

## Project Profile



### Location:

1179 Rockdale Road  
Rockwood, PA  
rockwoodmillshoppes.com

### County:

Somerset

### Description:

Business Improvement

### Total Project Cost:

\$5,000



## Rockwood Mill Shoppes

Photo courtesy of Allegheny Trail Alliance



### People:

Judith Pletcher is a one-woman economic boom, but she recognizes that no one needs to go it alone. She has turned abandoned and underutilized buildings into the Rockwood Mill Shoppes & Opera House, Mill Shoppe Antiques, and The Hostel on Main, channeling the rising energy of the nearby Great Allegheny Passage trail. If there's one thing hungry trail users love, it's pizza, so when her decades-old oven showed its age, she acted quickly.

### Progress:

The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program helped Judith with the planning for The Hostel on Main, so she looked no further when it came to buying a new pizza oven. The Progress Fund arranged a \$5,000 loan from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Business Enterprise Program.

The new oven is faster and more energy-efficient than the old, meaning more pizza, and profits.

### Impact:

The Trail Town Program fosters synergy along the Great Allegheny Passage, and that's a philosophy Judith has embraced. She steers her customers to nearby bed & breakfasts and cafes, and to tourist attractions throughout Somerset County and beyond, and gets the same courtesy back. Ten years ago, when the trail was just catching on, "it was kind of everybody for themselves," says Judith. "But now it's all about collaboration. If you don't partner, you're not going to be there." Armed with that cooperative spirit and enduring entrepreneurial moxie – not to mention a new oven – Judith intends to be there.

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