

## BIOGRAPHY



**Duane B Thomas**

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Duane B Thomas is a Director / Educator / Facilitator at The Center for Appalachian Philanthropy (AppaPhil). Established in June of 2009, AppaPhil is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which operates as an umbrella for a number of programs under its supervision and direction. AppaPhil's primary objective is to attract philanthropic investment in Appalachia and its purposes are to: (A) act as a catalyst in providing networking platforms as well as educational support services to nonprofits, and (B) provide and attract resources to help organizations forward their causes and fulfill their missions.

Duane is involved specifically with Building Community and MiAppa (Made in Appalachia), responsibilities include but are not limited to providing leadership resources, education and networking opportunities in community and economic development throughout the Appalachian region. These areas utilize his experience gained over the past two decades within: Entrepreneurship, management, and marketing; Consulting services to small businesses; Education and training to public (University faculty member) and within the private sector; and Financial services industry ranging from Start-up Branch Banking to an Appalachian Credit Union League.

Additionally, Duane is the Founder of StartUP52 (<http://startup52.biz/>), a product / service of Create WV, which provides a platform for aspiring entrepreneurs, beyond the artisan trade, with a product or service to initiate the process from ideas2action™. Entrepreneurs are provided opportunities for unlimited access to invaluable partner and vendor network, marketing and advertising, and consulting programs through the services and membership program.

Duane earned a Bachelor of Business of Administration degree majoring in Marketing and International Business from Ohio University along with a Master of Business Administration degree from Marshall University.

Duane's passion is to have well sustained Appalachian communities, with reduced poverty, improved health, and stronger educational achievement. He currently resides in APPALACHIA!