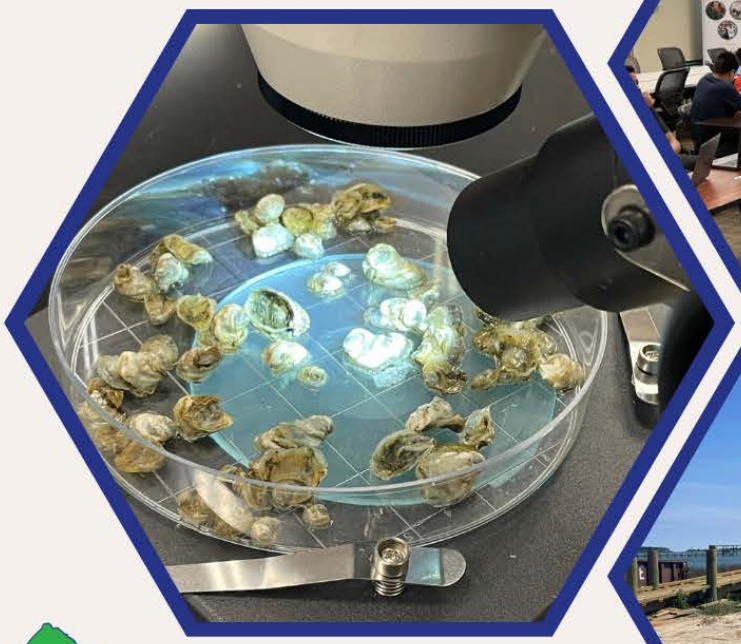
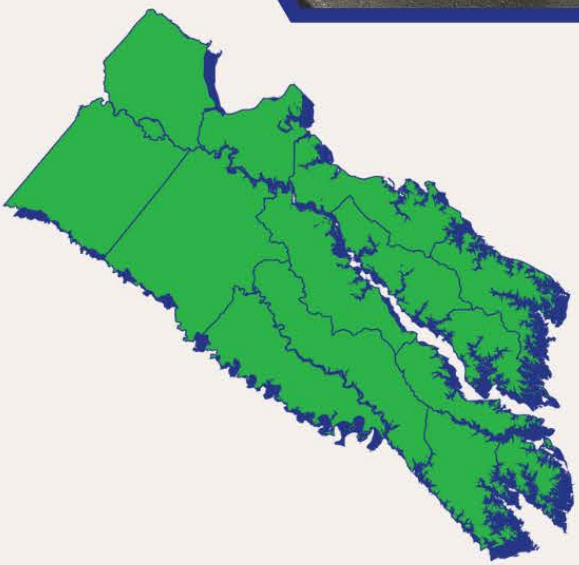
GO Virginia Region 6

FY 23 Annual Report





Mary Ball Washington Regional Council
GO Virginia Region 6 FY 23 Annual Report

I: INTRODUCTION

Region six includes the counties of Caroline, Essex, Gloucester, King and Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, and Westmoreland; the towns of Bowling Green, Colonial Beach, Irvington, Kilmarnock, Montross, Port Royal, Tappahannock, Urbanna, Warsaw, West Point, and White Stone; and the city of Fredericksburg. The region is made up of three planning districts: The George Washington Regional Commission, the Northern Neck Planning District Commission, and the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission. The make-up of region six is diverse and includes urban areas along the I-95 corridor leading to Northern Virginia and Washington, D.C., military bases that provide a large source of employment, rural counties depending on improvements to Broadband, and economies dependent on the rivers, bays, and creeks affected by coastal resiliency.

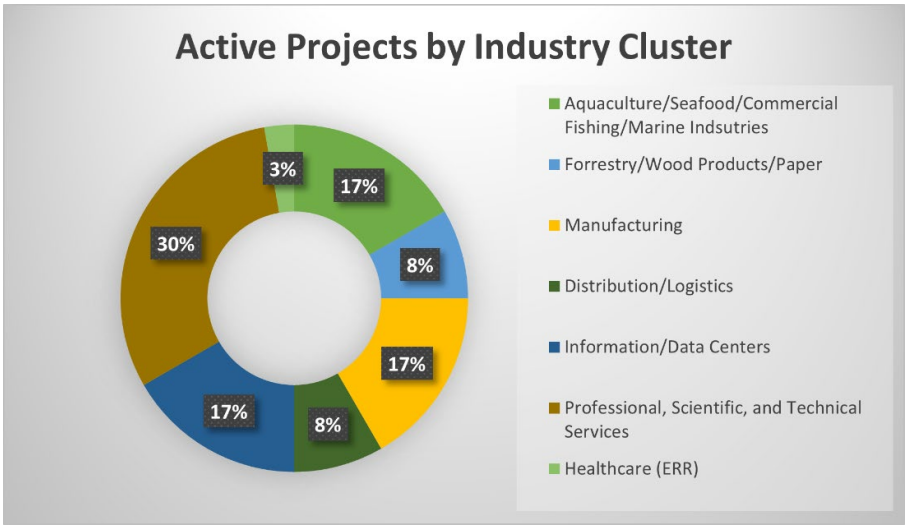
The Region Six Council, also known as the Mary Ball Washington Regional Council, is led by William Beale as chair, and is supported by the George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC), led by Executive Director Chip Boyles, Deputy Director Kate Gibson, Program Director Ian Ginger, and Program Coordinator Sarah Oldaker. Region Six updated its Growth and Diversification Plan in 2021 and its focus remains on six targeted industry sectors.

The Region 6 FY23 Annual Report will highlight the work done by staff and the Regional Council. FY23 included a focus on project development, educating localities about GO Virginia, and connecting with stakeholders across the entire Region 6.

Target Sectors:
Aquacultures/Seafood/Commercial Fishing/Marine Industries
Forestry/Wood Products/Paper
Manufacturing
Distribution/Logistics
Information/Data Centers
Professions, Scientific and Technical Services

II: GROWTH & DIVERSIFICATION PLAN

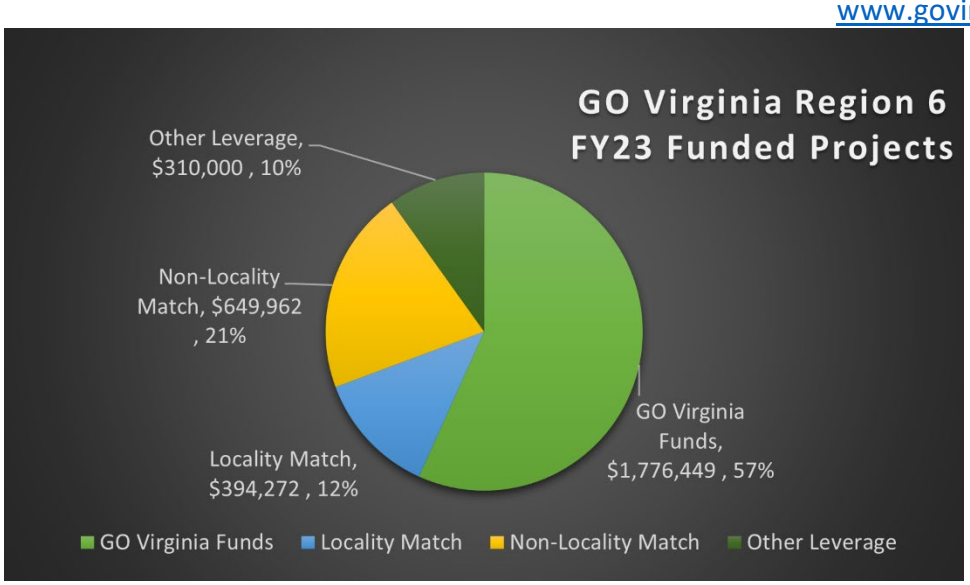
The Region 6 Council updated the Growth and Diversification Plan in 2021 and is working on an update in 2023. The update will review the Targeted Industry Clusters and evaluate how the council can improve upon the Growth & Diversification Plan in order to create higher paying jobs in the region. While many of our projects have been under the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry cluster, we saw more diversification across the other clusters in FY23.



During FY23 the Regional Council and Region 6 staff worked with the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance (FRA) to develop their application for the Regional Entrepreneurial Initiative. The FRA formed the Rivers Region Entrepreneurial Ecosystem non-profit to conduct the activities of the REI. This project will allow Region 6 to accomplish the following strategies identified in the Growth and Diversification Plan: 1. Developing a robust network of entrepreneurs, 2. Developing programming to help businesses at all stages develop and grow, 3. Build awareness around existing business support programs and resources in the region, and 4. Provide counseling, mentoring, and other instructional programs for technology and venture-backed startups to facilitate innovators bringing new technologies to the marketplace.

III: SUMMARY OF PROJECTS IN FY23

Project	GO Virginia Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Stafford County Public Schools Pathways to Success	$100,000	$15,000	$35,000	
KG County Young Entrepreneurs Program	$98,000	$90,272		
FXBG Workforce NOW	$250,000		$150,000	
Stafford County Public Schools Innovation Pathways	$978,449	$224,000	$339,962	$228,000
MPPDC West Point Airport Industrial Site Evaluation	$100,000	$65,000		$82,000.00
Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board Talent Pathways Initiative	$250,000		$125,000	



PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS | STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND JASON LEARNING

The purpose of this project, co-designed by nationally-renowned K-12 STEM curriculum and training provider, JASON Learning (JASON), and Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) is to ensure middle schoolers in Region 6 are receiving career preparation and exploration and gaining workplace skills that employers desire in their future employees. Participating localities are Caroline County, Essex County, City of Fredericksburg, King & Queen County, Mathews County, Stafford County, Westmoreland County. *Pathways to Success" curriculum published and available to all districts in Region 6 in perpetuity.*

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS PROGRAM | KING GEORGE COUNTY

King George Young Entrepreneurs Project is aimed to encourage and support the development of prospective young entrepreneurs in King George County, Gloucester County, and the town of Colonial Beach. The project begins by documenting existing resources available to new startups and young entrepreneurs, focusing on educating high schoolers on entrepreneurship through classes and clubs, and culminates in a pitch competition for the student's business plans along with a resource guide available to the public. Participating localities are King George County, Gloucester County, Town of Colonial Beach. *2 new businesses created, 2 new internships created, 5 mentors engaged.*

WORKFORCE NOW | FREDERICKSBURG AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Following the previously awarded GO Virginia Enhanced Capacity Building grant that awarded funds to Fredericksburg Chamber in partnership with five school divisions, Germanna Community College, Rappahannock Goodwill Career Works, and the University of Mary Washington to host 2 internship expos, this project will help address workforce shortages and increase work-based learning opportunities. In addition to the internship expos, the Chamber will hold 12 Workforce Now workshops for businesses and prospective interns regarding workforce needs. The chamber will also develop a database system to track internships in the region. The Participating localities include Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, Caroline County, King George County, City of Fredericksburg. 200 *businesses served/200 internships.*

INNOVATION PATHWAYS | INNOVATION PATHWAYS & G3 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Stafford County Public Schools, in partnership with G3 Community Services, the University of Mary Washington, and a regional coalition of school divisions, was awarded funding to offer IT certifications (CompTIA certifications including IT Fundamentals, A+, Network+, and Security+ series) to students across the region through outside of school programming and summer camps to build student awareness of STEM and cybersecurity opportunities. The project will also train teachers with the same CompTIA certifications to build training capacity. The project will partner with the University of Mary Washington as the provider to conduct teacher training and host summer camps. Participating localities include Stafford County, Spotsylvania County, Caroline County, King George County, City of Fredericksburg. *300 students trained/36 teachers trained/525 credentials awarded.*

WESTPOINT AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL SITE EVALUATION | MIDDLE PENINSULA PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

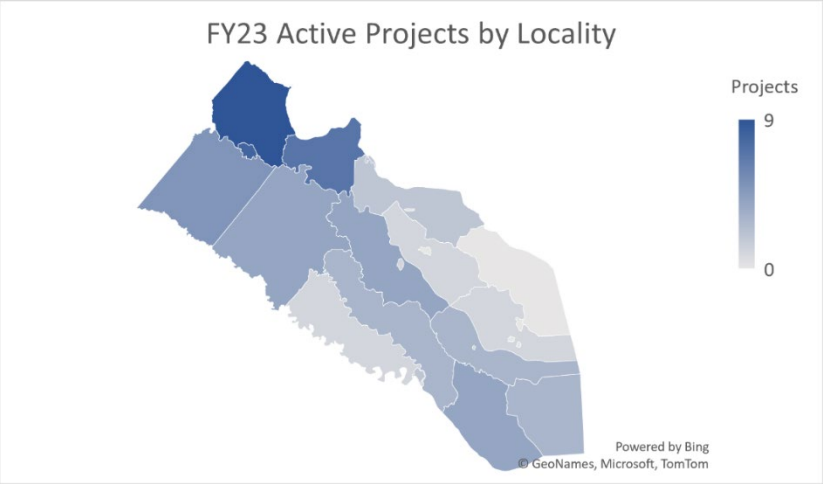
The Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) in partnership with the Town of West Point, will accelerate development of a 368-acre industrial site at the Middle Peninsula Airport. This publicly owned site has potential to support businesses in the maritime, forest products, manufacturing and resiliency-related sectors. participating localities King and Queen County, Town of West Point. *368 acres advanced to a higher tier per the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program.*

TALENT PATHWAYS INITIATIVE | BAY CONSORTIUM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

The Region 6 Council selected the Bay Area Workforce Development Board (BCWDB) to serve as the Talent Pathways Planning Initiative industry cluster talent coordinating entity as the regional workforce convening organization that has a proven track record of providing seamless services among various workforce programs and providing community leadership around workforce issues in GOVA Region 6. Using a sub-regional approach, the BCWDC and Region 6 council will develop a plan to create robust talent pipelines specific to the region's industry clusters. GO Virginia funds will be used for contract services, outreach, workshops, employer needs assessment and survey, and administration. Partnering localities include all Region 6 localities. *Asset map of all CTE Programs, workforce training, degrees, certifications, etc./Situational Analysis to determine gaps of skills between job seekers and employers/Situational Analysis to determine gaps between education and employer needs.*

IV: REGIONAL COLLABORATION & PARTNER SUPPORT

In FY23 the Region 6 Council and staff made a goal to reach out to the localities in the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, and to encourage projects that included more regional collaboration. This included staff traveling to localities historically not included in GO Virginia Region 6 projects and encouraging collaboration between the two community colleges in Region 6. Due to our efforts in FY22 and FY23 to create more cohesive goals across the region, we saw an increase in projects that included more localities across the three sub-regions. Because of this, there was a higher number of projects that included the more rural areas than from FY22.



The Talent Pathways Initiative with the Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board garnered support from all 15 localities in Region 6 and is working in tandem with multiple partners throughout the region including the Chambers, industry partners, school divisions, and institutions of higher education.

Stafford County Public Schools' Pathways to Success project, in partnership with JASON Learning, received participation from school systems in PD 16, the Northern Neck, and the Middle Peninsula and is providing a curriculum that will be free to all school divisions in Region 6. This project was able to find industry mentors for their learning module videos all the way from a cyber company in Stafford County to a Waterman in the Middle Peninsula.

The outreatch efforts started in FY22 was a catalyst to the increase in regional collaboration in FY23. Staff plan to continue and braoden these efforts in FY24 as well as recruit members from the Regional Council from the more underepresented industries and subregions.

REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Virginia Sea Grant
- Rise
- Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority
- Old Dominion University
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science
- Rappahannock Community College
- Virginia Tech
- KCB Oyster Holdings
- Little Wicomico Oyster Company, LLC
- Matheson Oyster Company
- Rappahannock Oyster Company
- Shores and Ruark Oyster Company
- Ward Oyster Company
- Oyster Seed Holdings
- Fredericksburg Area Chamber of Commerce
- University of Mary Washington
- Germanna Community College
- Stafford County EDA
- King George County EDA
- Fredericksburg Regional Alliance
- RIoT
- GCubed, Inc.
- G3 Community Services
- Bay Consortium Workforce Investment Board
- Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission
- Northern Neck Planning District Commission
- George Washington Regional Commission
- Simventions
- Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren
- Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement
- JASON Learning

OUTCOMES & IMPACT

In FY 23, Region 6 closed out the Fredericksburg Regional Chamber's Internship Expo Pilot program, exceeding or meeting most metrics with 85 business served and 72 internships created. These positive results played into their Workforce NOW Implementation project which was approved in FY23. So far, they have already held one internship expo, several workshops, had 30 businesses served, and 35 internships created in just their first quarter of reporting in FY23.

The Rappahannock Community College and Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement's Promoting Careers in Aquaculture pilot program also saw positive results leading to a statewide competitive application planned for FY 24. They were able to serve 10 businesses in the Aquaculture Industry Cluster, had 14 students engaged in the online course, the weeklong S.P.A.T. course, and 13 students placed in internships at the end of FY 23. The program also developed a brand-new certification and digital badge for the students who have completed the program.

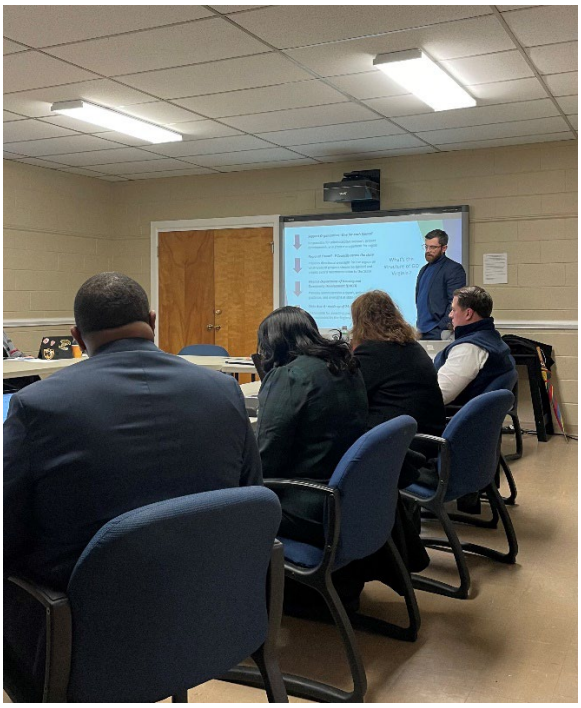
The Germanna Tech Talent Implementation project also began to wind-down and begin the closeout process at the end of FY23 with positive results. This program had 1,056 students trained, 87 businesses served, 2 new programs implemented, and 15 teachers trained with 10 of those certified. They were also able to produce 235 Cyber certificates or associate degrees. This implementation project set the foundation for Germanna's continued expansion of their cyber program and new cyber campus in Stafford, VA.

The Rappahannock Community College and Germanna Community College joint program for Patient Care Technicians through the ERR grant funds had a high demand from students for the program, resulting in the addition of another cohort of students before the end of their grant period in FY24. In FY23, the success of the program yielded 3 students hired at area hospitals, 45 students trained, and 31 credentials awarded. These numbers will continue to grow.

Virginia Sea Grant's Launching a Coastal Resilience Economy project continued to see the growth of a new industry cluster around coastal resiliency companies in the Middle Peninsula and Hampton Roads areas. Taking advantage of the collaboration between companies in the cluster, the project shifted to include more round tables with industry partners and regional stakeholders. This project is set to close out in FY24, but so far has had a significant impact in the region including creating 35 new jobs, retaining 26 existing jobs, expanding 3 businesses, and serving 104 businesses through both the Business Plan Competition with RISE and the Coastal Virginia Adaptation and Resilience Consortium housed at Old Dominion University.

VI: COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

As evidenced by the increased participation from rural localities in Region 6, the support organization staff were able to travel around the region to educate and network with the local governments, Economic Development Authorities, School Divisions, and industries all throughout Region 6. The focus of these meetings, in addition to educating stakeholders of GO Virginia projects, was also to help bridge the gap between education and industry. This included a presentation given to all the regional Superintendents at their quarterly meeting in December 2022. Region 6 staff also made it out to several project events such as the Fredericksburg Chamber's Workforce NOW workshops, the Promoting Careers in Aquaculture student open house at the RCC Warsaw and Glenns campuses, and the launch meeting between industry and higher education partners for the Launching a Coastal Resiliency Economy project, among others.



In FY 23 Region 6 developed a comprehensive social media strategy and plan for the first time. This plan was used to direct additional outreach through social media channels with strategized and targeted posts. The goal of the social media campaign is to keep partners informed of activities and projects in Region 6, promote education of GO Virginia to stakeholders, and share news or updates from around the region. A second part of this strategy was continued monthly newsletters which are sent out at the beginning of each month to Region 6's growing mailing list, and archived on the website. Staff will grow these efforts in FY 24 with quarterly application information sessions, a website re-design, and an economic development summit in January 2024.

VII: PROJECT PIPELINE

CAREERS IN AQUACULTURE 2.0 | VIRTINIA TECH CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Promoting Careers in Aquaculture program was successfully piloted through a GO Virginia Enhanced Capacity Building (ECB) grant during 2022-2023. The project team has evaluated, adjusted and enhanced the overall project

for a formal implementation grant funding request titled "Promoting Careers in Aquaculture 2.0" within GO Virginia Region 6 and Region 5.

The updated Promoting Careers in Aquaculture 2.0 program's multi-prong approach will create positive career and growth opportunities for students, teachers and participating industry partners. The pilot project was proven successful, and there is interest and demand from localities including industry and students. The 2.0 program will expand student participation to more counties and include a new project element that extends to local K-12 educators ("teach the teacher") to build on previous success in a sustainable way.

The project team is currently drafting the full application, with partners in both Region 6 and Region 5 to submit a state-wide competitive application to go in front of the State Board at their December 2023 meeting.

EQUIPPING RCC'S NEW CAREER TRAINING CENTER | RAPPAHANNOCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION

Rappahannock Community College (RCC) currently offers a part-time evening Diesel Mechanics Technology program – a 28 credit Career Studies Certificate or a 38 credit Diesel Mechanics Technology Certificate. The program is designed to introduce the fundamentals of diesel equipment repair and provide instruction in hydraulic systems, diesel engine overhaul and tune-ups, electrical circuits, powertrain maintenance, fuel injection and welding. The program has been held in the past at the RCC New Kent site.

In 2023-24, the diesel program will move to RCC's Glenns campus. In 2024-2025, the program will be offered as a full-time day and part-time evening program expanding the capacity of the in-demand training program. To facilitate the move and expansion, the college's current maintenance warehouse will be repurposed into a new Career Training Center. The Career Training Center will provide the large classroom space needed not only for the diesel training program but also our CDL and welding programs.

Funds will be used to purchase the training equipment necessary to deliver the diesel mechanics program at the new site ($306,273) and architectural / design services ($123,727). For the last academic year, RCC's diesel program served 20 students. RCC anticipates the full-time day program will increase the number of students served by 50%. Diesel mechanic technicians are a high-demand, high wage field in the region. According to Jobs EQ, the region holds 358 diesel mechanic technician positions and has a five-year historical growth of 1.5 percent. The average wage for a technician is $53,100. The college anticipates the following outcomes:

- 30 students trained
- 28 students certified
- 28 students placed in position in the distribution and logistics industry

RCC has submitted an initial application summary and plans to submit their application to go in front of the GO Virginia State Board at their December 2023 meeting.

YOUNG ENTREPRENEURSHIP IMPLEMENTATION | MIDDLESEX COUNTY

This proposal for a GO VA Implementation grant follows up on the success of a GO VA Region 6 ECB grant to King George County. During this initial grant, three communities mounted pilot projects in their high schools to foster entrepreneurship among their students.

This Implementation Grant will help institutionalize entrepreneurship programs in five high schools in Region 6, offering additional services and more interactive experiences for the students. As part of this new grant, each class

or club will be required to produce a class project that involves the steps in starting a business and will be encouraged to create at least one business plan which relates to or supports one of the Region 6 priority industry clusters, such as Aquaculture/Seafood/Commercial Fishing/Marine Industries; Forestry/Wood Products/Paper; Manufacturing; Distribution/Logistics; Information/Data Centers; as feasible.

Middle Sex County Economic Development is asking or $150,000 in GO Virginia Funds with $150,000 in match. This project will be presented to the Region 6 Regional Council on October 23, 2023 and then submitted for GO Virginia State Board approval at the December meeting.

IGNITING ENTREPRENEURSHIP| STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS & JASON LEARNING

The proposed project aims to develop a localized curriculum for high school students in GO Virginia Region 6 on entrepreneurship and employability skills. The curriculum will be co-designed by Stafford County Public Schools (Stafford Schools) and JASON Learning to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of entrepreneurship and the Professional, Scientific, and Technical services industry cluster.

Stafford Schools is requesting $100,000 in planning grant funding to allow the partnership to design, develop, and implement a unique entrepreneurship curriculum to be delivered for grades 9-12. This will be a pilot program. To support these efforts, JASON will design and develop teacher training modules to support effective classroom instruction of the course material and deliver that training to up to 50 educators from Stafford Schools and other regional school district partners.

Stafford Schools has submitted an initial application and plans to present their project for approval at the October 23, 2023 Regional Council meeting to then be submitted to DHCD for administrative approval.

BLACK BUSINESS ACCELERATOR | VIRGINIA BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Empowering Black Entrepreneurs (EBE) Business Accelerator Pilot Program explores and addresses critical opportunities and challenges within the Black business community, emphasizing business sustainability, survival, and recovery, particularly in the post-COVID-19 business environment.

The EBE Pilot accelerator program will stimulate business growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaborations. The initiative comprises business accelerator planning work, forming a strategic roadmap to nurture established businesses and startups and facilitate their evolution into successful businesses. This is achieved through workshops, mentoring sessions, and networking opportunities.

The project request is $98,438 with a match of $99,738. The Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce has submitted a Planning Grant Application that will be considered at the Region 6 October 2023 Regional Council meeting and then submitted to DHCD for administrative approval.

VIII: COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilmember Name	Organization
William Beale (Chair)	CEO Blue Ridge Bank
Rob Quartel (Vice-Chair)	NTELX
Dr. Derek Aday	Virginia Institute of Marine Science
John Anzivino	Middlesex County EDA/Citizen Member
Taryn Brice-Rowland	Rogue Oyster Company, Lancaster EDA
Sarah Calveric	Caroline County Public Schools
Rene Daniels	Private Citizen (K-12 Experience)
Bruce Davis	Beltone Hearing Centers (retired), Germanna Community College
Jackie Davis	Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board

Jan Erkert	Spangler Erkert and Associates
Val Foulds	Bank of America (Retired), Town of Colonial Beach (Retired)
Joel Griffin	Riphean Investments
Lisa Hull	Northern neck Tourism Commission
Dr. Shannon Kennedy	Rappahannock Community College
Kim McClellan	Fredericksburg Area Association of Realtors
Jeff Szyperski	Chesapeake Bank
Lindsey Watson	Rappahannock Electric Coop
Linda Worrell	Worrell Management Group
Kimberly Young	University of Mary Washington

IX: SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

Support Organization for Region 6 is:

The George Washington Regional Commission

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401.

(540) 373-2890

Executive Director: Chip Boyles, boyles@gwregion.org

Deputy Director: Kate Gibson, gibson@gwregion.org

GO Virginia Program Director: Ian Ginger, ginger@gwreion.org

GO Virginia Program Coordinator: Sarah Oldaker, oldaker@gwregion.org

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS/LOGOS