



Unlimited Future, Inc.

Small Businesses Start Here

**GROWING
RESILIENT
ECONOMIES**



UNLIMITED FUTURE... BUILDING NETWORKS FOR SUCCESS

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR GROWING IMPACT

Unlimited Future, Inc. (UFI) had three areas of focus this year; expanding services/brand awareness, coordinating partnerships, and building organizational capacity. During this time UFI has been laser focused on achieving these goals. The organization has collaborated and partnered with other organizations to increase programmatic reach plus ignite economic development in the industry of social enterprise. Further, UFI has gained a greater impact in the community through our community development efforts.

Unlimited Future is expanding services/brand awareness with social media to promote the work of our organization. This goal has also led to collaborative partnerships with Coalfield Development Corp., Marshall University, Recovery Point, PROACT, and Cabell Huntington Hospital. Staff is working on revitalization projects in the Fairfield and West Huntington communities through collaboration with community residents, local government, and business owners. UFI staff has also attended events within the neighborhood showcasing clients plus creating awareness of our services.

Networking efforts have increased ability to coordinate partnerships and this has been the highlight of this year. The networking and relationship development done throughout this year has led to multiple funding resources that have given the organization the ability to continue to offer and expand services in different sectors of the population. One amazing collaboration this year has been with Marshall University, PROACT, Cabell Huntington Hospital and other partners under the umbrella of a project called CORE2 (Creating Opportunities for Recovery Employment). This partnership has allowed UFI the opportunity to explore social entrepreneurs with the lens of employment for individuals struggling to find jobs during and after recovery. This work aims to provide business opportunities that leverage skills from a community of individuals desperately looking for a chance to change their lives.

The most thrilling partnership created this year was between Coalfield Development Corporation and UFI. These two organizations set out on a quest to address the issue of retraining and educating individuals negatively affected by the loss of jobs in the coal industry. This initiative led to a Communities Thrive Challenge Award. We were one of only 10 communities out of 1800 applicants to receive grant funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative. This partnership hopes to empower individuals who will gain education, jobs skills, and personal development.

The board of UFI is strong, vibrant, and committed to the growth and well-being of the organization. They worked diligently with a consultant to develop a strategic plan. Three new board members were added this year. They have held friend-raising events, community functions, and partnered with staff to acquire CRA funds. An additional staff person has been hired through the Generation WV Impact Fellowship.

In 2018 Unlimited Future formed 26 new partnerships, helped to create 17 new businesses, and helped 85 existing businesses expand and grow. These efforts resulted in 211 new or retained jobs in our region! UFI has also leveraged \$1,866,785.00 in private investment.





ELEVATE ELIXIRS: RESOURCES

Mark Smith is the owner and operator of Elevate Elixirs, a kombucha brewing company based in Huntington, WV. Mark and his wife Gina discovered kombucha while traveling and started making their own blends at home. Friends, Family, and co-workers loved getting a sample of Mark's latest flavor and kept saying you could make this into a business!

So they did, coming to Unlimited Future to learn about business incorporation and licensing requirements for their unique product. Then an opportunity to enter the Strong Mountain Communities' Good Jobs Business Plan Competition incentivized them to write a long term plan

to grow their business. Unlimited Future coached them through the competition reviewing business plans and supporting their in-person pitch. After winning the grand prize, they also received product development support from RCBI and are looking for space to grow supported by HADCO.

A great product, passionate people and the right network of support gave Elevate Elixirs a jump start! They now distribute across the Huntington Area and to more than ten cities in West Virginia. You can find their product at The Wild Ramp and Butter It Up at the Market (also clients of Unlimited Future).

PARTNERSHIPS TO GROW LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM



Unlimited Future achieves our mission through partnerships with organizations working at the local, state, and regional level. Partnerships are the way we can lift up entrepreneurs and offer a full suite of supportive services for all of their needs. Unlimited Future uses a broad network of experts and service providers. Whether your new business is selling a product or service, needs to apply for a loan, has a tax situation, needs help with marketing, cash flow, or regulatory issues, we can connect you to the resources you need.

THE CORRIDOR PROJECT

Unlimited Future in partnership with Appalachian Center for Economic Networks and Appalachian Sustainable Development collaboratively launched the Appalachian Food Enterprise Corridor in 2016 with the support of an ARC POWER Grant. The project connected local food entrepreneurs through a regional network to help these businesses reach new market opportunities and diversify their revenue. The Corridor Project leveraged \$1,003,085.00 of investment from more than 25 food businesses in West Virginia.

INITIATIVES

- 1 Training for Individuals** Unlimited Future provides the education and skills new entrepreneurs need to be successful in business.
- 2 Cluster Development** Unlimited Future builds networks around entrepreneurs to enable success in new sectors and create a nexus of economic opportunities that grow together.
- 3 Community Development** Unlimited Future knows that strong economies are linked to strong communities so we work to strengthen individuals and networks that improve livability for members in our community.

78%
Women-owned
Businesses

102
Businesses
served in 2018



BEAUTY BUSINESS MILESTONES

In 2018, Elizabeth Caul celebrated 5 years in business. Noni Beauty Supply provides a wide variety of cosmetology supplies. Elizabeth's secret to success? Ensuring that the store is customer focused. She travels to trade shows to keep up with trends and styles, working with distributors in larger markets to bring the best quality and variety to the Huntington store.

"You have to fight for your business." Elizabeth points out, explaining the need to compete to stay ahead, removing the hindrances to growth. "If we fail to grow and develop our business, we can't expect to succeed." To illustrate, most of her current business is from customers visiting the store to select their products, but plans are already in place to develop more online business through the website.

Elizabeth attended Unlimited Future's Planning for Profit course taught by Ursulette Huntley in 2010. She gained valuable knowledge on starting a business. She credits the early encouragement of her mother and grandmother especially with giving her confidence to go into business. You can visit Noni Beauty Supply at 917 20th Street in Huntington.

**SINCE
1992**



316+
Businesses
Currently Operating



712+
Jobs
Created

UNLIMITED FUTURE... POWERING SMALL BUSINESSES FORWARD.

CREATIVE THINKING FOR REVITALIZATION

Creative Placemaking rose to the top of Unlimited Future's playbook in 2018. Creative placemaking by definition is a multifaceted approach to the design, planning, and management of public spaces. The goals of creative placemaking projects are to increase economic vitality, foster greater livability, and build social capital and civic connection in a community.

Unlimited Future sponsored the ON TRAC Assessment Days, a strategy session to create a long term transformation strategy for the Central City District. The multi-stakeholder engagement identified food and arts as key drivers of new activities in the Antiques District.



CICADA BOOKS: INVEST IN PLACE

Cicada Books is a bookstore and coffee shop that has created a third space in West Huntington for people to gather. The bright blue facade and an eclectic interior create a relaxing and cozy vibe with lots of nooks to sit with a book or meet with a friend.

Dawn Norman has always wanted to start a bookstore and has owned AMS Direct, a direct mail and marketing company for 25 years. Cicada is an opportunity to share her vision and experience as an entrepreneur with her daughter Katie. After living in Central City, Dawn decided "this is the place that I want to invest in and show people why it's a great place." Cicada Books is a business building the community that the owners Dawn and Katie want to live in and they welcome other like-minded entrepreneurs to invest in the revitalization of this area.

Dawn started AMS Direct in the AFI Incubator in 1996. She returned to UFI for assistance in starting a second business.



10,000+
Hours of
Business Coaching



57
Incubator
Tenants

AND STILL
GROWING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Lieving
President

Breanna Shell
Vice President

Jason Shepard
Treasurer

Ashley Shaw
Secretary

Michael Thomas
Founder, Member

Maria Hill
Member

Uday Tate
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Abby Reale
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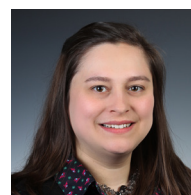
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THANKS TO OUR MAJOR FUNDERS

APPALACHIAN
REGIONAL
COMMISSION -
CORRIDOR PROJECT

USDA - RURAL
DEVELOPMENT

BB&T FOUNDATION

USDA - SPECIALTY
CROP BLOCK GRANT

USDA - FARMERS
MARKET PROMOTION
PROGRAM WITH THE
WILD RAMP

JM KAPLAN FUND

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