



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

VEDA/VEDP *impactED*
Monday, August 8, 2022
Speaker Profiles



David Manley
Executive Director, Joint IDA of Wythe County
VEDA President

David Manley is the executive director of the Joint Industrial Development Authority, the public economic development agency for Wythe County and its two towns, Wytheville and Rural Retreat.

David is a native Wythe Countian and graduate of the University of Virginia.

Prior to being joining to the Joint IDA in 2014, David oversaw the establishment and operation of West Wind Farm Vineyard & Winery for more than a dozen years. Previously, he worked in the airline industry and for state government.

David is Vice President of the Virginia Economic Developers Association, is on the board of directors restoring the historic Millwald Theatre, and co-founded and advises Wythe-Bland Young Professionals, a non-profit community service organization.



The Honorable George "Bryan" Slater
Secretary of Labor
Commonwealth of Virginia

George "Bryan" Slater brings more than 20 years of experience to the Youngkin Administration with a wealth of knowledge and senior-level experience leading public, non-profit, and private sector organizations.

Bryan received his associates degree from Ferrum College and his bachelor's degree in Political Science from University of Richmond and immediately began his career in politics. He has taken on roles large and small from campaign work to serving in senior management, operations, transformation, and administration.

In Virginia, Bryan served as Secretary of Administration for Governor James Gilmore (R-VA) and as Director of Administration for the Attorney General's Office under Attorney General James Gilmore. Most recently, Bryan served as Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management at the U.S. Department of Labor and Assistant Secretary of Administration for the U.S. Department of Transportation under President Trump. He was the White House Liaison at the U.S. Department of Labor under President George W. Bush, where he managed all non-career appointee hiring, and as a congressional relations officer for the Department of Housing and Urban Development under President George H.W. Bush.

Bryan has served in numerous senior positions in non-profit organizations including Americans United for Life, Freedom Partners Shared Services, and Generation Opportunity. He was also the former Executive Director of the Republican Party of Georgia.

Bryan is a recipient of the 2007 Innovation in Government Award from the Virginia Commonwealth University Wilder School of Government, as well as previously serving on the Board of Visitors for Virginia Commonwealth University.



Sean McCusty
Registered Apprenticeship Navigator
Division of Registered Apprenticeship
Virginia Department of Labor and Industry

The Virginia Registered Apprenticeship program is an employment training model that produces highly skilled workers to meet the demands of employers competing in a global economy, through a combination of on-the-job training and related technical instruction.

Sean McCusty is the Registered Apprenticeship Navigator with DOLI's Division of Registered Apprenticeship and the Commonwealth's Registered Apprenticeship Future Talent (CRAFT) Project grant. In this position he works to leverage existing workforce resources to expand Registered Apprenticeship opportunities. These efforts benefit both Employer/Sponsors and Apprentices by meeting the need for a highly skilled workforce and expanding these opportunities for underserved populations. For the past eight years he has been involved with workforce services in Virginia, working for Local Workforce Boards, as part of the Commonwealth's Rapid Response team and as Business Development Manager for the V2V American Apprenticeship Initiative grant. He is a native of Virginia and received a B.A. in Economics from Hampden-Sydney College.



Dr. John A Downey
President
Blue Ridge Community College

Dr. John Downey serves as the fifth President of Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC), a position he has held since 2009. Prior to his service as president, Dr. Downey worked in a variety of capacities at BRCC, as well as at Bunker Hill Community College in Boston. He currently serves on several local boards, including the On The Road Collaborative Board, the Go Virginia Region 8 Board, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Chamber of Commerce, the Shenandoah Valley Partnership, the Shenandoah Valley Workforce Development Board, the GenEdge Alliance, and on the Voice of Business Committee of the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce. Past board service included the Harrisonburg Rotary Club and the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank Board.

Dr. Downey completed his doctoral program in Higher Education Administration at the University of Virginia where he earned the Annette Gibbs Research Publication Award. He served as the Chair of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) *Complete 2021* Strategic Planning Task Force, and was a member of the *Achieve 2015* and *Opportunity 2027* strategic planning committees for the VCCS. Under his leadership, BRCC has garnered recognition for its progressive workforce initiatives and partnerships, and as a key player in local economic development. BRCC has been recognized frequently by the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* "Great Colleges to Work For" program. In 2010, Dr. Downey was recognized as the most supportive president of the year at the Enactus (formerly SIFE) National Exposition. In 2018, he was awarded the Business Leadership Award by the Greater Augusta Regional Chamber of Commerce, and in 2019 he received the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction from the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society for his support of the BRCC Alpha Xi Xi chapter.



Jason El Koubi
Interim President & CEO
Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Jason El Koubi is President and CEO of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

Before joining VEDP in July 2017 as Executive Vice President, El Koubi was previously President and CEO of One Acadiana, a regional economic development organization based in Lafayette, Louisiana. Under his leadership, the organization developed and successfully launched one of the most successful capital campaigns of its kind in the nation to deliver a new economic development program for the nine-parish region. Previously, El Koubi served as

Assistant Secretary of Louisiana Economic Development, where he led initiatives that helped secure projects creating more than 63,000 new jobs along with more than \$28 billion in new capital investment, while dramatically improving Louisiana's position in virtually every state business climate ranking.

Jason holds a B.S. in Biological Engineering from Louisiana State University and a M.S., Public Policy from the London School of Economics.