



VIEW*S* & VISIONS

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All Systems Go!

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FROM OUR MANAGING PARTNER

Tom Heywood is Managing Partner of Bowles Rice. He has significant experience in health care, corporate, finance and commercial law, and leads the firm's Government Relations Team.

Tom was the recipient of the YMCA's 2017 Spirit of the Valley Award. In 2016, he was named to the inaugural class of "Sharp Shooters" by *West Virginia Executive* magazine. *The State Journal* named him one of the state's "Ten Most Influential Business Leaders" in 2012.

He served as Chief of Staff to the Honorable Gaston Caperton, former Governor of the State of West Virginia, from 1990 to 1993, and was chairman of Governor Earl Ray Tomblin's election campaigns in 2011 and 2012. In 2016-2017, he was a member of the Jim Justice Inaugural Committee.

Tom serves on numerous charitable and nonprofit boards, including the West Virginia University Board of Governors, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, the West Virginia Roundtable and the Discover the Real West Virginia Foundation. He also participates actively in various business and trade associations.

In recognition of his many contributions to the legal profession and community, he was named a Fellow of the American Bar Association. He also is a past recipient of *The State Journal's* "Who's Who in West Virginia Business" award.

Appalachia is entering its golden era.

Investment is pouring into our region. Billions of dollars have been invested by Fortune 100 companies in recent years, and that investment only shows signs of accelerating.

CEIC plans to invest \$83.7 billion in West Virginia over the next two decades, and that investment is already underway. President Trump, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and elected officials from across our region are committed to development of the Appalachian Storage Hub, at an estimated cost of \$3.5 to \$10 billion, depending on the amount of total build out. The list goes on.

Long known for its beauty, abundant natural resources, safe and strong communities, and resourceful people, Appalachia is now making headlines worldwide as a place to invest and prosper. It does not get much better than this.

The authors in this edition of *Views & Visions* explore the many facets of our region's nascent growth, prosperity and success. I thank each of them for their leadership and vision, and their dedication to making our shared vision of a prosperous Appalachia a reality.

What keys will help us unlock the doors to sustained growth and prosperity? Our authors are clear and consistent in their message: diversification, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Diversification. We have permanently entered the global knowledge economy. Leaders throughout our region recognize that our future lies in building on our traditional industries and assets to diversify our economy and economic base. And since winning in the future is not a zero-sum

game, success will go to those who invest in education, develop a knowledgeable and skilled workforce, and diversify, broaden and deepen their economies. No region of the country is better positioned to execute this game plan and radically transform its future.

Innovation. We have a rich tradition of innovation in Appalachia, and a history of a hardworking and resourceful people succeeding in a demanding and sometimes scarce-resource environment. From expanding broadband service and modernizing our infrastructure, to promoting the region's extraordinary tourism industry, to seizing new opportunities in technology, agribusiness and manufacturing, just think what is possible now that we find ourselves fully able to capitalize on our abundance in the context of a global, knowledge economy.

Entrepreneurship. One of the most exciting developments in recent years is the focus on entrepreneurship across our region. We have great universities that are in the early stages of stretching their innovation and commercialization muscles. Numerous programs and scholarships across our region are now devoted to entrepreneurship. Meaningful pools of capital are being accumulated and deployed in support of entrepreneurs and innovators. As a culture, we are returning to our roots in terms of our willingness to take chances, experiment and explore the art of the possible.

In reading the articles that follow, I have never been more excited about our future. I wish you and your organizations much fun and great success as you join our authors in boldly stepping up to create the future of your dreams. Forward! ▽