



**Contact:** Thomas Becher, APR  
(540) 772-3942  
tbecher@ndp.agency

## **DELTA DENTAL OF VIRGINIA CONTRIBUTES \$30,000 TO RAMP TO FOSTER INNOVATION IN REGION**

**ROANOKE, Va. (February XX, 2018)** – Delta Dental of Virginia has contributed \$30,000 to the Regional Acceleration and Mentoring Program (RAMP) to support innovation and entrepreneurship in the Roanoke and New River valleys.

The funding will help pay for expenses and programs at the RAMP’s headquarters at 709 S. Jefferson St. in downtown Roanoke.

“Delta Dental is Virginia’s largest dental benefits company, and we are constantly investing in ways to remain on the forefront of technology when it comes to serving our customers,” said Frank Lucia, president and CEO of Delta Dental of Virginia. “Being headquartered in Roanoke, we are committed to supporting innovation in our growing technology and health sciences industries. We believe this investment will support our emerging startup culture and attract and retain talent in the region.”

RAMP’s mission is to help high-potential startups expand and create jobs in the science, technology, engineering, mathematics and health (STEM-H) fields throughout the Roanoke-Blacksburg region. Partners in the initiative include the City of Roanoke, which renovated RAMP’s home in the historic Gill Memorial Hospital building; the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council (RBTC), which recruits RAMP participants and provides them mentorship and networking opportunities; and Virginia Western Community College, which provides on-site business education training.

“We are deeply appreciative for Delta Dental’s pledge to innovation and entrepreneurship,” added Robert McAden, president and CEO of the RBTC. “Supporters like Delta Dental understand that our success is about planting the seeds. If we want the region to grow, we need to foster entrepreneurship. Growing business is important, because those businesses eventually become customers. We need a thriving startup culture to grow.”

As part of the contribution, one of the rooms in the RAMP building will be named after Delta Dental of Virginia.

RAMP participants, called cohort companies, are selected every year for the opportunity to benefit from a mentoring program, networking opportunities, business education and access to capital. Applications are being accepted for the next cohort. The companies will be announced at RBTC’s TechNite awards gala on May 3.

### **About Delta Dental of Virginia**

Delta Dental of Virginia is a member company of the Delta Dental Plans Association, the nation’s largest, most experienced dental benefits carrier providing dental coverage to more than 75 million people in more than 139,000 groups across the nation. For additional information about Delta Dental of Virginia, visit [DeltaDentalVA.com](http://DeltaDentalVA.com).

###