

# About Us

## NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership

NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership is the economic development organization for Sullivan County, Tennessee, and its communities of Bluff City, Bristol, and Kingsport. Our name - NETWORKS - represents everything we do and all that our region has to offer. Northeast Tennessee works for existing and new business and industry. Sullivan Partnership represents a collaborative partnership among Sullivan County and its three primary communities. The NETWORKS team is equipped to assist your company reach its strategic goals. We offer existing and new business/industry programs for all companies, regardless of size or scope of business. Our experienced team of business and economic development professionals assist companies with asset maintenance coordination, small business loans, consultant visits, contract negotiations and deal closings.

The Sullivan County region, located in the Tri-Cities TN/VA metro area in Northeast Tennessee, is proud of a skilled, reliable workforce committed to delivering first-rate products and services. It's our responsibility to retain this workforce to work for you – whether you're a company looking to expand or relocate to Northeast Tennessee or an existing company seeking an exciting growth opportunity.

Experience the real benefits of a successful team effort! Put NETWORKS to work for your company today.

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## Our Tennessee Story

Maybe it's because we are the first people in the Volunteer State to see the sun rise over our beautiful mountain landscape. Perhaps it stems from the pioneering pride of being the Birthplace of Country Music. Or it could be credited from being home to NASCAR's most unique and exciting venue, Bristol Motor Speedway, The World's Fastest Half Mile. Whatever the reason, our Tennessee story is one of creativity, innovation, proactive problem solving, and a tireless work ethic. Our story is one that values education, deep rooted morality and ethics, and working alongside our neighbors.

These values are evident in all aspects of our life in Northeastern Tennessee and economic development is no exception, earning us the reputation as being Where Tennessee Begins Its Business Day. And it is why NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership takes such pride in serving as Sullivan County's economic development organization and the marketing and recruitment arm for neighboring Hawkins County.

Examples of our tradition of innovation and pioneering spirit are not hard to find.

More than a decade ago, Sullivan County created its Educate and Grow program that ensured its high school graduates two years of free tuition which is now mirrored by the statewide guarantee through the Tennessee Promise.

As other communities vie for the dollars through public and private investment for better broadband infrastructure, Bristol, Tennessee, was the first in the state to earn the right to call itself a One Gigabit Community. In fact, Sullivan County is the only community to be recognized as a Connected Community by Connected Nation and Connect Tennessee at the county-wide level.

When the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development rolled out its highly touted Tennessee Select industrial site certification program, Sullivan County was the first to certify multiple sites with three... and more are on the way.

Among those certified sites is the Tri-Cities Aerospace Park, the first Tennessee Select site that is runway accessible. The airport also houses and supports a US Customs Port of Entry and Foreign Trade Zone #204. Our FTZ was among the first to take advantage of the federal program's Alternative Site Framework to expand to surrounding counties in a true regional effort.

The overwhelming presence and influence of Tri-Cities Airport has also had a great influence on establishing an aviation industry cluster, with nearly a dozen aviation, aeronautics, and defense related industries in the region. This cluster is being supported by yet another innovative success story with the creation of a new aviation curriculum built from a partnership between Bell and Northeast State Community College.

Speaking of education, Sullivan County is home to more than a half dozen university and college campuses and satellite campuses. Perhaps the crown jewel of industrial education is the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing, borne out of another public-private partnership, this one between NESCC and Eastman and Domtar, two of the state's preferred employers. With training programs ranging from welding to 3D printing to robotics to its own in-house chemical plant, the RCAM is widely considered the model for vocational training facilities in Tennessee. Companies located in the Phipps Bend Industrial Park in Hawkins County are served by the Center for Applied Technology located near the entrance to the park.

These are but a few of the many examples of regional cooperation, perhaps best illustrated with the Tri-Cities earning the All-American City designation several decades ago, the only region (as opposed to a single metro center) to ever receive that seal of approval.

Innovation, cooperation, and being on the forefront of educational and economic development initiatives have told a deep, rich story that has spanned generations. Simply put, we are Where Tennessee Begins Its Business Day... and that's our Tennessee story!