

**Ray Daffner**  
**Asset Based Development Regional Initiative, ARC**

Mr. Daffner leads efforts at ARC that both support the growth of entrepreneurial ventures, and develop and build on the Region's assets. As part of ARC's Asset Based Development Initiative, the Commission seeks to build on the advantages of the Region by leveraging cultural assets, natural assets, structural assets, and leadership/community assets. Each of these assets offer unique avenues for crafting new enterprise and injecting vitality into Appalachian communities.

Mr. Daffner also directed ARC's Entrepreneurship Initiative, which promotes locally-owned, high value-added, sustainable ventures that increase local wealth, foster human and social capital, and reduce the need for subsidies. Through the Entrepreneurship Initiative, the Commission has helped develop an infrastructure to support an entrepreneurial economy, and promoted the culture and vision needed to ensure the continuation of these efforts. By providing over \$35 million of support to more than 300 projects, the Entrepreneurship Initiative has helped local partners create over 1,200 new businesses and create or retain over 5,000 jobs.

Ray Daffner has a range of experience in both the non-profit and private sectors. Mr. Daffner has been involved in start-up ventures in the software, natural foods, and wood products industries, and has experience in the plastics and biotechnology industries. Mr. Daffner's public sector experience includes a position with the Southern Growth Policies Board supporting projects to encourage business collaboration and networking in the Southeastern United States. In 1998 he joined the Appalachian Regional Commission as the director of ARC's new Entrepreneurship Initiative. Mr. Daffner received his bachelor's degree from Duke University in 1981, and his masters in business from Yale University in 1986.