



The Alleghany Foundation Announces Awards to Area Projects

COVINGTON, VA (April 22, 2011) – The Alleghany Foundation announced today that it has awarded \$358,250 in two grants to two area organizations for projects designed to enhance the quality of life for citizens in the Alleghany Highlands. Both grants had been deferred from the Foundation’s review last fall, and both have potential to contribute to ongoing economic development activities.

The Foundation awarded a \$50,000 grant to the Town of Clifton Forge to secure the services of an architectural historian, who will prepare a nomination of a portion of Clifton Forge’s residential area for historic designation. The Foundation awarded \$308,250 to The Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism to develop a high-visibility visitor’s center for the Alleghany Highlands.

“As the Foundation continues its efforts to support innovative approaches to strengthen the local economy, it is wonderful to have strong community partners who work so hard to create new opportunities,” noted Charles Kahle, Foundation President.

Support of the project in Clifton Forge is an effort to preserve the character of the community and create opportunities for further enhancements of the residential areas. The Department of Historic Resources defines a historic district as a significant concentration of buildings, structures, or sites that are united historically and aesthetically by plan or physical development. At its December 16, 2010 meeting, the State Review board concurred with the Department of Historic Resources that a significant portion of Clifton Forge is potentially eligible for listing on both the state and national registers, as a residential historic district. Registration is an honor bestowed on historic properties by the state and federal governments. It recognizes the historic value of a property and encourages present and future owners to continue to exercise good stewardship. Owners of registered properties may donate historic preservation easements (which can reduce real estate taxes), qualify for the state and federal historic preservation tax credits, receive technical assistance from department staff for maintenance and rehabilitation projects, and purchase plaques that mark the property’s significance.

Development of a Visitor’s Center is the third step in efforts to enhance tourism and increase economic development activities in the recreation and tourism sectors. Phase I was an effort to learn about potential opportunities in the area, which led to the Chamber’s “Tourism Needs Assessment and Visitor’s Center Marketing Plan.” Phase II led to organizational development for the Chamber tied to creation of a marketing plan that includes website design, marketing materials, signage, and outreach strategies.

This grant will provide the Alleghany Highlands with a premier Visitors Center to serve as the gateway to our community. The funds will develop a welcoming and inviting visitors center, one that is easily accessible and highly visible.

Plans are to renovate the former bank building at Mallow Mall which is easy to reach from the interstate and centrally located in the community. Renovations and enhancements will include façade improvements; public restrooms; landscaping; the addition of a public access point for the Jackson River; pet walking area; small picnic area and signage.

“With the addition of the visitors center as well as a new visitors website, visitors guide and additional marketing, the Alleghany Highlands will be well positioned to grow and expand tourism,” noted Teresa Hammond, Executive Director of The Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism.

About The Alleghany Foundation: The Alleghany Foundation was established in 1995 with \$35 million in proceeds from the sale of the Alleghany Regional Hospital. The Foundation uses multiple forms of capital to refocus the region’s aspirations and goals, build the capacity of our grantees and partners, seed and support innovation, and measure and mark progress. For more information about the Foundation, please visit www.AlleghanyFoundation.org.