











Celebrating 25 Years

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

ROANOKE
HIGHER EDUCATION
CENTER



Message from the Chair of the Board:

It's an honor to serve as the Chair of the Board of Trustees for the Authority. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary this year, we recognize this achievement as a testament to the dedication of our students, who strive to earn industry certifications, complete degrees, or enhance their skills. I am proud to be part of an organization that is committed to workforce development, and to work closely with the RHEC Executive Team, whose efforts are vital in supporting the needs of our students.

Sincerely,
G. Lyn Hayth III
Chair, Authority Board of Trustees

ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION AUTHORITY
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RHEC LEADERSHIP

Kay Dunkley ..... Executive Director
Carla James ..... Senior Director of Academic & Student Services
Jeremiah McMillan ..... Director of Facility Services
Lori Van Curen ..... Director of Finance & Administration



Dear Friends and Supporters,

The 2024–25 year was filled with many accomplishments, and we are excited to share the highlights in this year's annual report. We honor the dedication of our 11 member institutions and their commitment to providing quality programs at the Center.

Thank you for your continued support.
Kay Dunkley
Executive Director

ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

MISSION

The Roanoke Higher Education Center, known throughout the Roanoke region as a dynamic learning community of colleges and organizations, responds to the evolving needs of the current and future workforce.

VISION

The Roanoke Higher Education Center develops partnerships and maintains a state-of-the-art facility that provides citizens of the Roanoke region access to training, certifications and degrees.

STRATEGIC GOALS 2024–2027

I. RHEC will support learners as they pursue education and learning.

II. RHEC will ensure financial stability through diverse and sustainable funding sources.

III. RHEC will collaborate with other organizations to identify workforce needs and align programming with evolving needs.

IV. RHEC will maintain an innovative, welcoming, and safe facility for students, staff, and the community.

V. RHEC will promote the Center as a unique community asset, learning hub, and workforce partner.









Roanoke Higher Education Center Celebrates 25th Anniversary

2025 marks a major milestone for the Roanoke Higher Education Center: 25 years of expanding access to education and workforce development in the Roanoke Valley.

In August 2000, the Roanoke Higher Education Center opened its doors to its first class of students. The opening was the culmination of more than 10 years of efforts to establish a center for training and education in downtown Roanoke. At the time, Roanoke was the largest region in the Commonwealth of Virginia that did not have a four-year public college or university.

Thanks to the steadfast leadership of former Senator and Board Chair John Edwards, along with the support from city and government officials, the project came to life. In 1999, veteran higher education administrator Thomas McKeon was hired as the Center's first Executive Director, a position he held for 17 years.

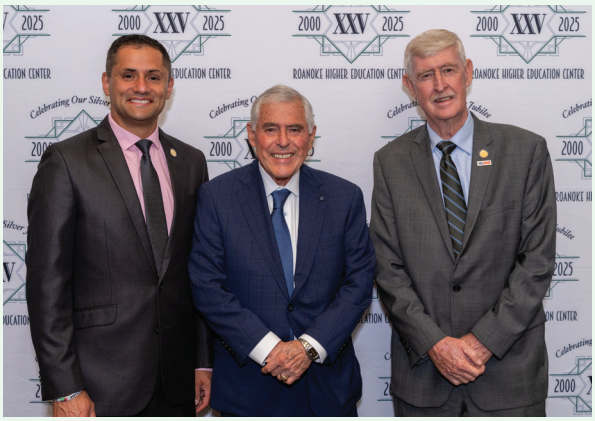
McKeon shared that the original vision was to "create an opportunity, while not for a university or a college in its own right, to bring all these resources of other colleges and universities, and in fact, a workforce. It was the whole spectrum."

A total of $19 million in state, local, and private capital, as well as federal and state historic tax credits, were used to transform the former headquarters of the Norfolk and Western Railway, a 1931 Art Deco building, into a state-of-the-art facility for learning. McKeon oversaw the renovations to the building, and on day one, the Center was filled to capacity with 2,500 students from 16 member institutions.

According to McKeon, the Center has continued to be dynamic, responding to the evolving needs of the region. In the past 25 years, the Center has had approximately

> **Celebrating the Center's 25th anniversary is a milestone that honors the dedication of our 11 member institutions and their commitment to delivering quality educational programming to the citizens of our region.**
>
> – Kay Dunkley, Executive Director





16,000 total program completers, including degrees, certificates, and endorsements, with nearly 900 program completers in FY 2024. Today, 11 member institutions offer more than 100 degree and training programs, from GED preparation to bachelor's and doctoral degrees. The Roanoke Higher Education Center contributes over $10 million in economic impact to the region and is a cornerstone of downtown development and revitalization of the historic Gainsboro neighborhood.

After McKeon's retirement in 2016, Kay Dunkley took the helm as the organization's second executive director. "Kay Dunkley has picked up the baton and just never skipped a beat in terms of taking over and running the ship," McKeon said. "They've maintained the building so well. It looks just like it did the day it opened."

"It's just wonderful to go in there," he added. "I'm amazed every time I go, they've done something new and positive. It's continued to have an impact on people's lives through the educational programs that they find available there."

> **The Roanoke Higher Education Center is an amazing resource for the region's citizens. From GED to PhD and everything in between, we have educational opportunities for everyone.**
>
> – Carla James,
> Senior Director of Academic & Student Services



Celebrating Our Silver Jubilee

2000 XXV 2025

ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER







> The anniversary celebrates the Center's mission to serve the educational and workforce needs of our region.
>
> – G. Lyn Hayth, Authority Board of Trustees

On August 23, the organization hosted its 25th anniversary celebration, a special gala event that celebrated the significant achievements of RHEC over the past 25 years and efforts to increase access to education in the region. The event raised $25,000, benefiting the RHEC Foundation, which supports the Center's transformative educational programs that align with regional workforce needs, student support services, and scholarships for deserving students.





Kay Dunkley, Executive Director, and Frank Shushok, President, Roanoke College.

ROANOKE COLLEGE REJOINS THE CENTER

Roanoke College, a previous charter member of the Roanoke Higher Education Center, has rejoined the Center. Roanoke College, a liberal arts college that was founded in 1842, recently launched Roanoke College-Roanoke Valley (RC-RV), a new division that aims to develop campus-community partnerships that strengthen workforce development and continuing education in the region.



A ceremony was held in September 2024 to honor the legacy of John S. Edwards, who served as Chair of the Authority Board from 2000 to 2023. Pictured (l to r): Tom McKeon, former Executive Director, RHEC, G. Lyn Hayth III, Chair, Authority Board of Trustees, Kay Dunkley, Executive Director, and John Edwards, former Chair of the Authority Board of Trustees.

According to Lisa Stoneman, RC-RV Executive Director for Curricular Innovation & Digital Learning, RC-RV is focused on a three-pronged effort of continuing education and professional development, K–12 dual enrollment programs, and online programs for adult learners. She said that a recent "shift toward workforce development and community-based interactions drove us to seek out the Higher Ed Center again and reconnect."

"Through the Roanoke College-Roanoke Valley (RC-RV) initiative, we are embracing our conviction that meaningful education happens when institutions commit to being genuinely present in the communities where people live, work, and build their lives," said Dr. Frank Shushok Jr., President, Roanoke College. "Our Imagine Roanoke strategic plan reflects our belief that colleges must move beyond traditional boundaries that separate academic learning from community flourishing. By becoming embedded partners with industry leaders, entrepreneurs, and community stakeholders, we are creating pathways for individuals to discover their unique potential and use their strengths in service to something greater than themselves. Our membership in the Roanoke Higher Education Center represents our shared commitments to helping people understand not just what they can learn, but who they can become."

> "We commend Roanoke College for their dedication to offering professional development opportunities that help our workforce stay current with best practices in the workplace.
>
> – Kay Dunkley, Executive Director

Ryan King, Roanoke College's Chief of Staff, emphasized the College's renewed focus on identifying gaps in the current market and revamping educational offerings to respond to those needs.

"There's a large segment of the population that never has a reason to interact with the Roanoke College in the Valley," King added. "When we hear from talking to industry partners, there's a large segment of the population that could use additional education; it may not look like your traditional education. One of the things that we can bring with it is the reputation and backing of Roanoke College."

Starting in the Fall 2025 semester, Roanoke College plans to offer two new certificate programs that align with regional workforce needs: a certificate in leadership geared for early-career managers, as well as a certificate in communication. The College also plans to launch an associate's degree program in Spring 2026, followed by a bachelor's degree program in Fall 2026.

Stoneman noted that Roanoke College looks forward to expanding their programming and presence at the Center.

Appalachian College of Pharmacy JOINS THE Roanoke Higher Education Center

Starting this fall, the Appalachian College of Pharmacy (ACP) will offer pharmacy education classes at the Roanoke Higher Education Center (RHEC), establishing the region's only pharmacy education program. As part of this new partnership, ACP students will complete the first two terms of the curriculum in person at their main Oakwood campus, prior to matriculation to the Center for the completion of the curriculum.

Established in 2003, ACP offers the Commonwealth's only three-year accelerated Doctor of Pharmacy degree. A Doctor of Public Health and pharmacy technician program will also be offered in Roanoke. ACP currently has a similar partnership with the Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center in Abingdon.

By joining the RHEC, ACP is addressing the shortage of pharmacists in the Roanoke Valley. Andy Bowman, a Roanoke native and ACP Assistant Dean for Strategic Partnerships & Engagement, was instrumental in arranging this partnership. "The greater Roanoke Valley has been a problem area for staffing of physicians for decades," he said. "We are going to be able to fill a need. One of the things that I think we can do with this program is when students realize they can go to pharmacy school here, and they're from the area, they'll go to pharmacy school in Roanoke. Then they'll stay, is my hope."

"We are committed to delivering training that strengthens the Roanoke region's workforce for both current and future employment needs."

Dr. Susan Mayhew,
ACP Provost, Dean and
Chief Academic Officer

"Overall, the national demand for pharmacists is high," added Jason McGlothlin, Director of Admissions, Student Services & Alumni Affairs, noting opportunities for pharmacists in retail settings, hospitals, and long-term care facilities.

The administrators expect the program to grow quickly and meet this demand. "I think it's going to explode," said McGlothlin. "What will end up happening long term, if our dreams come true, and I believe they will, we will have just as many students in the Roanoke Valley going to school as we do on our main campus."



Pictured (l to r): Carla James, Senior Director of Academic and Student Services, RHEC; Kay Dunkley, Executive Director, RHEC; Michael G. McGlothlin, President, Appalachian College of Pharmacy; Susan Mayhew, Provost, Dean and Chief Academic Officer, Appalachian College of Pharmacy; and Andy Bowman, Assistant Dean for Strategic Partnerships & Engagement, Appalachian College of Pharmacy.



A YEAR OF IMPACT FROM Student Services

In just four years, the Roanoke Higher Education Center's Student Services department has become a cornerstone of student and community support, offering impactful tutoring, education, and workforce training programs. The Student Success Center, run by Student Services, offers free tutoring to any student or client of a member institution, and it recently expanded significantly with the hiring of 12 new tutors.

This July, Student Services wrapped up its third annual Summer Math Camp, made possible by the generosity of the American Electric Power Foundation. Designed for rising third graders who might need extra support with math, the free camp ran for four weeks. Fifteen students participated in fun, engaging activities and hands-on lessons to build confidence and strengthen key math skills. Field trips to local museums and STEM labs added real-world experiential learning opportunities.

Student Services also partnered with Roanoke City Public Schools for a six-week career development program with high school students at the Charles W. Day Technical Education Center. The program focused on their career goals and learning about certification and workforce development opportunities. They held a career panel with individuals in real estate, mental health, and entrepreneurship to provide firsthand insights into a variety of career paths.

"What we really wanted to do with them was let them see that regardless of what your circumstances may be, if you have a picture of where you want to go, there's a path you can lay out for yourself on how to get there," said Student Services Manager Ryan Bell. "You have individuals like us to support you in those efforts."



Student Services also manages the Career and Workforce Training Center, which assists RHEC students with building professional skills and preparing them to enter the job market. In March, they hosted their first Healthcare Career Day, a free career fair focusing on careers in the healthcare industry. Approximately 70 students connected with local healthcare employers and received free headshots and resume support. Several interviews were scheduled on the spot, and at least one participant secured a job as a direct result of attending the career fair.



Last but not least, Student Services launched the Dr. Carla L. James Lecture series, an annual forum dedicated to addressing critical social issues, such as the foster care crisis and food insecurity. Named in honor of Dr. Carla L. James, Senior Director of Academic & Student Services, this series recognizes her long-standing commitment to the Center and her dedication to expanding access to education and community resources.



More than Books: Creating Community at the Library



The Roanoke Higher Education Center's (RHEC) Library launched two free monthly programs in 2025 designed to transform the library into a vibrant community hub for their Gainsboro neighbors. The first, Peaceful Paint Night, is an enriching community art program for painters at all experience levels in a non-judgmental and inclusive atmosphere. Unlike a typical paint night experience, attendees may paint anything they like. From January through July 2025, the library welcomed 91 painters, 47 of which were first-time visitors. Coffee, Tea, and Poetry, on the other hand, brings community members together to share and read their own poetry or the work of others. The group engages in a discussion about the poems, often highlighting what resonated with them. Total attendance from February through July 2025 included 27 poets, including 15 newcomers.

"I like the positive atmosphere and encouragement from the instructor and other attendees," one participant shared in a survey about their experience in Peaceful Paint Night. Feedback on both programs has been overwhelmingly positive.



> *I like the positive atmosphere and encouragement from the instructor and other attendees.*
>
> – Participant shared in a survey

Beyond these initiatives, the RHEC library continues to engage with students of member institutions and the community through existing programs. During Library Card Sign-up Month in September, students who signed up for a library card received a free student planner. The library also marked National Voter Registration Day on September 16 by providing voting resources.

For National Library Week in April, the RHEC library held an online raffle for noise-canceling headphones, encouraging students to sign up for the library newsletter and engage on social media. Additionally, each fall and spring the library offers popular "finals care kits" filled with snacks and study tools to support students in the home stretch of the semester.

In fiscal year 2025, the RHEC library had 885 visitors and circulated a total of 331 items. The collection includes more than 4,300 print books, with a focus on the educational programs offered at the RHEC, including nursing, culinary arts, and education. To stay informed about upcoming programs and events, please subscribe to the monthly newsletter at www.education.edu/library.









ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER FOUNDATION

Advancing Learning. SECURING OUR FUTURE.

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Pictured (l to r): G. Lyn Hayth III, Chair, Authority Board of Trustees; Brad Hall, VP External Affairs, Appalachian Power; and Kay Dunkley, Executive Director, RHEC.

MISSION:
The Foundation supports the Roanoke Higher Education Center and its partner institutions through fundraising and resource development to meet the evolving demands of our region's diverse workforce through education, training, student services, and lifelong learning programs.

VISION:
To strengthen the region's economy by supporting access to education and training that empowers the region's workforce and improves the quality of life.

RHEC FOUNDATION BOARD
Fundraising Priorities 2024–2027

PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Provide funding to develop and offer new programs that align with regional workforce needs.

STUDENT SUPPORT: Connect learning resources and services to ensure students achieve their goals.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Create tuition assistance to establish opportunities for learners to complete programs at the Roanoke Higher Education Center.

FOUNDATION OPERATIONS: Support the daily operations of the RHEC Foundation according to the areas of greatest need.

RHEC FOUNDATION
Financial Awards

2025 GRANT AWARDS

During fiscal year 2025, the Roanoke Higher Education Center Foundation received $160,340 in grant awards. A special thanks to our gracious corporate donors who support our fundraising priorities and educational initiatives:

- Advance Auto Parts Foundation
- Appalachian Power Foundation
- Edgar A. Thurman Foundation for Children
- Pinnacle Financial Partners
- Richard & Caroline T. Gwathmey Memorial Trust
- Sam and Marion Golden Helping Hand Foundation
- The Kroger Co. Foundation

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

During the 2025 fiscal year, the RHEC Foundation proudly awarded $35,500 in scholarship funds to 17 exceptional adult learners. This vital support was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Appalachian Power Foundation, along with contributions from dedicated donors to the RHEC Foundation. Their collective investment continues to transform lives through education.





SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

Sarah Arnold
James Madison University

Morrow Berberich
Radford University

Eden Bitew
Radford University

Sarah Dotson
Radford University

Dalena Duy
Sovah School of Health Professions

Seokhee Kim
Radford University

Ashleigh Devine Krauss
Virginia Tech

Fatmata Moore
Total Action for Progress

Dhruv Patel
Total Action for Progress

Janki Patel
Total Action for Progress

Laura Phan
Radford University

Tiffany Sizemore
Sovah School of Health Professions

Katevonni Sorlouangsana
Virginia Tech

Zachary Stockton
Total Action for Progress

Melanie Straley
Radford University

Dallas Thompson
Sovah School of Health Professions

Devin Wilson
Radford University

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPORT

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the following donors whose contributions and in-kind gifts supported the RHEC Foundation throughout the 2025 fiscal year. Their commitment has played a vital role in advancing our mission.

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Advance Auto Parts Foundation
Appalachian Power Foundation
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ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

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Day Porter

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Receptionist

Elias Azar
Tutor

Ryan Bell
Student Services Manager

Marie Bishop
Tutor

Kinsey Boone
Facilities Assistant

Maggie Boone
Facilities Assistant

Cynthia Bryant
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Dylan Dent
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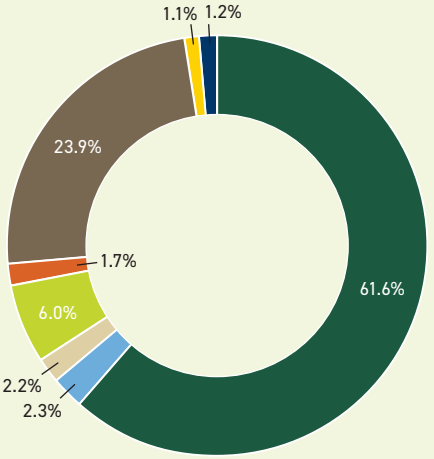
Beth Williams
Tutor

Jessica Yopp
Library Associate & Webmaster

FISCAL YEAR 2025 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Revenue for Fiscal Year 2025

Grand Total All Sources = $8.66 million
($5.60 Operating & Nonoperating + $3.06 Capital State Funding)



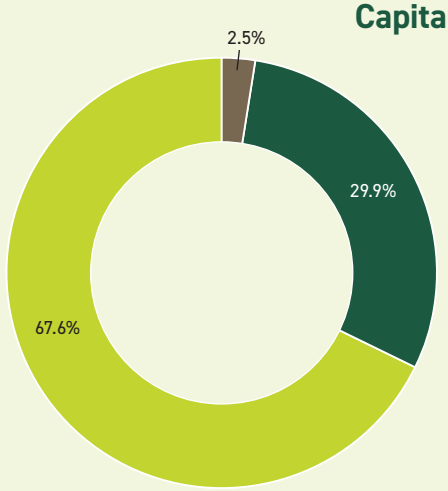
Nonoperating Revenues Total $4.03 Million:

State Appropriation	61.6%
Interest Earnings	2.3%
Grants and Contributions	2.2%
Other	6.0%

Operating Revenues Total $1.57 Million:

Day Rental & Training Initiatives	1.7%
Member & Commercial Leases	23.9%
Phone, Vending, Library & Misc.	1.1%
Testing Services	1.2%

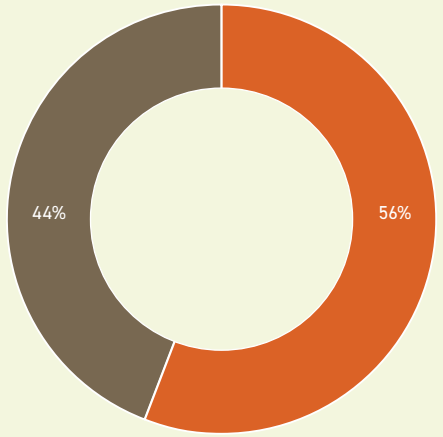
Capital State Funded Revenues



Total $3.06 Million:

Higher Education Equipment Trust Fund (HEETF)	2.5%
Capital Maintenance Reserve (CMR)	29.9%
Capital Outlay — HVAC Fan Coil Replacement	67.6%

Expenses for Fiscal Year 2025



Grand Total All Sources = $4.35 Million

Personnel Services Operating	56.0%
Other Operating	44.0%
• Facility Services	23.1%
• Finance and Administration	8.6%
• Student Services	7.4%
• Information Technology	4.9%

ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER BY THE NUMBERS

YEAR IN REVIEW



Social Media Followers

5,600



Website Visits

55,200



Program Completers

825



Exams Administered

3,823



Business and Industry Visitors

3,133



Staff Members

43



Member Institutions

11



Programs of Study

100+

Economic Impact on the Region Annually

$10,000,000





MEMBER INSTITUTIONS
ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

	APPALACHIAN COLLEGE OF PHARMACY The Appalachian College of Pharmacy (ACP) is a private pharmacy school located in Oakwood, Virginia. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, the ACP offers both on-site and online doctoral degrees, and pharmacy technician certification.
	JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY James Madison University (JMU) is a public coeducational research university located in Harrisonburg, Virginia. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, JMU offers credit and non-credit programs, both on-site and online.
	RADFORD UNIVERSITY Radford University (RU) is a public university located in Radford, Virginia. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, RU offers bachelor's, master's, and certificate programs, and serves as the primary teaching site for the Radford University School of Nursing.
	REGION 5 ADULT EDUCATION Roanoke Valley — Alleghany Region 5 Adult Education is a leading provider of adult education services in the area. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, Region 5 offers GED and ELA classes, as well as serving as an enrollment hub for the region.
	ROANOKE COLLEGE Roanoke College is a private liberal arts college located in Salem, Virginia. The college offers over 100 areas of study, including majors, minors, concentrations, and pre-professional programs.

SOVAH School of Health Professions	**SOVAH SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS** Sovah School of Health Professions is a small, private higher education center located in Danville, Virginia. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, Sovah offers an on-site Diagnostic Medical Sonography program.
tap into hope	**TOTAL ACTION FOR PROGRESS** Total Action for Progress (TAP) is an anti-poverty community action agency serving the Roanoke Valley and adjacent communities. TAP's This Valley Works component offers education and career development programs at the Roanoke Higher Education Center.
VCU College of Health Professions	**VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY** Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) is a public research university located in Richmond, Virginia. At the Roanoke Higher Education Center, VCU offers Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice programs delivered in a hybrid format.
VSU Virginia State	**VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY** Virginia State University (VSU) is a public historically Black land-grant university located in Ettrick, Virginia. VSU offers 37 undergraduate degree programs, 16 graduate degree programs, two doctoral degree programs, and nine certificate programs.
VT Roanoke Center Virginia Tech	**VIRGINIA TECH** Virginia Tech is a public research university with a main campus located in Blacksburg, Virginia. The Virginia Tech Roanoke Center at the Roanoke Higher Education Center offers graduate degree programs and professional development opportunities.
Virginia Western	**VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE** Virginia Western Community College (VWCC) is a two-year public community college located in Roanoke, Virginia. The college's Al Pollard Culinary Arts Program operates within the Claude Moore Education Complex of the Roanoke Higher Education Center.



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BLUE RIDGE BEVERAGE

FreedomFirst

LIONBERGER CONSTRUCTION
100th Anniversary

ML&A

Roanoke Gas

SPECTRUM DESIGN
architects | engineers

RHEC IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

Creative Occasions
EVENTS
FLOWERS & GIFTS

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Saturday	7:00am–6:00pm
Sunday	Closed

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