



CONTACT:

Terrell Ellis
(304) 342-6972

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Business Retention Specialists Hired for Advantage Valley Region

Charleston, WV (November 13, 2017) – Advantage Valley, in partnership with the Putnam County Economic Development Authority, Huntington Area Development Council and the Charleston Area Alliance, has hired three business retention specialists to provide support and assistance to manufacturers and other area companies who have been affected by the downturn in the coal industry.

Terrell Ellis, executive director of Advantage Valley, said, “I’m very pleased to announce the hiring of Victoria Russo, Adam Phillips and William Miller. They are all exceptionally qualified and will do a great job in assisting Advantage Valley companies grow and expand.”

Ellis said that Victoria Russo will work for the Charleston Area Alliance. With a background in automated manufacturing technology and electronic engineering, Russo is already well acquainted with the area’s manufacturing sector. Additionally, she operated a language translation business over the past nineteen years specializing in the manufacturing sector and working with local companies.

Adam Phillips will work for the Huntington Area Development Council. Phillips previously served as projects manager for the Southern Ohio Port Authority in Scioto County, Ohio. He is a professional economic developer with experience in business recruitment and retention, as well as grant writing.

And, William Miller will work for the Putnam County Economic Development Authority. Miller brings significant business-to-business marketing experience to the role along with a unique understanding of international trade.

Earlier this year Advantage Valley received a grant of \$800,000 from the Robert C. Byrd Institute, which was funded through the POWER initiative and the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation to improve the economic viability of manufacturing and related businesses that have been negatively affected due to the downturn in the coal industry.

“As the coal industry has declined, so have many of the small-to-medium sized manufacturing companies that serve the industry,” said Ellis. “This grant will provide companies with assistance to identify and expand marketing opportunities with the goal of helping them increase sales and employment. The retention specialists will be responsible for assessing company needs and connecting them with the appropriate resources and service providers.”

Advantage Valley Inc. is a private nonprofit organization representing the Charleston and Huntington, West Virginia metropolitan statistical areas. In West Virginia, the region is represented by Boone, Cabell, Clay, Kanawha, Lincoln, Putnam and Wayne Counties with a combined population of nearly 600,000 persons.

For additional information, contact Terrell Ellis at (304) 342-6972.

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