



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NRGRDA to Partner with Generation West Virginia To Promote Fellowships and Retain In-State Talent

Beckley, W.Va. (Jan. 19, 2021) – Jina Belcher, executive director of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA), announced today NRGRDA is partnering to support Generation West Virginia, a statewide non-profit dedicated to attracting, retaining, and advancing young people in the Mountain State.

“Generation West Virginia is one of the most effective ways to retain our in-state talent to live, work and give in the Mountain State,” said Belcher. “One of my early priorities was to seek NRGRDA board approval to employ an Impact Fellow in 2021, and I am pleased to say our board unanimously agreed and our application for a fellow is pending.”

NRGRDA is seeking an Impact Fellow to be its Director of Business Retention and Expansion.

Belcher said the next step is for NRGRDA and the programs under its umbrella – West Virginia Hive Network, Country Roads Angel Network and Active Southern West Virginia – to work in concert to encourage our clients and partners to consider working with Generation West Virginia. “Natalie Roper and her team at Generation West Virginia have honed one of the most meaningful recruitment and retention programs to keep Mountain State talent excited about staying home and boosting our economy and way of life,” Belcher said.

NRGRDA will be the third organization in its four-county region to hire an Impact Fellow. Vaught, Inc. in Beckley and PracticeLink in Hinton have both hired personnel through this Generation West Virginia hiring vehicle.

Since launching in 2017, the Generation WV Impact Fellowship has:

- Connected 23 employers from a variety of fields with qualified talent based on their hiring needs including Terradon Corporation, CAMC, Core10, TC Energy, West Virginia Child Advocacy Network, The Just Transition Fund, and McKinley Architecture & Engineering. just to name a few.
- Recruited and placed 39 qualified employees across sectors including architecture, engineering, communications, marketing, software development, public health, business administration, human resources, information technology, research and data analysis, higher education, and financial analysis.
- Held an average 80% in-state retention rate across all years of Impact Fellowship, meaning Fellows are choosing to stay in West Virginia after the program ends.
- Donated 10,920 community service hours through the program's Volunteer Fridays, giving host employers a presence with local nonprofits and connecting fellows to their communities.

If your business or non-profit are interested in learning more about becoming a Host Employer, consider filling out the [Host Employer Interest form](#) to get a conversation started.

According to the Generation West Virginia website -- <https://generationwv.org/> -- Host Employers agree to:

- Hire their Impact Fellow(s) at a minimum annual compensation of \$31,000 and provide employee benefits or a stipend for benefits;
- Permit Impact Fellows to be out of the office on Fridays for the duration of the Fellowship year to complete volunteer projects in their communities and attend quarterly retreats with their Impact Fellow cohort across the state;
- Provide a direct supervisor to the Fellow, who will serve as a contact person for Generation WV;
- Determine appropriate positions, job description(s), work plan and team placement within the company for the year;
- Value and recognize the importance of investing in the next generation of West Virginia's workforce; and
- Provide a program fee paid to Generation WV to support recruitment and professional development costs. If you are an employer with less than 60 employees or a nonprofit organization, the program fee is \$3,000. If you are an employer with 60 or more employees, the program fee is \$6,000.

"The Generation WV Impact Fellowship program is a no-brainer for organizations seeking to grow and to tap the incredibly talented and hard-working people of this state," said Belcher.

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