

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Official Publication of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center

A Small Business Incubator

*Shawn Utt/Doug Hudson,
Acting Incubator Managers*

December 2009 – January 2010

NRV Competitiveness Center Transitions to New Management

With the retirement of Dave Rundgren as Executive Director of the New River Valley Development Corporation (see the newsletter from October 2009 for the announcement), the Development Corporation's Board of Directors has partnered with the County of Pulaski and its staff to assist in the management of the Competitiveness Center. The transition has been underway for two months and the County staff along with the Development Corporation's Board look forward to a positive relationship as we all work to make the Center a first-class business incubator. There are some exciting programs on the horizon for small businesses (new or existing), so be on the lookout.

NRV Competitiveness Center Welcomes New Tenants

Communicate Consulting

Communicate Consulting helps businesses and non-profits increase their profits and build long-term relationships through strategic marketing and precise communication. What that means is they help you find the right words and images to tailor your message, and combine them with the right places and times to get in front of your target audiences. If you're going to say something, say it right the first time. That's why they tailor each message to the people you're trying to reach, and then follow-up by measuring the results. That way you know exactly what you're getting for your money and time.

Their services include:

- Marketing strategy and planning
- Graphic design
- Advertising strategy in all media
- Web design and development
- Market research and survey design
- Event planning and strategy
- Public relations and media campaigns
- Staff training and presentations
- Public speaking training

Ready to start getting your message out? Visit their website at www.communicateconsulting.com or contact them at 540.267.3404.

MACO TOOL

MACO TOOL, INC. is a forward thinking company with small shop values.

Maco Tool is a precision machining and fabrication facility located in Christiansburg, VA and they have now added a second location at the Competitiveness Center. Their staff are trained professionals as evidenced by the precision workmanship and quality that go into each project. They also maintain a commitment to continually update their equipment, utilizing the latest computers, precision CNC machining technology, and a COORDINATE MEASURING MACHINE for inspection. MTI has become a major supplier for many well-known companies such as Federal Mogul, Bucyrus International and Volvo, with tooling and machines throughout the entire world. Please feel free to call 540.382.1871,

fax 540.382.1296, or e-mail fredcecil@macotool.com or edcampbell@macotool.com with your quote today. For further information, please visit <http://www.macotool.com>.

BAE Systems

BAE Systems is delighted to locate a Radford Field Office in the New River Valley Competitiveness Center. BAE Systems is a global, defense, security and aerospace company looking to further consolidate its activities in Virginia. The office will be open for business at the start of the New Year and provide an excellent base from which to develop new business opportunities. BAE Systems delivers a full range of products and services for air, land and naval forces, as well as advanced electronics, security, information technology solutions and customer support services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIRGINIA BIOSCIENCE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Thursday, December 17, 2009, 1 - 5:15 p.m.

Free of Charge/Reception to Follow

Virginia BioTechnology Research Park
800 East Leigh Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Go to www.virginiabbr.org for more information and to RSVP.

4TH ANNUAL NEW RIVER VALLEY CAREER FAIR: (Sponsored by Cumulus Broadcasting)

January 28, 2010, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., at New River Valley Mall

To become an exhibitor or for further information, contact Judy Woodyard at Cumulus Media
(540) 731-6046 or (540) 577-5758.

Congratulations to the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance for being awarded "**Top 5 Website Design**" from Expansion Solutions Magazine, a national publication designed to inform key site selection consultants and corporate real estate brokers about progressive communities and the benefits that are offered by each community. See the Press Release at:

http://www.nrvalliance.org/news/documents/ESOL_Awards09PressRelease.pdf



For Competitiveness Center information contact:
Shawn Utt or Doug Hudson, Acting Incubator Managers
6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 302, Radford, VA 24141
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incubatormanager@nrvc.org or www.nrvdc.org/nrvcc.html

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February – March 2010

The ‘WOW’ Factor: Where Service Excellence Starts

Due to its popularity and effectiveness, New River Community College is offering the ‘WOW’ Factor customer service training for businesses in the New River Valley. Since customer service is vital to the success of any business, this is certainly an important opportunity. Sponsored by the Community College’s Office of Workforce Development and the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), the workshop will be held on Wednesday, February 24th in Room 117 of Edwards Hall beginning at 10 a.m. and running until noon. Bobbie Walker, Director of Education and Workforce Readiness with the VTC, will lead participants toward positive behaviors that enhance customer service skills and help give employees confidence and the support needed to shine. To register, visit www2.nr.edu/wd_service/.

NRV Competitiveness Center Updates



In a sign of a turning economy, the NRV Competitiveness Center occupancy is up to approximately 82%, but space is still available.

Currently, there are only 12 offices and a small amount of manufacturing space available. If you are interested in viewing the available space, visit the Center’s website at: www.nrvdc.org/nrvcc.html and click on “Floor Plan”.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BAE Systems

BAE Systems cordially invites you to an Open House to learn more about their company and operations in the region. The Open House will be on Tuesday, February 23rd from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. at The Inn at Virginia Tech, 901 Prices Fork Road in Blacksburg. For further information, contact Tony Hewitt at tony.hewitt@baesystems.com.

Competitiveness Center Tenant Survey Results and Implementation

Recently, the tenants of the Competitiveness Center were asked to take a short survey focusing on their needs as a small business and how the Competitiveness Center can meet those needs. The results will help the Center develop a set of training workshops geared toward meeting those needs. However, these workshops will also be open to all small businesses and those who may be interested in beginning a small business. If you are interested, please complete the survey on the next page and forward it to the Center by February 21st. Keep an eye out for updates and other happenings as they are planned.

Competitiveness Center Business Development Survey

The Management of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center would like to offer business development/support workshops to the tenants of the Center. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey to allow us a better idea of the current needs of the tenants.

All responses will remain completely anonymous.

1) Are you interested in participating in business development/support workshops?

- Yes
- No

2) To what extent do these content areas interest you?

Please use the 'Additional Comments' field to type other content areas you would like to have included in a professional development offering.

	Not interested	Somewhat interested	Very interested
Managing Credit & Debt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Start-up Basics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing a Business Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing / Networking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legal Considerations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Record Keeping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Meet the Lender"- A How-to Guide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Business Taxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technology and E-Commerce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional Comments/Ideas for Workshops: _____

***** Thank you very much for your feedback and participation. *****

Please return the survey to the Center Manager’s office before February 21st in order to better allow for workshop coordination.

Questions or comments: Shawn Utt (sutt@pulaskicounty.org) or 540-980-7710

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April – May 2010

IRS Tax Support to Small Businesses

For those of you who are not aware, the IRS provides a Small Business/Self-Employed Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop. This extensive workshop is designed to help new and existing small business owners understand and meet their federal tax obligations. There are 9 lessons covered through the Business Tax Workshop:



1. Federal taxes and your new business
2. Setting up and running a new business
3. Paying your taxes using a computer (Sole proprietors, partnerships, Corporations, Charities/Non-profits)
4. Running your business out of your home
5. Retirement plans for owner & employees
6. Federal Taxes when hiring employees/contractors
7. How to manage payroll so you withhold the right amount from employees.
8. Making tax deposits and filing payroll taxes
9. Federal unemployment taxes (FUTA)

To learn more about the Small Business/Self-Employed Virtual Small Business Tax Workshop, visit <http://www.irs.gov>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Social Networking and Your Business – Understanding the Legal Aspects: Breakfast Briefing Sponsored by the Pulaski Chamber of Commerce and offered by Baker-Donelson Law Firm; Tuesday, April 27th at 8:00 am; MK's Pizzeria located at 4941 State Park Road, Dublin, VA 24084. For additional information, contact the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce at 540-674-1991.

Small Business Fundamentals Series – The Radford Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring monthly workshops focused on the quirks of running a small business. On April 6th, the focus will be on **Risk Management** while the series spotlights **Small Business Start-up** on May 4th. Workshop sessions are held at the Chamber offices located at 200 Third Avenue, Radford, VA. For additional information, contact the offices at 540-639-2202 or visit their website at www.radfordchamber.com.

Pulaski County Small Business Expo 2010: *Standing the Test of Time* - The Pulaski County Small Business Expo will be held Thursday, May 20th at 1210 E. Main Street, Pulaski, VA (aka, the “old Lee Jeans building”). Exhibit space is still available. If interested in participating, contact the Chamber offices at 540-674-1991 or visit their website at www.pulaskichamber.info.



**FREE SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP FOR NRV
BUSINESSES**

go green NRV is happy to announce a free upcoming workshop available to all NRV businesses looking to 'go green' and learn how to participate in the *go green NRV* initiative.

The workshop will be held **Thursday, April 29th** at Mountain Lake Conservancy and Hotel in Pembroke, VA from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Workshop includes a complimentary lunch for all guests, informational session on calculating a business' carbon footprint, overview of the go green NRV program, and a tour of Mountain Lake to learn how the Hotel and Conservancy are using eco-friendly practices on the mountain.

Participating in the *go green NRV* initiative will help your business save money, improve employee wellness and productivity, increase marketing edge over competition, be a part of the new green economy, and most importantly, conserve resources and protect the environment.

To register for the workshop, please e-mail Emily Woodall at mlc@mountainlakehotel.com or call her at 540-626-7121 x444. Carpooling options available; please indicate your interest when registering. Space is limited, so register early! Registration deadline is **Monday, April 19th**.

go green NRV was established in the Fall 2008 to promote a Green Business Program for businesses in the New River Valley and is currently represented by companies in Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski counties, and the City of Radford. For more information on participating in the go green NRV initiative please visit: www.gogreenrv.com.

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June – July 2010

Renting Office Space – the Why's and Why Not's

At some point, all growing small businesses are faced with the question of leasing versus buying office space. This question has many pros and cons. In order to make their decision easier, key facts to consider when leasing office space are discussed in the About.com Guide.

With ever-changing U.S. office vacancy rates and stock markets, it is uncertain what the future may bring. A small business owner needs to carefully weigh their options when leasing office space. Here are a few reasons to consider leasing office space.

- ◎ **Prime Property:** A leasing office space option provides a business with the chance to rent in an area with a good location and high image. If your small business is dependent on location and image, such as service providers or retail establishments, the leasing option is much more affordable.
- ◎ **Free-up Working Capital:** With your money not tied up in real estate your business can respond to opportunities in the market. In addition, your ability to borrow funds will not be as limited as with buying office space.
- ◎ **More Time:** Any type of ownership comes with headaches. A leasing option affords the time and flexibility to focus solely on running your business.

SMALL BUSINESS FUNDING OPTIONS

Funding opportunities are often determined by small business growth status. Below are a few of the most popular funding sources, including small business loans, Small Business Administration loans, bank loans, venture capital investors and angel investors. Determining the best source for your company isn't always easy. You need to graph your whole business plan and presentation to the source that is most likely to fund your project. So choose wisely, and be ready to change direction at any time.

A quick summary of small business growth funding alternatives you may be looking at are listed for your review. However, there are no hard and fast rules. The best funding option for your company is often the one you can obtain. Check out the following website for additional details in business plans - <http://www.businessplanmaster.com/small-business-growth.html>

	Bootstrap	Angels	VC	SBA	Leasing	Grants	Alternative
Pre-Start Up	YES	YES				YES	
Start Up	YES	YES	YES	IFFY	YES		YES
Established			YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Buy Out				YES	YES		YES

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPCOMING EVENTS

The W.O.W. Factor Customer Service Training – The New River Community College’s Office of Workforce Development, in partnership with the Virginia Tourism Corporation, will be sponsoring



this great Customer Service Training geared to all levels of employees. Come and learn what it means to just “give ‘em the pickle”. The workshop will be held on Wednesday, June 23rd from 10:00 am to noon and is free to all participants. Register online at www.nr.edu or contact the Office of Workforce Development at 540.674.3613.

Entrepreneur Express Workshop – The Entrepreneur Express is a business development workshop presented by the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and is being sponsored by the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce, the NRV Competitiveness Center, Virginia Economic Bridge and Wachovia. The series will provide participants with interactive discussions and presentations covering key elements of business practices, including: How to Start & Operate a Business, Growing your Business/Marketing Strategy, Financing/Managing Resources and Available Resources & Resource Fair. The workshop will be held at the NRV Competitiveness Center on Thursday, August 19th beginning at 9:00 am through noon. For additional information or to register, call the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce offices at 540.674.1991 or go to www.vastartup.org/register/events/204



Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce 2010 Member Expo is coming on August 19th in conjunction with the August Business After Hours. It will be held at the Holiday Inn University, 900 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg and will be open to the public from 3:00 to 5:30 pm. If you are interested in participating, call the Chamber office at 540.552.2636 or email the Chamber staff at dlyons@montgomerycc.org

Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce - Is your business looking for just the right employee to fill that job opening? Post your job openings free of charge on the Chamber web site. This is one of the latest additions to the services the Chamber is offering to members. To add your listings, contact the chamber office at pchamber1@swva.net or call 540.674.1991.

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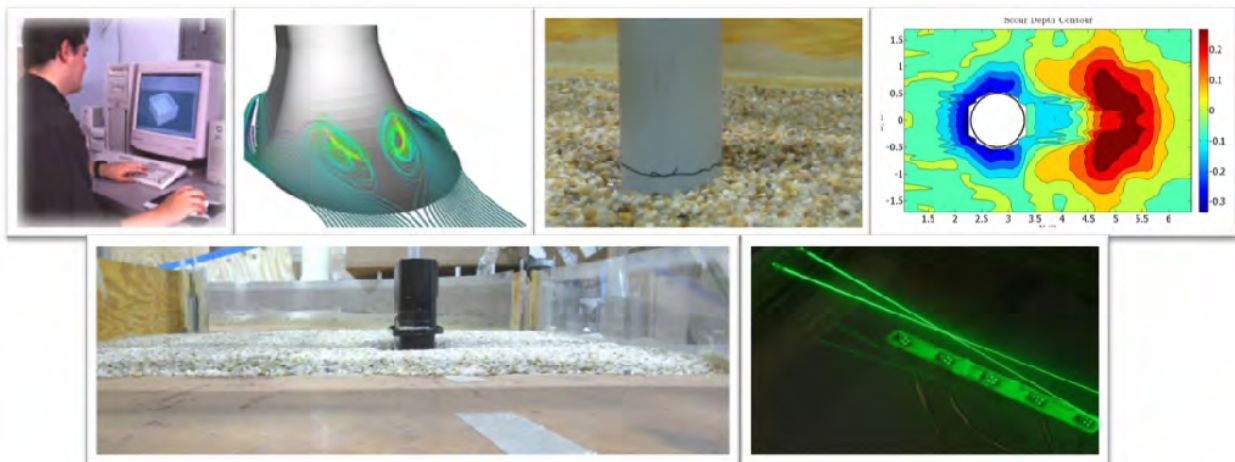
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August – September 2010

AUR, Inc. keeps things flowing in the NRVCC

How a group of aerospace engineers came upon a breakthrough in protecting the integrity of highway and railway bridge foundations is no mistake, despite the apparent disciplinary disconnect. “Whenever I speak with aerospace engineers about our company’s solution to the bridge scour problem, I always mention the old adage: the mark of a great idea is when you are baffled by the question, ‘why has no one ever thought of this before?’”, says Dr. Todd Lowe, the Vice President for Research and Development at Applied University Research, Inc. (AUR) Lowe’s question is driven largely by his background as an aerodynamicist who is used to seeing complex solutions for air flow problems. Perhaps the truest answer to the question lies in the experience of AUR President, Dr. Roger L. Simpson, a registered Professional Engineer with a background in aerospace and mechanical engineering. As an expert aerodynamicist, Simpson spent years studying and documenting flows with features very similar to those occurring at the bases of bridge piers, and he is recognized in the field as the world’s expert in such ‘junction flows’. The bridge scour problem is one of fluid flow, and understanding this class of flows better than anyone before him gave Simpson the unique vision to solve the problem.

For some background, bridge scour is a potentially catastrophic and deadly phenomenon in which the soil and rock that is used to stabilize the foundations of bridge piers and abutments is moved away from the pier and abutment footings. In extreme cases, sufficient soil and rock can be removed to the extent that the bridge foundation shifts and causes the roadway deck to collapse into the waterway beneath. The problem is a serious risk to public safety and infrastructure, and it is pervasive throughout the U.S. and the world: more than 20,000 bridges in the U.S. alone have been marked by engineers as at risk to scour effects.



AUR’s bridge scour solution, the scaUR™ product, went through extensive design evaluation, from computer simulations to real flow experimentation using custom developed flow apparatus and laser instruments.

Since moving to the NRVCC in September of 2007, AUR has plotted a steady course toward bringing their bridge scour solution, the Patent Pending scAUR™ device, to market. Dr. Quinn Tian, also with a background in aerospace and mechanical engineering, guided the product development from computer simulations and design to scale water flow testing in AUR facilities at the NRVCC to current developments in efficient manufacturing of the scAUR™ technologies. The company is currently speaking with potential customers across the entire U.S., with plans to extend their reach to Europe and Asia.

When asked about his belief and commitment to this product and its potential to improve the safety of bridges throughout the world, Simpson leaves no doubt as to his stance: “No bridge should ever fail again due to local scour around piers and abutments - if the proper scAUR™ products are installed.” AUR plans to deliver the fruits of that promise of safety and infrastructure protection to many bridges soon.

If you would like to learn more about AUR’s scAUR™ product or its line of laser instrumentation for flow measurement, please visit their websites: <http://www.noscour.com/> and <http://www.aurinc.com/>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and UPCOMING EVENTS

ENTREPRENEUR EXPRESS: MOVING YOUR BUSINESS FORWARD

You are invited and encouraged to attend the Entrepreneur Express Workshop on Thursday, August 19, 9 a.m. - 12 noon, at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center, in Fairlawn. This workshop is designed to deliver practical, hands-on training and provide information on available business resources. Attendees with specific interests or resource needs will receive follow-up attention from the workshop's sponsoring and participating organizations. They include local, state, and federal resource providers. Workshop participants will be introduced to many potential programs of interest to start-up companies and growing small businesses, from business plan counseling through increasing sales and obtaining financing.

Sponsored by: Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce; Virginia Economic Bridge; Virginia Department of Business Assistance; New River Valley Competitiveness Center; Wachovia Bank.

Admission is **FREE**, including breakfast, but advanced registration is required by August 16th. Register at: www.vastartup.org or call the Pulaski County Chamber of Commerce at (540) 674-1991.

Reserve your spot today for this session. It could make a big difference in your current or planned business.

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October – November 2010

MMDS MOBILE X-RAY *“Bringing Healthcare to the Patient”*

MMDS NRV, Mobile Medical Diagnostic Service New River Valley, LLC, a tenant of the Competitiveness Center since 2005, provides diagnostic x-rays for patients in a variety of settings and locations throughout West Central Virginia, hence the “mobile” aspect of the business. As Leigh-Anne Cumbee, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, indicates, “For most of our clients, remaining in comfortable, familiar surroundings is paramount for their health, safety, and well-being. Research has shown that patients, families and medical caregivers alike, list the difficulties associated with dislocating patients, as a major problem, and that is where we come in...!” In addition to this trauma, there is the increased risk of causing additional medical complications, especially since many geriatric patients are more fragile and prone to injury.

The President and CEO, S. Quentin “Skip” Castle related that “Our number one priority is the health and welfare of the patient. MMDS personnel take great pride in offering quality radiologic studies, and we are especially proud of the fact we are providing the best patient care possible each time we perform a procedure.” Ms. Cumbee reiterated that, “Our technologists are chosen in part based on their sincere interest in providing quality care to their patients. Each technologist is responsible for a particular group of clients/facilities, with whom they become familiar and develop a close working relationship. Together, they ensure patients receive the highest quality care possible!”

The goal of MMDS is to make a difference in patient care and healthcare for everyone they come in contact with. The benefits of their service and the efforts of their staff are evident by the response of the patients and their family members. The President offered these remarks...“We find that our Patients love us...their Families love us, the Nursing Homes find our services very beneficial and we complement their offering of service to their clientele...! Often we get reports of elderly patients crying when they see us...so happy because as they say...I don’t have to go to the hospital now that you are here! That transport to the hospital, the not so stylish open back drafty gown and the whole ordeal is just plain exhausting and stressful on these oftentimes very fragile people! I am proud to say, we eliminate all of that...!” He went on to say that frequently after discovering what MMDS does that the family members say they wish they had known about us sooner, i.e., when their grandmother, grandfather or a parent needed an x-ray while in the Nursing Home or while confined to a bed at home.



You might surmise from all this that Skip and Leigh-Anne sincerely enjoy bringing their services to patients and facilities in the New River and Greater Roanoke Valleys!

For questions regarding their service call the main office at 540.633.6760. They are here to serve You and the Community!

NRV Competitiveness Center Welcomes New Tenant

This past July, Brian Bishop, with Horace Mann Insurance, joined the Center as a tenant. Horace Mann Insurance was founded in 1945 by a group of educators and is the largest multi-line insurance company that focuses on the education



community. Bishop Insurance recently opened and became an agent with Horace Mann. When asked exactly what services he offers, Brian explains that he “provides retirement planning as well as auto and life insurance. Educators are our primary market, but we also provide the same quality services to non Educators as well.” Brian is a resident of Pulaski County with his wife Kelly and daughter Caroline. Please contact him at Brian.Bishop@horacemann.com or 540.267.3012.

NRV Competitiveness Center Hosts Delegates from World Bank

Recently, delegates from the World Bank visited the New River Valley and the Competitiveness Center. Thanks to a program through Virginia Tech’s Career & Technical Education program through its School of Education, Dr. Bill Price hosted a group from the World Bank’s Department of Human Development. The goal of the visit was to learn about innovative programs focused on increasing entrepreneurialism and learning how to replicate them throughout the Third World Countries. The group also heard from John Olver, President/CEO of Center tenant Emissshield on his experiences with the incubator system as well as colleagues from Beans & Rice, Inc. (Eric Bucey, Program Manager; Mike Forrest and Sam Hensley) to discuss their MicroSolutions Revolving Loan Fund Program. A special thank you goes out to all who participated and especially to Dr. Price for bringing the group to the Center.

Condolences...

Mary Holliman, a member of the New River Valley Development Corporation Board, passed away on August 13, 2010. Ms. Holliman represented the Town of Blacksburg and was an active member of her community. She was devoted to her hometown of Blacksburg where she served on the Town Council and Town Planning Commission and was active in local civic organizations. Ms. Holliman was a valuable and dedicated member of the Development Corporation for two years. She will be missed and our condolences go out to her family, friends, and her community.

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