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**VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
THIRD WEDNESDAY WEBINAR:**

SOURCELINK DATA BASE RESOURCE PROGRAM

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015
2:00 P.M.**

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CONAWAY HASKINS, III

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Q & A SEGEMENT:

LAUREN STUHLBREHER

VIRGINIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP



WEBINAR**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015****2:00 P.M.****(WHEREUPON, Slide 1 was displayed.)**

BRENT SHEFFLER: Hello, everyone. Welcome to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's Third Wednesday Webinar. Thank you for joining us today. Today is the 15th day of April, 2015. This Third Wednesday Webinar is the fourth in our 2015 series, and it's titled, "SourceLink Virginia: Linking Entrepreneurs to Resources That Help Them Grow." We expect today's session to run a little under one hour. My name is Brent Sheffler. I serve as managing director of Knowledge Transfer and Strategic Outreach on the Business Expansion Division of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. At the controls is my colleague, Lauren Stuhldreher with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, who is standing in for Connie Long today. Lauren is managing the dashboard and will moderate the Q and A part of today's webinar. The Virginia Economic Partnership is collaborating with Virginia Community Economic Network, also known as VCEN, to conduct today's webinar.

(WHEREUPON, Slide 2 was displayed.)

1 In just a minute, I will introduce our
2 program today. But before I ... you see this special
3 panel that's located in the upper right of your screen
4 as you see it on this slide.

5 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 3 was displayed.)**

6 We're taking questions, and we want this
7 webinar to be interactive. Those of you who have
8 screens on your desktop, your laptop, or your mobile
9 device, I invite you to type your questions in the
10 question panel window on your go-to webinar dashboard
11 at any time during the session. Lauren Stuhldreher is
12 able to read the questions submitted and can
13 communicate those questions to us as you proceed
14 through today's session. Again, we want this to be
15 interactive, so please go ahead and drop a question
16 into the question panel if you have one.

17 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 4 was displayed.)**

18 Several of our listeners ask us how they can
19 receive a copy of the presentation. This session is
20 being recorded. After we close today's session, we
21 will post the recorded webinar on the
22 VirginiaAllies.org website at the address that you see
23 above. If you miss any of the webinars connected so
24 far, and we have produced 30 webinars since 2012, you
25 are invited to go to the VirginiaAllies.org website

1 where each webinar conducted so far has been posted
2 and is made available for you. After we end today's
3 session, and once you have closed your webinar, you
4 will receive an e-mail with a few survey questions.
5 The survey should arrive in your e-mail within 24
6 hours after the close of today's webinar. We
7 encourage you to respond to the survey and give us
8 your feedback, which will help us to improve and plan
9 for future webinars.

10 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 5 was displayed.)**

11 So, just to recap, use the chat box during
12 the webinar to submit your questions, and yes, the
13 webinar is being recorded, so visit the website listed
14 above for the recording, and the webinar is being
15 transcribed. The transcription will be posted on the
16 website.

17 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 6 was displayed.)**

18 So, why are we doing this? Our Third
19 Wednesday Webinars are part of the Virginia Economic
20 Development Partnership's Ally Communications
21 Strategies. The webinars we held in 2013, 2014, and
22 the webinars we are showcasing this year are designed
23 to bring subject matter experts to address topics that
24 are important to you and to share knowledge about
25 available resources. It's our objective to keep you,

1 our Virginia's allies and partners, well informed so
2 that we can collectively accomplish our mission and
3 realize our economic development goals.

4 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 7 was displayed.)**

5 For those of you just now joining us,
6 today's topic is, "SourceLink Virginia: Linking
7 Entrepreneurs to Resources That Help Them Grow." Our
8 speaker today is Conaway Haskins, III, who joins us
9 from Virginia Community Economic Network.

10 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 8 was displayed.)**

11 Here's what we can expect Conaway Haskins to
12 cover today, and it's largely about how the Virginia
13 Community Economic Network, VCEN, and SourceLink
14 Virginia are supporting the growth of local and
15 regional entrepreneurs share ecosystems. You learn
16 what SourceLink Virginia is all about, how SourceLink
17 Virginia can be used as a tool for business retention
18 and expansion, how SourceLink Virginia can support
19 business attraction and business recruitment and what
20 economic developers can learn from SourceLink
21 Virginia's launch as they got started in the
22 Commonwealth, and where economic development and
23 community leaders can go for more information. We have
24 considerable information and material to cover, so let
25 me introduce our speaker, Conaway Haskins, III.

1 (WHEREUPON, Slide 9 was displayed.)

2 Conaway Haskins serves as first executive
3 director of the Virginia Community Economic Network,
4 an independent state-wide convener, thought leader,
5 and public voice for the curation and expansion of
6 community economic opportunities throughout the
7 Commonwealth. VCEN promotes innovative and
8 sustainable approaches to state and local
9 entrepreneurship and economic development that spur
10 job creation, increase wealth-building, and enhance
11 community vitality. Prior to VCEN, Conaway held
12 positions in the public and private sectors at the
13 local, state, and federal levels. He served as
14 executive director for government and external affairs
15 at Virginia State University, project director for the
16 national findings for work solutions at the council on
17 foundations, state director for U.S. Senator Jim Webb,
18 senior program officer at the Cameron Foundation, and
19 as research associate at the Aspen Institute's
20 Economic Opportunities Program. He currently serves
21 on the board of directors at George Mason University
22 Alumni Association and on the advisory boards of the
23 Minority Political Leadership Institute at Virginia
24 Commonwealth University and the Honors College at
25 George Mason University. Conaway is also a member of

1 the Virginia Economic Developers' Association.
2 Conaway previously served on the board of directors at
3 Communities and Schools of Virginia and the Virginia
4 Public Access Project. He was the Virginia volunteer
5 leader for the White House Office on Public
6 Engagement. In 2009, Richmond Magazine named him one
7 of its 51 people to know, and in 2006, he was selected
8 as a Robert H. Cole Leadership Fellow of the
9 Southeastern Council of Foundations and as political
10 leadership fellow of the Sorensen Institute for
11 Political Leadership at the University of Virginia.
12 Conaway earned his masters degree from the University
13 of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a bachelors
14 degree from George Mason University. A native of
15 Lynchburg, he currently lives in the Richmond area
16 with his wife and son.

17 Please join me in welcoming Conaway Haskins.
18 Conaway, please go ahead.

19 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 10 through Slide 28 was displayed.)**

20 **CONAWAY HASKINS, III:** Thank you, Brent, and
21 first of all, I just want to say thanks to you, the
22 team here at VDEP and VEDA for all your support and
23 the invitation to do this today. Good afternoon,
24 everyone. Thank you for participating in this
25 webinar. It's an exciting time for all of us at VCEN.

1 As Brent alluded to earlier, our organization is
2 relatively young. We were founded in 2013, and so
3 we're still very much in start-up mode, and we, you
4 know, came, our 50(c)3, just to clarify, we are not a
5 membership association like VEDA, nor are we lobbying
6 or an advocacy group. We are more of an information
7 and connecting organization trying to build and help
8 foster collaborations across the Commonwealth. I also
9 would like to thank, of course, our sponsors and our
10 partners. Our sponsors include a variety of public-
11 and private-sector entities, including VDEP, DHCD, the
12 Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity,
13 Virginia Housing and Development Authority, the state
14 SBDC network, our corporate partners such as Capital
15 One and Wells Fargo, university partners like George
16 Mason's Enterprise Center, VT Knowledge Works, and
17 also the Virginia Tourism Corporation. And a special
18 thanks extends to our partners at the Virginia
19 Business Information Association, the Virginia
20 Downtown Developers Association, and Virginia
21 Community Capital. Our universe is pretty broad. As I
22 said, we're more of an information and connecting
23 group, and so a lot of different organizations, as
24 Brent mentioned earlier, touch on the local and
25 regional entrepreneurship ecosystems, organizations

1 that we consider stakeholders in what we do. And so,
2 that's just a sample of sort of who all is out there,
3 particularly who's here in the Commonwealth of
4 Virginia. In terms of the organization's history, this
5 is important, because even though we are a relatively
6 young organization, we've been doing a lot around the
7 state and getting out there and meeting a lot of
8 different groups, and so they give you a sense of how
9 we got here. VCEN has its origins in some
10 conversations that actually were initiated in the fall
11 of 2012 by Virginia Community Capital in conjunction
12 with support from DHCD around what was going on in the
13 state of play in community economic development across
14 the Commonwealth. Later on in 2013, the Virginia
15 Microenterprise Network, which represented the
16 microloan and microfinance, microbusiness development
17 groups across the state held a big annual conference
18 in Richmond and connected up with the VCC initiative
19 and later that year in 2013, there was what was called
20 then the Community Economic Development Alliance, or
21 CEDA, which some people may have heard of. In the
22 fall of 2013, there was a formal agreement between the
23 CEDA initiative and the Virginia Microenterprise
24 Network to actually leverage the Virginia
25 Microenterprise Network's 501(c)3 status to help grow

1 this community economic development effort, and it was
2 merged and rebranded as the Virginia Community
3 Economic Network, and subsequently I was hired in
4 January 2014 by the board of directors to be the first
5 executive director. Two other milestones I'll point
6 out really quickly. We held our first annual
7 conference in June at the Hotel Roanoke. It was a two
8 and a half day event which brought together a variety
9 of players in this community of economic development
10 ecosystem, and then in August 2014, we did a soft
11 launch of the program that we're going to be talking
12 about today, which is SourceLink Virginia. Our first
13 conference, which we gave the SourceLink Virginia
14 brand to, was really about putting together the
15 pieces, you know, bringing folks together who are
16 working at the nexus of community economic
17 development, entrepreneurship development, and
18 economic development. As you can see from a variety
19 of prospectives that were representative of a variety
20 of kinds of organizations. We had local officials, we
21 had state agencies, staff, we had economic development
22 and community development staffs from at least five or
23 six state agencies. A number of communities that
24 really represented every corner of the Commonwealth,
25 rural, urban, and suburban. At the conference,

1 participants were able to engage in best practice
2 sharing through the sessions, the concurrent sessions
3 that were held, to engage in a lot of high-level
4 professional networking. Some people were able to use
5 this opportunity to get together with folks that they
6 always wanted to meet but had never been able to reach
7 out to or never had a constructive forum in which to
8 reach out to them. And then there was a lot of
9 interactive learning where we encouraged people to
10 have to spark new projects and new activities and
11 learn from each other, and this really was the, one of
12 the first of its kind where you brought together this
13 many different people and professionals across the
14 spectrum of economic community development, and we
15 would also like to note that the conference was ...
16 And ask why SourceLink Virginia? Why are we doing
17 this? And for those of you who are either at your
18 desks, on your PCs or laptops, or even somewhere with
19 your mobile device, it probably would be useful for
20 you to go to our SourceLinkVirginia.org website and,
21 so you can sort of see the actual platform that talks
22 about what we're doing. Over the past five or six
23 years, if you look around at the different reports
24 that have been put out, if you do a number of media
25 searches, you'll see that a variety of economic

1 development agencies, economic development efforts at
2 the local or regional level and at the state level
3 have explored the notion of creating a one-stop sort
4 of online resource portal to enhance small business
5 development, to provide resources to entrepreneurs.
6 And a survey that was conducted as part of the
7 formation process of VCEN actually found that this was
8 a real need as well among practitioners. Out of that
9 came the decision of looking at the U.S. SourceLink
10 platform which emerged as the best and most cost-
11 effective ways to address this need in the
12 Commonwealth. A little bit about U.S. SourceLink is it
13 was started in 2003 in partnership with the Kauffman
14 Foundation and the University of Missouri Kansas City.
15 It's consistently noted as one of the most effective
16 tools for economic developers to support
17 entrepreneurship with small business development, and
18 U.S. SourceLink, the national office in Kansas City,
19 and the 30-plus affiliates across America at the
20 local, state, and regional level, have garnered a
21 number of awards and recognition and support from
22 IEDC, USDA, EDA, the Federal Reserve, other parts of
23 the Commerce Department, and it's just really gained a
24 lot of traction at all levels of economic development
25 in terms of the utility of it as a resource. In

1 particular for today's discussion on this webinar,
2 we'd like to highlight that the SourceLink program is
3 really well suited to help those folks who are working
4 on the business retention and expansion side of
5 economic development, because it essentially helps
6 connect the companies that you're trying to retain,
7 expand, and start up in your communities, find the
8 resources that can help them in a more efficient and
9 more effective manner of doing something such as a
10 general Google search or having to go through any
11 number of databases and other programs to find who can
12 help them with the resources they need. It also adds
13 value to visitation programs that the business
14 retention and expansion professionals do, because you
15 actually can, in real time, encourage and work with
16 your local businesses to use SourceLink and our
17 SourceLink Virginia program to find what they may
18 need. On the other hand, it's also helpful for the
19 marketing and industry attraction side of economic
20 development because it will help you find potential
21 partners to work on the supply chain needs of the
22 firms that you're targeting or to help address the
23 supply chain partnerships or other partnerships that
24 you may need in place while you work to bring those
25 companies here to Virginia. In terms of the user

1 experience, there are two primary target audiences for
2 SourceLink. First would be the service providers
3 themselves. Their information is what's used to
4 populate the SourceLink resource directory and
5 calendar and other information. The core basis, the
6 foundation upon which the program is built off of are
7 the variety of not-for-profit university-based and
8 public sector organizations that provide business
9 assistance, that small business entrepreneurship
10 assistance services. However, given that Virginia
11 itself was founded in part, in large part as a
12 commercial entity and that Virginia rates consistently
13 as one of the top three to five states on almost every
14 business measure, we felt that it would not be as
15 useful for us to have this program and to not include
16 the variety of private sector for-profit organizations
17 that are very much engaged in the local and regional
18 entrepreneurship ecosystem development activities.
19 And so, we have been encouraging our fellow affiliates
20 across the country and at U.S. SourceLink to really
21 help come up with a way to include the business
22 providers in there more. For those folks that are
23 signing up for SourceLink to be listed, it's a pretty
24 low impact process. We have two options. There's an
25 online form, and there's also a paper form. And if

1 you go to SourceLink, you'll see the banner at the
2 top. There'll be a tab for "become a partner," and it
3 takes you right to the intake forms. It's easily
4 integrated into existing local or regional
5 initiatives. We've actually had website code
6 generated so that if a local or regional
7 entrepreneurship effort wants to utilize the database
8 for its own purposes, for its own local website or
9 local portal get free publicity for your events and
10 your services. And you'll help us generate data that
11 can support your own advocacy efforts, not our
12 efforts, but that you can use to support advocacy at
13 the local, state, and federal level and also do
14 ecosystem mapping activities. Another benefit of being
15 a part of SourceLink for those providers is that it
16 helps you find partners and collaborators who you may
17 not have known about before, particularly those that
18 aren't in your immediate geographic area. And then
19 the way the platform is set up and the way the
20 communication structure is, it allows us to do
21 continuous feedback so that we can make improvements
22 based upon the suggestions that we receive from
23 providers from the broader community at large. And
24 just as important, the one key element of SourceLink,
25 too, that's really attractive, we feel, for everybody

1 is that it is free to use, so there's no charge for
2 you to list your information about what your
3 organization does on SourceLink Virginia. In terms of
4 the entrepreneurs, the aspiring entrepreneurs, the
5 established entrepreneurs, and the mature small
6 business and business owners out there, what
7 SourceLink provides is access to information that's
8 sorted and vetted beyond what you can do from just a
9 general internet search, and it also helps you find
10 activity and resources that are out there that may be
11 outside of your immediate locality or your region but
12 that may still be willing to help you. There's a
13 clean interface when you go to search on SourceLink
14 Virginia. You're not going to see banner ads, you're
15 not going to have pop-ups and things like that. One
16 thing that's particularly important about SourceLink
17 is that we do not collect any personally identifiable
18 or proprietary business information. You're not
19 required to log on. You're not required to sign up to
20 enter your e-mail, your phone number. You can use it
21 and all the data that we track, analytics that we see,
22 are aggregated on the back end. Another key piece of
23 this, and this is both for the entrepreneurs and also
24 for the service providers is that you will not receive
25 any unsolicited communications from us about the

1 SourceLink program, and some of the data analytics
2 that we do generate can provide feedback that we can
3 give to our partners in the entrepreneurial ecosystem
4 here in Virginia on how they can improve or create new
5 activities and new programs. And again, for
6 entrepreneurs, it's free of charge. So, if you've gone
7 to SourceLinkVirginia.org and are looking at the home
8 page, you'll see some variation of this. The key
9 features there that you have on the side, the initial
10 start point to do the search for resources, there's a
11 blog with information, articles, and other things out
12 there that could be helpful and useful to both the
13 entrepreneurs and to the economic development
14 community, and the highlight for the calendar of
15 events of things that are going on around the state to
16 support entrepreneurship and economic development.
17 And there are also different drop-down menus as well.
18 The key feature, which is the most used feature of
19 SourceLink we've found so far is what's called the
20 resource navigator. This resource navigator is what
21 actually connects the users to the providers that are
22 out there and allows you to do, through a variety of
23 drop-down menus, to actually customize the search.
24 You can search by geography by putting in your ZIP
25 code, your industry, the area of assistance you're

1 looking for, what your specific needs are. It even
2 allows you to search under what stage of business are
3 you. Are you in the concept phase? Have you not
4 started your business yet, but you're just thinking
5 about it? Are you a start-up? Are you an established
6 business? Are you a mature enterprise? And it allows
7 you to have none of those categories selected. Maybe
8 you just want to see everybody that's out there that
9 can help you as a business with your information
10 technology and business planning needs. And so it
11 allows you, you have an either/or situation to search
12 by ZIP code or your city/state, or to do no geographic
13 search and just try to find everyone who's out there
14 in Virginia. Other thing you will see about the
15 resource providers is that they're not just Virginia-
16 based as we have a number of states bordering us, a
17 number of regions that are multi-state. We do have
18 providers listed from other states aside from
19 Virginia. In terms of the calendar, this is the main
20 state-wide calendar. What you'll see there is that it
21 is actually built in on geolocation technology, so
22 that as you sit at your computer or on your phone, the
23 SourceLink program actually identifies where you are
24 based on your IP address and will order the courses
25 that are available, workshops, classes, and other

1 events according to the distance that you are away
2 from those activities. It also allows you to search
3 by topic, so if you want to look just for marketing
4 events or just for accounting or just for legal
5 assistance ... or a particular course, there are also
6 online courses that are available as well through our
7 partner-providers. And what you'll see, too, if you go
8 to the top of the calendar page and do the drop-down
9 is there's a regionalization feature, too, so where
10 the calendar has actually been sorted by six different
11 regions in Virginia, you can look for a activities
12 that are just happening in your area. In terms of some
13 early analytics and early information that we've
14 gathered, we essentially have been in a two-phase,
15 two-step process with SourceLink. We initially
16 launched it in August in our soft launch test phase
17 with about 30 providers and went live in October with
18 about 100 providers, and at the end we've grown to
19 about 203 since then, and we're continuing to add
20 providers every day. Most of all, our marketing and
21 PR for it has been through word of mouth, through
22 social media, and through direct outreach to folks out
23 of this community. And so far we have over 1,000
24 unique users with over 6,200 page views. Over time,
25 we've seen an uptake in the traffic from new users in

1 addition to a steady state of traffic from folks who
2 are returning to the site to find information. A
3 little bit less than half of our activity comes from
4 people who are directly to SourceLink Virginia. About
5 a quarter of the activity are from referrals from
6 other partner websites, and about a third of the
7 activity is actually through general search engine
8 searches for other things like business planning or
9 technology support, and SourceLink Virginia comes up.
10 As you can see there, our highest level of activity
11 are in those particular regions of the state, and a
12 lot of that tracks to where the providers are who have
13 submitted their information so far. And again, as I
14 said earlier, we continue to build that out. About 80
15 percent of the activity is for the resource directory,
16 and a little less than 10 percent is for the calendar.
17 And there you can see what some of the more desired
18 information sources are. It shows what people are
19 looking for when they're using SourceLink Virginia. A
20 couple of highlights that I'd like to feature of what
21 we've done so far, we've actually got a number of
22 local and regional partnerships established in, with
23 Loudoun. Loudoun, actually Loudoun County's
24 Department of Economic Development actually joined the
25 U.S. SourceLink network before we did, and they run

1 Loudoun SourceLink for their site. And so we have a
2 data sharing partnership where any information that is
3 updated on a provider that serves Loudoun County is
4 updated in both their system and in our system. And
5 then we also have the local partnerships established
6 in groups in Richmond, Roanoke, Charlottesville, and
7 the Shenandoah Valley and Southern Virginia, where
8 they have actually taken, through the use of that
9 website, they've taken SourceLink Virginia and
10 embedded it directly into their own local and regional
11 entrepreneurship online portals. We're currently in
12 active discussions with groups in Hampton Roads, other
13 parts of Southern Virginia, southwest, Northern
14 Virginia, Fredericksburg, and so forth, in bringing
15 this resource to them as well. It's a new tool for
16 you. They're a local economic development, and we
17 hope that you will make good use of it and also help
18 us improve it. We're working on a partnership with
19 the Department of Small Business and Supplier
20 Diversity at the state level to help integrate and
21 connect the business One-Stop Program that they manage
22 with what we're doing at SourceLink Virginia so that
23 we can have a really good wraparound support system
24 for our small business community in Virginia. I will
25 note that we do have one of the, thanks to our

1 partners and to the support that we've gotten from our
2 sponsors, we've had one of the fastest rollouts among
3 all the affiliates in the U.S. SourceLink network.
4 And one of the things I will say in terms of things
5 that we are really looking forward is to your feedback
6 of how we can make it better and your organization's
7 participation as a provider submitting your
8 information. We are really seeking additional content
9 for our blog that's on our front page. And so, if you
10 have information out there about things that are going
11 on in your particular neck of the woods or would like
12 to offer your perspective on things in economic
13 development, small business development,
14 entrepreneurship ecosystems, please get in touch. Just
15 a couple of examples here. Out of the 30-plus
16 SourceLink affiliates, there are only about six or
17 seven of us that are actually statewide. Most
18 SourceLink affiliates are local and regional in
19 nature, but for those of us who are statewide, we have
20 developed some more interesting models for
21 collaboration, particularly with the public and
22 private sector economic development entities in our
23 state. Iowa was once a ... the equivalent of their
24 business one-stop. And so that's a new partnership
25 that happened a couple months ago, and so they're

1 starting to see some really good collaboration and
2 really good outcomes as a result of working with
3 SourceLink partner, of working with the state agency
4 that's in charge of that business one-stop type
5 activity. Another model for collaboration is what's
6 happening out in Kansas, Network Kansas, which is
7 based at Wichita State, was actually the very first
8 affiliate of U.S. SourceLink, and they are a
9 partnership not only with the State of Kansas Commerce
10 Department and the universities but with a variety of
11 other groups. And they actually are leveraging the
12 SourceLink database and the SourceLink calendar and
13 other functions of the technology platform and pairing
14 that up with economic development programming,
15 particularly those that are funding and providing
16 technical assistance to small businesses in that
17 state. And so those are two interesting models that
18 we like to showcase that are very much in the
19 mainstream of local resource, state economic
20 development, in the country and how SourceLink and
21 SourceLink programs can help foster that kind of
22 activity. In terms of early lessons learned from
23 developing the SourceLink program and taking it out
24 into the field, to those of you who are in Virginia,
25 we see that there are some disconnects between what

1 economic developers are seeking to do and what some
2 segments of the entrepreneurial community are looking
3 at in terms of job creation, the focus there, the
4 prospective on increased tax revenue, the risk factor
5 of making investments in certain kinds of companies
6 and certain kinds of activities, and industry sector
7 targeting. And we see that as an opportunity, because
8 SourceLink can actually help refine the information
9 that gets to the economic development community. It
10 can be a communications tool, two-way communications
11 tool between entrepreneurs broadly and economic
12 developers in Virginia. One of the things that we
13 have consistently heard from entrepreneurs and
14 business owners who we've consulted with about the
15 development of SourceLink, and I think the research
16 being the data entered from the initial six months or
17 so shows that a lot of what the small businesses are
18 looking for out there revolves around the provision of
19 capital, access to capital, and credit, trying to
20 obtain more customers. And the third piece of that is
21 the connection speeds. A lot of our customers are
22 really looking for the opportunity to connect with
23 fellow entrepreneurs to share stories, to develop an
24 informal form of support, so that's a really
25 interesting finding that we have early on, and we feel

1 like it's another opportunity for those who are
2 providing services to the small business community to
3 be more precise about what you're doing. But then on
4 the other hand, and I'll give, the credit goes to a
5 lot of folks in Virginia that are doing local and
6 economic development, is that particularly with the
7 emerging new economy in Virginia, economic developers,
8 especially in some of the more distressed areas or
9 areas that are historically more distressed, are now
10 taking an all-inclusive approach that maintains the
11 industry and business recruitment and attraction and
12 marketing piece, international trade piece, but also
13 has a nice balance of that with business retention and
14 expansion and working on ways to do innovation and
15 start-up type activities for their communities. Some
16 of the other things that we're seeing is that, really,
17 SourceLink Virginia is a state-wide program, but our
18 local partnerships that are key, because
19 entrepreneurship ecosystems are inherently local and
20 inherently regional. And in many parts of Virginia,
21 they cross state borders, and so services have to be
22 provided, they have to be structured in a way to
23 reflect that and they can go as deep as possible with
24 entrepreneurs. The other thing that we find, too, and
25 this may seem like an obvious point for some, but it's

1 not quite for other, is that the quantity and quality
2 of services varies widely, but it's not necessarily an
3 issue of size. There's some smaller areas that are
4 doing some really interesting and creative things and
5 are really making a difference for the entrepreneurs
6 and small businesses in their areas. And there are
7 some larger, wealthier areas in the state that, when
8 you look out there, scan the landscape, may be
9 struggling a little bit to make sure that they reach
10 entrepreneurs. And so that's the one thing that I
11 would, one of the points that we would like to make is
12 that the quantity and quality piece should not be
13 equated. But we're happy to say that a number of
14 regions in Virginia, small regions, mid-sized regions,
15 and in our larger metro areas that are really well
16 positioned to become leading hot spots for
17 entrepreneurship and innovation. And so that's a
18 really exciting thing to be a part of. A few things on
19 the horizon for VCEN and also for SourceLink, we're
20 going to start, particularly as we get more complete
21 information about resource providers, we're going to
22 start work ... Virginia. There's some very creative
23 things that are going on in Virginia that other
24 communities across the country would love to have
25 happen, but we're doing it right here. So, we want to

1 make sure that we're promoting and plugging the
2 things, the great things here, right here in the
3 Commonwealth. We're going to continue to try to
4 provide different interactive learning opportunities
5 for practitioners that are not duplicative of what
6 other resource providers in the state are doing.
7 We're testing a number of pilot initiatives to try to
8 figure out if there are new models and new ways of
9 doing what we do better. And then also using the
10 information that we gain from SourceLink and from
11 being part of this ecosystem here in Virginia to
12 provide insight to folks in the community, community
13 leaders, to the economic development community, and
14 also to policymakers at the local, state, and federal
15 level here in Virginia. And if you need to get in
16 touch with us, feel free to reach out. I'm always
17 reachable via e-mail and phone, and it actually
18 concludes this piece of my presentation, and I think
19 we'll kick it back over to Brent.

20 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 29 was displayed.)**

21 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** Very well, Conaway. Thank
22 you very much. Thank you, Conaway. Those of you who
23 joined us in the middle of the program, you have been
24 listening to Conaway Haskins, III, who serves as the
25 executive director of the Virginia Community Economic

1 Network, just as you see on this slide. His contact
2 information along with the links to the websites that
3 he mentioned are listed here. As a reminder to our
4 audience, we are taking questions. If you have a
5 question, please post it in the question panel. We
6 have an opportunity to take questions, and Lauren
7 Stuhldreher will moderate the question panel and will
8 let us know what questions she's receiving. Lauren,
9 please go ahead.

10 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 30 was displayed.)**

11 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** Great, thanks, Brent.
12 We have a few questions. First question for Conaway:
13 What would you suggest a locality do to get resources
14 in the online network?

15 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Yeah, there are a couple
16 things they can do with that, and that's a great
17 question. One, if you go to the front page of
18 SourceLink, and there's a tab at the top that says
19 "become a resource partner," the community can
20 actually, if there's a community economic development
21 agency or whatever may be, they can fill out that
22 information and send it directly to me, and we'll make
23 sure that it gets in the SourceLink, or you can fill
24 out the online form. And if you'd like, we can talk
25 beforehand about the best ways of navigating that

1 process to make sure that you get what you need as a
2 community.

3 **LAUREN STUHL DREHER:** Great, thank you. Next
4 question: What kind of content for the blog are you
5 looking for?

6 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Well, actually, what we
7 really would like to have are information, articles,
8 things that, and highlights of what's really going on
9 out there in these local entrepreneurship ecosystems.
10 We want to, we know that there's increased news
11 coverage by various local media, but we see our blog
12 as another place for the entrepreneurship development
13 community, the economic development community, to
14 really provide its own message about what's happening
15 out there and what you're doing to help amplify and
16 lift up the small business sector in your area.

17 **LAUREN STUHL DREHER:** Great. Next question:
18 Would it be helpful for VEDP's BX managers to connect
19 you with resources in our regions that we do not
20 currently see on your website, or can we send you
21 information and let you determine if you want to reach
22 out to them?

23 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** I would say the first one
24 is great. Please do reach out and let me know who you
25 think we should be connected with, and we can do it

1 jointly, you know, work on that and make sure that we
2 get as many organizations and as many programs and
3 sources as possible because, really, the effectiveness
4 of a SourceLink program is highly dependent on the
5 effectiveness of that program at getting those
6 resources into the database.

7 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** Okay. Last question:
8 How can a locality become a partner with ...

9 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** I think we just lost part
10 of the question, there, Lauren. Go ahead, and can you
11 repeat the question?

12 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** Sure ...

13 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** I'm not sure if Lauren can
14 hear us ...

15 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** ... how can a locality
16 become a partner with SourceLink in Virginia?

17 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Well, the easiest way to
18 do it is actually just to give me a call. Give me a
19 call, shoot me an e-mail, and we can talk about the
20 various ways that we can maybe bring the SourceLink
21 program to bear in your region, whether that is in an
22 existing website that you may have for
23 entrepreneurship and economic development, or if you
24 would like to create something new. All of our
25 partners are doing things that are fit and that are

1 customized to their local environment, and so we don't
2 have a set is to please send me your events, your
3 workshops, your trainings, things like that that you
4 all are doing. Please send that to us so that we can
5 actually post it to our calendar and hopefully be
6 another avenue for you to get attendees at your
7 events.

8 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** Okay, thanks. I just
9 got a few more questions that have come in. Next
10 question: Can a government be listed as a resource?

11 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Absolutely, absolutely.
12 There are number of government entities whether it's
13 the Clerk of the Court, whether it's the county tax
14 office. If you interface at all with small businesses
15 in the business community, you are able to be a
16 resource as a government agency.

17 **LAUREN STUHLBREHER:** Okay, great. Next
18 question: Is there a cost to become a resource in
19 SourceLink?

20 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** No. Through the generous
21 support of our public and private sector sponsors,
22 we're able to offer the SourceLink Virginia program
23 free of charge to the participants in terms of the
24 service providers that are out there working with
25 small businesses, and it's also free, the businesses

1 don't have to pay, and neither do you all who are in
2 the economic development government community.

3 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** Okay, I think ...

4 **LAUREN STUHLDTREHER:** Okay, last question ...

5 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** ... okay.

6 **LAUREN STUHLDTREHER:** We have one more that
7 just came in, Brent. Can for-profit incubators, can
8 for-profit incubators, entrepreneurship centers, be
9 included in your resource directory?

10 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Yes, they can, and that is
11 something that is different than some other source and
12 providers is that we recognize very clearly that our
13 for-profit community and the for-profit business
14 sector are vital in the development of Virginia's
15 entrepreneurial ecosystem, because we are one of the
16 best states for business, and we have been for
17 decades. And so, yes, for-profits can access it. We
18 do have a vetting process where we really look at what
19 kinds of services are being provided and the level of
20 engagement for that for-profit in economic and
21 entrepreneurship development, but yes, we welcome for-
22 profit participation.

23 **LAUREN STUHLDTREHER:** All right, great, thank
24 you. That looks like all the questions we've received
25 for now.

1 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** Very well. Thank you,
2 Lauren. Thank you, Conaway. And those of you who have
3 been listening, you have been listening to Conaway
4 Haskins, and I would like to thank you for joining us
5 today, Conaway. It's been a great presentation, great
6 overview and orientation to the SourceLink Virginia
7 program, and it's great to hear what you're doing with
8 the Virginia community economic network and the
9 ecosystem for entrepreneurship in Virginia. So, thank
10 you, Conaway.

11 **CONAWAY HASKINS:** Thank you, Brent. Thank
12 you for inviting me to participate.

13 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 31 was displayed.)**

14 **BRENT SHEFFLER:** I'd also like to thank many
15 of the people who make this webinar possible. As you
16 see, several names on here, from VEDA with Connie Long
17 and also at the Virginia Economic Development
18 Partnership, several names there. If you have a word
19 of praise, please pass it on to them. If you have a
20 complaint, please let me know.

21 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 32 was displayed.)**

22 I'd also like to acknowledge that Veteran
23 Reporters is serving for our transcription services.
24 As mentioned, the transcription will be posted on the
25 website, so please go to that website when you can.

1 This is where it's posted, on the VirginiaAllies.org
2 website, and go to the webinars tab or the
3 presentations tab. Either way will get you there, and
4 we hope you would not only take a look at this webinar
5 but others that have been posted previously.

6 **(WHEREUPON, Slide 33 was displayed.)**

7 We hope you can join us again, Wednesday,
8 May 20th, 2015 for the next Third Wednesday Webinar on
9 the topic "Blueprint Virginia: An Update from the
10 Virginia Chamber of Commerce." During this webinar,
11 we will provide you with an overview that has taken
12 place to create Blueprint Virginia, and what this
13 means to the economic developers across the
14 Commonwealth. Barry DuVal, president and CEO of the
15 Virginia Chamber of Commerce will provide us with that
16 update, and we'll share the latest development and the
17 steps going forward in the implementation of Blueprint
18 Virginia. As always, there is no cost for
19 registration. We look forward to having you with us
20 on May 20th for the fifth webinar in our 2015 Third
21 Wednesday Webinar series, and Conaway Haskins and I,
22 Brent Sheffler, would like to thank you for joining
23 us. So, please join us again on May 20th. We look
24 forward to having you. Until then, goodbye everybody.
25 Have a great day. Thank you.

1 STIPULATION

2
3 The foregoing matter was taken on the date, and at
4 the time and place set out on the title page hereof.

5
6 It was requested that the matter be taken by the
7 reporter and that the same be reduced to typewritten
8 form.

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**CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER AND SECURE ENCRYPTED
SIGNATURE AND DELIVERY OF CERTIFIED TRANSCRIPT**

I, **Constance Boudreau**, do hereby certify that the foregoing matter was reported by stenographic and/or mechanical means, that same was reduced to written form, that the transcript prepared by me or under my direction, is a true and accurate record of same to the best of my knowledge and ability; that there is no relation nor employment by any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financial or otherwise interest in the action filed or its outcome.

This transcript and certificate have been digitally signed and securely delivered through our encryption server.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have here unto set my hand
this 11th day of May, 2015 .



Constance J. Boudreau

Constance Boudreau
Court Reporter



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