

## ARC Announces Appalachian Leadership Institute Fellows for 2023-2024

*New class of 40 fellows represents public, private, and nonprofit sectors across Appalachia's 13 states*

**Washington, DC, September 26, 2023** — Today, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) announced the 40 fellows selected for the 2023-2024 Class of the [Appalachian Leadership Institute](#), a free leadership and economic development training opportunity for individuals currently living and/or working in one of ARC's [13 Appalachian states](#). The 2023-2024 class comprises a diverse network of professionals representing all 13 Appalachian states and a wide spectrum of perspectives and sectors, including tourism, healthcare, education, civil service, and more.

The nine-month curriculum is anchored by six multi-day seminars across the Appalachian Region focusing on each of ARC's [strategic investment priorities](#), which aim to strengthen economic and community growth in Appalachia. From October 2023 through July 2024, this class will focus on skill-building seminars and best practice reviews to prepare fellows to:

- Design effective economic development project proposals
- Integrate community assets into long-term economic development strategies
- Identify resources available to spark economic and community development
- Locate and access investment capital from a variety of public and private sources
- Prepare competitive applications for public grant opportunities
- Use expanded connections and leadership skills to create strong regional partnerships

"Growing and supporting the next generation of Appalachian leaders is integral to the future success of our region," said **ARC Federal Co-Chair Gayle Manchin**. "I send my sincerest congratulations to the newest round of Appalachian Leadership Institute fellows, as well as my appreciation for all the work and passion they put into helping their communities thrive and compete."

The fifth class of Appalachian Leadership Institute fellows were selected via a competitive application process to reflect the Appalachian region's wide range of economic development challenges, opportunities, and strategies. The 2023-2024 Appalachian Leadership Institute fellows are:

### Alabama

- **Kenneth Anderson**, Director, City of Huntsville – DEI, Madison
- **Paul Kennedy**, President, Walker Area Community Foundation, Jasper
- **Jesslan Wilson**, Director, Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham, Trussville

### Georgia

- **Jason Mock**, President/CEO, Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce, Dalton
- **Pam Powers-Smith**, President, Rome Floyd Chamber of Commerce, Rome

### Kentucky

- **Jordan Campbell**, Executive Director, Gateway Regional Arts Center, Mount Sterling

- **Eric Dixon**, Senior Researcher, Ohio River Valley Institute, Louisville
- **Jacqueline Kohl-Hamilton**, Executive Director & Senior Lecturer, Why We Write, Inc., Eastern Kentucky University, Winchester
- **Candace Tingen**, Copywriter, Pineville

#### Maryland

- **Kathy Beachler**, Executive Director, Garrett County Arts Council, Oakland
- **Stephanie Hutter-Thomas**, Founder/CEO, Appalachian Recovery Concepts, LLC & WVU School of Medicine, Cumberland

#### Mississippi

- **Suzy Bowman**, Ecosystem Workforce Coordinator, State Office of Workforce Development - Accelerate MS, New Albany
- **Case Knight**, North MS Field Representative, U.S. Senate – Cindy Hyde Smith, Saltillo

#### New York

- **Joshua Bacigalupi**, Superintendent of Schools, Dryden Central School District, Dryden
- **Vince DeJoy**, Director of Planning and Development, City of Dunkirk, Jamestown
- **Ray Pucci**, President, Delaware County Chamber of Commerce, Delhi
- **Joseph Sellepack**, Executive Director, Broome County Council of Churches, Binghamton

#### North Carolina

- **Amanda Hall**, Executive Director, Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, Western Carolina University, Whittier
- **Justin Kearley**, Rural Health Operations Specialist, NC Office of Rural Health, NC DHHS, Boone
- **Michael Pesant**, Community Investment Officer, Dogwood Health Trust, Asheville

#### Ohio

- **Amanda Crabtree**, Marketing Director, Vinton County National Bank, Jackson
- **Chris Schaffer**, Director of Grants and Sponsored Research, Shawnee State University, Waverly
- **Bailey Venzin**, Executive Director, Hocking Hills Chamber of Commerce, Logan

#### Pennsylvania

- **Amy Camp**, Founder, Cycle Forward, Pittsburgh
- **Elizabeth Lockwood**, Director, Project Development/Grants Economic Development Program, SEDA- Council of Governments, Lewisburg
- **Jamelle Price**, External Relations Manager, University of Pittsburgh, Bethel Park
- **Daniel Rossi-Keen**, Executive Director, RiverWise, Aliquippa

#### South Carolina

- **Brandy Singleton**, Executive Director, PlaySafe USA, Williamston
- **William Westmoreland**, Future Operations Planner, South Carolina Army National Guard- Air and Missile Defense Command, Landrum

## Tennessee

- **Brad Collett**, Director, Tennessee RiverLine Initiative, Knoxville
- **Jeff Mason**, County Mayor, Smith County Government, Brush Creek
- **Susan McKinney**, Executive Director, Appalachian Resource Conservation & Development Council, Johnson City
- **Leigh Ann Riggs Broesch**, Founder, fern+daisy, Knoxville

## Virginia

- **Mary Newlyn**, Executive Director, WV Hope in Action Alliance, Winchester
- **Annette Patterson**, President, The Advancement Foundation, Vinton

## West Virginia

- **Summer Hartley**, Associate Vice President, West Virginia University Health Affairs Institute, Morgantown
- **Jennifer Justice**, Executive Director, McDowell County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Welch
- **Jennifer Light**, Program Director of Industrial Technologies, Allegany College of Maryland, Ridgeley
- **Kalyn Obiozor-Dorey**, Community Coaching Associate, West Virginia Community Development Hub, Huntington
- **Jona Rinard**, Dean of Transfer and Public Service, Washington State Community College, Williamstown

Upon completion of the program, fellows are automatically part of the Appalachian Leadership Institute Alumni Network, a peer-to-peer working group of experts helping foster collaborative solutions that will build a stronger future for Appalachia.

“The Appalachian Leadership Institute supports leaders already doing amazing work across Eastern Kentucky and the entire Appalachian region,” said **ARC 2023 States’ Co-Chair, Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear**. “This program capitalizes on the incredibly talented people who are already invested in these special communities. When we invest in our people, we’re building a brighter future for generations to come.”

To learn more about the program, visit: [arc.gov/leadership](https://arc.gov/leadership). To meet the 2023-2024 class of fellows and learn more about how they are working to transform their Appalachian communities, [visit this link](#). Please note, this page will not be active until after the 9/26 announcement.

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## About the Appalachian Leadership Institute

The Appalachian Leadership Institute is a comprehensive regional leadership training program developed by the Appalachian Regional Commission in partnership with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; The Howard H. Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs; Tuskegee University; and Collective Impact. Learn more at [www.arc.gov/leadership](https://www.arc.gov/leadership).

## About the Appalachian Regional Commission

The [Appalachian Regional Commission](https://www.arc.gov/) is an economic development entity of the federal government

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and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia to help the Region achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation. Learn more at [www.arc.gov](http://www.arc.gov).

