Onward NRV Launches "NRV Talent Network" LinkedIn Group to Connect Emerging Talent with Regional Employers

New online community supports college students, early-career professionals, and businesses building the future workforce of Virginia's New River Valley

New River Valley, VA, (January 12, 2026) — Onward New River Valley (Onward NRV) has launched the NRV Talent Network, a new LinkedIn group created to help college students, recent graduates, early-career professionals, and employers in Virginia's New River Valley connect directly in an easy to access space in order make career opportunities easier to find and navigate.

The NRV Talent Network was established to address a critical gap in the regional talent ecosystem by linking people early in their careers with local employers and job opportunities. While the NRV has world-class educational institutions, employers, and career resources, students often lack awareness of what's available in the region, causing them to seek opportunities outside the NRV. By bringing job seekers and businesses together in one shared location, the group aims to strengthen career pathways while supporting long-term economic growth across the New River Valley.

"Through the NRV Talent Network, we want to create a sustainable pipeline where students can see clear career pathways, employers can connect with local talent, and young professionals can envision themselves living and growing their careers in the New River Valley," said Laken Blankenship, Onward NRV Talent and Business Strategies Manager. "Onward NRV is excited to help students and early-career professionals launch and grow

their careers locally, while supporting the long-term growth, innovation, and prosperity of the New River Valley."

Unlike traditional alumni or professional groups, the NRV Talent Network is intentionally focused on opportunities within Virginia's New River Valley. Intended to be interactive and community driven, the group is being positioned as a resource to foster community, increase access to internships and jobs, and strengthen the region's workforce by building a stronger and more integrated talent pipeline.

The NRV Talent Network is now live and open to college students and young professionals interested in building their careers in the New River Valley, as well as employers located within the region. Individuals who would benefit from the group are encouraged to join on LinkedIn and look for a job or internship, engage by sharing about job and internship opportunities in the NRV, posting about a young professional event or meetup, sharing an article or resource on career development, and asking questions.

Virginia's New River Valley: Virginia's New River Valley is an eclectic mix of interconnected small towns that each offer their own unique vibe and appeal. The region provides an abundance of cultural and social offerings due to the presence of three world-class universities, while retaining the charm and benefits of small-town living. The NRV is home to a diverse and innovative business community with companies that range from high-tech startups to foreign-based corporations to specialty agribusiness. These organizations benefit from the collaborative spirit of our region and a loyal, highly-skilled, and educated workforce. The scenic beauty of the region also fosters a deep connection to nature, which is deepened by access to outdoor recreation and the preservation of our natural environment. It's clear why Virginia's New River Valley is "A Natural Fit."

Onward NRV: Onward NRV is a public/private, regional economic development organization whose mission is to attract and retain world class jobs, investment, and talent in Virginia's New River Valley. It's also a movement where leaders from business, government, and higher education work together to promote the economic vitality of the region.