

Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Bedford County Office of Economic Development. Don't forget to add [tblido@bedfordcountyva.gov](mailto:tblido@bedfordcountyva.gov) to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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## Bedford Business First

News from Bedford County Office of Economic Development - February 2019

### Bedford County by the numbers

Population: 77,724

Labor Force	38,777
Employed	37,828
Unemployment rate	2.4%
Advertised jobs	536

Source: [VirginiaLM.com](http://VirginiaLM.com)  
December 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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### EDA Appoints Officers, New Member Joins



**2019 Members of the Economic Development Authority**  
(left to right: Wyatt Walton, Kelly Harmony, Matthew Braud, Mickey Johnson (Chairman), Jim Messier (Vice Chairman), Kristy Milton, and Dennis Novitzke.)

The new year brings a new member and new officer appointments for 2019. We'd like to welcome back Kristy Milton to the EDA. Ms. Milton previously served on the EDA from 2015 - 2016 and was appointed for this four-year term by Tommy Scott, Supervisor for District 5.

We'd also like to congratulate Mickey Johnson (District 2) for being appointed as EDA Chairman for 2019. This is Mr. Johnson's second term on the EDA, and second year as the Chairman. Jim Messier (District 7) was appointed this month as Vice Chairman and has served on the EDA since 2017.

### Bedford ONE Tours Several Area Companies

Several students from Bedford County Public Schools had the opportunity to tour **Custom Truck One Source** in Forest on January 16. Many of these students expressed an interest in working in a manufacturing facility. The students were able to see welding in action (including humans and even welding robots!), quality control, and painting operations. They also learned about what the company expects from its employees in terms of work ethic.



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Custom Truck serves the forestry and power industries among others, and customizes vehicles such as bucket trucks that can be used to trim trees or work on power lines.



*BCPS students tour Custom Truck One Source.*

At **Sentry Equipment** in Forest, our cheerful tour guide showed students the various production lines they are working on for national food and beverage companies. These companies, such as Dr. Pepper, Coke, and ketchup bottling factories, send bottles to the Forest manufacturing operation so that Sentry can customize the production line prior to the installation at various plants around the country.

At the end of the tour, students were treated to a pizza lunch by the company and watched an [Ultimate Factories video](#) that features Sentry Equipment in the Coca-Cola bottling plant in Louisiana.



*Students at Sentry Equipment watched conveyor systems in action.*

On February 6, **Framatome** in Lynchburg opened up its Mill Ridge Road training facility to teach our students about nuclear power. The students watched a video about different sources of energy, including nuclear. Framatome is one of the area's largest employers and hires a wide range of talent including civil and mechanical engineers as well as welders and machinists to name just a few.



*At Framatome, students learn about steam generator repair for the nuclear industry.*

Next, students toured **Innerspec** in Forest. Innerspec designs and develops equipment that tests metals for all types of applications for companies from around the world including railroad, nuclear, and airline industries. Frank Weinmeister, VP of Operations at Innerspec told the students, "Whatever you are doing, do the most to get to the top of the game to separate yourself from the rest of the group".



*Students gather for a group shot after touring Innerspec in Forest, VA.*

Remaining tours scheduled for this semester include healthcare tours, US Pipe and Delta Star.

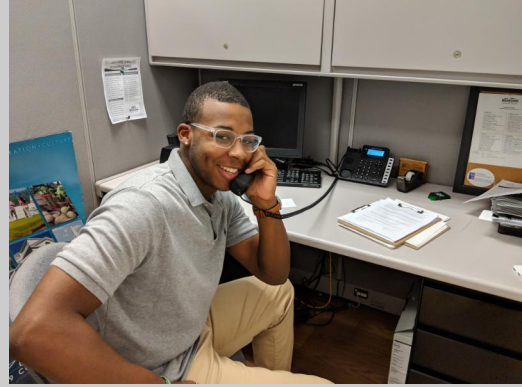
These experiences provide career exploration opportunities for high school students enrolled in Bedford County Public Schools. If your company would like to host a tour for up to 30 BCPS students, please contact [Pam Bailey](#).

## **Workforce Development**

Is your company able to



offer internships to High School students? Bedford County high schools offer an Internship class where students work three hours a week unpaid in exchange for class credit. If your company has an interest in this program with Bedford County Public Schools (BCPS), please contact [Dr. Tony Francis](#) with BCPS.



*Percy Payne is a Senior at Jefferson Forest High School and is an intern for the Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce*

## Year-end Review

# EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS



**38,777**

LABOR FORCE



**949**

UNEMPLOYED



**79,931**

PROJECTED  
POPULATION IN 2020



**\$36,972**

MEAN AVERAGE  
WAGE



**2.4%**

UNEMPLOYMENT



**536**

ADVERTISED JOB  
OPENINGS

*Source: US Census Bureau, December 2018*

In the past few months we have seen our unemployment rate drop from 2.7% to 2.4%, the labor force numbers are increasing, the number of people who are unemployed is decreasing, and the average wage has gone up nearly \$4,000.

## Save the Dates

Come and meet our new county administrator, Robert Hiss, at our first **Business Roundtable** event of the year. **Date:** Thursday, March 14 **Time:** 8:30 a.m - 10:00 a.m. **Location:** CERE Building in our New London Business and Technology Center park. 1173 Research Way in Forest.



A light breakfast will be served.

Please [RSVP to Pam Bailey](#) by March 8.



Be a Destination in a Digital World

March & April 2019

**BRICK & MORTAR BEDFORD**

*Bedford Business Academy*

Existing Business Workshops

The Town of Bedford is holding workshops to help local businesses gear up for the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. This 5-week program is your chance to get one-on-one consultation for your small businesses ahead of the commemorative event which is expected to draw 20,000 visitors to Bedford. More information including dates, times and cost can be found on [Facebook](#).

**Expanding? We have pad-ready sites and a NEW shell building under construction.**



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. We also have a 40,000 square foot shell building under construction on Lot 7. Call the Office of Economic Development to learn how we can help your business grow in Bedford County. **540-587-5670**

