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# Bedford Business First

News from Bedford County Office of Economic Development - December 2018

## Bedford County by the numbers

Population: 77,724

Labor Force	38,731
Employed	37,671
Unemployment rate	2.7%
Advertised jobs	659

Source: [VirginiaLMI.com](http://VirginiaLMI.com)  
October 2018 report

## About our office

The Office of Economic Development is responsible for planning, developing, and directing business and economic development programs and services in Bedford County, Virginia.



**Traci Blido**

Director

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## Governor Northam visits Bedford to make Broadband announcement



Bedford County's work toward expanding Broadband in the County has received recognition at the state level. On Friday, December 14, Governor Northam made a trip to Bedford to announce \$50 Million from the General Assembly for localities to be able to apply for and use toward broadband expansion in rural areas.

The Governor made the announcement in Bedford citing our County as "an almost perfect model" for how localities can create public private partnerships to expand broadband access for those who do not currently have service. [Read the full news release here.](#)

In September 2018, the Board of Supervisors authorized a Public Private Partnership to work with Blue Ridge Towers to build-out the County's broadband infrastructure. [Read the full story here.](#)

## Business leaders discuss workforce solutions



**Pam Bailey**  
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Thank you to everyone who came out to our year-end Business Roundtable event on December 12 at CVCC in Bedford. Traci presented information regarding the 'wins' and growth in the County this past year and challenges that we face with our low unemployment numbers. Watch for more roundtable events in 2019 and be part of the conversation

**KMR Breaks Ground on New Addition**



*KMR groundbreaking ceremony in Forest.*

KMR Aviation in Forest officially broke ground on its new repair center on November 8. The new 3,700 square foot addition adjacent to its current 7,200 square foot facility will bring the company's total footprint to nearly 11,000 square feet and is expected to spur a dozen new full-time jobs in Bedford County over the next two years. [Read more here >>](#)

KMR is having great success working with Liberty University aviation students through an [apprenticeship](#) program. The company's apprenticeship model is one that could be emulated by other companies who are hiring local, talented, college students as a way to develop its workforce.

**Bedford ONE Takes Culinary and Public Safety Tours**



***BCPS students tour Sodexo at Liberty University.***

Culinary students from Bedford Science & Technology Center, along with about a dozen other BCPS students interested in the culinary field, got a behind the scenes tour at **Sodexo**, the food service provider for Liberty University.

The massive operation feeds 25,000 students every day, plus thousands more people during sporting events. The students met with Executive Chef, Michael Lowe, who talked about the importance of having a passion for the food service industry before making it a career.

Following the Sodexo tour, we headed to **CVCC's Culinary Arts** building to talk about the program and what students can expect to learn.

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### *Students interested in Public Safety toured facilities in Bedford.*

On December 4, students toured the **E-9-1-1 Dispatch Center**, **the Town of Bedford Police Department** and the **Bedford County Courthouse**. This is always a popular tour for students who enjoy seeing a police car up close and watching and listening to the dispatchers in action.

Tours next semester include Custom Truck One Source, Sentry Equipment, Framatome, Innerspec, University of Lynchburg PT program, US Pipe and Delta Star to name a few.

These tours provide career exploration opportunities to high school students enrolled in Bedford County Public Schools. If your company would like to host a tour for up to 30 BCPS students, please contact [Pam Bailey](#).



## **Guidance Counselors tour BSTC**



On November 6, all guidance counselors from Bedford County Public Schools toured Bedford Science and Technology Center. We were treated to a catered lunch by the Culinary Arts teacher and learned about career pathway programs at the school including nursing, automotive technology, culinary, ROTC, and construction to name a few. Many students who finish the coursework to on to a career in nursing, engineering, or another skilled trade with high-paying jobs.

## **Year-end Review**

# EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS



Source: US Census Bureau, October 2018

In the past year we have seen our unemployment rate drop from 3.5% to 2.7%. While this may look like a positive, the challenge we face is a decrease in the available workforce. The good news is that our population is trending in a positive direction. In the 2010 census, Bedford County had a population of 68,676. By 2020 we are projected to have a population of nearly 80,000 people and by 2040 that number will rise by another 12,000.

## Shell building update



We have signed a contract with Price Buildings to construct our 40,000 sq. ft. building in our New London Business & Technology Center park in Forest. Site plans have been signed and groundbreaking is expected in early 2019.

Call us for information to see if this building is right for your

## **Expanding? We have pad-ready sites.**



Our premier New London Business and Technology Center park in Forest has freshly graded and cleared lots for sale ranging in size from 4 acres to 15+ acres. Additional larger lots are also available. Call the Office of Economic Development to learn how we can help your business grow in Bedford County. **540-587-5670**

**Bedford County Office of Economic Development**  
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