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## **Third Annual SEED Contracting Symposium Creates Business Connections in Morehead, Ky.**

MOREHEAD, KY – Representatives from some of the world’s biggest defense contractors traveled to Eastern Kentucky to meet with many of the region’s most successful small business owners at the Morehead Conference Center for the Third Annual Eastern Kentucky Supplier Education & Economic Development (SEED) Contracting Symposium on October 9.

The day-long event is a collaborative effort between Fifth District Congressman Harold “Hal” Rogers’ office and Southeast Kentucky Economic Development Corp. (SKED). Rogers welcomed the crowd.



Congressman Hal Rogers met with SEED clients.

“Since the first SEED Summit in 2017, SKED has trained more than 50 local businesses and advanced manufacturers in cyber security, bid preparation, compliance and execution. Each training provides the guidance our local companies need to be competitive for contract opportunities,” said Rogers, who launched SKED in 1986.

“In 2018, the Defense Department awarded more than \$358 billion in federal contracts, and I believe we can earn more of those jobs in Eastern Kentucky. I deeply appreciate all of the prime federal contractors who have attended the SEED Symposium over the last three years to help our companies become contract-ready. It is a rare opportunity for local businesses to meet with these major contractors in one day, and hope this new network will result in more jobs in the near future.”

SEED’s goal is to create an ecosystem of economic growth among small business owners in the region, by preparing them to bid for contracts and eventually be subcontractors for prime contractors like: Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman. SEED was given a shot in the arm with a \$1.3 million

# Southeast Kentucky Economic Development



A Regional Growth Corporation

Power Grant award from the Appalachian Regional Commission to expand the reach and capacity earlier this year.

The goal is to provide more opportunities for increased value for major prime contractors and at the same time provide economic revitalization in Kentucky's coal country.

Twenty-three Eastern Kentucky-based businesses attended and were given the opportunity to meet with officials from 16 different prime contractors.

Rajant Corporation CEO Robert Schena was keynote speaker at the event. He spoke about Eastern Kentucky's potential for economic growth.

"It was a privilege to share Rajant's excellent, four-year experience working with the Morehead (KY) business community with other organizations at SEED. Those curious about tapping into the economic development potential Eastern Kentucky has to offer should look first at the region's workforce," Schena said. "Beyond know-how, 100% of Rajant's Morehead staff has integrity, drive, and enthusiasm fueling their talent. For Rajant's purposes, we are fortifying continued technology innovations with engineering graduates from Morehead State University and hiring other support personnel to increase the production of goods and services for our global customers. Our investment to now build a facility here will not only serve our manufacturing growth, but it will keep Morehead residents at home with their families and neighbors."

SKED staff held four trainings earlier this year to prepare the small business owners to put their best foot forward at the event.

For more information about SEED, future trainings or the symposium, please contact Brett Traver, SKED executive director at 606-677-6102 or [btraver@centertech.com](mailto:btraver@centertech.com).

*Formed 33 years ago by Fifth District Congressman Hal Rogers to create jobs in Southeast Kentucky, the economic development organization, based in Somerset, serves a 45-county region in Kentucky. Staff works with business owners, small and large, throughout its service area to identify financing solutions to fund their location, expansion and working capital needs. For more information, visit: [www.southeastkentucky.com](http://www.southeastkentucky.com).*