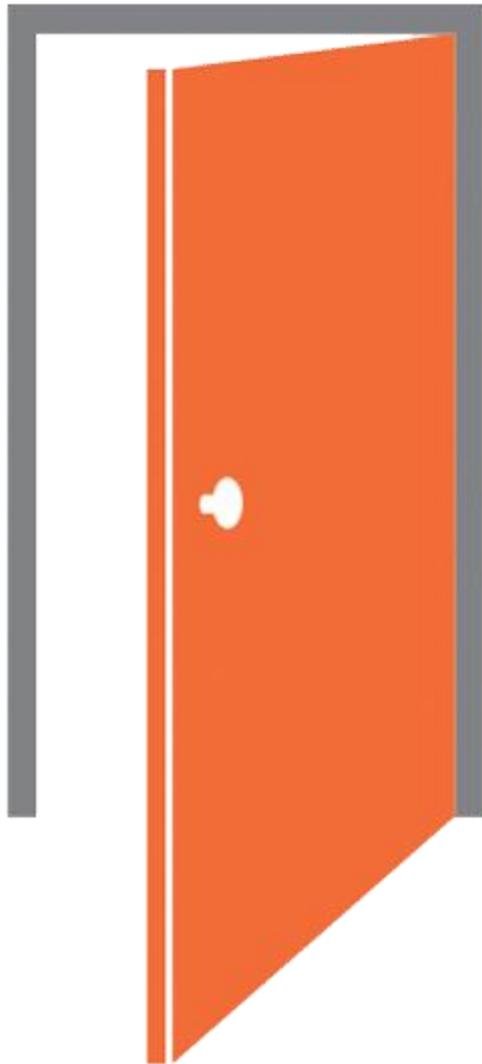


# Certified Entrepreneurial<sup>®</sup> Community Program

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NOVEMBER 2015



A PLACE WHERE  
ENTREPRENEURS  
SUCCEED

# Program History

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AdvantageWest launched in 2007

10 certified communities

- Black Mountain
- Burke County
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Haywood County
- Macon County
- Mitchell County
- Polk County
- Transylvania County
- Watauga County
- Yancey County



**C E R T I F I E D**  
**Entrepreneurial**  
**Community®**

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“We all figured out that **if we operate in a silo it just doesn’t work,**” said Jason Triplett, CEC® team member. “But when we partner we spur all of us on, and we use all our strengths. The result is **more awareness of how we value entrepreneurs** and more passion for this in the community.”

That entrepreneurial spirit helped the CEC® leadership team complete the certification process. “We were already doing it, so **this was just a natural next step,**” said Joe. “We knew we could learn and share ideas, and doing this further emphasized our desire to **sustain that entrepreneurial culture.**” Joe Furman, Watauga County, CEC® team leader.

# 2013 Program Evaluation

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In order to be transformed to a fee-for-service program, an overhaul was needed.



# CEC® Finds a New Home

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Creative EDC purchased in June 2015

AdvantageWest closed

# CEC® Team

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Creative Economic Development Consulting  
Entrepreneurial Places  
Innovative Economies



Crystal Morphis



Leslie Scott



Emily Breedlove

# Why CEC®?

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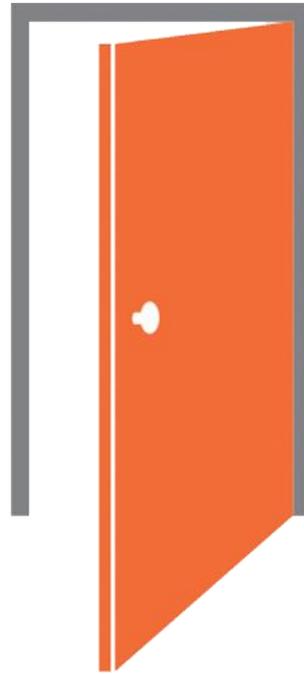
Entrepreneurship is a proven economic development strategy to create jobs, encourage economic diversification, and revitalize communities.

Enhances community capacity to

- Streamline the startup process
- Connect existing assets
- Grow vibrant existing businesses
- Attract new innovative ventures into the region
- Open the doors for additional market opportunity.

# What does it mean to be entrepreneur-ready?

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# Redesigning the Program

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# The Creative CEC® Model



# Ecosystem Assessment

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We start the process having already completed an ecosystem assessment. We come to the first meeting with data ready to share.

- Baseline Research
- Develop a Leadership Team
- Resource Directory
- Entrepreneur focus group

# Action Plan and Score Card

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The first meeting is a work session to identify two entrepreneur activities for focus (examples: local food, youth entrepreneurship, etc.).

# Example Entrepreneur Initiatives

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Business Plan Competitions

Youth Business Plan Competitions

Revolving Loan Funds

Angel Investor Network

Cluster specific (Creative Placemaking/Arts/Culture/Heritage, Local Foods Systems/Agribusiness, Technology/Innovation, Green/Sustainability/Wellness, Manufacturing, Tourism(eco/agro)/Hospitality/Outdoor Recreation)

Expos/Conferences

Local Food

Buy-Local Campaigns

Youth Entrepreneurship & Leadership Development

# Coaching of Task Teams

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The second meeting reviews the action plan, score card, establishes task teams, and defines the work process for the next 6 months.

# Evaluation, Certification, and Action Plan for Year 2

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The third meeting will present results of task team work, formally certify the community, and action plan for Year 2.

# Annual Meeting

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Best practices

Networking

Show casing communities

# Recertification

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A recertification fee covers ongoing coaching and action planning for the next year.

To be recertified each year, the community must show progress toward meeting objectives on the Score Card.

# Program Deliverables

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# Application Schedule

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## January and July Cohorts

- Application deadlines are January 15 and July 15

## How to Apply

- [www.creativecec.com](http://www.creativecec.com)

# Price

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\$20,000 (plus travel) for North Carolina counties

Discount for multiple counties working as a region

- Workforce region, economic development region, COG region, etc.

\$6,000 (plus travel) for recertification

# Crystal Morphis, CEcD, LEED Green Associate

[www.creativeedc.com](http://www.creativeedc.com)

[www.creativesiteassessment.com](http://www.creativesiteassessment.com)

[www.creativecec.com](http://www.creativecec.com)

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economic development consulting