
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**West Virginia Hive Annual Small Business and Partner
Awards Announced at Today's Open House Dec. 2**

Beckley, W.Va. (Dec. 2, 2022) – The West Virginia Hive named top performing Hive clients and partners as part of its annual open house this morning at the Beckley Presbyterian Church. For each of the past five years, the entrepreneurial arm of the New River Gorge Regional Development Authority (NRGRDA) has recognized business clients and program partners and supporters.

Ryan Thorn, state director of the West Virginia office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, offered keynote remarks as part of the program.

Judy Moore, executive director of the WV Hive and deputy director of NRGRDA, along with staff, presented the following awards:

2022 WV Hive Small Business of the Year Award – Amanda Green and Ceretha Green, Falcon Mine Service – located in Midway

2022 WV Hive Startup of the Year Award – Jordan Casey and Steven Jones, Botany Tropicals – located in Hinton

2022 WV Hive Entrepreneur of the Year Award - Marcus Thomas, Fat Bottom Coolers – from Beckley

2022 WV Hive Social Enterprise of the Year Award – Deiandra Blair, Blair's Sweet Treats & More – located in Bluewell

2022 WV Hive Partner of the Year Award - United Bank – accepted by Zack Statler, Market President

2022 Community Advocate of the Year - Donnie Pomeroy – Business Services Representative at Region 1 Workforce Development Board – from Meadow Bridge

This year, displays by WV Hive entrepreneurs were added to the Open House activities, showcasing their products and services, including a wide variety of food. Following the award presentations, the WV Hive opened its doors to the public to introduce its staff, promote networking, tour its coworking space, and invite entrepreneurs to take advantage of a range of services offered by the WV Hive.

“Today was a great way to reflect on our accomplishments throughout 2022 as well as recognize high-achieving business leaders, which we are so proud of, and our partners, who are so supportive, and on whom we depend,” said Moore. “More small businesses were created during the COVID-19 pandemic, and our entrepreneurs as well as our WV Hive staff were forced to endure a challenging stress test that has made us all stronger and more resilient.”

The WV Hive is the entrepreneurship program of the NRGRDA and the administrator of the Country Roads Angel Network. Its 13-county service area includes Raleigh, Fayette, Summers, Nicholas, Webster, Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Monroe, Mercer, McDowell, Wyoming, Logan, and Mingo counties. More information about the WV Hive can be found at <https://wvhive.com/>.

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