

Reaching Further

Annual Report 2021



JARI 

Growing Your Region

Expanding the Economic
Opportunities of Our Region

JARI in 2021

Reaching more businesses in more places

Indiana

Cambria

Blair

Huntingdon

Bedford

Fulton

Fayette

Somerset

JARI in
2021

419
jobs created

17,680
jobs retained

Hosted successful
30th anniversary Showcase
for Commerce with
\$678 million in contract
awards announced

JARI is reaching further!

JARI is reaching further! Even as our agency, region and world continues to cope with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, JARI is extending our reach and increasing our impact in so many ways. Geographically, JARI programs are now reaching the entire Southern Alleghenies region and beyond. Our microloan programs cover seven counties while our PTAC program now covers four. This has been made possible due to our partnerships with local economic development agencies.

Over the course of 2021, JARI collaborated with Somerset County Commissioners and the Somerset County Economic Development Council Board in working toward expanding economic services and programs in Somerset County. We look forward to assisting more businesses through this partnership.

As our cover photography illustrates, we are reaching into more industries than ever before, with clients in an incredible variety of sectors. And with an ever-increasing portfolio of financing options, we are able to reach even more businesses to provide more opportunities for growth.

In this annual report, you'll read just a few success stories that illustrate how JARI is reaching further, finding creative ways to facilitate workforce development, government contracting, entrepreneurial activity, and business expansion through financing. The report also includes big-picture statistics that help illustrate the scope of our reach.

JARI is grateful for the steadfast support of our many stakeholders, boards of directors, industry partners, and donors, all of whom share our vision of reaching further to support business growth across the region. Together, we are looking forward to continued growth in 2022, one business at a time.

Linda

Linda Thomson
JARI President/CEO

Workforce
Christine Connors

Back in 2017, Christine Connors was working as a personal trainer in Johnstown. She liked her job, but needed a position with benefits like health insurance and a retirement plan. So when she heard about a JARI program providing free welding training to qualified residents, she decided to make a career move. The training was funded through the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP), which allows businesses to earn tax credits through investing in projects that improve distressed areas.

"I learned a lot in the class, and got a job the day after I graduated," Connors recalls.

Connors began working in Pittsburgh, learning more and more about her trade, and soon moved to Los Angeles. She saw a social media ad for a new show called "Tough as Nails," and responded. To her surprise, she was cast in the show's third season,

"The show is about real people in skilled jobs, tough jobs – they come together to see who's really 'tough as nails,'" Connors explains. "You compete as individuals, but also as teams. And my team won."

Each of the winning team members was invited to select one or two charitable causes to support. Connors chose to divide her donation between the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, because she has a sister with diabetes, and JARI.

"JARI was the starting point of my career, and I don't know where I'd be without them," she says.

But that was only the beginning of how Connors has supported JARI. In October 2021, she participated in a JARI-sponsored virtual conference for young people.



"The kids were saying things like, 'I didn't think you could go that far with a trades career,' and some of them even reached out to me afterward on social media," says Connors, who is a Westmont Hilltop graduate.

"Christine is an example of how someone took advantage of a short term training program that helped her to launch a very successful career," says Debi Balog, JARI Workforce Development Director. "Her willingness to share her story greatly inspires others to pursue their career aspirations."



\$45,800
awarded in
scholarships

\$243,413
invested in workforce
programs and projects

PTAC
DiVerse Industrial
Solutions LLC

Rochelle Johnson started her own business, DiVerse Industrial Solutions LLC, in 2019 after a 30-year career in the power industry. DiVerse Industrial Solutions helps staff major projects with skilled union craft labor that fulfills diversity requirements.

The JARI PTAC assisted Johnson with becoming certified in the United Certification Program and Small Diverse Business Program, as well as SAM (System for Award Management) and PA Vendor registration.

"JARI was able to help me set the wheels in motion to get those certifications," Johnson explains. "I am now certified to do business in two states, and am working on registration for 11 more."

“
JARI was able to help me set the wheels in motion to get those certifications.
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Johnson's personal story is inspiring. She left home at 13 and lived with another family, and became the first Black woman to attend her vo-tech school. She graduated at the top of her class in welding and began her successful career.

"Reaching out to people is just not something that's in human nature," she reflects. "I want to use my walk to encourage other people."

The certifications have already paid off with a contract to work on a high-profile project here in Johnstown – the refurbishment of the Inclined Plane.

"JARI is a blessing that came to me," Johnson says. "JARI gets you all kinds of opportunities, but it's what you do with them that matters."



\$89.6 million
in contract awards
to PTAC clients

208
PTAC clients

29 training workshops hosted with 502 participants

1,022 counseling assistance hours



Ample Greens
Tyrel with his family, Jonna, Ezra, Hendrix and Preslee - East Freedom



AM Ag Fence
Alex Masser - Ebensburg

22 microloans
and JGF loans totaling
\$672,225 were closed



Start Smart Learning Center
Elizabeth Hogue - Gallitzin

\$2,857,602
in COVID-19 Hospitality
Industry Recovery
Program (CHIRP) funding
distributed



The Brick on Front
Dee Bertison - Cresson

4,171 hours
of technical assistance
provided to
343 clients



Black Valley Farm
Alana Foor - Everett

Microloan and JGF
portfolio over
\$3.9 million

Financing

The JARI Microloan and JARI Growth Fund (JGF) loan programs deploy capital throughout the Southern Alleghenies region aiding businesses in Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon, Indiana, and Somerset Counties. The loan programs can assist small businesses in almost all industries. Funding has been provided to a broad range of businesses – from local daycares to farms, restaurants and clothing stores. The assistance doesn't end with financing. JARI and JGF continue to be a resource as the business opens and grows. Here are just a few of the businesses that JARI and JGF helped in 2021.



Kindred Soul Apparel
Howard & Crystal Pepper - Somerset



Stouffer's Mobile Mower Repair
Corey Stouffer - Johnstown



Entrepreneurship B&F Supply

Sometimes entrepreneurs start a completely new business – others take over existing businesses and make them all their own. Brian Baxter had been working for his father-in-law's business, Harper & Gallo, since marrying into the family in 2000. When Bob Harper retired in early 2021, Brian and another co-worker, Justin Frederick, decided to continue and expand the business.

Harper & Gallo, which had been in business for over 30 years, was primarily a coal yard before adding landscape and construction materials such as sand, gravel, topsoil, decorative stone, and mulch. The new owners came to JARI for technical assistance in transferring ownership of the business, renaming it to B&F Supply, and forming a business plan for growth. They were also provided with financing through JARI's Microloan and JGF loan program.

"JARI has helped us get a good business plan together – we want to keep the business the same, but also grow," Brian Baxter explains. "We're planning to add items to our inventory that will coincide with our current business model such as a greenhouse and firewood processor. JARI is also helping us with a new website."

"Without JARI's help all of this wouldn't have been possible," Justin Frederick adds.

"No two entrepreneurial journeys are the same – that is what's so exciting about it," says Blake Fleegle, Entrepreneurial Coach for JARI. "JARI takes customized assistance very seriously and works hard to meet the needs of our clients wherever they are on that journey, whether they are a brand-new business getting off the ground, or a legacy transition like B&F Supply."

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Without JARI's help all of this wouldn't have been possible.

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415 entrepreneurs
enrolled in Cambria County
Ecosystem program



352 entrepreneurs
enrolled in Somerset County
Ecosystem program



Over \$40,750
in non-COVID grant funding
provided to 13 recipients



Assisted companies
with a variety of COVID-related
funding programs

THANK YOU

Our programs could not be successful without our Fund Drive, NAP Tax, and in-kind contributors, along with our ongoing funding sources.

1st Summit Bank

AmeriServ Financial

Barnes Saly & Company P.C.

Cambria County

Community Foundation for the Alleghenies

Concurrent Technologies Corporation

Crown American Associates

Croyle–Nielsen Therapeutic Associates, Inc.

The EADS Group

First Commonwealth Bank

First Energy

First National Bank

Gvozdich Law Offices

H.F. Lenz Company

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

HR Consultants, Inc.

In–Shore Technologies, Inc.

JWF Industries

KIZ Resources, LLC

Kongsberg Protech Systems USA Corp

Lia Mort / Christine Connors

Martin–Baker America

Moore Power Sales

Northwest Bank

Prime Design Solutions

S&T Bank

Somerset Trust Company

St. Francis University

Tresa McVicker,
Tranquility Gardens

Wessel & Company

William Locher

JARI STAFF

Linda Thomson – President/CEO

Debi Balog – Workforce Development Director

Holly Bodolosky – Staff Accountant

Michele Clapper – Vice President, Economic Development

Brenda Fike – Chief Financial Officer

Blake Fleegle – Entrepreneurial Coach

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To Be Filled – Program Manager, JARI PTAC

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Bryan Young – Administrative Professional

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Ned G. Kendall III – Regional External Affairs Manager, First Energy Service Company

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Vincent P. Strugala II – Vice President/Business Banker III, First National Bank of PA

Reverend Sylvia J. King – Community Development Officer, AmeriServ Financial

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Karen Struble Myers – President, United Way of the Laurel Highlands

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David R. Johnson – Vice President, North American Höganäs

Chad P. Kamler – Assistant Administrator, Arbutus Park Retirement Community

Shawn D. Kaufman – Director of Human Resources, McAneny Brothers

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David B. Zucco – Vice President, Kongsberg Protech Systems USA



Growing Your Region

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*JARI is the collaborative
force that enhances all
aspects of our region to grow
a diverse economy and build
vibrant communities*

**Contact JARI
to reach further
in 2022**