



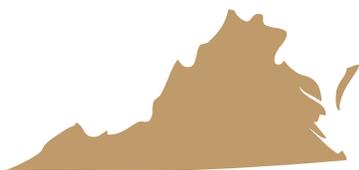
MARYLAND — Maryland is ranked the third-best state for science and technology capabilities related to economic growth, according to the 2018 State Technology and Science Index from the Milken Institute. The index uses dozens of measurements in five categories to determine states' abilities to grow and sustain a tech sector. The report says Maryland earned its ranking due to its high concentration of computer science, engineering, and life science employment, its high level of research and development funding, and its creation of state programs that foster high-tech business growth.



NORTH CAROLINA — In late January, the North Carolina Department of Commerce announced it is investing more than \$250,000 in Downtown Strong, a program that provides economic development and revitalization resources to local governments across the state. The program will be run by the department's Main Street and Rural Planning Center and will provide services such as staff training and technical assistance to towns that want to revitalize or preserve existing downtown commercial districts.



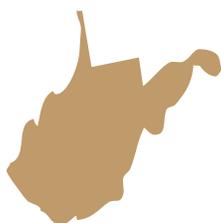
SOUTH CAROLINA — Greenville launched the seventh year of its Minority Business Accelerator program in January with 17 participants. The year-long program aims to encourage the development of minority-, women-, and veteran-owned businesses as well as ones operating in low-to-moderate income areas. Participants receive business development services, mentoring, technical assistance, and opportunities to partner with larger businesses. Since the program's 2013 launch, participating companies have created about 200 jobs and have gained more than \$22 million in contract awards and revenue increases.



VIRGINIA — With Amazon headed to Northern Virginia, the University of Virginia announced in January that it will open a School of Data Science to help meet tech industry demand. Most of the funding will come from a \$120 million donation by the Quantitative Foundation, a private foundation based in Charlottesville; it is the largest private gift in UVA's history. The new school will build on the university's existing Data Science Institute and is expected to offer undergraduate, doctoral, and certificate programs. Elsewhere in the state, Virginia Tech plans to build a \$1 billion tech innovation campus near the Amazon site, and George Mason University plans to create a school of computing and almost triple its computer science enrollment over the next five years.



WASHINGTON, D.C. — College athletic programs at eight D.C. universities generated more than \$122 million in sports revenue in 2016, according to a recent *Washington D.C. Business Daily* analysis of Department of Education data from colleges and universities that receive funding through federal financial aid programs. In D.C., George Washington University had the highest revenue per athlete, \$74,153. Georgetown University had the highest total sports revenue, with more than \$44 million.



WEST VIRGINIA — Out-of-work residents in the Upper Kanawha Valley will soon be able to apply for a new program that will provide up to \$10,000 loans to help people start small businesses in their communities. UKAN, which was created in January, aims to assist those who may not be able to get a traditional business loan. Applicants will need to submit a business plan and agree to audits to ensure the loan is being spent on business purposes. If a business stays open continuously for two years, the loan will be forgiven.