



Center for Rural Innovation
TENNESSEE TECH

June 10, 2025

Re: UC Makerspace Letter of Support

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Tennessee Tech Center for Rural Innovation (TCRI), I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for UC Makerspace and its invaluable potential for contributions to the Upper Cumberland region's economic and community development.

The mission of UC Makerspace aligns seamlessly with the TCRI's commitment to fostering growth and innovation in rural areas. We recognize the critical need for accessible resources and collaborative environments that empower individuals to transform their ideas into tangible products and sustainable businesses. UC Makerspace directly addresses this need by providing state-of-the-art tools, a certified community kitchen, and a supportive network for creators of all levels.

Specifically, the provision of a dedicated space for makers, artisans, and especially home cooks and bakers, is a tremendous asset to our rural entrepreneurial ecosystem. Many aspiring small business owners in the Upper Cumberland face significant barriers to entry, such as the high cost of specialized equipment or the absence of certified commercial kitchen facilities. UC Makerspace eliminates these obstacles, enabling these entrepreneurs to refine their products, scale their operations, and meet regulatory requirements, thereby increasing their likelihood of success.

By offering affordable access to professional-grade equipment and fostering a community where creativity and collaboration flourish, UC Makerspace is actively cultivating local talent and planting the seeds for new businesses. This directly contributes to job creation, diversification of the local economy, and the overall vitality of our rural communities.

The Tennessee Tech Center for Rural Innovation is proud to support UC Makerspace in its endeavors. We believe that its continued success is vital for the economic resilience and innovative spirit of the Upper Cumberland.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kruszka, MPS
Assistant Director, Center for Rural Innovation
Tennessee Tech University
Office of Research and Economic Development