

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

NEPA

ANNUAL

REPORT

NEPA Alliance continues to provide quality services to our businesses, communities and governments in Carbon, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Monroe, Pike, Schuylkill and Wayne counties.

The NEPA staff has accomplished all of the goals set by our funding partners, and we continue to serve our region with quality business, community, economic development and transportation services.

The following pages of our Annual Report chronicle the success of our programs for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2023.

- NEPA leveraged \$2.95 million in ARC grants for regional and local organizations.
- NEPA Business Development Programs assisted our clients in creating or retaining 1756 jobs in our region.
- NEPA's Business Finance Center loaned \$6,209,099 leveraging \$16,281,583 for businesses. The NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation, our affiliate Small Business Administration (SBA) Certified Development Corporation, closed 15 loans providing \$6,381,500 in financing to businesses in the region, leveraging another \$12,858,000.
- NEPA's International Business Development Program completed the year at 116% of the goal established by the Commonwealth Office of International Business Development (OIBD) and reported sales of \$128,680,834 for 1047 jobs direct, indirect and induced.
- NEPA's government contracting program, APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC), supported hundreds of jobs through \$449,345,048 in government contracts awarded in our region and assisted 253 businesses.
- The NEPA Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill counties with transportation planning continues to maintain the TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) for 2023-2026 in the amount of \$677 million.

- NEPA manages the NEPA PREP Partnership (Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance), which is a collaboration of twelve (12) economic development agencies within our region. NEPA leveraged \$657,142 in state funding to support the initiative.
- NEPA assisted business and nonprofit clients leveraging \$5,750,000 in PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grants.
- The Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC) provided customized grant/capital/fundraising development strategy sessions to over 333 organizations.
- Through the Get Connected E-Commerce program, NEPA used \$64,750 in grant funding to provide e-commerce platforms including websites and social media support to over 18 businesses.
- NEPA leveraged a \$195,000 DCED grant to continue Engage!, a business retention and expansion program. NEPA and partners interviewed over 232 companies in the region to assist with growth and expansion strategies.

We thank all of our volunteer Board and Committee Members for their service and dedication to making Northeastern Pennsylvania a great place to live, work and play. We also thank our legislative delegation at the federal, state and county levels for their continued support!

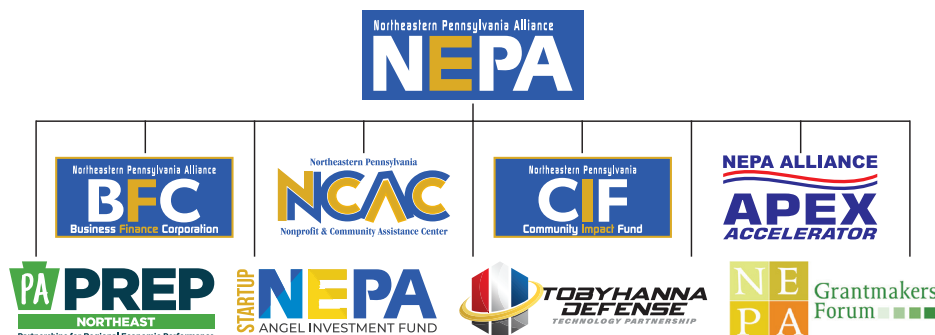


Mary Beth Wood
Board Chairperson
2022 - 2024



Jeffrey Box
President & CEO

NEPA Alliance Affiliates





OFFICERS

Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Commissioner George Halcovage, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
William Kerstetter, Treasurer

Mary Frances Postupack, Secretary
Alex Stark, Assistant Treasurer
Commissioner Wayne Nothstein, Assistant Secretary
Joseph Sebelin, Past Board Chairperson

DIVISIONS

Executive Leadership

Jeffrey Box - President & CEO

Administrative Services

Wendi Holena - Vice President/CFO
 Judith Doblix - Senior Accounting Manager
 Jeffrey Loftus - Accountant

Business Development Services

Stephen Ursich - Vice President
 David Nat - Business Finance Manager
 Donovan Klem - Business Finance Manager
 Ken Doolittle - Business Finance Manager
 James Urso - Business Finance Specialist
 Frank Migneco - Senior Government Procurement Manager
 Paula Terpak - Business Dev. & Govt. Procurement Specialist
 Kara Smith - Government Procurement Specialist
 Tyler Day - Government Procurement Specialist
 Deborah Langan - Senior International Business Development Manager

Community & Economic Development Services

Kurt Bauman - Vice President
 Betsy Ardizoni - Community & Economic Development Services Manager

Communications & Operations

Donna Hritz - Vice President
 Michael Skowronski - Information Technology Manager

Transportation Planning Services

Alan Baranski - Vice President
 Kate McMahon - Senior Transportation Services Manager
 Daniel Yelito - Transportation Services Manager
 Annette Ginocchetti - Transportation GIS Manager

CARBON COUNTY

Kathy Henderson (2024)
Commissioner Wayne Nothstein
 Harold Pudliner (2024)
Joseph Sebelin (2023)**
 Garry Wentz (2023)

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Philip Condron (2024)
 Thomas Donohue (2023)
 Katie Leonard (2023)
 John McNulty (2024)
 Commissioner Jerry Notarianni
 (Brenda Sacco alt.)
Alex Stark (2024)**

LUZERNE COUNTY

Stephen Barrouk (2023)**
 Joseph Lettiere (2024)
 Mary Malone (2023)
 County Council Tim McGinley
 Michelle Mikitish (2024)
 Kerry Miscavage (2023)

MONROE COUNTY

Christopher Barrett (2024)
 Commissioner John Christy
 Charles Leonard (2023)
Mary Frances Postupack (2023)**
 Marynell Strunk (2024)

PIKE COUNTY

Cynthia DeFebo (2023)
William Kerstetter (2024)**
 Commissioner Matthew Osterberg
 Peter Wulfhorst (2024)
 Vacant (2023)

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Robert Carl (2024)
 Courtney Fasnacht (2024)
 Micah Gursky (2023)
Commissioner George Halcovage
 Bud Quandt (2023)

WAYNE COUNTY

Commissioner Jocelyn Cramer
 James Hockenbury (2023)
 Craig Rickard (2024)
 Mike Rollison (2023)
Mary Beth Wood (2024)**

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley***
 Chris Doherty***
 Ricky Durst***
 Vincent Galko***
 Larry Malski***
 Kit Pappas***
 Alana Roberts***
 Vacant***

EX-OFFICIO

Jeffrey Box, NEPA President & CEO
 Maria Montoro Edwards, NCAC Board Chair
 Andy Reilly, PNE (John Augustine alt.)

EMERITUS

David Donlin
 Ernest Preate

**Officer

*** Chairman's Appointments
 () terms expire June 30th

APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION



**Appalachian
Regional
Commission**

As the designated Local Development District (LDD) for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), NEPA provides technical assistance to those organizations seeking ARC grant assistance.

FUNDED PROJECTS FY 2022-2023

Organization	Project	ARC Grant Amount	Funding Leveraged
NEPA Alliance	PREP	\$400,000	\$400,000
Wyoming Valley Chamber of Business & Industry	Connect Inclusive	\$154,000	\$154,000
Johnson College	Tools of the Trade	\$140,000	\$140,000
NeighborWorks NEPA	West Scranton Main Street Revitalization	\$125,000	\$125,000
Misericordia University	Simulation in Nursing	\$83,507	\$83,507
West Hazleton Borough	Rotary Drive Roadway Drainage and Public Enhancements	\$500,000	\$500,000
Tamaqua Area Community Partnership (Hope and Coffee)	Hope and Coffee, and Anti-Stigma Recovery-to-Work Employment Skills Coffee Shop	\$270,000	\$270,000
Lackawanna County	Stauffer Road Construction Phase IV	\$630,294	\$282,574
Scranton Cultural Center	Sound Enhancements for the Weinberg Theater	\$125,000	\$128,617
Maternal and Family Health Services	Circle of Care Maternity Medical Home	\$200,000	\$200,000
Downtown Shenandoah, Inc.	Shenandoah Innovation Center	\$136,000	\$136,000
Wayne County	Wayne County Food Locker Program	\$185,000	\$185,000
Total		\$2,948,801	\$2,604,698

ENGAGE! AND GET CONNECTED PROGRAMS

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance serves as the Northeast Regional Coordinator for the *Engage!* Program, which is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED). The *Engage!* Program is a Pennsylvania statewide business retention and expansion program designed to interact with targeted companies regularly and proactively. Get Connected is a DCED-funded program that provides businesses with either the development of a new website or the enhancement of an existing one in terms of adding the capability of conducting online transactions. During FY 2022-2023, there were:

- 232 *Engage!* surveys completed;
- 3 *Engage!* focus groups with over 20 businesses participating; and
- 26 businesses receiving assistance from the Get Connected program.

NONPROFIT & COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CENTER (NCAC)

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Nonprofit & Community Assistance Center (NCAC) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) affiliate agency of NEPA that assists nonprofit organizations and communities.



NCAC PROGRAM TOTALS 2022-2023

Program	Totals
Nonprofit Counseling Sessions	211
Customized Funding Searches	69
Grant Proposal Reviews	15
Nonprofit Start-Up Assistance	11
Demographic & Statistic Assistance	27
Total Assistance Provided	333

TOBYHANNA DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP (FORMERLY BLUE RIBBON TASK FORCE)

NEPA manages the Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership, which was organized as the Blue Ribbon Task Force in 1992 to provide regional community support for the preservation and protection of Tobyhanna Army Depot from the base closure process known as BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure). The initiative underwent a name change and rebranding during the year to better align with its purpose. NEPA utilized several grants from the Pennsylvania Military Community Protection Commission and is actively fundraising with consulting partners, Kevin Edwards and Paul Strunk, to raise dollars to provide regional community support for the preservation and protection of the Depot. NEPA calculates the economic impact of Tobyhanna to be \$3.3 billion annually.



NEPA GRANTMAKERS INITIATIVE

The NEPA Grantmakers initiative brings grantmaking organizations and agencies together to more efficiently and effectively address the grant making needs of the communities in Northeastern Pennsylvania.



Activities this initiative included:

- Successfully guided the formation of the Community Foundation of Monroe County;
- NEPA Grantmakers Forums: Hosted two Grantmakers Forums, one in August 2022 highlighting the RISE Program at Johnson College, and one in June 2023 highlighting four different nonprofits across our region. Each forum had over 25 grantmakers in attendance, bringing awareness to the needs of our community.

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The NEPA Business Finance Center includes fourteen (14) loan products, including the NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation (NEPA BFC). The NEPA loan products provide low-cost, fixed-rate financing generally up to 50% of the total financing requirements with a maximum loan amount of \$5,500,000. Job retention/creation criteria apply.

The NEPA Alliance Business Finance Corporation is a SBA 504 lender. There are numerous advantages associated with the program including subordinate lien position; fixed interest rates that are market based; and longer repayment terms with a maximum 25-year loan maturity. The loan structure of a 504 loan preserves working capital as the borrower's cash equity can be as low as 10%. Many business sectors can qualify for this program.

LOAN PROGRAM RESULTS:

- **Counseled 94 entrepreneurs and small businesses**
- **Closed 39 loans for a total of \$12,590,599**
- **Leveraged \$29,139,583 in private/public financing**
- **Retained/created 337 jobs**



Constantino's Catering and Events Inc. opens Bailey's Cafe and Suites on Main in Dalton, Pa. NEPA Alliance assisted with financing through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES ACT.



NEPA Alliance and MD Capital hosted a group of local business, economic development and municipal leaders at the Electric City Trolley Museum. Participants participated in a discussion about current topics affecting local business, community and economic development initiatives and various finance programs available to assist businesses navigate the ever changing economic environment.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE (PREP)



In 2022-2023, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Regional PREP collaborative continued to provide integrated assistance to many businesses throughout the

seven-county Northeastern Pennsylvania region.

Additional Impacts:

- PREP Partners sponsored 119 training workshops that were attended by 2,247 individuals;
- 1,321 new clients were assisted by PREP Partners and 2,049 clients received counseling;
- 84 loans were closed;
- 124 business plans/projections/research were developed; and
- 111 location leads were provided.

PREP Regional Partners are:

- Berwick Industrial Development Association
- CAN DO, Inc.
- Carbon Chamber & Economic Development
- Greater Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance
- Pike County Economic Development Authority
- Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation
- Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company
- Schuylkill Economic Development Corporation
- The University of Scranton Small Business Development Center
- Wayne Economic Development Corporation
- Wilkes University Small Business Development Center

During the program year, the Procurement Technical Assistance Program was moved from the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Office of Small Business Programs, which resulted in a new program name. The Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) is now the NEPA Alliance APEX Accelerator.



For program year 2022-2023, the APEX Accelerator received funding in the amount of \$446,199 from DLA with matching funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for a total funding award of \$557,751, a 2.5% increase over the previous program year.

The APEX Team, collaborating with Congressman Cartwright's staff and



NASA's Office of Small Business Programs, brought to Northeastern Pennsylvania the first NASA Industry Day Event held at the DeNaples Center on

September 23rd was extremely well received by those in attendance. The event also included a matchmaking session where regional businesses

met with NASA departments and prime contractors, and two NASA sessions interacting with engineering students from the University of Scranton.

Maintaining an average annual active client base of 253 businesses, for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, the APEX Team achieved the following performance metric results:

• Client Counseling Sessions:	2,712
• One-on-One Counseling Hours:	1,365
• Prime Contract Awards:	\$405,318,509
• State/Local Government Awards:	\$42,311,373
• Subcontract Awards:	\$1,715,166
• Total of all Client Awards:	\$449,345,048
• Events	32
• Jobs Supported:	372

The APEX Team, under a year of changing federal certification conditions, continued their success supporting regional businesses in the government and defense contracting spaces. A snapshot of the Team's Key Performance Indicators are as follows:

- 110 - System for Award Management Registrations/Updates
- 5 - Service Disabled/Veteran-Owned Small Business Certifications
- 9 - Women-Owned Small Business Certifications
- 29 - Pennsylvania Vendor Portals Small Business Registrations/ Certifications

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

NEPA provides international trade assistance to businesses in Northeastern Pennsylvania with the goal of helping to generate international sales and increase regional employment. As the Regional Export Network (REN) coordinator for the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Office of International Business Development's (OIBD) Export Assistance Program, NEPA serves as the first point of contact for international trade in the region.

2022-2023 Outcomes

Companies Assisted	57
New Companies Assisted	15
International Projects	87
Export Clients Reporting Sales	21
Export Sales Reported	\$128,680,834
Export Actions	204
Percentage of Goals Achieved	116%
Jobs Supported	1047
Global Access Program Grants Approved	20
Global Access Program Dollars Approved	\$152,960

BRINGING THE WORLD TO NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

In conjunction with OIBD, NEPA hosted the annual "Bringing the World to Northeastern Pennsylvania" event on Friday, September 23, 2022 in Scranton, PA. This is the International Business Development Program's premier annual event, during which NEPA hosts Pennsylvania's Authorized Trade Representatives (ATRs) for one-on-one meetings with companies. In 2022, twenty-three businesses participated, generating more than 100 individual meetings with the ATRs.



This year, NEPA also worked with OIBD, the Governor's Action Team and Wilkes University to host a pre-event networking reception on Thursday, September 22, 2022 at Wilkes University. The goal of this event was to bring together international business

students, local companies, and the ATRs to highlight the international footprint of the regional and state economy.

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance operates the Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization (NEPA MPO), providing transportation planning and programming services for Carbon, Monroe, Pike, and Schuylkill counties. As part of the planning process for the MPO, two MPO committees are convened: the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee and NEPA MPO Policy Board. The committees:

- Assist and advise NEPA with assessing the transportation needs of the MPO counties;
- Approve and manage the four-county regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which funds highway and bridge projects, transit system improvements and other transportation programs over four years; and
- Review and recommend projects for grant programs including the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program, Multimodal Transportation Fund Program and Green Light-Go Program.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The NEPA MPO 2023-2026 TIP totaling \$677 million dollars went into effect on October 1, 2022. The TIP was developed by the MPO committees in collaboration with PennDOT, FHWA and the region's transit partners. The 2023-2026 TIP includes:

- 96 bridge and highway projects, totaling \$250.7 million.
- 22 transit projects, totaling \$11.3 million.
- 11 interstate projects, totaling \$415.5 million.



The State Route 6 over Delaware River Bridge in Pike County.

EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA REGIONAL FREIGHT STUDY

NEPA, in coordination with four other MPO planning areas, has secured \$280,000 in supplemental planning funds for the development of the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Plan. The regional freight plan will assist in coordinating all modes of freight travel for a 10-county region and identify development recommendations for accommodating our growing freight industry. The plan is expected to be complete by the end of 2023.



Lowe's Regional Distribution Center in the Schuylkill Highridge Business Park.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS)

GIS is a computer application used to store, view and analyze geographic information through a number of formats, including computer generated maps. GIS helps spot trends, highlight customer bases, and manage projects, along with numerous other applications. During the 2022-2023 year, NEPA has completed and continued several GIS projects including:

- NEPA MPO Transportation HUB page
- 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Project Map
- NEPA LTAP Class Storymap

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The Long Range Transportation Project (LRTP) for the four-county MPO identifies the major transportation projects, programs and policies needed for the next twenty-five years. The LRTP establishes the vision and goals that guides future decisions affecting transportation facilities, infrastructure and services in the region. The current NEPA MPO LRTP was approved in May 2020. An update to the LRTP is required every four years. NEPA is currently updating the LRTP, and completion of the plan is expected in early 2024.

LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LTAP)



NEPA coordinates the PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) throughout our seven-county LDD region serving our local governments with road maintenance and safety training sessions. These services are available to all municipal and county road staff and are provided at no cost to attendees. This year, LTAP resumed in-person classes and continued to offer virtual classes and workshops.

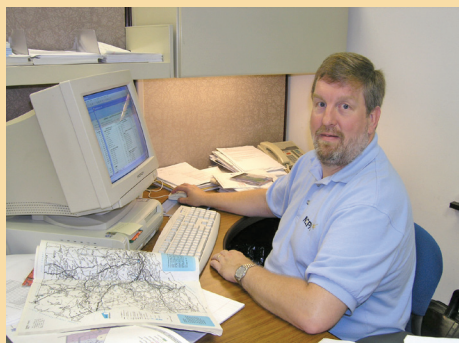
2022-2023 LTAP Training

Individuals Trained: 196



LTAP Winter Maintenance Class in Chestnuthill Township, Monroe County.

IN MEMORY



Steven N. Zaricki

The NEPA Family lost a valuable member, Steven N. Zaricki. Steve was a true gentleman, professional, and most of all a dear friend. He was a kind soul who was always willing to help anyone and everyone.

He was an inspiration to us all, and the memory of his courage, kind words, and constant compassion will always be treasured among those who knew him. His loss will impact everyone for a long time.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The NEPA Alliance Regional Leadership Award is presented annually to an agency, group or individual demonstrating a significant contribution to regional growth, development or cooperation within the seven-county NEPA region. This year's award recipient was Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport (AVP) for their impact on the regional economy and involvement in the regional community of Northeastern Pennsylvania.



From left: Donna Hritz, NEPA Alliance; Chris Chermak, Lackawanna County Commissioner; Carl Beardsley, AVP; Lee Ann McDermott, Luzerne County Council; Mary Beth Wood, WEDCO and NEPA Alliance Board Chairperson; and Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance.

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STARTUP NEPA



NEPA has raised \$750,000 in support of our Angel Fund initiative. The official launch meeting was held in January 2022, and member meetings have been held monthly. To date, over ten (10) businesses have made pitches, and two investment commitments have been made. NEPA staff continues to recruit new investors and vet potential pitches from businesses and entrepreneurs.

In November 2022, \$50,000 was invested in Conservation Labs, a water management company based in Pittsburgh. Their technology, H2know, takes measurements from your pipe every second and uses a patented technology and machine learning approach to translate those signals to accurate water flow estimates, leak alerts, and water insights. In March 2023, \$55,000 was invested in Buoy, a health and wellness company that produces clean hydration drops that can be added to any beverage. The drops have been used to treat individuals with chronic illnesses to aid in their hydration and overall health. The company is based in California and was referred to StartUp NEPA through the Angel Fund Network. In May 2023, \$185,000 was invested into LifeAire, an air purification company based in the Lehigh Valley.

FUNDING PARTNERS



www.arc.gov



dced.pa.gov



www.northeastprep.net



www.penndot.gov



www.eda.gov