

**FY20 Competitive Education  
Summaries and Staff Recommendations  
May 2020**

The Education Committee will meet electronically on Monday, May 19th. The agenda will include review of the sixteen pending requests for Competitive Education funds that were received in April. Guidelines for this program are posted on the Commission website [here](#). The Committee has sufficient available funding to approve these recommendations.

<b>Req #</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Request Amount</b>	<b>Staff Recommendation</b>
3632	Center for Rural Virginia	Virginia Rural Leaders Institute	\$100,000	<b>Refer to Special Projects</b>
3641	Central Virginia Community College Educational Fndt	Machining and Manufacturing Equipment Update	\$120,189	<b>\$115,000</b>
3629	Central Virginia Community College Educational Fndt	New Radiography Overhead X-Ray System	\$91,667	<b>\$91,667</b>
3633	Emory & Henry College	Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Rural Southwest Virginia	\$298,770	<b>\$288,405</b>
3636	Ferrum College	Ferrum College Internet of Things Laboratory	\$40,000	<b>\$40,000</b>
3646	Hampden-Sydney College	Preparing Technology Leaders for Southside VA	\$366,732	<b>\$85,866</b>
3642	Institute for Advanced Learning and Research	Work Ready Community Expansion Phase II	\$260,674	<b>\$260,674</b>
3648	Institute for Advanced Learning and Research	Sonography School and Healthcare Apprenticeship Pilot	\$238,775	<b>\$238,775</b>
3650	Medical Solutions Academy	Practical Nursing Simulation Lab	\$12,500	<b>\$12,500</b>
3640	Mountain Empire Community College	MECC Power Lineman, CDL, Dental Assistant Program Expansion	\$308,593	<b>\$253,593</b>
3643	New College Institute	Implementing the Amazon Web Services re/Start Program	\$100,000	<b>\$100,000</b>



**Financial Viability Assessment:** This is an ambitious, commendable and expensive undertaking for CRV, which has engaged similar long-standing programs such as LEAD Virginia for guidance. However, the VRLI would not offer a nationally-recognized workforce credential, which is the primary outcome metric for the Competitive Education Program. To allow additional time for the Advisory Committee to be formed, for development of curriculum - and for CRV to explore resource-sharing partnerships with other organizations that conduct training institutes (e.g. LEAD Virginia, Cooperative Extension and ARC) that could make this Institute more sustainable - Staff suggests this proposal be referred to the Special Projects Committee, where this project better aligns with program outcome metrics, and which has an available balance for consideration of this request at a future Commission meeting

**Staff recommends this proposal be referred to the Special Projects Program.**

**Central Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, Inc.**  
***Machining and Manufacturing Equipment Update (#3641)***  
**\$120,189 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** Central Virginia Community College has an accomplished machining program that feeds the pipeline for world class industry leaders in the Greater Lynchburg Area. Our machine shop has been the premiere leader in machinists and technicians in Central Virginia for over 50 years. CVCC currently offers five distinct machining programs, each building on the previous and offering stacking credentialing and diplomas. Students enrolled in the Machining Technology Fundamentals program can earn a Career Studies Certificate in less than a year and begin working at a local industrial corporation. Likewise, a Machining Trainee can earn a certificate with 43 credits in one year in the Machine Shop program. Students can also advance by enrolling in one of the two two-year programs in machining: Machine Tool and Machine Tool and Quality Control. These programs high-level degrees offer multiple credentials and prepare students to work for some of the biggest companies in the world regionally.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request seeks funding for half of the costs to replace six pieces of equipment in the College's machining program, specifically two TRAK K3 machines will be placed in the "Beginner Area", three DPM X2 machines will be for the "Intermediate" program, and one HAAS Mini Mill will be for the "Advanced" level. CVCC states the current training equipment is "worn and dated" and provided a list of current equipment with the dates they were put in service, mostly ranging back to the early-2000s. The College states it graduates 200+ students annually with a variety of stackable industry-recognized machining credentials, with a 100% hire rate upon (and even prior to) graduation. The outcomes for this request show no net new gain above the current enrollment and graduation. Required matching funds will be raised from private companies, donors, etc. CVCC subsequently estimated a \$10k reduction of installation costs, bringing the total project to approximately \$230k.

**Financial Viability Analysis:** The principal limitation of this request is the lack of increase in enrollment/graduation, however the current number of graduates and their job hiring rate is most impressive. The CVCC machining program has clearly been able to meet the needs of regional employers for machinists for several decades, and as technology has evolved, it is reasonable to accept the College's premise that the current equipment - most of which is 15-20 years old - has been heavily used and lacks state-of-the-art training capabilities.

**Staff recommends an award of \$115,000 for up to 50% of replacement equipment acquisition and installation.**

**Central Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, Inc.**  
***New Radiography Overhead X-Ray System (#3629)***  
**\$91,667 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** Central Virginia Community College has the only regional Radiologic Technology Program and is the sole provider of radiologic technologists in a large portion of the Tobacco Region. Established as a degree program in 1968, the CVCC Radiologic Technology Program is fully accredited by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT). Over 750 students have graduated from the program, providing highly qualified radiologic technologists to health care facilities throughout Virginia and the surrounding states. The graduation ceremony held on August 1, 2019 was our 50th graduating class. Our current X-Ray machine was purchased and installed in 2007. While it still operates, it is not compatible with current technology and is not a relevant training tool for our students who are preparing for immediate job placement. A new X-Ray System will be used for more than 10 years (likely 15), and will be a small investment in career preparedness.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** As stated in the Executive Summary, CVCC's radiologic technology program has successfully graduated and placed 750 graduates over the past half century. It is a two-year program with 16 students per cohort gaining an Associates degree. While this equipment replacement does not expand the annual cohorts, it provides training on x-ray equipment offering current technology via replacement of equipment put in service in 2007. The College notes a 99% pass rate for students and 100% job placement rate for graduates. An equipment quote of \$183,333 was provided for a Siemens Multix Fusion Max x-ray system and attachments that is expected to have a 10-15 year useful life. Required matching funds will be raised from healthcare providers and other private donors. **Financial Viability Assessment:** The radiologic technology program's longevity and successful job placement rate speak volumes for the success and sustainability of this program, which is validated by a support letter from the Centra Health CEO, noting that Centra hired four of the 16 graduates in the 2019 cohort.

**Staff recommends an award of \$91,667 for 50% of new equipment costs.**

**Emory & Henry College**  
***Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Rural Southwest Virginia (#3633)***  
**\$298,770 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** This project will launch a high-need healthcare program through Emory and Henry College, namely clinical mental health counseling. The demand for mental health services is extremely high and expected growth over the next decade (22%) is much faster than average (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Consistent with national demand, the Virginia Employment Commission expects a 34% increase in need across the Commonwealth and there are currently 1,500 open positions annually in this professional field. The demand for these healthcare providers is magnified in rural areas as the demand for mental health counselors to treat those affected by the opioid epidemic is exceptionally high in the tobacco region. The need for these professionals is highlighted consistently in the letters of support.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request supports the development of a new Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MS-CMHC) program at the Emory and Henry School of Health Sciences. The School of Health Sciences has received approximately \$1.14M from the Commission since 2014 for the establishment of the physical therapy program, start-up funding

for the Dean position, and the creation of a clinical simulation lab. The requested funds are requested over two years for Personal Services (\$260,470) to support the program director and two core faculty positions as well as an administrative assistant position which will also serve a newly created BSN program. An additional \$38,300 is requested for contractual services (faculty and student recruitment, professional development, etc.) and for supplies and materials (library materials, laboratory supplies, etc.). Matching funds of \$360,950 will be provided from E&H for salary support, supplies and materials, and video equipment. Initial enrollment will consist of 18 students per cohort, although future classes will expand to allow 24 students per cohort. By August 2023 an estimated 18-24 students will graduate annually. In addition to producing graduates to fill open positions across the region, students in the MS-CMHC will complete practicum and internship rotations in local behavioral health facilities and will be directly involved in patient care.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Because the Program Director has already been hired and is due to start on July 1 it appears that funding may already be in place for this position and it is not necessary to allocate grant funds for this staff member. Additionally, the recruitment and professional development expenses presented in the budget are better suited to be paid using matching funds. During review, TRRC staff proposed that E&H revise their budget to reallocate these expenses to better fit this program's funding priorities. E&H has submitted a revised budget and agreed to focus TRRC support on salary/benefits for the part-time admin assistant (\$44k) and the two faculty positions that will be hired in year two (\$171k requested). E&H also revised its request to seek TRRC support of one-time equipment needs (\$48k) and to stock the program's library (\$28k). Staff suggests these are more appropriate expenses to support. E&H is also requesting general and lab supplies and student recruitment costs (total of \$21k) which staff feel should be a lesser funding priority that should be conducted by E&H using matching funds. The application cites 15 open positions for Clinical/ Medical/ Licensed Mental Health Professional Jobs in just the Marion/ Smyth County area. Similar demand exists throughout Virginia with a total of 2,018 open positions that require the LPC credential. The need for these healthcare providers is especially high in the Tobacco Region and similar rural areas to assist in the treatment of those affected by the opioid epidemic. Staff notes the success of E&H in standing up new health science programs supported by previous grants, and suggest that this new program will result in significant numbers of individuals earning graduate level degrees for careers in a high demand field that serves the mental and physical health needs of the SWVA workforce. As such, this proposal tied for the top score in this funding round.

**Staff recommends award of \$288,405 per the revised budget, and excluding supplies and student recruitment.**

## **Ferrum College**

### ***Ferrum College Internet of Things Laboratory (#3636)***

#### **\$40,000 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** Ferrum College's Internet of Things Laboratory is the natural progression of the College's existing computer technology and information systems major course work. Students' skill sets must expand apace with the employment marketplace, and students lacking the proficiencies to meet the demands of a technology-driven future will be locked out of an array of lucrative careers. The IoT Lab is one example of new coursework and experiential learning opportunities to launch our students into careers prepared to excel. Within the IoT Lab, students will attain competencies required for careers in fields which rely upon existing and emerging technologies, enabling them to utilize and administer systems of interconnected devices as

would be found in telemedicine, business intelligence, and cybersecurity, among others. Students will also receive hands-on experience programming rovers and drones, enabling these machines to interact with humans in unstructured environments for use in domestic, commercial, research or other diverse settings.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** Grant funds are requested primarily for costs of 25 Dell business laptops for establishing the new “Internet of Things Lab” at Ferrum College to support the ability of students in the Computer Technology and Information Systems Major to receive professional certifications in several IT related areas. A detailed budget shows use of \$30,190 cash Match toward specific new equipment and supply costs for the establishing the IoT lab, and the College clarified intentions for \$10,050 of In-Kind Match associated with their Dean of Arts and Science and an Assistant Professor for Computer Information System. New IT related certifications where students will develop an aptitude for ??? are identified to include Machine Learning and Data Analysis, Microcontroller Programming, Arduino Programming, Raspberry Pi Programming, Drone and Rover Applications and others. Outcomes are projected for serving 28 students annually, and increasing the number of nationally recognized IT-related certifications to 160-224, based on 20-28 students each receiving up to eight different certifications.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Strong employer letters were provided. McAirlands expressed a need for employees with programming skills for working on automated equipment in their expanding manufacturing operation in Franklin County, and Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital indicates a need for system analysts to support expansion of telemedicine capabilities. This very modest request to expand the offerings of a long-standing program appears to better prepare Ferrum computer science students for a wider range of employer-demanded career options.

**Staff recommends an award of \$40,000.**

## **Hampden-Sydney College**

### ***Preparing Technology Leaders for Southside Virginia (#3646)***

**\$366,732 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** Consistent with the goals of the Tobacco Regional Revitalization Commission’s Competitive Education Program, Hampden-Sydney College’s Preparing Technology Leaders for Southside Virginia initiative will expand educational opportunities offered in Southside Virginia and increase the number of college graduates who will be competitive for career opportunities in the region. Graduates of this initiative will be trained in programming languages, operating systems, algorithms, cryptography, 2D/3D computer graphics, artificial intelligence, data structures, and many other related skills, making them well qualified for high technology jobs including software and hardware engineering, database implementation and management, cloud storage/software development, and data analysis and visualization. We will actively recruit students from the Tobacco Commission’s service area, including students from Southside Virginia Community College who wish to pursue baccalaureate degree completion. The initiative will also place our graduates with high tech companies and other organizations in Southside Virginia, and prepare them for leadership roles in this growing sector.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This project is focused on increasing enrollment and graduates in Hampden-Sydney’s Computer Science program, and in the number of students studying Economic or Business with a secondary focus on Data Science and Data Analytics. The proposal emphasizes a plan for increased recruitment of students from Southern Virginia, and placement of students in work-based learning opportunities with employers in the region. Grant funds are

requests to support \$195,000 of personnel costs for hiring of two new Computer Science faculty, to accelerate development of new CS programming, and \$171,732 identified as computer laboratory equipment (of which ~ \$120K appears to be for a new server). Matching funds support two new staff: an admissions officer focused on recruitment of students from Southern Virginia; and a career services position for working with public and private employers in the region, for placement of Computer Science students into internships, with the goal of creating a long term employment opportunity for these individuals. The Computer Science program will be housed in the new \$30 million Pauley Science Center expected to open in 2021. Employer letters were provided by Daybreak IT Solutions (an IT recruitment company based in Richmond), and Carter Bank & Trust which indicates a need for graduates with Computer Science degrees to expand their digital capabilities. A letter of support was provided by Southside Virginia Community College expressing interest in working with Hampden-Sydney College on a 2+2 or similar agreement for students in their Center for Information Technology Excellence program. However, no details were provided to suggest that a transfer agreement between the two has been finalized, which staff suggests appears to be a critical component for the recruitment targets for this program. Outcomes are projected at increasing the annual number of Computer Science majors from the current baseline of four per year, to twenty students annually.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Staff notes that \$195k of this request would fund the refilling of two computer science faculty positions upon the expected retirement of two incumbents, and that using TRRC funds to supplant funding that is already in the College's faculty budget would be contrary to TRRC program guidelines and funding policies. Furthermore, having those requested hires matched by two new positions in admissions and career counseling - whose percentage of time dedicated directly to this project would be enormously challenging to track and verify - is less than ideal as required match. Staff suggests that offering half of the \$171k expense to equip a new state-of-the-art computer sciences lab - as a one-time cost - is more consistent with recommendations on other equipment requests within this cycle, as well as countless Education grants over the years to support creation and expansion of health sciences, computer sciences, and other STEM-H educational facilities at in-region public and private universities including Averett, Emory & Henry, Longwood and UVA-Wise as well as community colleges. As the applicant's narrative indicates recent CS grads have gone on to employment in cities such as Richmond, D.C., Boston and Chicago, it is imperative that the College follow through on its stated intent to work closely with SVCC (and other Tobacco Region community colleges) to enroll and provide IT intern/apprentice opportunities to students from the TRRC region, who are somewhat more likely to pursue employment within the region upon graduation, with potential student debt assistance through the TRRC Talent Attraction Program.

**Staff recommends an award of \$85,866 for computer hardware required to establish and initiate the new computer sciences program(s) and laboratory.**

## **Institute for Advanced Learning and Research** ***Work Ready Community Expansion Phase II (#3642)*** **\$260,674 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** The Dan River Region Collaborative and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, in partnership with regional economic development agencies, school divisions, Workforce Development Boards and employers, seek to continue and expand the successful Work Ready Community (WRC) effort. The WRC Expansion Phase II effort will maintain a focus on certification testing and strengthen employer engagement. Funding will

support 12 certified localities as they maintain their WRC status and assist five localities in achieving their initial WRC goals. Tobacco Commission funds, totaling \$270,674 and matched with \$288,287, will support: National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) testing for 6921 individuals, NCRC retakes for 769 individuals, a minimum of six job profiles for employers, and dedicated personnel to work with employers and partner agencies. The NCRC is a competency and evidence-based, industry-recognized, third-party validated, portable and stackable certification that validates work readiness skills in: applied math, graphic literacy and workplace documents.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request would expand a regional effort to support testing for the National Career Readiness Certificate, which tests for a job candidate's competencies in applied math, graphic literacy and reading/comprehension of workplace documents. As sufficient numbers of tests are passed in a locality it is then certified as a Work Ready Community. The project has been supported by two previous Competitive Education grants: #2669 approved in May 2013 (\$142k); and #3274 approved in May 2017 (\$251k, with a current balance of \$84k). Since the 2017 funding was approved annual NCRCs granted have grown from 385 in 2017 to 1,256 in 2019, and was on track in Q1 2020 to reach a yearly total approaching 2,500 before the COVID lockdown. Participating school divisions have grown from 6 in 2017 to 16, and 12 localities have achieved or maintained WRC status. The current request would assist those 12 Southern VA localities in maintaining certification, while supporting five new counties in gaining initial certification. Funds are requested for testing (\$200k) and for half of the salary/benefits for the current program coordinator for 2 years (\$60k). The coordinator, in addition to administering the program, will complete an additional six job profiles for employers looking to add NCRC to its applicant screening. Funding partners on the matching side include IALR, Danville Regional Foundation, local school divisions, workforce development boards and GO Virginia Region 3.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Companies such as Owens-Illinois (Pittsylvania), Eastman Chemical (Martinsville), Ten Oaks (Patrick) and Nucor Buildings Group (Mecklenburg) have adopted the NCRC as part of their job applicant pre-screening, and several letters from regional employers who use NCRC in their applicant screening provide a strong endorsement of the value of this initiative. Outcomes are truly significant, including 7,690 individuals tested and more than 5,500 certificates expected in the two year project period, with five new initial CWRCs and 12 cities/counties maintaining that status, covering the majority of the Southern TRRC region. IALR anticipates reaching the 3rd anniversary of the current grant with a \$35k balance, for which a 4th year extension has been requested. This request builds on a strong and collaborative established regional partnership that has demonstrated measurable growth to better position thousands of job candidates across most of Southern VA with an employer-recognized and valued credential, and will greatly assist these localities in marketing the competencies of their workforce to existing and prospective employers. As such, this request clearly aligns with TRRC Education metrics and is significantly impactful on thousands of workers across a large swath of the TRRC footprint.

**Staff recommends an award of \$260,674.**

## **Institute for Advanced Learning and Research**

### ***Sonography School and Healthcare Apprenticeship Pilot (#3648)***

#### **\$238,775 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research is proud to partner with Sovah Health to offer a new sonography training program. There is a need for registered sonographers in southern Virginia with no training programs in the region. Over the

next decade, the demand for medical sonographers will grow by 23%, over three times the national average. Sovah Health is an ideal partner for this new program given their experience with the Sovah School of Radiologic Technology. The sonography program, located at Sovah Health Danville, will consist of both classroom/didactic and clinical/OJT education. Seven students will start the 12-month training and it is anticipated that five students will become credentialed. IALR and Sovah Health will work with VDOLI to pilot this as an apprenticeship program and explore opportunities for apprenticeship in other high-need healthcare careers through best practice visits and consultation.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** Funding is to support start-up costs for development of Virginia's first healthcare apprenticeship program to address the need for qualified sonography professionals. IALR's request is in partnership with the Danville Regional Medical Center (dba Sovah Health) School of Health Professions (SoHP) which is accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools as an AAS Degree granting institution, making students eligible for federal financial aid. An annual cohort for the one-year program is expected to be seven students, with 5 of those completing and sitting for national certification. Acceptance criteria for the program will require either an Allied Health background, or an Associate's Degree in a related field and will be based on those that have the qualifications to sit for the national exams. Graduates will be qualified to take two nationally recognized certifications, the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers and the American Registry of Radiologic Technologies which offers a certification in sonography. Starting wages are \$25.78 per hour, and open sonography positions were identified for all hospitals in Danville, Martinsville, Halifax and Gretna. TRRC funds are primarily for new personnel with \$175,000 allocated for hiring the Sonography Director and Associate Director faculty, and \$63,775 for equipment (an ultrasound machine and laptops). The application is well matched with ~ \$238K of cash contributions toward the new faculty positions, accreditation and licensing fees, classroom renovations, and wages paid to apprentices by employers. Additional In-Kind match is from existing staff who will be directly involved with establishment of the apprenticeship program, IALR's Director of Advanced Learning and Sovah Health's Director for School of Health Professions. The State Council on Higher Education for Virginia would have to approve the new sonography apprenticeship program, and SoHP plans to pursue further accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** This project is designed to address a critical training need that does not currently exist in the region. Sonography requires a high skill set, and research by SoHP on existing programs revealed that students with the highest success were those with an allied health background. The decision to proceed using an apprenticeship model was based on a number of factors: the need for a long-term solution to employment challenges for sonography positions (which are often contracted through national vendors for short stays in the region at significant expenses to the hospital system); the challenges of recruiting medical professionals to southern Virginia versus the success of training and retaining individuals who are already here; and the allowance for apprentices to be paid while gaining work experience, benefiting both the students and the employers. Staff notes the success of SoHP's Radiologic Technology program which graduates ~ eleven students annually, and since its inception in 2003 has succeeded in addressing the occupational demand and has transitioned the hospital away from having to contract with national vendors for providing those critical services (the same challenge that SoHP seeks to address with the sonography program). Sovah Health and their subsidiary SoHP are committed to the long term sustainability of this program, noting financial value they receive as a training hospital qualifying them for reimbursements through Medicare and Medicaid programs that would augment projected annual expenses for the program which exceed revenue (a pro-forma submitted with the application showed the program operating in the red without those funding subsidies). While this might appear to principally benefit Sovah Health, support letters were provided from Sentara-Halifax Regional

Hospital, PATHS (a federally-qualified clinic) and a local OB-GYN practice, all expressing need for ultrasound technicians and endorsing this request. As a private organization, Sovah Health has agreed (as the primary beneficiary of the project), to be a party to the grant agreement to ensure completion of approved outcomes, and to protect the Commission's security interest in equipment. Though annual outcomes are low (five nationally-certified technicians), the documented demand for these graduates, and SoHP's long track record of success with its radiologic technician training speak to the sustainability and demand for this training. As such, this was the third highest scoring proposal in this funding round.

**Staff recommends an award of \$238,775 contingent on Sovah Health being party to the executed grant agreement.**

### **Medical Solutions Academy** ***Practical Nursing Simulation Lab (#3650)*** **\$12,500 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** Medical Solutions Academy, INC is seeking funds to purchase a high fidelity mannequin to enhance simulation in the Practical Nursing program. There are numerous scenarios that the PN students are not exposed to in the hospital setting. We feel as though a high-fidelity mannequin would help the students learning experience.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** Grant funds are requested to support 50% of the cost for a high-fidelity mannequin to use for training simulations for students enrolled in the Practical Nursing program. Medical Solutions Academy is a nonprofit academy based in Danville. While other nursing programs are available in the area, Medical Solutions Academy offers their nursing program in the evenings and on weekends. The Academy launched in 2011 and offers short-term health care training programs in Nurse Aide, Medical Assistant, Medication Aide, Medical Office Assistant, and Pharmacy Technician that are in addition to the Practical Nursing program. TRRC provided a modest grant of \$6,814 in 2016 with the start-up of the LPN program. Mean annual wages for LPN's in Virginia are listed at \$44,030.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** The Academy has been operating successfully for nearly a decade, and is certified through SCHEV, the Virginia Board of Nursing and is approved by the National Healthcare Association. The Academy's Practical Nursing program is currently a candidate for accreditation from the Council on Occupational Education, with the final visit reported to have been scheduled for June but postponed due to COVID-19. Following approval of accreditation, which will allow for financial aid eligibility to support tuition costs, the Academy plans to expand increasing annual enrollment from 10 to 40 students. Area employers with on-going needs to fill LPN positions include Piney Forest Health and Rehabilitation Center, Riverside HRC, Stratford Nursing Home and SOVAH Health. An employer letter from Piney Forest HRC's human resources director indicates that graduates from the Academy fill a majority of their charge nurse positions. While outcomes are very modest (8 LPN graduates annually, but potentially growing to 40) this very modest request will provide state-of-the-art simulation experience that has become a standard teaching technique at nursing programs across the TRRC region that have also requested support to acquire mannequins, including community colleges and several universities.

**Staff recommends an award of \$12,500 to support 50% of equipment costs.**

**Mountain Empire Community College**  
***MECC Power Lineman, CDL, Dental Assistant Program Expansion (#3640)***  
**\$308,593 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** MECC seeks to expand the college's Power Lineman and Commercial Driver's License programming to serve the needs of our regional employers. Enrollment growth in each of the existing programs is currently limited due to restrictions in equipment, instruction, and renovation costs. Both programs currently have a waiting list of at least eight months. MECC requests additional funds to purchase equipment that would allow instructors the flexibility to expand the Power Lineman to three cohorts with 30 students per class as well as expand the CDL Program to include 14 students per cohort, benefitting 42 additional, non-duplicated students per year. This expansion has been requested by MECC's partner employers to fill existing open positions in the region. In addition, MECC's current Dental Assistant program requests additional funding to support infrastructure improvements. These improvements would lead to students being able to earn an additional credential in the program.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request to continue development of the MECC Center for Workforce and Innovation in Appalachia will result in the expansion of both the Power Lineman and CDL programs. This facility, which opened late 2018, received \$425,905 from the Special Projects Committee in FY18 to support renovations and furnishings for the building (a former elementary school owned by Wise County). In the current proposal, funding is requested for equipment to allow the expanded Lineman and CDL programs (\$137k). TRRC funds are also requested for electrical upgrades for the building to support the Dental Assistant Program. TRRC provided \$195,000 for program development expenses including a program-specific equipment such as digital x-ray equipment. The electrical infrastructure currently in place at the CWIA is not sufficient to support this equipment. Commission funds (\$81,500) are requested to complete the needed electrical upgrades. The Dental Assistant Program will produce 36 graduates annually. The new outcomes of this application are associated with the expansion of the Power Lineman and CDL programs. TRRC funds (\$137,093) will be used to purchase several pieces of equipment needed for these programs. The additional tools and equipment will allow flexibility to train more students on different pieces of equipment using alternating training cycles. Enrollment in the Power Lineman program will increase by 10 students per cohort (30 annually) and the CDL will increase by 4 students per cohort (40 annually). Matching funds will be provided from MECC for additional adjunct faculty for three years (\$135,000) and general office and maintenance supplies (\$15,000). Equipment and Computers will be purchases using \$92,200 from the Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund and In-Kind support will be contributed from Glass Equipment representing the lease value of a Digger Derrick truck. Title III Funds (\$38,000) will be used for classroom and laboratory renovations.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** The CWIA is rapidly emerging as an effective new facility to add/expand MECC skilled trades programs that enable students to gain well-paying jobs, and the application provided strong letters of support from local employers documenting the need for graduates from these programs. The proposed budget also allocated TRRC funds for lower priority uses such as CWIA utilities (\$25,000) and Instructional Supplies and Materials (\$30,000). These are recurring expenses for MECC and the CWIA which would typically be supported through program revenues. The application also includes a request for \$35,000 for repair of a leaking roof. This repair was noted to be the responsibility of the landlord, Wise County, according to their lease agreement with MECC, however the County has stated in writing that the roof repairs are not funded in its five year capital improvements budget. Staff supports the urgent need for roof repairs and electrical upgrade to allow use of the dental assistant x-ray equipment, but not recurring operating expenses such as utilities and class supplies/materials.

Staff recommends award of \$253,593 for program expansion costs, including electrical upgrade and roof repair, but excluding recurring annual costs such as utilities and supplies/materials.

## New College Institute

### *Implementing the Amazon Web Services re/Start Program (#3643)*

#### **\$100,000 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** New College Institute and Amazon Web Services (AWS), will recruit and train unemployed and underemployed individuals in the Tobacco Region to participate in a program which will help participants succeed in entry-level cloud positions. The program, AWS re/Start, will serve four cohorts of twenty-five individuals annually. No previous technology experience is required, though a high-school diploma or equivalent is expected. Through a twelve-week program, participants receive job-specific training on building effective front-line support, troubleshooting, escalation, and task automation techniques. Through real-world, scenario-based exercises, labs, and coursework, learners build Linux, Python, networking, security, and relational database skills. Upon completion, participants take a cloud-practitioner exam. AWS re/Start also provides participants with resume and interview coaching to prepare for employer interviews. AWS works with its clients to identify those with vacant positions and helps participants schedule interviews. Many positions are local; however, cloud-based technology positions also have the potential for remote-work positions.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This is a pilot project for delivery of a proprietary foundational level cloud-based information technology skills training program, the AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification. Grant funds are requested to support \$100K toward the \$125K estimated costs for an Amazon Web Services Instructor, with New College Institute committing \$25K toward this position and an additional \$50K for an IT Foundations and Soft Skills Instructor. NCI plans for the instructors to be employees of NCI. The project budget identifies ~ \$175K of In-Kind contributions from Amazon Web Services including estimates for the value of curriculum, recruitment, travel, employer placement, and overall project management. Outcomes are for 100 participants in year one from four cohorts of 25 students, with projections for 90 individuals receiving the AWS Cloud Practitioner Certification. The NCI program is part of the AWS re/Start training program. While AWS offers a free digital course on its website for learning the fundamentals of AWS Cloud, which prepares individuals for the AWS Cloud Practitioner exam, the re/Start program is a more in-depth classroom based skills development and training program, aimed at preparing unemployed and underemployed individuals for careers. Listed criteria for participation are relatively minimal, requiring only a high school diploma or GED, and NCI plans to use an on-line math/logic assessment for assuring individuals selected have the required aptitude for success. Utilization of the Amazon curriculum by NCI will be provided under a Master Services Agreement. Once the four initial cohorts are completed and success is determined, the MSA allows for the training to be repeated as long as both parties agree and the MSA remains in effect.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** NCI addressed questions regarding sustainability/longevity of the program with two potential options: repeating the program beyond the first year by drawing students from the entire tobacco region for delivery at NCI; or consideration for replicating the model into a number of locations based on lessons learned from the pilot. NCI plans to evaluate best options for a funding model once they have experience with the program and better understanding of overall interest. Sustainability models from AWS' experience in running the

re/Start program in other locations range from grant funding to a sponsorship model where cohort expenses are covered by companies who wish to recruit participants. AWS - one of the most prevalent cloud service providers in the world - is committed to assisting every student who finishes the program and passes the certification with the opportunity to interview for a position. The Cloud Practitioner certification provides foundational skills for jobs in one of the highest demand IT fields, and can lead to advanced AWS certifications that can be layered to provide career progression and long-term opportunities. The results of a survey published by Global Knowledge for the 2020 Top-Paying IT Certifications in the US ranks the AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner at #8 with an average salary of \$131,465. While graduates shouldn't be expected to start at those salaries, opening a career pathway with an Amazon credential could be life-changing for the participants. This reasonable investment, supported by a deeply-resourced global partner with an existing training curriculum, should be viewed as a unique pilot opportunity for the TRRC region, and re-assessed to see if initial cohorts can be filled, and completers from the TRRC region ultimately gain better employment.

**Staff recommends an award of \$100,000.**

**New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Dev. Area Consortium Board**  
***Profiles to Increase Critical Knowledge for Skills that Matter (PICKS-TM)***  
**(#3631)**  
**\$234,864 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** PICKS TM helps STEM-H and manufacturing businesses have skilled talent to be competitive and grow. We will profile jobs, identify skills gaps, provide a framework to find resources to close those gaps, and coordinate training needs—including work-based learning. Businesses struggle to have workers who can manage people and/or critical processes, maintain and repair equipment, and maintain efficient quality-specific standards that underpin competitiveness and loyalty. Further, training providers must understand businesses' pain points and become agile responders. Businesses can then retain their current talent, identify new-hires, create an internal talent pipeline, and sponsor work-based learning. Transitioning and emerging workers also benefit from this deeper understanding through training programs that include WorkKeys® preparation and testing, credentialing, credit for prior learning, workforce training, work-based learning, and entry into a career pathway. Through our efforts, we will work towards becoming a Work-Ready Community to demonstrate to prospective businesses the strength of our workforce.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request increases the promotion of the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) in the nine tobacco region localities of the New River/ Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board service area. This service area also includes Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties, however they are not served by this request. By increasing access to NCRC testing, each of these localities will be better positioned to become certified as a Work Ready Community. While the application presents a primary goal of expanding access to NCRC testing in the service region, the budget appears to support a variety of other functions such as incumbent worker training (\$50k). An additional two years of funding (up to \$180,000) is planned for a future application to further broaden the scope of the project. Although a portion of the application requests support directly related to the testing fees there appears to be a large portion which is not directly related to the testing project but appear to be allocated for percentages of established, recurring operation expenses for the WIB such as salaries, rent, utilities, etc. For example, \$106,486 is requested to support percentages of three current staff members. While the job

descriptions of some have changed, all are currently employed by the applicant. The operating budget provided with the application supports this assumption. Matching funds of \$263,665.00 will be contributed from US DOL WIOA funding, America's Promise, and partnering localities, businesses, and community colleges. While only a portion of these contributions were listed in the application as "in-kind" the budget details indicate that, similar to the proposed TRRC funding, these are established, recurring expenses which are more appropriately classified as "in-kind" rather than cash match. Under this classification it is possible that the application would fail to meet TRRC's 1:1 match requirement due to exceeding the 25% in-kind limit.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Despite the questions concerning the use of TRRC and matching funds, the project does align with the CWRC initiative in Southern VA, and presents strong estimated outcomes. A total of 499 participants will be served through these programs. A smaller number (55) will receive other credentials such as AWS certified welder or other manufacturing credentials, while the majority (444) will receive the NCRC. By extrapolating the critical expenses necessary to offer testing to these 444 individuals it is likely that a reduced level of TRRC support focused on NCRC and WorkKeys testing (as opposed to existing staff and operating expenses, which could constitute a portion of the required match) could have a positive impact on this initiative, and advance the goal of having a credentialed workforce and certified Work Ready counties in a large swath of SWVA.

**Staff recommends an award of \$41,240 for NCRC and WorkKeys testing and related expenses (e.g. annual curriculum license and software), and excluding existing staff compensation, equipment and operating expenses.**

## **Patrick Henry Community College Foundation** ***Welding Training Expansion (#3635)*** **\$608,395 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** In order to increase welding capacity, PHCC is renovating a portion of the Manufacturing & Engineering Complex II building in order to increase the training capacity from the current 16 welding booths to 44 welding booths. The planned expansion will double the output of the welding program, which has an extensive waitlist due to the highly competitive salaries and employment rates for program participants. PHCC has already secured grant funds for the cost of renovation, and is now seeking funding for additional equipment needed to complete the project and begin offering classes in the new facility.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** Grant funds are requested to support 100% of the \$608,395 costs for welding booth and robotic welding equipment for expansion of the welding program to be relocated to PHCC's Manufacturing & Engineering Technology Complex. Match funds are from the \$3.2 million from Harvest Foundation for renovation of the MET building (the same Match submitted with the \$600K grant award by TRRC in FY19), and In-Kind Match for the value of existing welding machines that will be moved to the new location. The project presents a plan to increase from the 16 current, to 44 welding booths (+ 28 booths), while the budget shows 40 welding machines to be purchased (30 multiprocessor welders and 10 tig welders). PHCC explained that six of their current stick welders were obsolete and did not have the desired "pulse" feature, and other machines were in need of replacement due to their age, as well as clarification of plans to increase to 45 booths instead of 44. PHCC currently runs two cohorts serving 70-80 welding students with ~ 66 students on a waiting list due to limits on class size. Projected outcomes in the application show an increase from 28 to 47 credentials awarded annually (+19) which appears to be

inconsistent with the number of new booths (175% increase in booths and less than 20% increase in outcomes).

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Employer letters were provided by Thomas Industrial Fabrication expecting to add 10 welding positions in coming years, and from Deere-Hatachi Construction Machinery Corp and Mechanical Designs of VA who did not project hiring needs. A list of dozens of employers in the PHCC service area, and beyond, were listed as having hired welders from PHCC's program in the past. Labor data identifies \$17.96/hour as the median hourly earnings for welders in the PHCC service area and slightly higher hourly rates and significant demand within a fifty mile radius of the college. TRRC has previously supported PHCC's welding program with ~ \$730,000 of funding through the Phase 1 COE grant to NCI (which included the purchase of virtual welders and welding robots in addition to support for operating costs and renovations to their current lab), as well as funding from a FY18 award supporting equipping costs for the welding program in Patrick County. These investments are in addition to the \$600,000 award in FY19 mentioned above for renovations at the new MET building. Following inquiry from TRRC staff, PHCC clarified that the net new outcome estimates were too conservative and reported 57 welding credentials were awarded in the 2018-2019 academic year counting both Career Studies Certifications and Certificate welding programs, and projected these numbers would double to 114 credentials awarded annually with the welding booth expansion. Where the budget for the TRRC request included \$448,395 for the welding booth equipment and another \$160,000 for robotic welding (with one robot at \$110,000), staff suggests that the robotic welding expense may be less critical recognizing that five current robots will be retained from the old shop, including those purchased with previous TRRC funding from the COE grant. This project will unquestionably result in significant numbers of net new certified welders annually, to address the annual wait list and meet regional employer demand. However, in light of substantial previous TRRC investments in this program and the admittedly large matching funds being used to match previous TRRC grants, Staff suggests that support for 50% of this new expansion request is appropriate.

**Staff recommends an award of \$224,200 for 50% of the \$448,395 welding booth equipment, contingent on TRRC funds only being used for welding equipment for the expanded booths (as opposed to replacement of existing booth equipment).**

## **Southside Virginia Community College Foundation** ***Expansion of Industrial Technology Programs (#3647)*** **\$347,651 Requested**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** "Expansion of Technology Programs" at Southside Virginia Community College (SSVCC) focuses on electrical technology (ELE), solar photovoltaic panel installation (PV), and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC). By expanding opportunities for FastForward and academic technical training curricula, SSVCC will help create a fully prepared workforce. Expansions sited at the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center (LCAKC) in South Hill will include hybrid FastForward workforce credentials programs that encompass on-line technologies paired with hands-on lab experiences and greater flexibility in scheduling. Dually enrolled secondary students will have increased access to HVAC and ELE opportunities. A mobile solar unit will facilitate training at locations across the Tobacco Region. Equipment and renovations required to open more modules for student study include the construction of framed training props, the acquisition of a commercial trainer and HVAC units, and the installation of exterior solar panels and appropriate lighting for evening outdoor labs.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This project is focused on increased enrollment and expanded learning environments for three Industrial Technology programs: electrical technology, solar photovoltaic installation, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. Modifications will be made to the SVCC satellite campus at the Lake Country Advanced Knowledge Center in South Hill to support high-demand employment opportunities in Construction Trades. Grant funds are requested to support partial funding for a full-time 9-month instructor to lead additional cohorts, and a part-time lab assistant to extend hours for the lab operations (\$169,654 Personnel); hand tools and equipping costs for HVAC and ELE training labs (\$3,500 and \$135,141); as well as interior and exterior renovation for creation of new learning stations/labs (\$39,651). Detailed cost estimates were provided, and TRRC share of personnel costs are reduced as new cohorts are added over three years. Matching funds of \$727,865 include funding from SVCC for a new full-time 12-month instructor to lead program development; partial funding for the 9-month instructor; and other new operational and equipping costs. Match contributions are also provided by the nonprofit SHINE to support expansion of the solar technician training program. New industrial electrical and HVAC training labs spaces will be created at LCAKC in an interior framed training "prop" with six training cubicles and crawl space and attic spaces, allowing instructors to replicate installation and repair tasks for different scenarios. An exterior space will be up-fitted with a roof serving two purposes: HVAC training units will be below the roof, and the lower profile roof surface will include a working solar photovoltaic system for solar training. SVCC's solar installation training program will be made available to other community colleges through a mobile solar lab that can be used to deliver training at targeted locations.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Very specific and detailed industry data on planned solar installations with employment needs over the next two years across the Tobacco Region was provided. While each solar installation is only a 6-8 month or 12-18 month job depending on each project's MW size, most are employed by construction industry employment service companies who move the individuals from one job to the next, allowing for these entry level construction trades jobs to extend for at least several years. TRRC staff are aware of discussions by SHINE and SVCC with workforce directors at JTCC (targeting Sussex County), PHCC, and CVCC for considerations of offering the short term FastForward Solar Technician Training program utilizing SVCC's model and mobile facilities. Employer letters in support of this project were provided by Trane, Electrical Equipment Company and Jones Electric. Bureau of Labor Statistics and VEC projections provide details for demand and pay ranges with the equivalent median annual pay in Virginia of \$30,510 to \$51,290 respectively for electrician assistants and for electricians; \$42,690 per year for solar photovoltaic installers; and \$48,950 for HVAC technicians. The project presents significant outcome numbers, with enrollment in SVCC's industrial technology program projected to increase from 55 to 105 annually (+50), and +102 students to be enrolled in solar technician programs across the Tobacco Region. Career Studies Certificates are projected to increase from 39 to 55 (+16) awarded annually; and NCCER certifications (Core, Electricity Level 1, and Solar System Installation) increasing from 13 to 154 (+131). While this is a relatively larger request amount, the potential outcomes across SVCC's ten-county service region, and across multiple in-demand career pathways, argues for significant financial support for operating costs to enable expansion of successful programs, and in long-lived training facilities. As such, this proposal tied for top score in this funding round.

**Staff recommends an award of \$347,651.**

## Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center Foundation *Virginia Rural Information Technology Apprenticeship Pilot Program (#3595)* \$700,000 Requested

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** In 2019, the General Assembly of Virginia established the Virginia Rural Information Technology Apprenticeship Grant Program for the purpose of awarding grants on a competitive basis to small, rural information technology businesses to establish apprenticeship programs. The Southwest Virginia Higher Education Foundation is seeking an award to fund the proof of concept for the program to be overseen by the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in collaboration with the Chief Workforce Development Officer of the Commonwealth of Virginia as stated in the Code of Virginia. The funds will support the first round of competitive apprenticeships for the identified tobacco region localities of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe and the Cities of Bristol, Danville, Galax, Martinsville, and Norton. Guidelines and policies for the program will follow the criteria set in place by the Center and approved by the Chief Workforce Development Officer.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request was submitted to the Special Projects program and was referred to the Education Committee in January 2020. The application requests funding to initiate a pilot for paying entry level salaries for the first cohort of 12 IT apprentices, to be employed and mentored by small rural IT businesses and supported for an 18 month period. The General Assembly and Governor approved the Rural IT Apprenticeship Grant Fund in the 2019 session under Code of Virginia 23.1-3129.1. However, no state funding was approved in 2019 to initiate the program, which per Code is to be administered by SWHEC and available on a competitive basis to IT employers in Southwest (except Floyd), the Southside cities of Danville and Martinsville and four Western Virginia counties outside the Commission footprint. Commission funds would be used in a cost-share approach as an initial pilot (in lieu of state funding) to reimburse participating employers for 70% of the proposed \$58,333 annual salary and benefits for the apprentices. This reimbursement rate seems extremely generous compared to other TRRC supported cost share programs which are often at 33% reimbursement. Matching funds will be provided by the participating employers who will contribute \$300k for the apprentice salaries and benefits and \$270k representing the salary and benefits for the mentoring employees. The participating mentor organizations will also contribute computers and other equipment valued at \$30k. The program requires that the apprentice maintain full time employment for an additional 18 months after the apprenticeship period had ended. The HEC will contribute \$70k representing a portion of the salary and benefits for the Grant Program Director (\$60k) and Executive Director (\$5k) for the time spent working on the project as well as rent and administrative expenses (\$5k). This contribution should be reclassified as in-kind match since these are well established positions at the HEC. Additionally, \$30k will be provided by the applicant for apprentice salary and benefits.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** This request seeks a high level of funding per apprentice (\$58K each) for just 12 positions. The proposed 70% reimbursement rate seems extremely generous compared to other TRRC supported cost share programs which are often at 33% reimbursement. The exact details of this cost-sharing arrangement, including commitments from both the employer and apprentice beyond the 36 month period, were not provided in the application which states that final policies and procedures are being developed with assistance from the Commonwealth's Chief Workforce Development Officer. These details are not yet available, and the May 2020 update indicates that this information will continue to be developed over the next 12 months. In the update provided in May 2020 it appears likely that this program will receive state funding, however this has not been finalized, and may be affected by the pandemic's impact on state revenues. Prior to any Commission funding being considered, state appropriation funding should be allowed to play out in

the 2020 General Assembly budget deliberations. Support from TRRC at this time could be viewed by the General Assembly as a message that the Commission is willing to be the primary funder of the program in future years, (including apprentices in non-TRRC counties), which would be a costly and ultimately unsustainable drain on future Commission budgets.

**Staff recommends no award.**

## **University of Virginia**

### ***UVa-Wise Southwest FOURSight (#3571)***

**\$750,000 Requested – reduced to \$482,292**

**Executive Summary Provided by Applicant:** UVa-Wise proposes to build a Southwest Virginia-based teleworking workforce in cybersecurity and outfit it with technology and market access to become the first operation in the country to apply a new decentralized labor model to solve the national crisis in cybersecurity talent shortages. This model has the potential to reduce the risk of cybersecurity attacks, such as ransomware, that today are unchecked in many governments and smaller enterprises across the country. The College and its partner, FOUR18 Intelligence Corp., an emerging Virginia cybersecurity company, will replicate FOUR18's pathfinder program already underway at Eastern Kentucky University to create a sustainable cyber workforce in Southwest Virginia, supplying it also with cutting edge collaborative cyber analysis technology to enable it to be first to market with this novel model and to grow it through national marketing partners including Amazon Web Services and federal agencies that have already performed pilots and requested new proposals.

**Staff Comments and Recommendation:** This request was submitted to the Southwest Economic Development Committee and was tabled at the October 2019 meeting. In January 2020 the request was referred to the Education Committee. The current request amount of \$482,292 is the result of a revised budget received in December 2019 which reduced the original \$1,005,127.89 request amount presented in the SWED application. Funds are requested for an 11 month project period that would support cybersecurity training and four-month internship experiences for an initial cohort of "non-technology" UVA-W students recruited from psychology, business and criminal justice majors. The larger objective is to establish a UVA-Wise program at Oxbow Center in St. Paul that would annually train 20-25 students for remote teleworking positions with federal contractors, communities and private businesses to hunt for and defend against cyber security attacks. The private sector project partner (FOUR18 Intelligence Corp.) is a cybersecurity company based in Northern Virginia which was identified based on its work in a current ARC-funded parallel effort in Eastern Kentucky and a project in South Louisiana focused on protecting small businesses from cyberattacks. The intended outcomes in the project period are to identify 25 participants in the pilot cohort and provide hybrid online/face-to-face training and work-based internships. Program completers will sit for the nationally-recognized CompTIA Security+ certification and be awarded a UVA-W 6-hour certificate. It is anticipated that the 12 highest performing students will then begin three-month apprenticeships with employers to be identified during the project, while the other 13 will begin entry-level IT jobs averaging \$40K annually.

**Financial Viability Assessment:** Since being tabled, Staff has been in frequent communication with UVA-W and FOUR18 to discuss changes to the project - in particular to the budget - to better align the objectives of the project with TRRC funding priorities and budgetary constraints. Slightly more than half of the current request (\$246K) will be used to contract with FOUR18 to deliver cyber training, candidate recruitment and apprentice job placement with local SWVA companies.

Funds are also allocated for UVA-W personnel (\$63K), equipment (\$54K), supplies/materials (\$7K) and \$112K for tuition and student stipends, for a total of \$236K flowing to UVA-W. The stipends (\$30K) will provide financial support to the students while they are completing the apprenticeship program. Matching funds of \$482,292 will be provided by FOUR18 for contractual services (\$442,867) related to program development, program management, recruitment, licenses, etc. to be financed by Income Sharing Agreements (ISA), a unique educational financing tool available to students pursuing education in certain professions (generally those with above-average income potential). In an ISA scenario an “impact investor” enters into the Income Sharing Agreement with the student in exchange for a limited share of the individual’s future income above a minimum threshold. The applicants state that sustainability will be accomplished through a variety of funding sources, including ISAs, Opportunity Zone investments, UVA-W tuition and reduced-cost licenses for UVA-W to use the FOUR18 platform, so that future annual cohorts will be added and led by UVA-W faculty. During discussions with the applicant Staff learned that the ISA’s could also be used to fund tuition and student stipends requested herein (\$112k) and allow TRRC support to be reduced by that amount (recognizing that ISAs could fund tuition, and that the targeted students have already shown the ability to pay UVA-W tuition). Completers may also be able to access the TRRC Talent Attraction Program to pay off student debt by working in IT roles in the Tobacco Region. This project should be viewed as a pilot stage public-private venture, bringing strategies and lessons learned from the afore-mentioned Kentucky and Louisiana pilots to benefit SWVA students and employers. Initial outcomes are modest (25 students in the pilot cohort) but the objective is to make this an annual program led by UVA-W using the FOURSight-licensed curriculum. While there is a moderate level of risk with any pilot initiative regarding achieving the intended outcomes and sustainability, UVA-W’s stewardship mitigates that somewhat, and the reduced level of funding that is being requested and recommended limits the Commission’s investment and exposure.

**Staff recommends an award of \$370,000.**