating a region where both businesses and individuals can thrive.

## OUR MISSION

To lead regional economic development through:

- Enhancing the Business Climate
- Cultivating Talent
- Generating Jobs & Investment
- Promoting Our Region's Brand & Image Globally

# CELEBRATING CREATIVITY & COMMERCE

2023 marked a significant milestone for the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance - 140 years since our founding in 1883. The year was one of celebration not only of the Alliance's history but more so the hardworking men and women of the Lynchburg region's business community who make us who we are.

Your dedication and inspiration led us to new heights and your impact is felt in every corner of our region. As the Alliance staff looks back at our collective impact over the last year, we are distinctly proud of our members who continue to grow, guide, and shape who we will be in the future 140 years.



# MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

## 841

total members

## 135

new members

## 96

premium investor members

## 81%

of our members are small businesses with less than 50 employees

## 89%

of membership dues retained

## 85%

of members retained

## 368

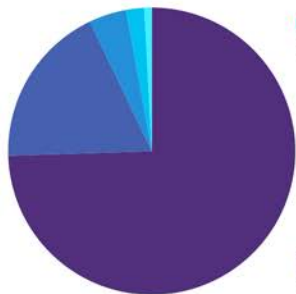
Certificates of Origin processed

## 328+

Jobs, Deals, News, Events & other content shared by members

Members glammed up for the 2023 Business Hall of Fame Gala at the Academy Center of the Arts.

## Membership By Level



Chairman's Circle

5

Executive Circle

12

President's Circle

25

Alliance Partner

109

Business Builder

690

## Largest Member Sectors

- Business and Professional Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Healthcare
- Restaurants, Food, and Beverage
- Nonprofits

## EVENTS & ALLIANCE RENTAL SPACE

## 60+

events held

## 3,297

event attendees

## 44

ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings, and 1 book signing

## 102

conference space rentals

## 41

uses of member office space



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY THE NUMBERS

**\$2,821,300**

raised through the Building Our Future economic development campaign

**94%**

of our \$3M goal

**84**

Economic Development Investors

**\$89,900,000**

in new capital investment in our region

**705**

New Jobs Created



*CEO, Megan Lucas, snaps a selfie with Governor Youngkin and Kathy Williams, CEO of Framatome, at their expansion announcement - adding 515 new jobs and \$49.4 Million in capital investment.*

*Construction underway for Delta Star's expansion - adding 149 new jobs and \$30.2 Million in capital investment.*



**22**

business retention and expansion visits

**3**

business expansions

**19**

industry request for proposals (RFPs) responded

**8**

business investment calls and trips in the continental U.S.

# ADVOCATING FOR YOU

## Tracking Key Bills Affecting Our Region:

- 47 Priority Legislation bills
- 89 Economic Development bills
- 83 Workforce bills
- 36 Energy & Infrastructure bills
- 89 Transportation bills
- 51 Education bills
- 52 Budget Amendments
- 211 Healthcare bills
- 459 Regulatory Reform & Taxes bills

# 46

meetings held with local, state, and national electeds

# 10

Alliance Advisors sent

# 2

Action Alerts sent

# 3

Sign-on Letters

# 7

General Assembly Candidate Virtual Interviews with 431 views



Virginia Economic Developers Association Lobby Day



Legal Roundtable with Attorney General Jason Miyares

## STAYING CONNECTED

162K visitors to LynchburgRegion.org & YesLynchburgRegion.org

1,326 Ambassador Touches with members

526 "I'm Here" Cards left at member locations by Alliance staff, board, and ambassadors

**The Voice of Business:** Representing **110,577** employees working at Alliance member organizations in the Lynchburg Region

9,000+ Email Subscribers with over 1,500 subscribed to our weekly newsletter

**13,143 Social Media Followers**  
**2,313 Added In 2023**



# Developing The Next Generation of Leaders & Talent

## 50

employers at the inaugural LYH Intern Connect with regional collegiate talent for prospective internships

## 10

young ladies hosted for our inaugural SHE Week providing mentorship, leadership, and professional development to high school girls during the summer

## 8

graduates from our LL2.0 program for seasoned executives

## 400

ladies hosted at our Women, Wine & Wisdom and EMERGE Women's Summit programs

## 13

customized trainings for members and partners



Leadership Lynchburg was voted as "Best Professional Development Workshop" in Lynchburg Business magazine.



2023 Class of LL46 graduates from our Leadership Lynchburg Flagship program for emerging and high potential leaders.

Hosted Lynchburg Beacon of Hope for their Summer High School Internship interviews with over 20 regional employers who conducted over 490 total interviews!

SHE Week



Partnered with Community Access Network's PHC coalition to host 60 regional leaders for a Cost of Poverty Experience to help raise awareness of the complexities and challenges of poverty in our region.



# YOUNG PROFESSIONALS OF CENTRAL VIRGINIA

**712**  
total YPCV  
Members

**200+**  
active YPCV  
members

**38**  
new YPCV  
members

**9**  
YP Connect  
Opportunities

The 2023 YPCV Christmas Party at The Flour District.



# SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS

The Alliance is proud to partner with and host the Small Business Development Center - Lynchburg Region.



**239**  
Unique  
Customers

**125**  
Clients  
Counseled

**20**  
Long Term  
Clients

**15**  
Business  
Starts

**44**  
Events  
Hosted

**676**  
Registered  
Attendees

Manufacturing Day Tour at Flowserve



Level Up YP Summit Award Recipients



# The Alliance 2024 & Beyond

It has been said that “He who has no plan, plans to fail.” This quote is credited to Benjamin Franklin from several centuries ago but I bet you can attest to its significance still today.

2024 is the final year of our three-year strategic plan and with the momentum of 2023, the Alliance is poised to truly live out this year’s theme of “Bold Ideas for A Bright Future.” How can we say this with confidence? Because we have a plan . . . several actually.

In 2023, we created two strategic documents that were part of our strategic plan including the first ever workforce roadmap and the new economic development strategy. This year, we boldly go after the ideas captured by the 50+ regional leaders backed by data and best practices from other mid-sized urban cities and regions.



**CHRISTINE KENNEDY**  
COO & Executive Vice President  
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance has a long and rich history of supporting business in the Lynchburg region under several names and structures over the past 141 years. From major industry to small business, to economic development and civic leadership programs, the Chamber of Commerce side of our work has had an influence on much of our region's history and success over the past century.

Today, the Alliance has over 840 members from the City of Lynchburg and the surrounding counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell. The Alliance is the largest and oldest business association in Central Virginia and our members employ nearly half of all the working men and women in our region.



# Enhancing the Business Climate

- Host 70+ member engagement events and opportunities throughout the region.
- Support member organizations through our “I’m Here” shopping/dining program.
- Launch the new **WiseChoice Health Care Alliance** options to our members so small businesses with 2-50 employees can take advantage of new affordable small business health care coverage.
- Activate the regional **Center for Entrepreneurship** to compliment our Small Business Development Center and to act as a “focal point” for the region’s entrepreneurs and startups providing technical support for a wide variety of businesses and entrepreneurs with high growth potential.
- Continue to work with federal, state, and local elected officials on **pro-business** and economic development policies that enhance the region’s profile, grow the local economy, labor force, and reduce regulatory barriers to free enterprise.

## Maintain open channels of communication with elected officials by:

- Meeting with federal elected officials in their districts, in the Lynchburg region, and in Washington, DC.
- Meeting regularly with Lynchburg region members of the House of Delegates and State Senate, in-district and in Richmond.
- Meeting with local elected officials as needed.
- Providing regular updates on legislative, regulatory, and other public policy issues affecting the region’s business community.
- Hosting two **Policy & Pancakes** events, before and after the General Assembly session each year.
- Inviting and hosting statewide elected and administration officials for tours, roundtables, economic development announcements, and events highlighting the Lynchburg region and its assets.

## Continue all advocacy efforts to:

- Secure funding for remediation efforts at **Central Virginia Training Center** and the creation of a second entrance to the property.
- Expand commercial air travel at Lynchburg Regional Airport, as well as passenger and freight rail services.
- Ensure federal and state funding continues to reach our regional higher education partners.
- Minimize changes to SMART Scale funding formulas.
- Enhance and expand regional broadband, energy, and other vital utility infrastructure.

## Enhance mission alignment by strategically positioning the Lynchburg region, and the Alliance, as a bellwether region and organization in statewide electoral politics by:

- Hosting candidate forums or debates.
- Offering speaking opportunities for candidates in front of major Alliance events throughout the year.
- Intentionally collaborating with like-minded groups, organizations, and coalitions in order to amplify our legislative and political influence.



2023 Level Up YP Summit

# Cultivating Talent

- Conduct the Educator Workforce Academy which will create an expedited learning process to aid teachers and guide counselors in understanding the career pathways available to their students and ensure high school curriculum is aligned with the skills the industry needs by strengthening the relationships between education and industry leaders.

## For Youth:

- Host **Worlds of Opportunity Career Exploration** event for middle school students providing them with a hands-on career experience with over 50 in-demand careers available in our region.
- Conduct **SHE Week** for middle and high school girls where mentors and female leaders offer professional development, field trips, and collegiate experiences that showcase what is possible for their future.

## For College Talent:

- Provide **Leading Off Campus** for interns and college students working in our region over the summer aimed at bridging the gap between collegiate students and local industry to increase retention of collegiate talent to the region, while equipping them with the core competencies they need to excel in their first professional roles.
- Host **LYH Intern Connect** - connecting employers with the brightest local talents across diverse degrees for meaningful conversations and exploring internship opportunities in our region.

## For Existing & Prospective Workforce:

- Continue to offer the regional and nationally award-winning **Leadership Lynchburg** Flagship and 2.0 programs for emerging and seasoned leaders as well as customized training for skill development, regional connections, and raising the leadership capacity in our area employers.
- Launch the new **Workforce Portal**, a comprehensive online hub designed to pull together all the workforce resources available in the region. This will increase awareness among job seekers and employers of the resources available to them to find work or fill their positions. The goal of this hub is to strengthen the talent pipeline and fill more jobs in our region.
- Creation of a new **Recruitment and Relocation** website and guide to assist employers and our localities with recruiting the top talent needed to fill the in-demand jobs in our region.



# Generating Jobs & Investment

The Alliance is the global marketing firm for our localities. Our ability to combine local funding for marketing and attraction allows us to travel to both domestic and international events to generate awareness and new business leads for the region.

With combined support, we were able to hold 456 meetings during the last five years promoting the assets of our communities. Our ability to provide this service for the local economic development offices allows them to focus on items at home, including business retention and expansions, site development, and support for industry.

We will continue this momentum with the following strategic goals in the year to come:

- Maintain strong relationships with **lead generation** pipeline partners.
- Support growth in the region's key industries through continuing our best-practice regional Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) efforts.
- Enhance capacity for **targeted marketing** and digital advertising.
- Seek positive earned media coverage of the Lynchburg Region.
- Assist local employers with enhancing their "workplace experience".
- Advocate for expanded air and passenger rail service to the Lynchburg region.
- Enhance and develop our **industrial sites**.

# Promoting Our Region's Brand & Image Globally

- Develop a comprehensive new **regional brand** and website to competitively promote our region to site selectors and corporate decision makers.
- Support placemaking throughout our region including:
  - Identifying and advocating for a master developer for the Central Virginia Training Center.
  - Developing a guide to resident-driven place making.
  - Support the development of a nationally renowned regional trail system.





## The Future of YPCV

In 2024, we have revamped our Young Professionals of Central Virginia (YPCV) program to provide stronger, more engaging and relevant programming, and opportunities for young professionals in our region. We recently held the second annual kick-off to welcome new YPCV members to the program and lay out plans for the year, including:

- Monthly “YP 5:35” opportunities designed to make connecting easy and meaningful.
- Four quarterly professional development workshops centering on trending topics for young professionals.
- The only regional summit for young professionals: the annual Level Up YP Summit in November.
- Special outings throughout the year such as YPCV Night at the Lynchburg Hillcats.
- A nonprofit showcase to help YP’s get involved in serving our community.
- Opportunities to cross-interact with employers and Alliance members at special Commerce & Cocktails.

## Not an Alliance member yet? Join today!

To grow a thriving business or nonprofit in the Lynchburg Region, Alliance members know what it takes: connections & relationships, opportunities, collaboration and creativity, and smarts and dedication. By being a part of the region’s leading business organization, they’re taking steps to more effectively maximize all of these areas. Is it your turn?

Join today to start taking advantage of member benefits and join in backing our mission and program of work for 2024.

Join online now at [LynchburgRegion.org](https://LynchburgRegion.org) or call Heath Barret, Vice President of Membership Development at (434) 845-5968 x20 for questions about how Alliance membership could be valuable for your organization.



Scan  
to join  
today!

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