FREDERICKSBURG REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2026 REGIONAL INTERCITY VISIT

LYNCHBURG

VIRGINIA



Leverage What You've Got

OCTOBER 14–16, 2026

Fredericksburg Regional
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
"The voice of the business community"

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Welcome

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR, GINNI MATERN



Dear Chamber Members, Regional Leaders, and Friends,

Welcome to Lynchburg, the City of Seven Hills. I'm excited to experience this dynamic region alongside all of you as part of the Fredericksburg Regional Chamber's 2026 InterCity Visit.

Lynchburg is widely recognized as one of Virginia's most collaborative regions, where business, education, government, and nonprofit leaders have aligned around a shared regional vision. Over the next three days, we'll explore how this region has leveraged its assets from innovation and education to tourism and energy to strengthen its economy and build a culture of partnership.

Our theme for this visit, "Leverage What You've Got," is one I hope we carry with us throughout the trip. Lynchburg and the Fredericksburg region are different communities, but we face many of the same opportunities and challenges. How do we work more effectively across jurisdictions? How do we support entrepreneurship and innovation? How do we connect education with the needs of employers? How do we capitalize on our strongest industries and assets? And how do we create places where people want to live, work, build businesses, and raise families?

I encourage you to approach these three days with curiosity and a mindset of "yes." Ask questions. Meet someone you don't know. Sit with someone new. Listen not only for what worked in Lynchburg, but also what was difficult, what took time, and what required people and organizations to come together. Most importantly, think about what we can bring home.

The success of this trip will not be measured simply by how much we see or how many ideas we hear. It will be measured by what we do with those ideas when we return. Our region already has tremendous assets and tremendous people. Our opportunity is to better connect them, strengthen collaboration, and continue building a shared vision for the future of the Fredericksburg region.

We'll carry that momentum into our Regional Stakeholders Meeting on November 17, where we can take what inspired us in Lynchburg and begin the conversation about what comes next.

I hope you leave Lynchburg energized, connected, challenged, and ready to act.

Ginni Matern

Ginni Matern - Chair, Board of Directors
Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce

Purpose of the Visit

Leverage What You've Got

This visit explores how the Lynchburg region builds on its existing assets to strengthen its economy and create a culture of partnership.

WHY LYNCHBURG?

Lynchburg is widely recognized as one of Virginia's most collaborative regions-- where business, education, government, and nonprofit leaders have aligned around a regional shared vision.

WHAT WE BRING HOME

Ideas that can inform Fredericksburg's regional identity, strengthen workforce partnerships, and help our communities identify and work together on shared opportunities.

A question for the trip:

How can we strengthen regional collaboration and develop a shared regional vision for PD16?

Questions We'll Explore

Regional Collaboration

How do business and civic leaders align around shared priorities?

Entrepreneurship

What resources help people move from an idea to a viable business?

Industry Strengths

How do regions build on existing expertise and competitive advantages?

Quality of Place

How do downtown events, cultural, and recreational assets support economic growth?

Talent Pipelines

How can educators and employers collaborate on workforce needs?

Ideas for Fredericksburg

Which lessons could translate into action in our own region?

Lynchburg at a Glance



A region built on its assets

Located in the foothills of Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains along the James River, Lynchburg blends history, character, higher education, innovation and outdoor recreation. Often called the "Hill City", Lynchburg has become a hub for regional collaboration, entrepreneurship and advanced manufacturing.

Regional Connections

Lynchburg, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell

Key Industries

Advanced manufacturing, Energy & Nuclear Technology, Healthcare & Life Sciences, Higher Education, Logistics & Distribution, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance connects partners across the region.

Meet Our Leadership

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS



John Hewa

President & CEO
Rappahannock Electric Cooperative



Tyrone Logan

President & Co-Founder
Obsidian Solutions Group

CHAMBER TEAM

Susan Spears
President & CEO

Wendy Zelazny
Executive Vice President, Membership and Strategic Growth

Attendee Information



HOTEL

The Virginian Lynchburg
Curio Collection by Hilton
712 Church Street,
Lynchburg, VA 24504

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrive independently Wednesday, October 14. Hotel check-in is scheduled for 3:00–4:30 p.m. Please allow 2 hours 34 minutes for travel. Friday's final session ends at 1:30 p.m. with an optional opportunity to hit the slopes and go tubing before departure!

WHAT TO PACK

Recommended: comfortable walking shoes, business casual clothing, a light layer, and an umbrella. Please wear your name badge during sessions and events.

MEALS

The proposed agenda includes Wednesday's reception and dinner, Thursday's breakfast and lunch, and Friday's breakfast and lunch. Thursday is dinner on your own/evening at leisure in historic downtown Lynchburg. Attendees will have the option to sign up for dinner at a variety of local restaurants.

KEY CONTACT & GROUP UPDATES

If you have a question or a concern during the trip and you need assistance, contact **Wendy Zelazny** at 540-429-0218 or **Janel Donohue** at 540-220-7804.

What to Expect

NETWORKING

Leadership Visits are known for their networking opportunities. You will strengthen current relationships and build new ones with the people you meet. Bring your business cards and plan on wearing your extrovert hat for the three days we're in Lynchburg. This visit is a time of connecting, learning and brainstorming!

SAYING YES

Adopt a mindset of "yes" during the trip. Say yes to meeting new people and getting out of your comfort zone. Say yes to all networking opportunities. Say yes to the extra activities and optional dinner. When you step outside your comfort zone, anything is possible. You will meet new people and make new connections. Say yes!

STAY CURIOUS

Ask questions about what worked, what changed, and what took longer than expected. Listen for the partnerships and best practices behind each project.

WHAT'S NEXT?

You will learn a lot and build lifelong connections and friendships. What you learn on this trip and whom you meet, are important. What you do afterward, however, is what makes the difference. Stay connected with the people you meet and put action behind your new ideas. Let's make OUR REGION even better than it already is!

ACTION AFTER THE VISIT

Choose an idea to explore with a colleague. Identify a next step and keep in touch with the people who can help you move it forward.

STAYING CONNECTED

Follow **updates**, alerts and key agenda reminders from the Chamber team on GroupMe: **Lynchburg Intercity Trip**



Digital version of this **Briefing Book** is available for viewing or download at:



Sponsor Spotlight

ALL-SESSION PRESENTING SPONSOR



Agenda

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Arrival and Welcome to Lynchburg

3:00–4:30 p.m.

Arrival & hotel check-in

The Virginian Lynchburg, 712 Church Street. Independent arrival. Parking Deck is across the street. Welcome bags at the front desk.

5:00 p.m.

Historical walking tour

Meet in the lobby and depart the hotel with Ted Delaney, Lynchburg Museum Director, Chief Public History Officer, for a 45-minute historical overview and walk to Amazement Square.

5:45–9:00 p.m.

From Ridge to Table: A Welcome Dinner & Reception at Amazement Square

Amazement Square, 27 9th St, Lynchburg, VA 24504
Regional welcome, museum presentation and exploration, followed by a wine pairing dinner.
Welcome remarks include Megan Lucas, Marjette G. Upshur, Mort Sajadian, and Susan Spears, John Hewa and Tyrone Logan.

During dinner

Guided Experience Featuring:

Christine Vrooman, Co-Owner, Vineyard Manager, Ankida Ridge Vineyards, and Kaitlyn Kirkland, Chef and Owner, Copper & Lace Catering.

9:00 p.m.

Return to hotel

Evening at leisure in historic downtown Lynchburg.

Agenda

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15

Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Regional Assets

8:30–9:00 a.m.

Breakfast with the Alliance team

Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance headquarters. 300 Lucado Pl, Lynchburg, VA 24504

9:00–10:00 a.m.

Regional overview

Megan Lucas, CEO and Chief Economic Development Officer
History and mission of the Alliance, regional economic snapshot, overview of strategic priorities and partnerships.

10:00–11:00 a.m.

The Entrepreneurship Ecosystem

Session I. Elise Spontarelli, Executive Director, Vector Space, and Stephanie Keener, VP Small Business Development, Lynchburg SBDC.

11:00–11:15 a.m.

Travel to Vector Space

2004 Memorial Avenue, Lynchburg, VA 24501 go to main entrance (closest to the Langhorne/Memorial intersection).
Allow 10 minutes for travel.

11:15 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Innovation Tour & Meet the Makers

Proof of Concept: Entrepreneur stories and group tours of Vector Space. Elise Spontarelli and Jason Golden Rony, Founder, Experimental Sweets

12:15–12:30 p.m.

Travel to Aerofin

4621 Murray Place, Lynchburg, VA 22506
Allow 15 minutes for travel.

12:30–1:15 p.m.

Lunch & welcome to Aerofin

Jeff Spaeth, President, Aerofin.

Agenda

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15 / CONTINUED

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Tour of Aerofin

Explore specialized manufacturing and the connection between engineering and skilled trades. Tour Guides: Jeff Spaeth, Roger Wilson, Spencer Kirkham, Dan Posid, Ruby Ferguson-Chambers

2:45–4:00 p.m.

Data Center Summit and the Energy Niche

Session II. Regional leaders discuss energy expertise, innovation, and industry partnerships. Megan Lucas, President & CEO, LRBA, Larry Jackson, Energy & Economic Development Consultant, Hurt & Profitt, Jeff Whitt, Executive Director, VA Nuclear Hub

4:00–4:15 p.m.

Return to downtown Lynchburg

The Water Dog, 1016 Jefferson Street, Lynchburg, VA
Allow 15 minutes for travel.

4:15–6:30 p.m.

Cocktail Reception & Overview of The Water Dog and the Riverfront Amphitheater.

Session III: Quality of Place & Tourism. A brief welcome and overview of The Waterdog from Dave Henderson, Owner, and how this anchor has been instrumental in building the quality of place for downtown and the city. Followed by hearing the vision of the Amphitheater from William Cook, President, Jamerson Lewis Construction, what it took to make it happen and the "fruits of the labor" of this project.
Meet members of the Leadership Lynchburg Council.

6:30 p.m.

Riverfront Amphitheater tour

Tour follows the reception and panel.

6:30–8:30 p.m.

Dinner on your own

Dinner on your own/evening at leisure in historic downtown Lynchburg.
Attendees will have the option to sign up for dinner at a variety of local restaurants.

Agenda

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

Tourism, Talent & Workforce Strategy

8:00–8:30 a.m.

Hotel check-out

Load or store luggage.

8:30–9:00 a.m.

Travel to Poplar Forest

1776 Poplar Forest Pkwy, Lynchburg, VA 24502
Allow 20 minutes for travel

9:00–11:00 a.m.

Breakfast & historic tourism experience

Welcome from Alyson Ramsey, Executive Director, followed by an introduction to historic tourism in the region, educational collaborations and tour of Poplar Forest.

11:00–11:30 a.m.

Travel to Liberty Mountain Snowflex

4000 Candlers Mountain Road, Lynchburg, VA 24502
Allow 17 minutes for travel

11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Workforce & education collaboration

The Lodge at Snowflex. Building the Talent Pipeline: partnerships between education, employers, and workforce organizations. Welcome: Dr. Scott Hicks, COO, Liberty University Moderator: Christine Kennedy, COO, LRBA; Panelists: Ashley Wilson, Campbell County Public Schools; Jason Ferguson, Central Virginia Community College; Alisha Meador, Framatome; Dennis Coan, Lynchburg Beacon of Hope

1:30 p.m.

Program close & departure

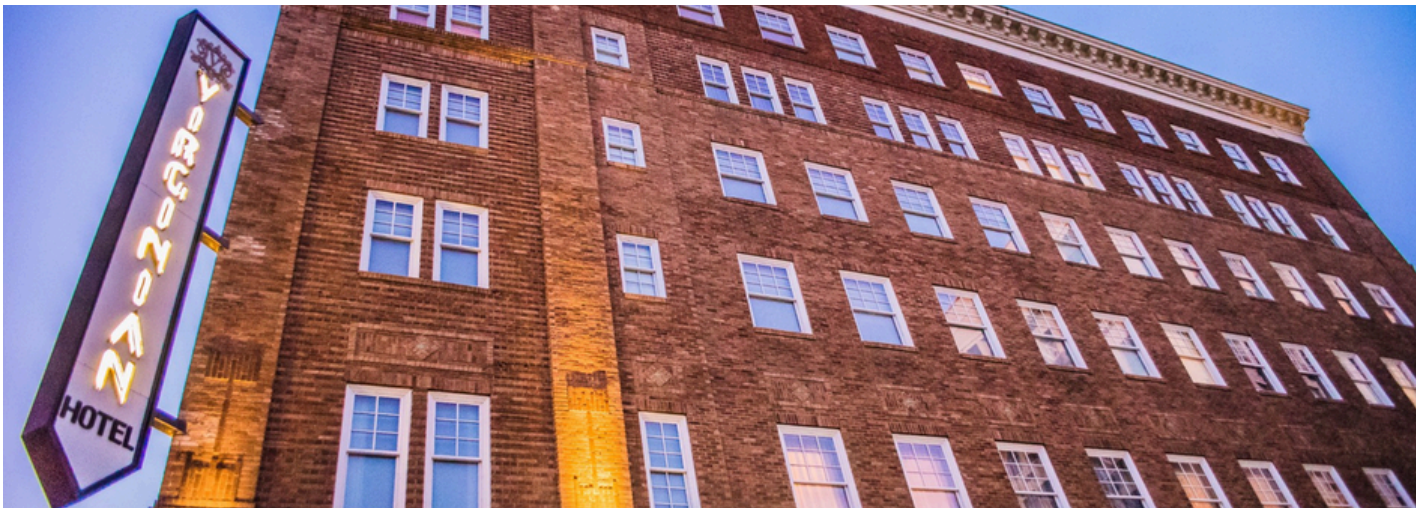
Optional tubing before the return to Fredericksburg!

PLATINUM SPONSOR



The Virginian

HISTORIC HOSPITALITY



712 Church Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

Our downtown home base brings Lynchburg's historic architecture into the visitor experience.

A DOWNTOWN LANDMARK

The hotel opened in 1913. Its restored building reopened in 2018 as part of Hilton's Curio Collection.

ARRIVAL

Independent arrival and check-in take place Wednesday, October 14, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Welcome bags will be available at the front desk. Parking across the street.

A CONNECTION TO OUR REGION

The hotel offers a starting point for discussing how historic buildings can support downtown activity and modern hospitality.

How can the Fredericksburg region connect preservation with new investment?

Amazement Square

CULTURE & DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION



27 9th Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

A historic warehouse becomes a place for learning, exploration, and community connection.

AN UNEXPECTED WELCOME VENUE

Wednesday's reception and dinner combine museum exploration with a wine pairing experience.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

The museum's four-story Amazement Tower and hands-on exhibits create opportunities for families and students to explore.

AN ANCHOR FOR DOWNTOWN

Amazement Square connects educational outreach with downtown redevelopment.

What community destinations could strengthen both education and our visitor economy?

WELCOME RECEPTION SPONSOR



WELCOME DINNER SPONSOR



Regional Business Alliance

REGIONAL COLLABORATION



300 Lucado Place, Lynchburg, VA 24504

The Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance brings business, government, and community partners into the region's economic development work.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Megan Lucas leads a discussion about the Alliance's evolution, mission, and strategic partnerships.

SHARED PRIORITIES

The morning explores how business and civic leaders align their efforts around economic growth, advocacy, and talent development.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP SESSION

Elise Spontarelli and Stephanie Keener discuss the entrepreneurship ecosystem and resources that support startups and small businesses.

BREAKFAST SPONSOR



Which shared priorities could bring our region's leadership organizations closer together?

Vector Space

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INNOVATION



2004 Memorial Avenue, Lynchburg, VA 24501

A community makerspace gives people tools, space, and support to turn ideas into prototypes and businesses.

TOOLS FOR EXPERIMENTATION

Resources include woodworking, metalworking, electronics, textiles, and 3D printing.

MEET THE MAKERS

Three entrepreneurs at different stages of growth will share how Vector Space and the SBDC supported their businesses.

THE VISIT

Participants divide into three groups for a tour, with time to learn about the makerspace's role in the local entrepreneurship ecosystem.

What shared resources would help entrepreneurs in our region test their ideas?

Aerofin

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING & ENERGY



4621 Murray Place, Lynchburg, VA 24502



Circa 1960



Circa 1965

A specialized manufacturer connects engineering expertise with skilled trades and markets beyond Virginia.

MORE THAN A CENTURY OF EXPERIENCE

Founded in 1923, Aerofin produces heat-transfer equipment for industrial and commercial applications.

MANUFACTURING IN LYNCHBURG

The company has operated in Lynchburg since 1966. Its products serve power generation, healthcare, universities, and other industries.

OUR VISIT

Lunch and a welcome from Jeff Spaeth precede the facility tour. The afternoon continues with a session on the region's energy expertise and LRBA's Data Summit.

Which existing industry strengths could our region build upon for long-term growth?

BRIEFING BOOK SPONSOR

DISCOVER NEXT STEP

YOU'RE THE ONE EVERYONE COUNTS ON.

But are you giving yourself the same care you give everyone else?

Discover Next Step provides practical tools to help individuals and organizations:

- Prevent and address burnout
- Build resilience and sustainable performance
- Support brain health and well-being
- Strengthen leaders and teams
- Create healthier workplace cultures



Because the work you do matters, and so do you.

Barbara Gustavson
Speaker · Facilitator · Author of REGROUP
Brain Health & Wellness Educator
DiscoverNextStep.com
barbara@discovernextstep.com



The Water Dog

QUALITY OF PLACE & TOURISM



1016 Jefferson Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

The downtown riverfront provides a setting for conversations about tourism, gathering places, and regional identity.

A PLACE TO GATHER

The Water Dog hosts Thursday's cocktail reception and panel overlooking the Riverfront Amphitheater.

THE CONVERSATION

Topics include downtown revitalization, tourism, outdoor recreation, and the role of higher education in the region's culture.

LEADERSHIP CONNECTIONS

Participants will meet and network with members of the Leadership Lynchburg Council during the evening program.

How could investments along our own riverfronts strengthen community life and tourism?

Riverfront Amphitheater

PUBLIC SPACE & COMMUNITY LIFE



1100 Jefferson Street, Lynchburg, VA 24504

A community performance venue, soccer field and park bring another layer of activity to Lynchburg's James River waterfront.

THE VISIT

A tour follows Thursday's reception and panel at The Water Dog, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

THE DISCUSSION

The program considers the amphitheater's development alongside broader investments in downtown and tourism.

A REGIONAL CONNECTION

The venue offers a concrete example for discussing how public gathering places support a city's identity and visitor experience.

What would make a public gathering place in our region useful throughout the year?

Poplar Forest

HISTORIC TOURISM



1776 Poplar Frst Pkwy, Lynchburg, VA 24502

Thomas Jefferson's retreat provides a setting for examining how historic assets contribute to a regional tourism strategy.

ARCHITECTURE AND PRESERVATION

The house's octagonal design reflects Jefferson's interest in geometry and classical architecture.

FRIDAY MORNING

Breakfast, a welcome from Alyson Ramsey, Executive Director, and a tour take place from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

THE LEARNING FOCUS

Participants consider how preservation, interpretation, educational opportunities and visitor experiences can support the region's tourism economy.

How can our historic sites tell fuller stories and create stronger visitor experiences?

Liberty Mountain Snowflex

EDUCATION & THE TALENT PIPELINE



4000 Candlers Mountain Road, Lynchburg, VA 24502

A year-round recreation destination hosts the closing conversation about education, employers, and regional talent.

THE SETTING

The synthetic slopes support skiing, snowboarding, and tubing without natural snow.

WORKFORCE COLLABORATION

The session at The Lodge explores education and industry partnerships, workforce training, and talent attraction and retention.

THE CLOSE

The program concludes at 1:30 p.m., with an opportunity to go tubing before departure for Fredericksburg.

What partnerships would help our region develop and retain the talent employers need?

The Welcome Dinner

LOCAL FOOD & WINE

Ankida Ridge Vineyards



Christine Vrooman, Co-Owner and Vineyard Manager

Wednesday's wine pairing dinner features wines from Ankida Ridge, one of the only wineries in Virginia to grow pinot noir grapes. The program connects the region's hospitality and local products with the evening's welcome experience.

Copper & Lace Catering

Kaitlyn Kirkland, Owner & Chef

A dinner featuring locally sourced ingredients accompanies the wine experience at Amazement Square.

Wednesday, October 14
Amazement Square
Welcome reception and dinner: 5:45–9:00 p.m.

Speakers & Hosts



Jeff Spaeth

President
Aerofin

Jeff Spaeth is President of Aerofin, a leading manufacturer of heat exchanger coils and heat transfer equipment. With more than 30 years of industry experience, he leads Aerofin's continued growth while also serving the region through the Virginia Career Works - Central Region Workforce Development Board and Greater Lynchburg Habitat for Humanity.



Roger Wilson

Plant Superintendent
Aerofin

Roger Wilson is Plant Superintendent at Aerofin, where he has built an impressive 47-year career, advancing from assembler to leadership roles across the plant. A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, Roger also stays active in the community as a longtime baseball and softball umpire.



Spencer Kirkham

Senior Application Engineer
Aerofin

Spencer Kirkham is a member of Aerofin's Sales team, where he works with customers across a variety of industries and builds lasting client relationships. A 2020 Virginia Tech graduate with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, Spencer continues to expand his industry expertise while growing alongside Aerofin.



Ruby Ferguson-Chambers

Group Lead- Assembly Department
Aerofin

Ruby Ferguson-Chambers is a Group Lead in Aerofin's Assembly Department and has been with the company for more than 27 years, advancing from assembler to brazer and into leadership. A lifelong Lynchburg-area resident, Ruby brings decades of manufacturing experience, dedication, and leadership to the Aerofin team.

Speakers & Hosts



Dan Posid

Director of Engineered Products
Aerofin

Dan Posid is Director of Engineered Products at Aerofin, bringing more than 25 years of engineering experience and nearly 20 years with the company. A licensed Professional Engineer, he plays a key role in Aerofin's nuclear business and highly engineered heat transfer applications.



Christine Vrooman

Owner
Ankida Ridge Vineyards

Christine Vrooman is co-owner and vineyard manager of Ankida Ridge Vineyards, a family-owned, high-elevation winery in Amherst County. She is a passionate advocate for sustainable farming and Virginia wine and is currently working to establish a new High Elevation Vineyards AVA in Virginia.



Kaitlyn Kirkland

Owner
Copper and Lace Bar and Catering

Kaitlyn is the owner and head chef of Copper and Lace, bringing together her love of family, Southern roots, and passion for food. With five years of restaurant industry experience, she creates memorable meals while proudly incorporating ingredients and products from local small businesses.



Ashley Wilson

CTE Program Coordinator
Campbell County Public Schools

Ashley Wilson is a Career and Technical Education Program Coordinator with 20 years of experience in public education, including 19 years dedicated to CTE. She also serves as Work-Based Learning Coordinator, building partnerships with regional employers and Central Virginia Community College to connect students with meaningful career opportunities.

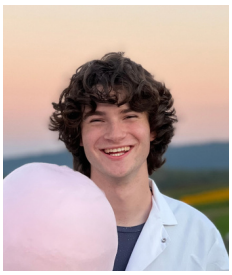
Speakers & Hosts



Jason Ferguson

Chief Workforce Officer and Associate Vice President
Central Virginia Community College

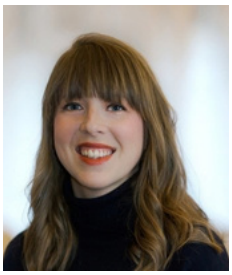
Dr. Jason Ferguson is Chief Workforce Officer and Associate Vice President of Professional and Career Studies at Central Virginia Community College, where he oversees a wide range of career and workforce training programs. Known for his collaborative approach, he works closely with regional businesses and partners to develop innovative solutions to workforce challenges.



Jason Golden Rony

CEO & Head Food Scientist
Experimental Sweets

A documentarian and Cotton Candy Scientist specializing in online science communication and ecosystem ecology. His work combines science, storytelling, and creative communication to make complex topics engaging and accessible.



Alisha Meador

Workforce Development Lead
Framatome

Alisha Meador is the Workforce Development Lead at Framatome, bringing more than 15 years of experience in workforce development. She is passionate about creating innovative career pathways and helping individuals and teams grow through strategic, people-focused talent development.



Larry Jackson, PE

Energy & Economic Development Consultant
Hurt & Proffit

Larry Jackson leads Energy and Economic Development initiatives at Hurt & Proffitt, bringing more than four decades of experience in the energy industry, economic development, engineering, and business strategy. He works with businesses and communities to leverage energy infrastructure, attract investment, and support long-term economic growth.

Speakers & Hosts



Scott Hicks

Chief Operating Officer
Liberty University

The Chief Operating Officer provides strategic leadership for university operations, infrastructure, and enterprise services. Working closely with senior leadership, the COO focuses on operational excellence, organizational effectiveness, and aligning resources and initiatives to advance the university's mission and long-term priorities.



Dennis Coan

Interim Executive Director
Lynchburg Beacon of Hope

Dennis has dedicated his career to education, college and career access, and workforce development in the Lynchburg community. At Beacon of Hope, he has served in several leadership roles and is committed to expanding opportunities for young people and helping them achieve their education and career goals.



Christine Kennedy

COO/EVP & Director of Leadership Lynchburg
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Christine Kennedy is Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, bringing more than 25 years of experience in economic growth, workforce initiatives, and leadership development. She also leads the award-winning Leadership Lynchburg programs and is a nationally recognized facilitator, coach, and speaker dedicated to developing leaders and strengthening communities.



Megan Lucas

President & CEO
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Megan A. Lucas, CEcD, CCE, IOM, is CEO and Chief Economic Development Officer of the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, where she leads efforts to drive job creation, investment, and regional growth. With more than 25 years of experience, she is one of only 18 professionals worldwide to hold both the Certified Economic Developer and Certified Chamber Executive designations.

Speakers & Hosts



Stephanie Keener

Vice President Small Business Development
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance & SBDC-Lynchburg Region & Center for Entrepreneurship

Stephanie serves as Director of the Small Business Development Center, Lynchburg Region, where she connects entrepreneurs with the resources, expertise, and relationships needed to start, grow, and sustain successful businesses. Her experience spans small business development, downtown revitalization, rural development, and community engagement.



Marjette Upshur

Director
Office of Economic Development & Tourism - City of Lynchburg

Marjette Upshur serves as Director of Economic Development & Tourism for the City of Lynchburg, where she leads efforts to attract investment, support local businesses, and strengthen the city's economy. A Lynchburg native, she has served in the role since 2007 and has helped advance major business expansions, entrepreneurial initiatives, and public-private partnerships throughout the city.



Ted Delaney

Museum Director
Lynchburg Museum

Ted Delaney is Director of the Lynchburg Museum System and Chief Public History Officer for the City of Lynchburg. A longtime Lynchburg resident, he has spent 25 years researching, writing, lecturing, and consulting on local history and genealogy.



Alyson Ramsey

President & CEO
The Corporation for Jefferson's Poplar Forest

Alyson Ramsey is President & CEO of Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, where she has served in various leadership roles since 2002. Under her leadership, the organization has advanced major restoration, preservation, and interpretation efforts that bring the history of Poplar Forest and its people to life.

Speakers & Hosts



Jeff Whitt

VA Nuclear Hub
Executive Director

Jeff Whitt is Executive Director of the Virginia Innovative Nuclear (VIN) Hub, where he leads statewide efforts in nuclear energy innovation, workforce development, research, and industry collaboration. With more than three decades of nuclear industry experience, he brings expertise in engineering, manufacturing, business development, and government affairs.



Elise Spontarelli

Executive Director
Vector Space

Elise Spontarelli is co-founder and Executive Director of Vector Space, a community makerspace in Central Virginia. She combines her background in design and entrepreneurship with a passion for hands-on education, connecting people with resources and opportunities to create, learn, and thrive.



William Cook

President
Jamerson-Lewis Construction

William Cook is President of Jamerson-Lewis Construction, where he leads the firm's strategic direction, estimating, preconstruction, and business development efforts. A Virginia Tech graduate, he is committed to strengthening client relationships, fostering collaboration, and creating lasting value throughout the communities JLC serves.



Dave Henderson

Owner
The Water Dog

Dave Henderson is a Lynchburg native, entrepreneur, and community leader with a background in financial services, marketing, and business development. He is a founder of Hen + Hound Management Co. and The Water Dog and is actively involved in the Lynchburg community through service on the Lynchburg Planning Commission and several local nonprofit and civic boards.



Mort Sajadian

President and CEO
Amazement Square

Mort Sajadian is President, CEO, and founding director of Amazement Square, where he has helped advance downtown Lynchburg's Riverfront revitalization since 2001. With more than 40 years of experience in museums, education, and the arts, he has held leadership roles at institutions across the country and served on the National Museum and Library Services Board.

Speakers & Hosts



Rob Mann

External Affairs Manager
Appalachian Power Company

Rob Mann serves as External Affairs Manager with Appalachian Power (AEP), supporting Smith Mountain Lake, Lynchburg, and Southside Virginia. He works with local governments, leads community relations, and supports economic development. With more than a decade at AEP across transmission, real estate, and external affairs, he brings expertise in infrastructure and regional partnerships.



Tori Gilmartin

Director, Talent & Workforce Development
Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Tori Gilmartin leads the Alliance's Regional Workforce Roadmap, partnering with employers and workforce organizations to strengthen the region's talent pipeline. Since joining in 2023, she has launched the Educator Workforce Academy and revitalized the Worlds of Opportunity Career Expo. Her background in staffing and recruiting informs her work across key regional industries.



Erik Dorman

Executive Vice President, Installed Base America
Framatome

Erik brings nearly two decades of experience with Framatome, having held a variety of leadership and strategic positions across multiple technical and commercial disciplines. His extensive background and commitment to operational and commercial excellence make him well-suited to lead the Installed Base Business Unit as it continues a history of more than 75 years serving the North American nuclear market.

Attendees



ANEDRA LOGAN

Executive Director
Guideline



APRIL MILUPI

Marketing Specialist
Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce



AUTUMN NABORS

Director of Secondary Education
Caroline County Public Schools



BARBARA GUSTAVSON

Corporate Wellness Trainer
Discover Next Step



BETH SHARPE

Career Influencer
Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board



BRAD NEAL

Group Vice President
SimVentions, Inc



BRUCE SIX

CEO
Topside Federal Credit Union



CHIP BOYLES

Executive Director
George Washington Regional Commission



CYNDI MACK

Human Resource Director
Universal Dynamics



DALTON OKOLO

Media Producer
1108 Media



DASHON TURNER

Director of Academic Programs and Pathways
Stafford County Public Schools



DAVE HAYES

Calypso Kennels



DEBORAH FRAZIER

Salem District Coordinator
Spotsylvania County Government



ERIC BATEMAN

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LORI HAYES

Lee Hill District Supervisor
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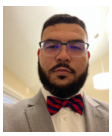
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Attendees



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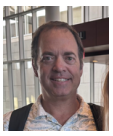
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With appreciation to our Lynchburg hosts and the organizations sharing their experiences with our region.

Mark Your Calendars



Ideas to Bring Home

An idea worth exploring in our region

A partner or connection to follow up with

What would it take to make this happen?

My first step after the visit

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes



Building a Stronger Region Through Shared Ideas

2026 REGIONAL INTERCITY VISIT
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA
OCTOBER 14–16, 2026

Fredericksburg Regional Chamber of Commerce
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