



CAMERON COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

Below is a listing of programs available to place-based businesses, entrepreneurs, nonprofits and governments in Cameron County, including business loans, grants and tax credit programs, technical assistance, marketing resources and recognition programs.

Some grant programs may require collaboration with a nonprofit organization. Every effort is made to ensure that program details are current, but applicants should double-check information with program managers before applying. Programs may have additional requirements.

Inclusion here does not imply endorsement.

Have an update or a new program you think should be listed here? Email details to wildscopa@pawildscenter.org.

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LOANS

Cameron County Micro Loan Fund: This program is for for-profit commercial and industrial businesses in Cameron County that have 5 or fewer employees. The business owner must be of low-moderate income status at the time the loan is made. Loan limit is \$25,000; no match is required, however, if the Micro Loan is the sole source of funding the applicant must include a letter of denial from a private lender. Interest rate is 1.5 percent. Money can be used for land and building acquisition; building construction; renovations; machinery and equipment; and working capital. Requirements include business plan, letter of denial from private lender, professionally prepared financial statements. No fees. Contact the Cameron County Industrial Development Authority at 814-486-3439 or cmclark001@windstream.net.



PA WILDS CENTER
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Cameron County Revolving Loan Fund: This program is for for-profit commercial and industrial businesses in Cameron County. Loan limit is \$200,000; 50 percent match required. Interest rate is 1.5 percent. Money can be used for land and building acquisition; building construction; renovations; machinery and equipment; and working capital. Requirements include job creation or retention of low-moderate income persons, business plan, commitment letter from a private lending institution, professionally prepared financial statements. \$250 non-refundable application fee and 1 percent loan commitment fee. Contact the Cameron County Industrial Development Authority at 814-486-3439 or cmclark001@windstream.net.

Cameron County USDA RBEG Loan Fund: This program is for for-profit commercial and industrial businesses in Cameron County that meet the USDA Rural Development's definition of a small and emerging business (i.e. -- "any private business which will employ 50 or fewer new employees, has less than \$1 million in projected gross revenues, has or will utilize technological innovations and commercialization of new products that can be produced/manufactured in rural areas and new processes that can be used in such production" ... A loan officer can help determine if you meet that requirement). Loan limit is \$100,000; 50 percent match is required. Interest rate is 1.5 percent. Money can be used for land, building acquisition, building construction, renovations, machinery, equipment, and working capital. Requirements include business plan, professionally prepared financial statements; job creation with health care benefits. \$250 non-refundable application fee and 1 percent loan commitment fee. Contact the Cameron County Industrial Development Authority at 814-486-3439 or cmclark001@windstream.net.

North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission: North Central, located in Ridgway, Pa., has a suite of low-interest loan programs to support small business development that creates and retains jobs. North Central serves the counties of McKean, Potter, Cameron, Elk, Jefferson and Clearfield. As an economic development lender, its loan programs are not intended to compete with banks or replace conventional financing, but are designed to leverage private financing and fill the gap when bank financing and equity are not able to completely finance a business project. North Central participates with economic development partners at the local level with revolving loan funds when possible to maximize resources and encourage investment in businesses. For more information about North Central's Loan offerings, contact Jennifer Hibbard, Loan Director, at 814-773-3162 x3049 or jhibbard@ncentral.com. Learn more at www.ncentral.com.

The PennCAP Program: The Pennsylvania Capital Access Program (PennCAP) provides a loan guarantee to small businesses based on a portfolio concept. The Pennsylvania Economic Development Financing Authority (PEDFA) provides capital to guarantee loans made through participating lending institutions in conjunction with the program. The program is a partnership between the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and participating PennCAP banks. Most companies authorized to do business in Pennsylvania will qualify for a PennCAP loan. Start-up businesses may be financed through PennCAP. PennCAP proceeds can be used for the purchase of land, buildings, machinery, equipment and working capital. The maximum PennCAP loan amount is \$500,000. Minimum loan amounts are established by each participating bank. To learn more information about the PennCAP Program, please visit <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/pennsylvania-capital-access-program-penncap/>



The Progress Fund: The Progress Fund is a non-profit financial institution based in Southwestern Pennsylvania but offers loans across the PA Wilds region. The Progress Fund specializes in loaning to tourism businesses (past clients include a canoe livery, vodka distiller, historic tavern, art studio, hardware store, cabins, white water rafting company, coffee shop, winery and others). Find them online at: www.progressfund.org or call 724-216-9160.

SBA 504 Loan Program: This loan is for businesses with a net worth less than \$15 million and profit after tax less than \$5 million. Funds can be used for land acquisition, site improvements, acquisition of existing buildings, building renovation, leasehold improvements, new construction, machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures, engineering fees, architectural fees, appraisal fees and environmental fees. Loans cannot be used for working capital, venture capital or investment purposes. Gross amount of the loan can be up to \$5,000,000 for regular loans, \$5,500,000 for Public Policy Goal loans, and \$5,500,000 for small manufacturers or 40% of the total eligible project costs, whichever is less. For more information about the interest rates, terms, and equity requirements, call 570-524-4491 or visit www.sedacogldc.org.

Small Business Pollution Prevention Assistance Account (PPAA) Loan Program: PPAA provides low interest loans to small businesses undertaking projects (located within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania) that reduce waste, pollution or energy use. Loans will be used to fund 75 percent of the total eligible project cost, up to a maximum of \$100,000. Small businesses with 100 or fewer full-time employees are eligible. The loan interest rate is 2% and has a maximum term of 10 years. This funding can help small businesses comply with environmental regulations while receiving the economic benefits of preventing pollution and using energy more efficiently. Visit the [PPAA Loan](#) website for additional information.

GRANTS AND TAX CREDITS

Art Works Grant Program – The National Endowment for the Arts: Art Works is the National Endowment for the Arts' principal grants program for organizations. Through project-based funding, NEA supports public engagement with, and access to, various forms of excellent art across the nation, the creation of art that meets the highest standards of excellence, learning in the arts at all stages of life, and the integration of the arts into the fabric of community life. Projects may be large or small, existing or new. These grants support artistically excellent projects that celebrate creativity and cultural heritage, invite mutual respect for differing beliefs and values, and enrich humanity. Matching grants generally range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. A minimum cost share/match equal to the grant amount is required. The NEA funds projects only. Projects may consist of one or more specific events or activities. Projects do not have to be new. Excellent existing projects can be just as competitive as new activities. Visit www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/art-works/grant-program-description to learn more.



Challenge America Grant Program – The National Endowment for the Arts: The Challenge America grant category offers support primarily to small and mid-sized organizations for projects that extend the reach of the arts to underserved populations – those whose opportunities to experience the arts are limited by geography, ethnicity, economics, or disability. Age alone (e.g., youth, seniors) does not qualify a group as underserved; at least one of the underserved characteristics noted above also must be present. Grants are available for professional arts programming and for projects that emphasize the potential of the arts in community development. Challenge America grants are limited to specific types of projects and are for a fixed amount of \$10,000 and require a minimum \$10,000 match. Within the Challenge America category, the Public Art project type is intended to support primarily visual arts projects, which may be temporary or permanent, such as murals, sculptures, multimedia, or environmental art, developed through a meaningful community engagement process. Evidence of community involvement should be apparent in the planning, design, or fabrication of the work, and should include a professional lead artist. A policy limits consecutive-year funding. Learn more at www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/challenge-america/grant-program-description.

Lumber Heritage Region Mini Grants: The Lumber Heritage Region of PA, Inc. occasionally offers a mini-grant program for eligible projects throughout the region. Funding for the Lumber Heritage Region, LHR, Mini-Grant Program is provided through the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) and therefore must adhere to all statewide rules and regulations. Eligible applicants for the program would include non-profit 501(c)3 organizations, municipalities, COG's, Conservation Districts, Educational Institutions, and Housing and Redevelopment Authorities. The project must be located within the boundaries of the Lumber Heritage Region. To learn more visit www.lumberheritage.org/grants/.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR): Dedicated to serving Pennsylvanians with disabilities who want to work, the OVR provides a wide range of services just for employers to meet recruitment and hiring needs. The OVR matches prescreened, qualified candidates to business requirements, and provides follow-up and support to make sure both the employee and the employer are satisfied. In addition to offering on-the-job training and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) technical assistance among other employer services and business incentives, they also offer tax breaks for hiring persons with disabilities and for making improvements to facilities making them accessible to persons with disabilities:

- **Disabled Tax Credit:** The Disabled Tax Credit is specifically geared to eligible small businesses for meeting increased expenses incurred in complying with the ADA. To qualify, a business must have fewer than 30 employees or a gross yearly income of less than \$1 million. The maximum that can be claimed in any tax year under this provision is \$5,125, as the allowable amount of tax credit is equal to 50 percent of the expenditures in excess of \$250, but not more than \$10,250. Eligible expenditures may include removing architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, providing qualified readers, taped texts, interpreters, the myriad of technical assistive devices, and offsetting the purchase or modification of equipment and devices for individuals with disabilities.
- **Architectural and Transportation Barrier Removal Tax Deduction:** Any private business may claim up to \$15,000 per tax year for making its premises or public transportation vehicles more accessible to



persons with disabilities or the elderly. Eligible expenditures may include installing ramps, widening doorways, modifying restrooms, or equipping a shuttle van with a lift.

For more information about these tax breaks and other OVR benefits and services, contact an Employer Representative at one of the two District Offices that serves Cameron County, including:

- Dubois Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Serving Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson and McKean counties) at 199 Beaver Drive, Dubois, PA 15801, or 814-371-7340 Voice, 814-371-7505 TTY or 800-922-4017 Voice (Toll-free within PA)
- Erie Blindness & Visual Services (Serving Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Potter and Warren counties) at 4200 Lovell Place, Erie, PA 16503, or 814-871-4401 Voice, 814-871-4599 TTY, 866-521-5073 Voice (Toll-free within PA) or 888-884-5513 TTY (Toll-free within PA)

The Our Town Grant Program – The National Endowment for the Arts – Supports creative placemaking projects that help to transform communities into lively, beautiful, and resilient places – achieving these community goals through strategies that incorporate arts, culture, and/or design. Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work. This funding supports local efforts to enhance quality of life and opportunity for existing residents, increase creative activity, and create or preserve a distinct sense of place. Our Town requires partnerships between arts organizations and government, other nonprofit organizations, and private entities to achieve livability goals for communities. Our Town offers support for projects in two areas: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects (matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$200,000) and Projects that Build Knowledge About Creative Placemaking (matching grants range from \$25,000 to \$100,000). Learn more at www.arts.gov/grants-organizations/our-town/introduction.

PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR): DCNR offers competitive grant opportunities that may be of interest to local governments and recreation and conservation organizations through its Community Conservation and Partnerships Program (C2P2). C2P2 grants fund projects related to parks, recreation and conservation, including planning, acquisition, and development of public parks; recreation areas; motorized and non-motorized trails; river conservation and access; and conservation of open space. Grants also support regional and statewide partnerships that build capacity to better develop and manage resources. Applications for DCNR's C2P2 grants are accepted once a year, typically during the spring. In addition, DCNR also offers special grants periodically. Learn more at www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/, or by contacting the Northcentral Regional Advisor, Wes Fahringer, at 570-401-2465 or mfahringer@pa.gov

PAsmart Industry Partnership Grants: Through Industry Partnerships (IPs), businesses are partnering to build stronger, more competitive industries through training, networking, recruitment, and collaboration to raise career and industry awareness. PAsmart Industry Partnership grants provide funds to support the development, launch, implementation, and technical assistance of IPs that are demand-driven in addressing the workforce, economic development, and educational needs of Pennsylvania industries. For more information about Industry Partnerships, contact Shuana Davis at shesdavis@pa.gov or at 717-571-4806, or



visit <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/Pages/Industry-Partnerships.aspx> for additional resources.

PA Wilds Mini Grants: PA Wilds Center operates occasional mini grant programs for businesses, nonprofits and communities. The focus, amount and timing of the mini grant offering changes depending on funding source and other parameters, but the program is always tied to PA Wilds strategies. Past offerings have included signage grants, design assistance grants (connected to the *PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship*), and grants that advance nature and heritage tourism projects in the region. To stay up to date on mini grant offerings, sign up for our e-newsletter on the homepage of www.pawildscenter.org, or check out the “PA Wilds Mini Grants” under the site’s “Programs & Services” tab.

Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts: Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA) is a partnership between local organizations and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA), a state agency whose mission is to foster the excellence, diversity and vitality of the arts in Pennsylvania and to broaden the availability and appreciation of those arts throughout the state. Operating in all 67 counties in Pennsylvania, PPA re-grants funds to support a wide variety of local and community arts activities. The PPA Program is administered by 13 local partners statewide. PPA offers both Project Stream and Program Stream grants for art-related projects and organizations. Project Stream describes grants up to \$2,500. Program Stream grants provide ongoing support to arts organizations and arts programs that have been selected after transitioning from Project Stream grants. Learn more on the [PPA website](#), or reach out to your local PPA Partner, the Elk County Council on the Arts, at 814-772-7051 or info@eccota.com; in person at 237 Main St., Ridgway; or online at www.eccota.com.

Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit Program: This program offers federal income tax credits as an incentive for private property owners to rehabilitate historic properties for income-producing uses. Generally speaking, if you rehab the building to the requirements you’re eligible to get 10 to 20 percent of your costs returned at tax time. This program does not provide funding up front. It is important to research and apply to this program prior to starting work. The National Park Service administers this program at the federal level. Visit www.nps.gov for details.

River Sojourn Grants: The PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers offers competitive grants for single and multi-day paddling events on Pennsylvania rivers. Sojourns must incorporate significant educational programming, and be open to all participants (i.e., private trips are not eligible). To learn more, go to: <http://pawatersheds.org/>.

Small Business Advantage Grant Program: This grant provides assistance to small businesses in Pennsylvania with under 100 full time employees to incorporate pollution prevention or energy-efficient equipment or processes to increase the business’s competitiveness while simultaneously improving the environment of Pennsylvania residents. Average grant amount is \$5,800. Go to www.depweb.state.pa.us and click on Citizens and then click on “Grants, Loans and Rebates” on the third box in the first column and then



click on Small Business Ombudsman's Office under Related Information for more information. You can also obtain information by contacting 717-772-5160 or epadvantagegrant@pa.gov.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC): The WOTC is a federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from specific target groups, which include numerous qualified candidates such as veterans, who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. WOTC incentivizes workplace diversity and facilitates access to good jobs for American workers, helping targeted employees move from economic dependency to self-sufficiency while earning a steady income and becoming contributing taxpayers. Employers generally can earn a tax credit equal to 25% or 40% of a new employee's first-year wages, up to the maximum for the target group to which the employee belongs. For questions, contact the Tax Credit Services Unit at 800-345-2555 or RA-BWPO-TaxCredits@pa.gov. To learn more, visit <https://www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Workforce-Development/WOTC/Pages/default.aspx>.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Act 129 Rebates: Pennsylvania utilities have energy incentive programs under Act 129 that provide rebates for the purchase of new equipment for lighting systems, HVAC, motors, and other equipment. The final rebate amount is determined for each project individually but generally ranges from \$0.025/kWh to \$0.05/kWh of energy saved. Pre-approval is recommended for all projects prior to commencing construction. Based on the utility company that covers your area, you can learn more at either the [Pennsylvania Electric](#), [West Penn Power](#), or [PPL Utilities Corp.](#) websites.

Ben Franklin Technology Partners: The award-winning Ben Franklin Technology Partners is one of the nation's longest-running technology-based economic development programs. For more than 31 years, BFTP has provided both early-stage and established companies with funding, business and technical expertise and access to a network of innovative, expert resources. BFTP couples its financial commitment with access to a wide range of mentoring, business and technology development services. We deliver hands-on technical and business expertise, providing both early-stage and established companies with a wide range of business and technical assistance. This includes business plan reviews, technical assessments, intellectual property counsel, marketing advice, operations and fund-raising strategies. Additional information can be found at www.benfranklin.org/what-is-bftp/.

DEP Small Business Assistance Program: Complying with environmental regulations can be difficult, especially for small businesses. Recognizing this, DEP created the Small Business Assistance Program. This program assists small businesses with regulatory compliance, provides information about cost saving pollution prevention practices, and ensures that small businesses are considered when new regulations are developed. Learn more [here](#).



Energy and Operational Assessments: PennTAP Technical Advisors can assist small to mid-sized Pennsylvania manufacturers assess and address energy, efficiency, and sustainability challenges by a systematic "low-cost/no-cost" approach to periodically re-commission a building to restore or exceed the building's original energy performance known as building re-tuning (BRT), providing pollution prevention and energy efficiency (P2/E2) on-site or virtual assessments, performing economy-energy-environment (E3) assessments and employee training, and delivering training pertaining to energy management systems, ISO 50001, and Superior Energy Performance (SEP) certification and implementation, including a no-cost DOE 50001 Ready Navigator program for manufacturers. For more information, call 814-865-0427, email penntap@psu.edu, or visit them online at <https://penntap.psu.edu/>.

PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship: Founded in 2013, this regional non-profit is dedicated to integrating conservation and economic development in a way that strengthens and inspires communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds. The Center operates several programs for businesses and communities, including The Wilds Cooperative of PA, PA Wilds Mini Grants, *PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship*, PA Wilds Licensing, PA Wilds Conservation Shops and PA Wilds Champion Awards. Many of these programs are outlined on this resource sheet. To learn more, go to www.pawildscenter.org.

PA Wilds Conservation Shops: PA Wilds Center operates this growing network of online and physical gift shops. To be eligible to sell wholesale to the Conservation Shop, businesses must be members of The Wilds Cooperative of PA (see previous listing).

PA Wilds Licensing: The PA Wilds Licensing Program provides a way for businesses and organizations to apply to use the PA Wilds logo on saleable and non-saleable products to help them leverage their business and community development efforts. To learn more about how to apply to use this trademark, go to <http://www.pawildscenter.org/use-the-pa-wilds-brand/>.

The Wilds Cooperative of PA: The Wilds Cooperative of PA is the main business development program of the PA Wilds Center. It focuses on growing and connecting the kinds of unique businesses and establishments at the heart of place-based nature tourism development – artisan and craft producers, B&Bs, specialty retailers, breweries, wineries, galleries, state parks and more. This is a juried, member based program. The program assists businesses with marketing and branding tools; access to new markets; education and networking opportunities with similar kinds of businesses; and referrals to PA's service provider network (lenders, technical providers, etc). For membership guidelines, go to: www.wildscopa.org or contact: ECCOTA/Wilds Cooperative Staff Support, 814-772-7051 or wildscopa@pawildscenter.org.

Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Centers (IRCs): PA's seven IRCs serve as the state's lead economic development organizations, providing technical assistance and offering resources and events to the manufacturing community in order to assist companies with improved bottom line strategies, productivity enhancement, and waste elimination, and with topline growth by supporting strategic initiatives, new and



improved products, market differentiation, and workforce development strategies. Funds will be awarded based upon submission and review of IRC proposals and work plans demonstrating regional needs, number of manufacturers, proposed projects, and projected impacts. The IRCs that serves Cameron County is the Northwest Industrial Resource Center (Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Elk, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter counties): Details – <https://nwirc.org/>

Pennsylvania Small Business Development Centers: (www.pasbdc.org): These organizations provide educational programs and no-cost, confidential consulting services to entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. Management consulting services provided by a professional staff emphasize education and guidance in finding practical solutions to business problems. SBDC consultants work with entrepreneurs one-to-one to help test new business ideas, shape business plans, or investigate funding opportunities. There are 18 university-based centers in Pennsylvania with more than 100 outreach locations. SBDCs are often the first stop for entrepreneurs. Clarion University Small Business Development Center serves Cameron County. Visit the SBDC online at www.clarion.edu/sbdc or 877-292-1843, or contact Cindy Nellis at cnellis@clarion.edu.

PennTap Information Technology Help: PennTAP (Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program), an Outreach arm of Penn State University, can help small businesses with a host of technology-related questions regarding the internet, website development, software selection, connectivity, security, networks and computer systems. A limited amount of free assistance is available. Contact Donna Yale, Advanced IT Team Lead, at 570-596-3585 or dyale@psu.edu or visit them online at <http://www.penntap.psu.edu>.

Product Development and Innovation Services: PennTAP (Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program), an Outreach arm of Penn State University, can assist businesses and startups with a number of issues related to product development, such as feasibility of product design, assistance addressing design and material issues, connection with prototype development and manufacturing resources, business development resources for market research and commercialization planning, entrepreneurial coaching and connecting small businesses to the scientific and technical expertise within Penn State University and the federal laboratory system. For more information contact Tim Kerchinski, Team Lead for Innovation at 814-865-4388 or txk128@psu.edu or visit them online at www.penntap.psu.edu.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP): REAP provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers with at least half of their gross income coming from the agricultural operation and rural small businesses in a town with a population of fewer than 50,000 inhabitants to purchase or install renewable energy systems, or make energy efficiency improvements. Energy efficiency projects require an energy audit or assessment completed by an independent third party. Applications can be submitted any time throughout the year but will be evaluated and awarded after various deadlines. Learn more [here](#).

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE): A network of retired business professionals, SCORE provides assistance to anyone wanting to start or expand a business. Their free business consultation can



include seminars on specific topics or business startups in general. Call 814 234-9415 or visit www.scorepa.org to learn more.

HIRING AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Apprenticeship Program Registrations: The Apprenticeship and Training Office (ATO) within the PA Department of Labor & Industry is responsible for guiding and promoting the expansion of apprenticeship programs across the state. Apprenticeships are innovative training programs that allow employers to develop and prepare their future workforce while providing individuals with a learn-while-you-earn approach to career development. Apprenticeships include paid jobs where apprentices are paid employees who produce high-quality work while they learn skills that enhance their employers' needs, on-the-job learning that develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting, classroom learning that improves job-related skills through education in a classroom setting (virtual or in-person), and mentorships which provide apprentices with the support of a skilled worker to assist and enhance critical hands-on-learning. Portable, nationally-recognized credentials will be issued at the completion of the program. Looking to increase the number of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in PA, including expansion into non-traditional occupations and underrepresented populations, the ATO supports sponsors with resources they need to implement high-quality apprenticeships programs, including through technical assistance, strategic planning and ecosystem building, education and advocacy, and funding opportunities such as the PAsmart grant program. For more on apprenticeships, contact the PA Department Of Labor & Industry, Apprenticeship and Training Office, 651 Boas Street, 12th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17121, by email at Apprenticeship@pa.gov, by phone at 717-783-5857, or online at <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Apprenticeships>.

Federal Bonding: The Federal Bonding Program was created as an incentive to employers to hire at-risk, hard-to-place job seekers and may provide a business insurance policy that protects an employer against loss of money or property due to employee dishonesty. The bond is good for six months up to the amount of \$5,000 at no cost. To request a Federal Bond, the employer must call the Bonding Coordinator for a phone interview on the new employee's start date. A confirmation letter is then sent to the company and McLaughlin Company, which issues the bond directly to the employer. Contact the State Bonding Coordinator at 717-783-3676 or 1-800-345-2555, or visit www.dli.pa.gov/Businesses/Finding-Skilled-Workers/Pages/FederalBondingProgram.

Incumbent Worker Training: This training is provided to a current employee(s) (incumbent worker(s)) to meet the needs of an employer for an in-demand occupation (as determined at the local workforce service delivery system level) and assists an employer to retain a skilled workforce or avert the need to lay off employees, increase the competitiveness of the employer or employee, and are conducted with a commitment by the employer to retain or avert the layoffs of the incumbent worker trained. Such training may also include the up-skilling of an employer's current workforce, which may lead to additional opportunities for potential jobseekers. Pennsylvania's local workforce development boards, or LWDBs, are part of the public workforce system – a network of state and local providers and programs that support local and regional economic



development, and the education and training of Pennsylvania's workforce. LWDBs connect the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry with PA CareerLink services for job seekers, workers, training providers, and employers. For more information on incumbent worker training, the LWDB that serves Cameron County is the North Central Workforce Development Board (Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean, and Potter counties): 814-245-1835 or <https://workforcesolutionspa.com/>.

PA CareerLink services for employers: PA CareerLink is part of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry's initiative to transform the landscape of how job-seekers find family-sustaining jobs and how employers find the skilled candidates that they need. Through this initiative, a user-friendly job-matching system was created to help bridge the gap between job-seekers and employers. It is easy for employers to search the talent pool in PA CareerLink and receive detailed information about job-seekers, create a job posting, get candidate recommendations, and connect with candidates for free. Benefits of the system include sorting and filtering capabilities for managing referral lists, free business service team consulting to help find job candidates, keeping track of candidates associated with your job posting, saving customized searches, and receiving email alerts for new candidates. PA CareerLink also offers many resources to employers, which include news, facts, and statistics on job market data, workforce and compliance-related policies, services, and procedures, and Unemployment Compensation Tax and Employer UC Services programs that manage employer contributions (in the form of quarterly tax payments) that are the primary funding source for UC benefit payments and provide a wide array of services to employers and third-party administrators. To contact your local PA CareerLink, see the locations serving the PA Wilds region in the table below. Cameron County's CareerLink is located at 221 E. 2nd St., Emporium, PA, 15834 and can be contacted at 814-601-0538. Details: www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Common/LandingPage/Employer

Report New Hires: New hire reporting is a process by which employers submit information about their newly-hired and rehired workers to a state directory for crossmatching open child support cases, locating non-custodial parents who change jobs frequently, and reducing fraudulent overpayments in state benefit programs such as unemployment and worker's compensation program. For more information on the various ways to report, visit <https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline/Employer/ReportNewHires>.

Workamper News: It can sometimes be difficult for tourism businesses in remote areas to find help for their peak seasons. Workamper News is a service that can help with this need. It is a national network of RVers who want to go someplace interesting and work, sometimes for just a season or year-round. More than half of the program's participants work to supplement their retirement income, while the rest work to support a full-time, or near full-time, RV lifestyle. Most Workamper jobs are in the outdoor hospitality industry (resorts, campgrounds, theme parks, state and national parks, etc.). For more information, go to www.workamper.com.

MARKETING RESOURCES



Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau: The official tourism promotion agency for Cameron, Clarion, Elk, Forest, and Jefferson Counties, this not-for-profit membership-based organization offers travelers assistance in planning their trip as well as tourism marketing/promotion and co-op advertising opportunities for members. Members receive a listing in a widely distributed Visitors Guide and the Pennsylvania Great Outdoors website and also receive advertising discounts in various publications. Each year, Great Outdoors distributes more than 185,000 member brochures at many branded display racks at high traffic stops within the PA Great Outdoors region. They also distribute three very popular guides that feature maps: Biker's Ride Guide, Uncorked Wine Trail Guide, and Elk Viewing Guide. PA Great Outdoors attends travel and consumer shows each year, publishes Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter GO Magazines, and has their own blog. For more information visit Great Outdoors online at www.visitpago.com or contact info@visitpago.com or 814-849-5197.

PA Signing Trust: Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) are the official blue and brown directional signs installed on roadways that help the traveling public find businesses and attractions. To learn more about cost, eligibility requirements and how to apply, go to: <https://palogo.org/tods-program/>.

Pennsylvania On Display: is the official brochure distributor for the state of Pennsylvania distributing brochures in the 35 Interstate Rest Areas, 17 Turnpike Plazas, and 14 Welcome Centers. Additional information available on website at www.PennsylvaniaOnDisplay.com.

Pennsylvania Tourism Office: The PA Tourism Office offers a variety of opportunities to grow your tourism business and connect with potential visitors by advertising in one or more of their offerings. The state of Pennsylvania's marketing program enables advertisers to connect directly with travelers planning a Pennsylvania visit. Realize the impact of the Pennsylvania tourism brand and the marketing initiatives driving travelers to visit the Keystone State. Promotion options include inclusion on visitPA.com, the official tourism site of Pennsylvania, whether through strategic placement on the homepage, display ads or listings in listings by category; the visitPA.com eNewsletter or Happy Traveler Travel Guide. More information can be found online at <https://visitpa.com/articles/advertising-opportunities>.

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Champion of the Pennsylvania Wilds Awards: Each spring the Pennsylvania Wilds Center recognizes individuals, groups, organizations, communities or businesses that in the last year have made significant contributions to help grow and sustainably develop the outdoor recreation economy and nature tourism in the Pennsylvania Wilds by marrying economic development and conservation goals. These awards are presented at an Annual Dinner. Award nominations are judged by the degree to which they help advance one or more of the following goals: to create jobs, diversify local economies, inspire stewardship of natural and cultural resources, and improve quality of life. Award nominations are also judged by the degree to which they reflect the hallmarks of the effort to grow the outdoor recreation economy in the Pennsylvania Wilds. These hallmarks include: use of creative partnerships and planning; fostering a strong sense of place and community pride;



ability to replicate new ideas or models in other communities; and demonstration of strong grassroots support. Learn more: <https://www.pawildscenter.org/programs-and-services/awards-dinner/>.

Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) each year selects recipients for the prestigious 2019 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence. Any individual, business, school, government agency, or community organization in Pennsylvania is eligible to apply. DEP evaluated projects for their degree of environmental protection, innovation, partnership efforts, economic impact, consideration of climate change, and sustainability and results achieved. Information can be found at www.dep.pa.gov/About/Awards/EnvironmentalExcellence/.

PA River of the Year Award: Each fall, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers hold an online voting contest to name PA’s River of the Year. Voting typically opens in November-December, with the winner being named in the new year. The honor brings with it recognition in the media and, often, increased visitation that supports small businesses while raising awareness about good stewardship of the waterway. To learn more, go to: <http://pawatersheds.org>.

PA Trail of the Year Award: Each year, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee designates a Trail of the Year to help build enthusiasm and support for both large and small trails, and raise public awareness about the value of Pennsylvania’s trail network. Nominations for PA Trail of the Year are typically accepted through late fall. The honor of being selected helps draw attention to trails across the Commonwealth and, often, increased visitation that supports small businesses while raising awareness about good stewardship of regional trails. To learn more, go to: www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/TrailDevelopment/TrailOfTheYear/ .