



Local Business Leaders Join Antietam’s Innovation Fund Committee *Fund Supports Washington County Entrepreneurs*

January 17, 2023. Hagerstown MD Antietam Broadband, in partnership with their parent company, Schurz Communications, takes the next step in the development of their Innovation Fund with the announcement of Committee Members.

- Frankie Corsi – Investor in Local Businesses, President of Beachley Furniture Company,
- Basheer Azizi – Founder/President OPSMART
- Herb Melrath – Business Consultant with the Maryland SBDC
- Austin Colby – Hearty Pet, Ship Simply Co-Founder
- Chuck Ernst - TEDCO Western MD RBII Business Mentor
- Jonathan Horowitz – Director, Department of Business Development Washington County MD
- Faisal Nisar, ZRF Partners

Three Schurz/Antietam executives will round out the Committee, they include:

- Chris Dautel, VP of Strategic Planning & Corporate Development, Schurz Communications (Committee Chair)
- Tony Heaton, Director of Media Services, Antietam Broadband
- Randy Berlin, Director of Business Services, Antietam Broadband

The Innovation Fund is designed to inject capital into the Washington County entrepreneurial ecosystem to help startups and growth companies move to the next level.

The advisory committee will recommend investments in attractive Washington County based businesses with a focus on:

- Investment criteria based on viability, potential, growth and return characteristics that would create jobs in Washington County and benefit the most from local expertise and the Antietam infrastructure.
- Consideration will be given to women, people of color, people with disabilities, community contributors, and members of other minority groups who have met basic investment criteria, and businesses that support those groups.
- The Investment Committee will make public, at least annually, a report on all firms that receive Innovation Fund investments and the local community impact.

Applicant’s business should be focused on, but not limited to technology, innovation, or businesses with a technology angle that can take advantage of broadband technology, but the fund has the latitude to look at all kinds of businesses that meet the investment criteria.

Examples of these businesses could be digital media, artificial intelligence, cyber security, IOT, cloud, gaming etc. to create/keep well-paying jobs in the ecosystem in Washington County.

“This Fund will provide \$1,000,000, or \$250,000 per year of local investments for four years,” said Brian Lynch, President, Antietam Broadband. “We are incredibly honored to have a Fund Committee comprised of expertise spanning multiple industries, ”said Lynch.

“We are thrilled Schurz Communications selected Washington County to roll out their second Innovation Fund,” said Jonathon Horowitz, Director, Business Development, Washington County. “This fund will have significant community impact and help our area compete in the technology arena, ”said Horowitz.

To qualify for the fund, businesses ideally are in the Antietam service area, and/or are local to Washington County with an interest in staying in Washington County. Businesses outside of Washington County will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The fund intends to support local entrepreneurs, who in turn will contribute to the local economy, support diversity goals, and garner interest in the development of Washington County as a technology hub.

For more information go to <https://www.antietambroadband.com/antietam-innovation-fund>

About Antietam Broadband:

Antietam Broadband was founded in 1966 and was purchased by Schurz Communications, Inc. in 1968. It is a full-service telecommunications company offering a complete range of residential and business-class technology solutions including digital television, high-speed Internet and digital phone services in Washington County, MD. Antietam introduced Flight Gigabit Internet service in 2016 and made Hagerstown the 75th gigabit city in the USA. The company is focused on enhancing the lives of its customers by supplying the latest telecommunication services and supporting the highest standards of excellence in customer care and world class technical service. www.antietambroadband.com

About Schurz:

Schurz is a family-owned corporation that has been helping businesses, communities and individuals make meaningful connections for five generations. The Schurz legacy began in newspaper publishing, radio, and television, and today, the company remains committed to making information more accessible through the platforms and technology of the digital age. Schurz Communications’ recent investments include regional broadband companies and cloud managed services providers, and the company’s portfolio also includes a variety of minority investments. For more information, visit: www.schurz.com.