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NEWS RELEASE

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Startup Alleghenies Goes On The Road to Honor Veteran Entrepreneurs | #SUASalutesVets

ALTOONA, PA - November 11th marks Veterans Day 2019, when the country pauses to salute veterans who have served our country.

Startup Alleghenies (SUA) (www.startupalleghenies.com) jumpstarted a movement to create the next vibrant startup zone in the Alleghenies. Since launching in June 2017, the nonprofit has registered over 450 entrepreneurs from Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Fulton, Huntingdon and Somerset Counties. *Among those entrepreneurs, Startup Alleghenies has been especially proud to support veterans who dream of bringing their big ideas to market.*

Startup Alleghenies will be acknowledging veteran-owned business by touring the Southern Alleghenies region and live-streaming visits to veterans who have or currently are starting businesses. Startup Alleghenies entrepreneurial coaches will be interviewing veteran-entrepreneurs about their service, their businesses and how the skills they learned in the military helped them on the path toward success.

“Many veterans are doing amazing things after their service and we want to celebrate that,” said Andrew Trexler, Startup Alleghenies entrepreneurial coach for Bedford County.

Startup Alleghenies welcomes everyone to watch throughout the day on Startup Alleghenies Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/startupalleghenies/>

“Veterans make a significant impact on the economy as owners of their own businesses,” said Debbi Prosser, director business-development, Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Commission (SAP&DC). “Right now, our Entrepreneur Coaches are working with eleven veterans who are starting businesses in areas as diverse as transportation, software, fitness, food and hospitality, and the development of a safety device for law enforcement. It’s possible that other

entrepreneurs in our ecosystem also are veterans, but haven't yet let us know about their military service. We hope they will reach out since we're here to help," Prosser added.

SUA Support from Idea to Market:

SUA Coaches routinely conduct outreach to veteran's organizations throughout the area. "We already have a great relationship with Veteran Community Initiatives (VCI) and Department of Veteran Affairs in Cambria County," said Blake Fleegle, Startup Alleghenies coach in Cambria County. "I attend their job fairs and other resource days."

SUA and its network of partners provide the kind of support veterans find most helpful, including workshops and networking events, business planning, financial advice, social media and marketing strategies, help with critical business plan development, access to capital and more through Startup Alleghenies' partners.

Facts about Vets in Central Pa. and across the State:

Supporting veterans is especially relevant in Central Pennsylvania. According to a report issued in December 2017 by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis,* nearly 346,000 veterans between 18 and 64 in 2016 lived in Pennsylvania, representing 4.4% of the population and making it the eighth highest state in the US in number of vets. In Central Pa, Somerset had the highest percentage of vets per population at 8.2%, with Cambria County at 6.6% and Blair County at 5.7%.

Prosser cited research from the Center of Excellence for Veteran Entrepreneurship that identified core skills veterans possess because of their military training that make them among the most successful entrepreneurs. They include good decision-making in chaotic environments, high levels of confidence, independence and self-efficacy.

#StartRHRN, #SUA Salutes Vets #EntrepreneursWanted

About Startup Alleghenies

Startup Alleghenies (SUA) is a free program that connects existing and potential entrepreneurs with experienced Coaches to help them navigate a vast network of partners at economic development groups, private organizations, colleges and universities. It was launched with a POWER grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), a federal-state partnership investing in the socioeconomic future of 420 counties in 13 states in the Appalachian region. The support of the PA Department of Community & Economic Development also was instrumental in establishing SUA.

**Sourced by US Census Bureau's American Community Survey, report published 12/17*

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