

For Immediate Release

## ARC GRANT TO STRENGTHEN ACM HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY EDUCATION, SERVICES

CUMBERLAND, Md. -- A federal Appalachian Regional Commission grant is enabling Allegany College of Maryland hospitality programs to purchase major equipment used in education and workforce development in an important sector of the region's economy.

The \$30,000 in ARC funds will enable downtown Cumberland's Gateway Center, where ACM hospitality programs are located, to renew and obtain equipment used in the college's culinary arts program and student-run Culinaire Café.

The monies, which are matched equally by the college, will go toward the renewal of an aging walk-in cooler and freezer, the purchase of a blast chiller for operational efficiency, and the replacement of outdated tables, chairs and other furniture for the dining room.

The equipment purchases will strengthen ACM academic offerings that prepare credit-program students for careers in the hospitality industry and address continuing education needs for those currently in the workforce.

The ARC-funded project aligns with the federal-state partnership's goal of promoting economic activity by raising employee skill and education levels to meet needs of employers and support area economic development initiatives.

The hospitality industry is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the national economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects job growth as fast as average for restaurant and food service managers and faster than average for chefs and head cooks through 2026.

Associate degree and certificate programs in hospital management and culinary arts at ACM support the growing tourism sector in the state and region.

Tourism is Maryland's fourth largest industry and has an economic impact that creates jobs, generates tax revenue and increases business income.

The state's Office of Tourism Development estimates that tourism supported the tax base in Maryland's three westernmost counties – Allegany, Garrett and Washington – by more than \$23 million in 2017.

Statewide, the office estimates that tourism supports approximately 146,000 jobs. The college estimates that approximately 150 students and 25 employers will receive direct and indirect benefits of this ARC-funded project every two years.

The new equipment enabled by the ARC grant -- walk-in cooler/freezer, blast chiller and dining room furniture – should be purchased and installed by summer.

For more information about tourism and hospitality programs at ACM visit the college website at [www.allegany.edu](http://www.allegany.edu).

