



## **For Immediate Release**

### **Create WV Conference to Address Innovation & New Economy Opportunities for West Virginia**

**Wheeling, WV:** The fourth annual Create West Virginia conference is coming to the Friendly City Oct. 17-19. This statewide celebration of creative community building is designed to spark new economic growth in West Virginia.

The “New Economy” is defined as those industries that generate income from the development of intellectual property and innovative entrepreneurship. This year’s Create WV conference will be based at Oglebay Resort with excursions planned to take participants to all corners of Wheeling.

“Our goal is for the creative energy from Wheeling and other communities that have embraced this approach to stimulating economic growth to spread throughout the state,” said Jeff James, CEO of Mythology LLC and chairman of Create West Virginia. “We want West Virginia to become a recognized leader for generating new opportunities through creativity and innovation, and this conference is the perfect place to create that spark.”

The conference is expected to attract nearly 500 people representing the state’s business, economic, academic, and cultural and community development leadership.

“We chose Wheeling as the location for the Create West Virginia Conference because Wheeling is an amazing example of a creative community in action, with the local Create Wheeling team helping shape this year’s event,” James said.

Community members are encouraged to take what they’ve learned at the conference, go back to their communities, form teams and move forward on a new economy growth plan. So far, there are local “Create” teams in: Wheeling, Huntington, Fayetteville, Buckhannon, Mercer County, and Pocahontas

County. Other communities, such as Fairmont, Point Pleasant, Spencer and Glenville, are also moving forward with similar goals.

As a community-focused, grass roots movement launched by Vision Shared ([www.visionshared.com](http://www.visionshared.com)), Create West Virginia has broad goals and strategies to build creative communities. Communities themselves then can determine how to move forward in a way that builds on their local strengths and goals. This conference is an opportunity to share ideas and generate renewed energy to spread the creative development of economic and cultural opportunities throughout the state.

Local leaders are encouraged to bring teams of attendees representing key areas of the community, including entrepreneurs and small business owners, superintendents of schools and board of education members, students, economic developers, non-profit and community leaders and cultural leaders. Based on the experience of prior conferences, the diverse mix of insights and ideas has been the spark that many communities needed to move in positive new directions.

Each year, the conference features the work of a West Virginia artist. This year the chosen artist is Robert Villamagna, who lives in Wheeling. Villamagna works primarily in assemblage, collage, and mixed-media. His work has been exhibited at the Carnegie Museum of Art, Andy Warhol Museum, ARC Gallery (Chicago), Penn State's Robeson Gallery, Pittsburgh Center of the Arts, Erie Museum of Art, Huntington Museum of Art, the West Virginia Cultural Center, and the Dickirson Gallery at Tamarack. Villamagna has two works in the State of West Virginia Permanent Collection. His work is shown at Gallery on 43rd Street in the Lawrenceville section of Pittsburgh, Society for Contemporary Craft in Pittsburgh, and the Annex Gallery at Taylor Books in Charleston, WV. Villamagna teaches at West Liberty University in West Virginia, and the Society for Contemporary Craft in Pittsburgh's Strip District.

The fourth annual Create WV Conference delivers an unprecedented level of insight and inspiration towards building creative communities for the new economy, with dozens of track sessions in Business Innovation, Quality of Place, Resources, Technology, Diversity and Education. Special early bird pricing is offered for conference attendees, including special rates for students. Register today at [www.createwv.com/2010conference](http://www.createwv.com/2010conference).

For more information about the Create West Virginia Conference, visit [www.CreateWV.com](http://www.CreateWV.com).

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