



## Updates from the Office of Economic Development

### That's a Wrap!



Over the course of the spring semester, the Office of Economic Development (OED) has been lucky enough to have Helena Harris join our team in an internship role. A graduating 4th-year student at the University of Virginia, she contributed to a number of projects during her time in OED including identification of best practices used in other localities to improve engagement with small and minority-owned businesses, development of new survey options to determine program effectiveness, and research on accessible parking solutions. Fluent in Spanish, Helena's most direct impact came through accompanying OED staff on visits to primarily Spanish-speaking businesses and providing Spanish translation services for several OED marketing pieces.

Keep a watch on the **OED website** for updated program information in English y obtener información del programa en español incluida la **Guía de Recursos Empresariales**.

We thank Helena for all of her contributions to the City of Charlottesville business community over the past several months and wish her all the best as she pursues her career ambitions!

### You're Invited: Celebrate Charlottesville Area Technical Education Center (CATEC)'s School-to-Work Signing Day!

Mark your calendars for an evening of celebration and inspiration! Join us on **Tuesday, May 13 at 6:00 PM** in the **CATEC Auditorium** as we honor the hard work and achievements of this year's CATEC students during our annual **School-to-Work Signing Day**.

Parents, teachers, family members, friends, and community stakeholders are all invited to witness a proud moment as students officially "sign on" with their new local employers. This special event recognizes CATEC students for their outstanding performance in career and technical education and their commitment to entering the workforce.

Students will be celebrated as they take the next step in their professional journeys—joining both large and small businesses across the region. This event is a powerful reminder of the strength of school-to-career pathways and the vital role our local employers play in shaping tomorrow's workforce.

We hope to see you there as we applaud these future professionals and the companies investing in their success!

For questions contact Amanda Jay at 434-245-2419 or [atjaya@charlottesvilleschools.org](mailto:atjaya@charlottesvilleschools.org).

**CATEC**  
CHARLOTTESVILLE AREA  
TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER  
SCHOOL-TO-WORK  
**SIGNING DAY**  
2025

**WHEN: TUESDAY, MAY 13**  
**TIME: 6 PM**  
**WHERE: CATEC AUDITORIUM**

**MAY 20TH 1-4 PM**



Are you an employer seeking qualified candidates or a job seeker ready to explore new career opportunities? Don't miss the **Virginia Works Virtual Job Fair**, happening **Tuesday, May 20, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**. This regional event will serve the Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Fishersville, and Winchester areas, bringing together employers and job seekers from a wide range of industries.

Whether you're hiring or looking to be hired, this virtual fair is a valuable opportunity to make connections and take the next step forward. Click [here](#) to register. For questions contact Ashley Moslak at (540) 660-0050 or at [ashley.moslak@vec.virginia.gov](mailto:ashley.moslak@vec.virginia.gov).

## Business Spotlight: Mai Tea Brings Authentic Vietnamese Flavors to the Downtown Mall

Charlottesville welcomes a new addition to the Historic Downtown Mall with the opening of **Mai Tea**, located at 509 E Water Street. The business had its soft opening on March 28th and is already receiving glowing five-star reviews from customers.

Mai Tea is owned by Hanh and Quang, a husband-and-wife duo originally from Vietnam and most recently from Roanoke, Virginia. While this is their second business venture, it marks their first in Charlottesville. Driven by a passion for authenticity, they aim to bring genuine Vietnamese cuisine and traditional tea culture to the area.



Before launching Mai Tea, the couple traveled to Taiwan to receive hands-on training in crafting traditional teas and boba. They emphasize the importance of preparation and patience for aspiring entrepreneurs. "Timing is everything," Hanh shares. Their journey included a three-year search for the right location and an extensive renovation process to make the space their own. One of the key lessons they learned. "Buy the right equipment and ingredients the first time it saves on cost and ensures quality."

The City of Charlottesville has been supportive, assisting with signage and permitting to help bring their vision to life. As for what keeps them motivated, Hanh and Quang say it's their pride in Vietnamese culture and the joy of sharing their delicious cuisine with others.

Mai Tea is already known for its traditional pho, and customers are encouraged to try the savory Vietnamese crepes. Coming soon to the menu are house made bánh mi sandwiches, served on freshly baked buns, as well as authentic Vietnamese coffee.

## University of Virginia to Host Small Business Expo



The **University of Virginia's Procurement Services Office** is thrilled to announce the upcoming Small Business Expo, scheduled for June 11, 2025, from 12 PM to 2 PM at Newcomb Hall. This marks the second annual event, providing a unique opportunity for small businesses in the greater Charlottesville region to showcase their products and services directly to university faculty and staff, opening doors for valuable partnerships and growth.

The Small Business Expo allows local entrepreneurs to present their products and services to decision makers within the university, building key relationships that can lead to potential collaborations. Participating as an exhibitor not only increases visibility within the UVA community but also allows small businesses to demonstrate the value they bring to the university's diverse needs.

Exhibitors will be stationed in dedicated spaces within Newcomb Hall, creating an engaging

networking atmosphere and partnership exploration. The registration fee for this event is \$125. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged to ensure participation.

Leverage this platform to grow your business, strengthen local connections, and showcase the value your business brings to the university community. **Register today** and take the first step toward building lasting business relationships at UVA.

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## OED Fun Fact

May marks the arrival of spring and the beginning of graduation season. The city will soon be bustling with UVA graduates and their families. Over the years, many famous individuals across various professions—such as acting, writing, sports, and coaching—have attended or graduated from UVA. Here are just a few notable alumni: Tina Fey, Ralph Sampson, Katie Couric, Chris Long, David Baldacci, Edgar Allan Poe, Dawn Staley, sisters Gretchen and Alex Walsh, and the list goes on! Congratulations to all the graduating classes of 2025!

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## Free Business Resources



The Albemarle County & City of Charlottesville Buy Local campaign highlights small businesses within the Charlottesville-Albemarle area through a multi-channel, multimedia promotional and educational campaign. To learn more about the campaign, click [here](#)!



The Central Virginia Small Business Development Center is a team of business and technical experts available to advise and assist entrepreneurs, confidentially and free of charge. They offer 1:1 assistance, curated research, access to technical experts and professionals, and timely events/training. To see upcoming SBDC events, click [here](#)!

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