



APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Giles County

Program Title: A.C.C.E - Access to Community College Education

Program Category: Community & Economic Development

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Chris McKlarney

Title: County Administrator

Department: Administration

Complete Mailing Address: 315 North Main Street

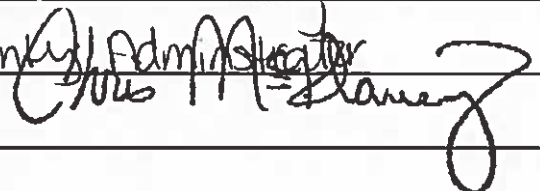
Telephone: 540-921-2525 Website: www.gilescounty.org

Email: cmcklarney@gilescounty.org

SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: Chris McKlarney

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

Virginia Association of Counties
2016 – Achievement Awards Submission
A.C.C.E. – Access to Community College Education
Giles County, Virginia

State the Problem, Challenge or Situation: The economic reality for Giles County is that we must attract new business and in order to do this we must be successful in increasing the educational levels of our younger citizens about to enter the workforce; especially in the technology sectors- Science Technology, Engineering and Math. The Giles County Comprehensive Plan states: *Another probable factor affecting the recent loss in the “younger adult” categories would be the lack of Jobs. With few moderate-high wage jobs readily available, young adults graduating high school do not have many employment options in the County. They move to larger communities with a more diverse employment base and a greater opportunity for higher wages.*

Giles County is a place of great natural beauty. It boasts of 37 miles of the New River, 63 miles of the Appalachian Trail, countless stunning vistas, agricultural scenes and 64,960 acres of the Jefferson National Forest. Giles has outdoor recreation opportunities that seem endless. These include hiking, birdwatching, hunting, fishing, boating, biking, caving, rafting and swimming; to name just a few. Giles is a wonderful place to **live** and **play**. We need more moderate-high paying jobs in order for it to be a more wonderful place to **work**; becoming the complete package.

How the Program Fulfilled the Awards Criteria:

All four information areas requested, as restated immediately below, are addressed in Description of the ACCE Program: 1. Innovative; 2. Promote intergovernmental cooperation and/or cooperation with local, state and federal entities and/or a private enterprise in addressing the problem; 3. Provide a model that other local governments may learn from or implement in their own localities; 4. Tell how the program was carried out including financing, staffing and results.

Description of the ACCE Program: Access to Community College Education (ACCE) provides the financial support for any Giles County Student who graduates from high school, with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5, to attend New River Community College (NRCC) at no tuition cost to the student. Students may be from public, private or home schools. The student must maintain this 2.5 GPA during college. The student may achieve an Associate Degree or Certificate, with a maximum of 60 credit hours paid by ACCE. Students may attend college for up to two years. In return for this benefit, the student must provide 80 hours of community service to the county each year in school. The purpose of ACCE is to elevate the educational levels of our citizens/workforce and, in turn, create the outcome of a more attractive workforce for present and future employers.

Planning for ACCE began in the spring of 2013. The Giles County Administrator, Chris McKlarney and previous Giles School Board/New River Community College Foundation member, Dr. J. Lewis Webb, and NRCC Foundation Staff, attended a presentation at NRCC given by Virginia Western Community College on their CCAP Program.

After much program design committee discussion over the following months, the ACCE concept was presented to the Giles County Board of Supervisors, Giles School Board and NRCC. The Board of Supervisors approved the allocation of funding in order to cover 50% of the anticipated cost of the first ACCE class. The development of final policies and operational details began in the summer of 2014. In the fall of 2014, a fundraising dinner was scheduled. Local industry stakeholders and select private citizens were invited and \$139,000 was secured. In the summer of 2015, fund-raising and advisory committees were established.

In January of 2015, the application process began and ultimately 69 applications for ACCE funding were received that were determined to be eligible. Of this number, 7 decided to pursue different options and withdrew, 11 were not accepted due to GPA issues or residency issues. FAFSA Workshops were provided for the remaining 51. Upon completion of the financial aid process, it was determined that 21 would be receiving full financial aid and would not require ACCE support. As a result of the ACCE process, 51 Giles County Students were enrolled in NRCC; 30 with ACCE funding and 21 with full financial aid (It should be noted that the entire Giles graduating class in 2015 was 196 seniors. The total ACCE applicants accounted for 35% of all seniors).

Special provisions have been built into the ACCE program in order to maximize the potential for each student to be successful in their college experience. These begin with student/parent workshops on how to fill out their FAFSA. NRCC Foundation staff also monitor each FAFSA application in order to assist the student with their proper completion. Every student at NRCC receives benefit from the Student Success and Intentional Engagement Mode. However, the difference for ACCE students is that each of them is assigned to the same ACCE Connection Specialist. The specialist oversees each student's progress to ensure they are performing in line with ACCE expectations. Another major difference is that through the ACCE program they are actually held accountable to achieving a specific GPA, whereas, students outside the program can't be "made" to perform at a certain level. The application process for the 2016-2017 school year has recently been completed and 72 applications were received (of these 72, 59 will be receiving ACCE funding; all needing it). This includes 3 from private schools and 3 home schoolers. There are presently 175 seniors in Giles public schools; the 2016 graduating class. The 2016 ACCE applicants accounted for 38% of Giles public school seniors. When the 6 non-public school student applications are added, we have realized an increase in total applications received of 4% over the first year. This is despite the fact that there are 11% less students in the public school 2016 graduating class vs the 2015 graduating class. It is anticipated that the rate of application response will continue to increase, although, at less than the present rate.

It should be noted that we are well aware of how profoundly education (Pre-K through College) impacts all areas of an adults' life. These impacts are not by any means only economic. Higher education creates more positive adult health outcomes and more impactful parenting skills; to name but two. Education plays a major role in breaking the negative cycles of generational dysfunction. ACCE will be a major factor in this. The next US Census will show an increase in the percentage of college level education for Giles. Over time, this increase will also be reflected in such diverse data point categories as Health, Economy and Income and Poverty. VA Department of Health Profiles will show decreasing teen pregnancy rates, diabetes rates, etc. Department of Corrections data will show lower incarceration rates. Few facets of the human condition are not impacted by education. In addressing the criteria *provide a model that other local*

governments may learn from or implement, several local governments are in the process of, or have expressed an interest in, implementing ACCE style programs and both Giles staff and NRCC staff have provided technical support.

Relative to financing of ACCE: In 2015, the first ACCE class, fifty-seven graduates were accepted to ACCE, receiving a total of \$75,180 in funding for an average of \$1,928 per student. Giles County contributed \$75,000 to ACCE. The Giles business community and citizenry contributed a total of \$139,000. Giles County contributed \$75,000 in 2016 and the target amount for the community is \$180,000. The Giles County Community Service Coordinator and his intern's annual time allocation is approximately 250 hours and 100 hours respectively and the Special Projects Coordinator allocation is approximately 60 hours per year. The first year 80 hour community service component gave back a total of 2,817 hours of service to Giles. This is the equivalent of more than one full-time employee. It provides the student with valuable work experience and creates an additional level of student commitment to their college experience.

Overview: ACCE - Access to Community College Education

Access to Community College Education (ACCE) enables any Giles County Student who graduates from high school, with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5, to attend New River Community College with no tuition expense (students may be from public, private or home schools. The student must maintain a 2.5 GPA during college. The student may achieve an Associate Degree, with 60 credit hours paid by ACCE. Students may attend college for two years. In return, the student must provide 80 hours of community service to Giles each year they attend NRCC.

Numerous county officials and staff were and/or are significantly involved in the development and implementation of the Giles County ACCE Program. These include the Board of Supervisors, School Board, Giles County Administrator, Superintendent of Schools, School Department Staff, Giles Community Service Coordinator and the Giles Special Projects Coordinator. With the exception of attending a presentation on the Virginia Western Community College, Community College Access Program (CCAP), no other outside technical experts and/or consultants assisted in ACCE.

ACCE Program conversation began in 2013. ACCE became operational on August 24th, 2015; the day the first class of ACCE Students began school at New River Community College. An objective of ACCE is to elevate the educational levels of our citizens/workforce. The outcome will be a workforce that is more attractive to present employers. This more qualified workforce will also play a major role in attracting new business to Giles County. The ultimate goal is the development of more moderate-high paying jobs for our citizens leading to a quality of life enhancement impacting all aspects of life. This past January, Giles County was advised by Virginia's Community Colleges Chancellor Glenn DuBois that we were the recipients of the **2016 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy** on behalf of NRCC.

Summary: ACCE – Access to Community College Education

Access to Community College Education (ACCE) enables any Giles County Student who graduates from high school, with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5, to attend New River Community College with no tuition expense. The student may achieve an Associate Degree, with 60 credit hours paid by ACCE. Students may attend college for two years. In return, the student must provide 80 hours of community service to Giles each year they attend NRCC. The concept became discussion in 2013 and on August 24th, 2015, ACCE became operational; the first day of that school year at New River Community College.

Numerous county officials and staff and NRCC staff were and/or are significantly involved in the development and implementation of the Giles County ACCE Program. These include the Board of Supervisors, School

Board, Giles County Administrator, Superintendent of Schools, NRCC Educational Foundation staff, School Department Staff, Giles Community Service Coordinator and the Giles Special Projects Coordinator.

An objective of ACCE is to elevate the educational levels of our citizens/workforce. The outcome will be a workforce that is more attractive to present employers. This more qualified workforce will also play a major role in attracting new business to Giles County. The ultimate objective is the development of more moderate-high paying jobs for our citizens leading to a quality of life enhancement for Giles citizens impacting all aspects of their lives.

This past January, Giles County was advised by Virginia's Community Colleges Chancellor Glenn DuBois that we were the recipients of the **2016 Chancellor's Award for Leadership in Philanthropy** on behalf of New River Community College.



2016 Narrows Senior Graduates Participating in A.C.C.E



2016 Giles Senior Graduates Participating in A.C.C.E.