

2018 ANNUAL REPORT







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OUR MISSION

ACEnet's mission is to grow the regional economy by supporting entrepreneurs and strengthening sectors. We envision a resilient economy in which all people have the resources and opportunities to prosper.



BEYOND THE JOURNEY

“Resilient people don’t give in....” according to a 2014 article from Business Insider. If you take a look across the Appalachian and Rustbelt regions of our country, you will come to understand the resilient people and communities that dot the landscape with their small businesses and their homes. In this article a list of *“habits of exceptionally resilient people”* was shared and indeed these are habits that are found in the places we call home, through our people and our places, and lie within the very fabric that makes up our organization, ACEnet. We would like to share with you four of the habits of resilient people (and communities) that stand out from our experiences:

They have a strong sense of purpose.

They are self-reliant.

They have a support network.

They turn adversity into opportunities for growth.

As you browse through our annual report you will recognize these habits as they are lived out on the pages that recap the efforts resilient people put forth every day. Whether you are traveling along the Ohio River in Meigs County, driving around the square of Nelsonville, journeying out Congress Run Road, or discovering the neighborhoods of Akron, you will certainly encounter some of our resilient clients and communities, turning adversity into opportunity.

With a strong sense of purpose,

Larry and the staff of ACEnet

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Kyle Verge
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GROWING NEW ROOTS IN GLOUSTER.



Running a small business in Southeast Ohio takes hard work, tenacity, and gumption. We met Gina Gabriel when she came to an ACEnet small business class at the Glouster Library. She told us that she had bought some land and had begun selling plants. Here, in her own words, she explained her start to the present:



✓ CONGRESS RUN GREENHOUSE

“Don’t worry,’ 8 year old Marcus said to his muddy little brother Gabe, ‘we’re country boys now.’ Just like that, we city folk turned into country folk when we moved our family of 8 from Columbus to Glouster in November of 2017. We fell in love with the rolling hills and quiet mornings on our 11 acre farm complete with several greenhouses. What started out as an intention to homestead as a hobby, quickly turned into a pull-up-your-bootstraps business when my husband lost his city job due to major job cuts within AT&T.

Thankfully, our neighbors and previous owners of the farm have been helping us right along, teaching us the ways of greenhouse growing and farming. My dad jumped in to help with data and execution and ACEnet offered guidance, teaching and customized tools for marketing encouraging us to utilize Facebook and Instagram to promote and connect with customers. This has led to an increase in sales and also the opportunity to grow basil, garlic and cherry tomatoes for Pelino’s Pasta, and for customers who were having to drive all the way to the river to buy tomatoes in bulk.”

- Gina Gabriel
Owner, Congress Run Greenhouse

KNOCKING OFF THE RUST IN AKRON.



THE WELL

Rust Belt communities like Akron were once bustling pockets that thrived with people, resources, and identity, a situation us folks in formerly coal-extraction based rural communities can identify with. The Well Community Development Corporation works with like-minded partners to create affordable housing, a thriving economy, and place-making initiatives, while reinvesting worth, value, and dignity back into the individual lives and social health of the neighborhoods of Akron.

While presenting at a regional meet-up for the Network for Incubator & Commissary Kitchens in Cleveland, ACEnet's Food Enterprise Coordinator, Adam Kody, met The Well's Operation Director, Curtis Minter Jr. and the Executive Director of the Summit Food Coalition, Beth Knorr. The Well was looking to open Akron Foodworks, a shared-use kitchen focused on small catering businesses, food truck operators, bakers, hobbyists who want to sell their goods at a local farmers market and more to offer new opportunities to food entrepreneurs who were previously having to drive to Cleveland or Youngstown to access a licensed commercial kitchen.

Throughout the year, Kody met with potential kitchen users, business owners, and community members to discuss the benefits of having a local kitchen incubator and to share information on how ACEnet's Food Ventures Center and Food & Farm Enterprise Center benefit local businesses and the local economy. He also met with Payto Architects to share the equipment list he compiled from data collected through potential user surveys and infrastructure possibilities. The Well's Akron Foodworks is set to open at the end of August, and will be Akron's only operational shared-use commercial kitchen.



KEEPING HEADS ABOVE WATER IN POMEROY.



BRICKHOUSE APOTHECARY

Located along the beautiful Ohio River in Meigs County, the fine people and businesses of Pomeroy have been keeping their heads above water since its founding in 1804 by Samuel Pomeroy. With the threat of the Ohio River leaving its banks every few years, the merchants of this town have always found a way to survive the waters and find new opportunities for growing their businesses. One of the most unique new businesses in Pomeroy is a past tenant of ACEnet's Athens Campus and the Food Ventures Center. Herbal Sage Tea Company took the big step of purchasing and renovating a historic building in downtown Pomeroy, one that dates back to 1896. Today, the Brickhouse Apothecary is a place to visit for health and healing and is home to a unique Airbnb.

ACEnet also works with other businesses in the area, such as Snowville Creamery in Pomeroy and Tuckerman's on Lincoln in Middleport. We have also begun to work with strategic partners as we offering trainings to new and existing businesses. The partners include the Pomeroy branch of the Meigs County Library, Ohio Means Jobs Center, Meigs County Chamber of Commerce, and the Pomeroy Merchants Association.



STANDING THE TEST OF TIME IN NELSONVILLE.



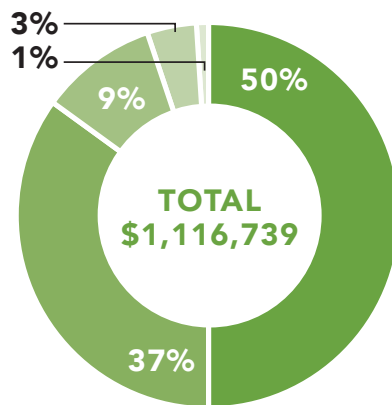


MILTIN, LLC

Since David Nelson began a settlement called Nelsonville 205 years ago, this resilient community, with her people and small businesses, continues to shine in Southeast Ohio. Today, ACEnet calls Nelsonville our home away from home with our Nelsonville Business Center featuring our Food & Farm Enterprise Center and our Wood Products Center. Together, these operations house 14 businesses that contribute to the diversity of our local economy. Two of the newest businesses are Miltin, LLC and Star Brick Logistics, LLC. Miltin, LLC is a zero waste mattress and box spring recycling company serving Southeast Ohio and beyond. They deconstruct used commercial mattresses and box springs, into fabric, plastic, metal and wood components for recycling, reducing the impact on area landfills. Star Brick Logistics, an expanding business, specializes in providing freight shipping solutions whenever and wherever a business might need them. As an independent logistics business, they have access to one of the largest logistics networks in the industry, which means area businesses have access to the services that large corporations enjoy.

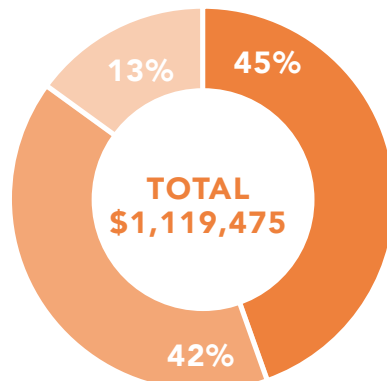
Nelsonville is also home to a variety of partners in community development, such as, the Nelsonville Emporium, the Appalachian Partnership for Economic Growth, Stuart's Opera House, and many others. A highlight of our work in Nelsonville has been our partnership with the Nelsonville Public Library where ACEnet has been able to provide a series of 6 workshops focused on entrepreneurship and new business starts.

FINANCIALS, FUNDERS, & FACTS



REVENUE

- Grants (\$556,536)
- Rents (\$416,784)
- Food Ventures (\$100,329)
- Consulting (\$33,080)
- Other (\$10,009)



EXPENSES

- Program (\$502,115)
- Facility (\$473,513)
- Administration (\$143,847)

FUNDERS

- Central Appalachian Network
- Farm Aid
- Ohio CDC Association
- Osteopathic Heritage Foundation
- Small Business Administration
- The Educational Foundation of America
- USDA Rural Development
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

- Appalachian Regional Commission with Appalachian Sustainable Development
- Central Appalachian Network with National Community Investment Fund
- Ohio State University
- New River Gorge
- SpringForward
- Sugarbush Foundation with The Winding Road
- Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education with Rural Action
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service with Community Farm Alliance
- USDA Agricultural Marketing Service with The Wild Ramp
- USDA Farm to School with Rural Action
- West Virginia USDA Rural Development with The Food Group Inc.
- West Virginia USDA Rural Development with Unlimited Future, Inc.

24

**NEW
BUSINESSES
STARTED**

31

**TRAINING
EVENTS**

38

**COLLABORATIVE
PARTNERSHIPS**

127

**BUSINESSES
ASSISTED**

416

**PEOPLE
TRAINED**



STAY IN TOUCH.

✓ STAY CONNECTED



Appalachian Center
for Economic Networks



ACEnetAthens



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acenetworks.org