

News Release

River District
Association
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River District Association names executive director

An economic development business retention specialist who directed the Main Street revitalization program in Ocala, Fla., has joined the River District Association as its new executive director.

Diana Schwartz began her duties in Danville earlier this month.

"The River District is doing exciting work in preservation and restoration, and is truly a model for downtown revitalization," Schwartz said. "Everyone involved is working closely together and moving in the same direction — not something you see every day — and that is a key element of what will make the River District, and in turn the City of Danville, a success."

Schwartz holds Main Street America leadership and community transformation certifications, and she is one of nine credentialed Main Street America Revitalization Professionals in the nation. The River District Association follows the Main Street model for commercial district revitalization. Danville is one of 28 cities and towns designated as a Virginia Main Street community.

She achieved her Main Street certifications and credentials while working with the Ocala/Marion Chamber & Economic Partnership as director of business retention and director of Ocala Main Street. Her prior professional experience also includes owning multiple small businesses, extensive retail management and more than a decade working in non-profit organizations.

A native of Virginia, Schwartz is a coal miner's daughter from the town of Clintwood. After 27 years in Ocala, she returns to Virginia, where she will be near family in the Martinsville area. Schwartz replaces Ernesia Coles, who after more than two years as executive director left in early June to accept a position with another organization.

Telly Tucker, executive director of the Danville Office of Economic Development, welcomes Schwartz to Danville. "The executive director of the River District Association plays a valuable role for our River District business community and our overall economic development strategy," Tucker said. "I believe Diana's professional experience will be an asset to the community."

The River District Association was organized in 1999 as the Downtown Danville Association. In May 2015, the organization was renamed the River District Association to complement the City's River District brand. Its office is located at 442 Main St.

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