

## I-64 HIGH-TECHNOLOGY CORRIDOR

*Michael Hicks, Asha Puttaiah, Amy Edmonds, Tiffany Simon*

If you have the fortune to drive from Beckley to White Sulphur Springs you will see new road signs heralding a high technology corridor. This is the Nick Joe Rahall, II High Technology Corridor that presently impacts a seven county region along I-64 from Beckley to White Sulphur Springs.



### Nick J. Rahall, II High Technology Corridor

*creating jobs through technology*

The High Technology Corridor program began with this technology transfer project performed by the Center for Business and Economic Research.

The program was funded by the Rahall Transportation Institute, the 4-C Economic Development Authority and the Greenbrier Valley Economic Development Corporation. The program goals are to deliver three products: a Needs Assessment, an Integration Handbook and a Planning and Evaluation Guide. The Needs Assessment is systematic explorations of recommendations for the development of the region. The integration guide will provide a general outline for the formation for the Corridor Organization. The planning guide will help provide a methodology for evaluating program strategies.

*Map of the region impacted by the I-64 High Technology Corridor*



The seven county region consists of Fayette, Raleigh, Nicholas, Monroe, Summers, Pocahontas, and Greenbrier counties, which cover a 4,715 square mile area. These counties boast a diverse suite of educational services, modest and uneven growth and several potential microclusters of technology in many geographic areas. Economic Indicators for these counties are included.

A major challenge facing the development of this region is that there is no regional coordinating organization to plan local high technology development. Additionally, there are some key labor force shortages in high technology areas as well as an aging workforce. It is also clear that some areas need extensive infrastructure improvement such as the basic necessities that are a requirement for business development: sewer, water, electricity and telecommunications.

High technology is an appropriate field to concentrate development efforts for this region at this time because it is “what the economy now is.” Since human capital is the primary input necessary for high technology development and growth, training can “home grow” future employees or trained individuals can be enticed to relocate from other regions.

People are the developers, they are the programmers, and they are the producers and the marketers of high technology. The markets for high tech products are dynamic and the distances between businesses and their customers matter less now than any time in history. Wages in these sectors are typically much higher than the national average ranging from \$37,500 to \$62,000.

These recommendations are rooted in the idea that the Region has the pieces for High Tech growth, but it presently lacks a framework for a successful transition. The regional educational services, and environmental amenities combined with the strong state and regional interest in high tech will make solutions possible. These recommendations are grouped into five categories.

*(continued on page 5)*

# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

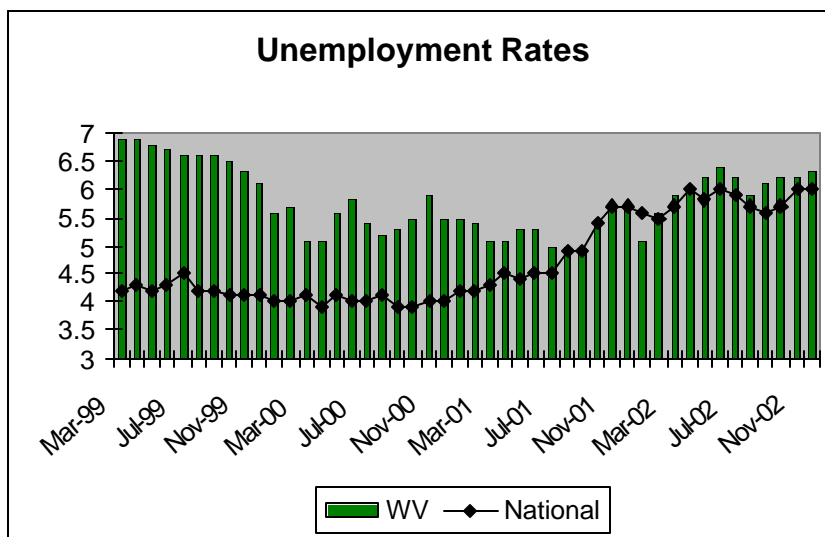
Michael J. Hicks, Brianne Salmons and Alissa Sikula

A year ago we wrote the national recession had ended, but what remained to be seen was whether or when the downturn would impact West Virginia. The U.S. is still recovering with productivity growth at roughly 2.4 percent annually, continued low inflation and record housing starts. The recovery is not as stark as the recession, but it is in full swing. Unfortunately, the answer is now pretty clear: West Virginia is beginning to feel the full effect of a recession. {Note: Business cycles sweep across the country with marked differences in timing, often as much as 24 months.}

From December 2001 to December 2002 almost 33,500 West Virginian's lost their jobs. The employment decline of over 4 percent will not appear in the unemployment rate statistic since roughly three quarters of these workers have left the labor market either through retirement or migration (we won't know which for at least 18 months). These data are troubling.

West Virginia's labor force has been declining from a May 2001 high of 849,400 to December 2002's figure of 805,500. This is a decline of roughly 5.2 percent, and if not reversed will return the state to the 1996 average level of employment.

These declines are not likely the result of current policy, but rather appear to be due to the impact of migration patterns in an earlier generation. Though it is too early to say with certainty, the loss of much of the State's labor force cannot be directly attributable to the cyclical slowdown. West Virginia has not suffered as badly as most states so it is not reasonable to expect increases in regional migration are the primary cause of the decline in the labor force. Instead it would seem more likely that many of the folks who didn't migrate are now reaching retirement age. This is consistent with the well known fact that economic migration is heavily



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## To Our Subscribers

Out with the old and in with the new !!!! Well maybe not so fast – Before we embrace 2003, I'd like to take this opportunity to remember CBER's 2002. It's been a good year for us on projects as well as with people. In this issue of the RER, we have taken the opportunity to tell you a little bit about both.

Since I have been part of CBER, I have seen our projects become not only greater in number but also more diverse. To meet the demands of our growth, we have attempted to assemble a staff of highly qualified individuals who we complement with excellent student research assistants.

As a supervisor I find myself asking 'Where do we attract more talent like this and how do we keep them?' It's a question that employers everywhere face. Some of our staff came to us as students; some through recommendations and others by pure chance. In 2002, our organization changed as some moved on due to graduation and other opportunities. Though we did not want to see them go - We wish them all well in their endeavors.

In our work, we constantly ask: What are the skills? Who has them? What do employers need to attract the most productive labor force? [Specifically, the team working on the I-64 High Technology Corridor project will be attempting to address in their work over the next several months.] We understand what these questions are about not only as academics and consultants, but also as employers.

Where do we go from here? Over the next year, there will be many more projects of all descriptions. In 2003, we at CBER look forward to the opportunity to do what we do best – be of service to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark T. Burton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Mark Burton, Director**

**Center for Business and Economic Research**

**Marshall University**

**Economic Profiles of I-64 Counties**

	<b>FAYETTE</b>	<b>GREENBRIER</b>	<b>MONROE</b>
<b><i>Transportation</i></b>			
Highways	I-77	I-64	None
US Routes	60, 19	219, 60	219
State Routes	612, 211, 82, 61, 41, 39, 20, 16, 6	311, 150, 92, 63, 39, 20, 12, 3	311, 122, 12, 3
Available Industrial Parks	1	2	0
Railroads	CSXT, Nicholas, Fayette & Greenbrier, AMTRAK, Norfolk & Southern	Nicholas, Fayette and Greenbrier (NF&G), CSXT, AMTRAK	CSXT
Airports	New River Gorge Airport, (private) Lansing; Fayette Airport, (public) Fayetteville; G. Lee Massey Airport, (private) Victor	Greenbrier Valley Airport, (public) Lewisburg, Lewisburg Airport (private) Rainelle	None
Nearest Navigable River	Kanawha	Kanawha	Kanawha
<b><i>Demographic Information</i></b>			
Total Population	47,579	34,453	14,583
Total Household	18,945	14,571	5,447
Median Value of Housing	\$50,900	\$71,300	\$64,700
Renter Occupied Units	4,320	3,415	844
Median Gross Monthly Rent	\$357	\$372	\$388
<b><i>Utilities and Service</i></b>			
Electricity	American Electric Power	American Electric Power, West Virginia Power, Allegheny	American Electric Power, West Virginia Power, Craig- Botetourt Electric Corp.
Natural Gas	WV Power Gas, Southern Public Service Gas	Allegheny Power	Allegheny Power
<b><i>Economic Indicators</i></b>			
Per Capita Income	\$17,787	\$19,630	\$15,281
Total Personal Income	\$832,156,000	\$693,141,000	\$203,181,000
County Unemployment	6.70%	6.20%	4.00%
Total Wages	\$278,287,953	\$293,287,130	\$47,351,866
Average Annual Wage	\$23,077	\$23,352	\$23,546

<b>NICHOLAS</b>	<b>POCAHONTAS</b>	<b>RALEIGH</b>	<b>SUMMERS</b>
None	None	I-77, I-64	I-64
19 (Corridor L)	250, 219	19 (Corridor L)	None
150, 129, 82, 41, 39, 20, 16	150, 92, 84, 66, 39, 28	307, 305, 210, 99, 61, 54, 41, 16, 3	122, 107, 20, 12, 3
1	0	2	0
CSXT, Norfolk & Southern, Nicholas, Fayette & Greenbrier	CSXT, Cass Scenic (tourist)	CSXT, Norfolk & Southern	CSXT, Nicholas, Fayette & Greenbrier (NF&G), AMTRAK
Richwood Municipal Airport, (public); Summersville Airport, (public); Herald Airport, (private) Craigsville	Pocahontas Co. Airport, (public) Marlinton	Raleigh County Memorial Airport, (public) Beaver; Perry and Hilton Field, (private) Beckley	Hilton/Alderson Airport, (private) Pence Springs
Kanawha	Kanawha	Kanawha	Kanawha
26,562	9,131	79,220	12,999
10,722	3,835	31,793	5,530
\$60,100	\$64,000	\$69,800	\$56,100
1,845	756	7,480	1,156
\$360	\$355	\$385	\$284
American Electric Power, Allegheny Power	Allegheny Power, WV Power	American Electric Power, Black Diamond Power	American Electric Power, WV Power
Hope Gas, WV Power Gas	No Service	WV Power Gas	Allegheny Power, WV Power Gas
\$16,814	\$19,811	\$20,687	\$14,647
\$462,829,000	\$179,585,000	\$1,633,167,000	\$203,051,000
6.00%	7.30%	4.20%	6.40%
\$198,055,673	\$74,932,850	\$769,311,787	\$42,514,333
\$22,899	\$20,580	\$25,740	\$18,745

(continued from page 1)

- General Strategies
- Educational
- Business Support
- Community Development
- Lifestyle and Environment

The primary General Strategy will be the development of a corridor organization — whose mission will include promoting the partnerships between entrepreneurs and the communities in the region. The region has many organizations that could create dynamic R & D partnerships. For example partnerships with academics at WVUIT could foster business spin-offs. It should be noted that input will be solicited from the public through online business surveys.

Human capital is a very important driver of every economy. To ensure that it is available specialized training programs should be developed to meet the needs of the local business community. In order to achieve this, programs should be modeled on those of other regions — possible regions for study include the Virginia and California Community and Technical college systems. It is also imperative that the younger generations also be involved in high technology education through programs such as summer science and math camps such as those sponsored by *RTILego* and *Science on Wheels Program*. A bi-annual technical conference similar to the *Intelligent Transportation System's Conference* at Marshall would bring people from within and outside the region to the area. The conference will also raise awareness of the region as well as produce opportunities for networking and creative synergies.

From a business support perspective, the first task is a review of the incentives available regionally and locally. These incentives include research and development, taxes and business development incentives. The second task is to establish a resource to develop new or locate existing entrepreneurial support networks with local small business administrations, community governments and local non-profits. Its purpose is to foster an entrepreneur-friendly environment. Third, the developments of an entrepreneurial database will a business-to-business resource. Lastly, having representatives attend regional and national trade shows will help to promote high-technology development as well as keep regional representatives literally 'in touch' with the high technology

environment. These recommendations have the underlying purpose of showing entrepreneurs that there is community backing to help them succeed.

Community strategies include integrating development efforts with community development efforts — such as Main Street and reaching out to higher education institutions and forming partnerships, and providing mentorship and shadowing opportunities for students to strengthen the business and community relationships. Also high visibility events that promote a community are valuable opportunities for recruiting out-of-region workers.

Non-local workers look at the lifestyle that will be available to them and their families as well as job opportunities. The community environmental amenities of this region need to be advertised more. These amenities include the environmental resources of the state and national parks and private tourism activities (whitewater rafting, rock-climbing and mountain biking etc.). Also intergenerational programs where the arts and high technology are integrated will help bring high technology activities into the lives of a greater population of individuals than before. By fostering awareness and familiarity with high technology, the inclination to create economic opportunities will be increased. For example, local townspeople could use urban renewal opportunities to create situations where high technology and community restoration work together to improve local working environments and lifestyle in general.

Our primary goal with this study has been to analyze and review the science and the regional data behind hi-technology growth in the region. Striving to achieve the recommendations proposed in the High Tech document will hopefully create jobs in the technology sector in the region. Over the next few months we will be presenting the Needs Assessment at public meetings in the seven county regions.

(continued from page 2)

concentrated among the 18-35 year old crowd. So, the population losses of the 1980's were concentrated among younger West Virginians. This left the state with a higher proportion of older citizens, an increasing proportion of whom are now reaching retirement age. If this analysis is correct

West Virginia should continue to see these types of labor force declines through much of the next decade.

These job losses have begun to show in the state's fiscal performance as well as in overall demand for local goods and services.

However, the State has thus far escaped the full force of the recession, which in any case is the mildest on record.

In West Virginia, our unemployment rate crept slightly above the nation as a whole, but has not deviated dramatically from the state's experience as it did until the very recent past.

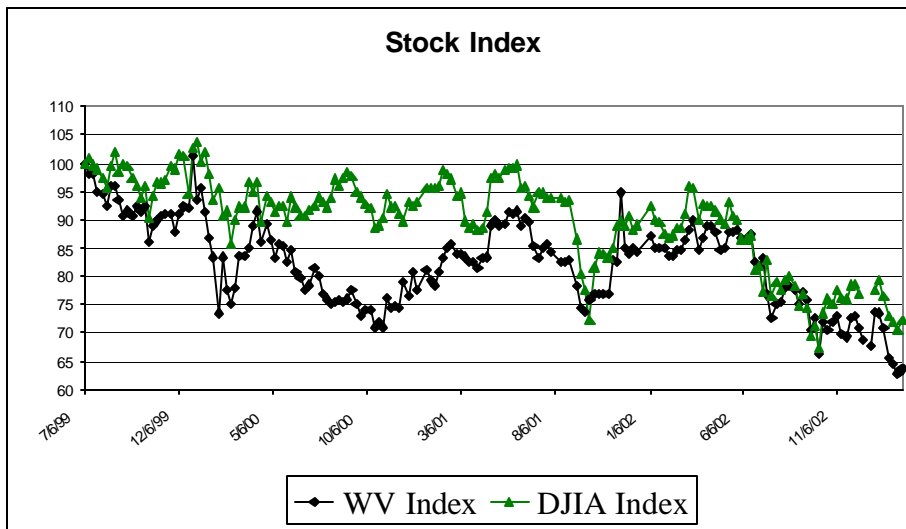
Our Help Wanted index of jobs in the state has shown a marked decline since the summer of 2002. This is very close to the period that West Virginia began experiencing the first signs of a recession. The Help Wanted index is a strong

leading economic indicator, and although the data suggests a brief rise in early 2003, the number of advertised new jobs in the state has dropped dramatically.

Much of the current impact in the national financial markets is due to uncertainty regarding war with Iraq and the slow rise of gasoline prices. The combination of fears of higher production costs and the presence of uncertainty have depressed not only U.S. stock indices but also the West Virginia Stock Index.

The current recession in West Virginia shows every sign of deepening slightly over the next year. However, the real economic unpleasantness we are likely to experience is a slow recovery in the State.

Estimates of long run economic growth for the state range between 0.6 and 0.9 percent through the end of the decade. This range is between one half and one third of estimates for the nation as a whole. These findings suggest that the relative economic performance of the state – primarily in per capita income is likely to continue to fall.



# 2002 : YEAR IN REVIEW

Amy Edmonds

During the past year, we at the Center for Business and Economic Research have had the opportunity to use our expertise to work on a diverse group of projects. The projects include everything from website design to feasibility studies to academic research. The following is a brief summary of some of our notable endeavors. Many of these projects may be available on our website <http://www.marshall.edu/cber>

## **CHARLESTON PARKS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN**

For the City of Charleston, West Virginia, we developed a Recovery Action Program (RAP). This was performed in order to identify the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of Charleston's parks, recreation, and other public grounds. To accomplish this, our staff researched, analyzed, and developed the RAP to ensure the City's eligibility to participate in the federal Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR). The study consisted of focus groups, site surveys and the creation of a geospatial information system map for an interactive website.

## **COMMODITY FLOWS AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN NORTHERN WV**

On this study, our team gathered information including commodity flows by transport mode to and from Northern WV, which included commodity values and actual origins and destinations; transportation costs for observed movements by mode; and identification of both Intramodal and Intermodal points to interchange. This was performed for counties in Northern WV in hopes of facilitating the planning of Intermodal infrastructure improvements. This commodity flows study set the stage for additional research sponsored by the Appalachian Regional Commission for all ARC counties.

## **WEST VIRGINIA HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY-**

In order to assess the effects of the long-term health care industry in the State of West Virginia, our staff performed an economic impact study for the WV Health Care Association (WVHCA). This study analyzed the economic impact of each of the long term health care facilities in West Virginia.

## **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD - REGIONS 1 AND 2**

In conjunction with the *Corporation for a Skilled Workforce* (CSW), our team presented the State of the Workforce Report and a Strategic Plan for the Region 1 and 2 Workforce Investment Board. These studies provided the region with important information regarding the growth and composition of the area's workforce in a 25 county region. This work also provided strategic planning guidance that affected the distribution of Federal Workforce Investment Funds throughout southern and western West Virginia. This study directly led to the State's decision to centralize these types of research programs into a collaborative effort between Marshall University, WVU, the Development office and the Bureau of Employment Programs. Due in part to Marshall's research in this area, the State of West Virginia was recently included in the Longitudinal Employer – Household Dynamic database. This Census Bureau data product has been characterized as the most innovative and important tool in economic analysis to emerge in a half century. Over the next five years the Center will engage significant resources in the development and adaptation of these data to users at all levels. This is one of the most exciting information and data related developments in the country, and West Virginia is a leading player in its development and application.

## **WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD REGION 2 - WEBSITE**

In association with the Workforce Investment Board project previously mentioned, our staff developed the Region 2 Workforce Investment Board website that includes a web-based database and assisted in the in user training. Specifically, our staff constructed, populated with data and trained Region 2 staff on the maintenance and updating of a website designed to facilitate the exchange of valuable regional workforce development information and the provide linkages to other workforce development stakeholders.

## **EDUCATION ALLIANCE**

*The Education Alliance* and the Center worked on a joint project to conduct research on teacher outcomes, education quality and the returns to education at the individual and regional level. The first notable monograph estimated the

impact to individuals of investment in education. This was performed by analyzing the relative return to a dollar invested in education and in a number of alternative investment instruments including broad stock indices, mutual funds, treasury bills, savings accounts, etc. This research was funded, in part, by the *Benedum Foundation*. This partnership resulted in the presentation of the Center's research to three legislative committees. Ongoing research is part of a nationally funded research project on the impact of teacher quality sponsored by the *Public Education Network*.

### **RIVER CITIES COMMUNITY HEALTH COALITION**

CBER staff conducted a study assessing the perception of service provision and health care outcomes of the River Cities Community Health Coalition (RCHHC). The first part was a written survey that assessed the service provision and health care outcomes of RCHHC and evaluate potential changes in service provision, marketing, and other factors determining use of RCHHC services. The second part was an epidemiological study and review of existing research of factors not deemed discernable in a regional survey. This study provided key inputs to the Coalitions strategic planning and resource allocation in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio.

### **INNOVATIVE HIGHWAY PROGRAM FINANCING**

For this project, CBER staff investigated alternative financing options for highway construction in WV. This study focused on identifying and ranking options for funding critical highway infrastructure in WV with special emphasis on the applicability to the King Coal Highway and the Coalfields expressway. This research also investigated and applied appropriate methods for disseminating information to policymakers, planners, stakeholders and citizens. It also identified the most efficacious development of implementation strategy for the financing options, including potential modifications to State institutions that assist in the goals of funding appropriate highway infrastructure.

### **IMPACTS OF APPALACHIAN CORRIDORS ON SMALL BUSINESS (MICRO BUSINESS)**

Over the past three decades, the Appalachian Regional Commission has worked to develop a network of corridor highways within the Appalachian region. Anecdotal information suggested that these corridor highways have contributed to the establishment, growth, productivity, and sustainability smaller businesses within the region. Our staff's goal, in this ongoing research project, is to quantify this contribution. We do this by measuring the distance from

roughly 7,000 firms in these counties to Corridor G using a geospatial information systems algorithm that measure road distance. The ensuing data will then be used to estimate the road's impact on productivity of firms along this corridor.

### **KANAWHA RIVER ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

CBER staff is preparing necessary economic and financial analyses describing the marketing, operating, and fiscal conditions and outcomes associated with the proposed development of port facilities on the Kanawha River in Charleston, WV. Cooperation from the South Charleston Area Development Corporation, WV Public Port Authority, Dow Chemicals, and FMC Corporation is essential to completing the business plan.

### **TENNESSEE VALLEY FLOOD DAMAGE**

CBER staff estimated expected flood damage to transportation infrastructures as a proportion of total event cost. This research includes the estimation of the impact of flooding on damages to all types of economic activity using data from the more than 400 counties affected by the Great Flood of 1993 along the upper Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. This model was then applied to the Tennessee River. Our research includes general model estimations, changing property values, flood scenarios, damage simulations and aggregate economic impacts. The intent of this analysis is to provide the Tennessee Valley Authority with information regarding the impact of changing flood mitigation design along the Tennessee waterways.

### **WATERWAY DEMAND ELASTICITY ANALYSIS-CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

CBER staff, in corporation with the Tennessee Valley Authority, will collect and prepare the data necessary to simultaneously estimate short-run demand functions for barge and rail transportation within the Ohio River Basin. CBER will provide a comprehensive literature review on contingent valuation analysis. The intent of this analysis is to provide the Army Corps of Engineers and other planning organizations with estimates of the key decision variable necessary for the modification of waterborne transportation systems and operations.

### **I-64 HIGH TECHNOLOGY CORRIDOR**

In support of the new Nick J. Rahall, II High Technology Corridor, CBER staff have constructed a Needs Assessment, Integration Guide, and Evaluation Program. In conjunction with staff from the Greenbrier Valley Development Authority and the 4-C Economic Development Authority, the Center's staff have successfully pushed forward regional cooperation in economic development. This is matched by a much enhanced understanding of the Region's high technology strengths and opportunities. This is an ongoing program that examines issues of promoting the I-64 corridor between Beckley and White Sulphur Springs as an area for high technology business development.

### **LINCOLN COUNTY HEALTHCARE ACCESS**

This joint project with the Robert C. Byrd Center for Rural Health identified transportation related barriers to health care access in Lincoln County. Survey results from Phase I identified several barriers, which will be further addressed in Phase II of this continuing research. The intent of the second phase is to answer some lingering questions from Phase I and to design additional program support to enhance rural health care access.

### **DROWSY DRIVING**

The cause and economic impact of drowsy driving are an important research initiative conducted by several organizations nationwide. Marshall University's Robert C. Byrd Center for Rural Health is leading this research. In a comprehensive analysis of the factors contributing to drowsy driving the RCBCRH outlined important ameliorative factors important in mitigating drowsy driving. CBER staff aided in the estimation of drowsy driving accidents and their economic impacts as part of the larger study headed by Tracy Smith of the College of Medicine.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The Center's staff has been involved in disseminating these and the other 30 projects completed this year to the public. The CBER staff has been mentioned by print or broadcast media in every month since December of 1999. We have presented this and other research to national forums, committees in both houses of the West Virginia legislature and to a Committee of the U.S. Senate.

## **Notice**

**Beginning with the  
Spring 2003 Issue**

**The Regional Economic  
Review**

**will be available  
exclusively online at**

**[www.marshall.edu/cber](http://www.marshall.edu/cber)**

## WHO WE ARE

As you can see our projects require a diverse set of skills and expertise. To successfully meet the unique challenges each of these projects presents, our staff has a wide-range and depth.

*Mark Burton*, Director

Specialization: transportation, regulation, and telecommunications.

Ph.D, University of Tennessee (industrial organization and regional economics)

Fifteen years in academia as an instructor and researcher.

Over twenty works published in journals and academic publication and fifteen years of private sector consulting experience.

*Michael Hicks*, Director of Research

Ph.D., M.A., University of Tennessee (Economics)

B.A., Virginia Military Institute (Economics)

Specialization: industrial organization and macroeconomics.

Five years in academia including directing a statewide economic modeling effort in Tennessee.

Over fifteen published works on public finance, industrial structure and economic forecasting.

Military Experience: years US Army Infantry.(Presently a Major in the Reserves)

*Kristy Wilburn*, Director of Business Analysis

MBA, Marshall University, (Finance)

B.A. Marshall University, (Finance)

Specialization: public finance issues, feasibility studies and economic development planning

*Judy Olson*, Grant Resource Administrator

30 years of administrative and grants oversight experience at Marshall University

Amongst the members of the Research Group, there is eight years of academic research experience, one year of state government experience, and four years of environmental consulting experience. Between them, they have contributed to over ten published works and most of them are presently pursuing D. Ed. or Ph. D. options.

*Rich Hatcher*, Senior Research Associate  
MBA, Marshall University, (Economics)  
B.A. Marshall University, (English)

*Kent Sowards*, Research Associate  
MBA Marshall University, (Management)  
B.A. Marietta College, (Management)

*Lesley E. Burton*, Research Associate  
M.Sc. London School of Economics (Anthropology)  
B.A. University of the South Swenae (Anthropology)

*Asha Puttaiah*, Research Associate  
M.Phil. University of Cambridge (Development Studies)  
B.S. Carnegie Mellon (Civil Engineering, Applied History and Industrial Management)

*Viktoriya Rusalkina*, Research Associate  
MBA, Marshall University  
B.S. West Virginia University – Parkersburg (Business Administration)

### CBER'S INFORMATION RESOURCES TEAM

In addition to their CBER duties, the team also provides contracted technical assistance. The team's capabilities include: Geographic Information Systems, data management, electronic mapping and website design.

*Jim Atkinson*, Information Systems Technician  
B.S. Marshall University (Computing Information Systems)

*Brie Salmons*, Information Systems Technician  
B.A. Marshall University (Management Information Systems)

*Christopher Haynes*, Website Development Technician  
B.A. Marshall University (Regent's Degree)

*Cathy Taylor*, Accounts Specialist  
B.A. Marshall University, (Accounting)

## **We Value Your Opinion**

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Most useful story or feature in this issue:

In future issues:

What would you like to see more of?

What would you like to see less of?

What would you like to see that was not covered in this issue?

Additional comments and suggestions?

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