



May 24, 2023

Department of Energy  
Energizing Rural Communities Prize

Re: Decarbonizing Rural America: Ferrum College

To Whom It May Concern:

We are pleased to submit this proposal to the Department of Energy in response to the Energizing Rural Communities Prize.

Banyan Infrastructure ("Banyan"), Dalrada Energy Services ("DES"), and AKF Group ("AKF" and collectively the "Banyan Team") have formed a partnership to retrofit the energy infrastructure of rural Ferrum College with cleaner, more efficient sources of energy. The university will improve its reliability and resiliency, lower its carbon footprint, make material gains towards its ESG targets, and save money. The new, clean energy sources will enable the university to continue to be vital sources of education, employment, and social justice in its community.

The phase one funds will be used to perform feasibility studies, an energy audit, a permit review, and an incentive review. Phase two funds will be used to apply for permits and begin equipment payments.

The university is located at:  
Ferrum College  
215 Ferrum Mountain Rd  
Ferrum, VA 24088

The competitor primary point of contact for the Banyan Team and team lead is Pete Solomon of Banyan. Contact info is as follows:

Pete Solomon  
Head of Strategic Alliances  
Banyan Infrastructure  
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San Francisco, CA 94107-6301  
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[banyaninfrastructure.com](http://banyaninfrastructure.com)

Our three minute video is [Energizing Rural Communities](#)

The competitor team members and short biographies are:

### **Tom Giles, President of Dalrada Energy Services**

Tom is an accomplished executive with proven leadership in designing and deploying business strategies that drive bottom-line profits. His executive management experience spans the clean energy and sustainability, technology, and health care industries with a focus on artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML). Tom presides on multiple boards within the clean energy and sustainability, technology, and community outreach sectors and currently serves as the President of Dalrada Energy Services (DES). At DES, he oversees a team that provides comprehensive, end-to-end commercial energy service solutions that mitigate the environmental impact caused by carbon and other harmful emissions. He holds a Business degree from San Diego State University.

### **Brad Lownsbury, Partner at AKF Group**

Brad is a Partner at AKF and leads the Richmond office, providing leadership and management to its team. He has been involved in all aspects of design, construction, and project management for 30 years. His experience includes healthcare, cogeneration development, power generation, microelectronics process engineering, clean room design, and program and construction management. Brad has designed and constructed many building types, including LEED® Certified Design for healthcare, transportation, higher education, corporate, and laboratory facilities. His process of working collaboratively with clients and his ability to translate strategic planning into innovative design have made him a highly sought-after team member.

### **Peter Solomon, Head of Strategic Alliances at Banyan Infrastructure**

Pete brings 20+ years of experience in technology, renewable energy, and project finance. He has founded a wind energy development company, built a solar business for a large energy company, and has acquired, originated, or financed over \$4B in energy assets. Pete has prior experience with EDF Renewable, US Export Import Bank, and Silver Spring Networks. Pete has a master's degree from Johns Hopkins University and graduate work at Stanford Graduate School of Business.

### **John Vigouroux, Chief Entrepreneurship and Innovation Officer to Averett University and Advisor to Banyan Infrastructure**

John leads the Averett Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The Center serves as an academic/learning lab and entrepreneurial gateway for students, connecting them with the region's economic environment while accelerating and supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem in southern Virginia. A highly successful serial entrepreneur, John has significant and varied connections to Averett: as an undergraduate business administration graduate, as a soccer alumnus and member of Averett's Athletic Hall of Fame, and most recently as a former member of Averett's Board of Trustees. Said Ken Larking, city manager of the City of Danville, Va. "We look forward to developing more strategic partnerships that will provide new revenue and resource opportunities for both Averett students and for industry in the region."

We appreciate this opportunity. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out directly to Pete Solomon at [pete@banyaninfrastructure.com](mailto:pete@banyaninfrastructure.com) or (503) 896-0238.

Sincerely,

Pete Solomon  
Head of Strategic Alliances