The Progress Fund provides loans and technical assistance to tourism-oriented businesses, ranging from bed and breakfasts, to canoe liveries, to restaurants. Its mission is to create economic opportunity and living wage jobs in small towns and rural areas of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and western Maryland through the provision of tailored and innovative loans to small business owners. The Progress Fund was a winner of the 2011 NEXT Awards because of its development and implementation of the first Trail Town Program®, an innovative and proactive regional partnership that supports and capitalizes small businesses involved in outdoor recreation and the tourism industry. Established in 1997, this innovative small business loan fund has grown to over $50 million. Its other products and services include custom-tailored loans, off-balance sheet lending activities, financial coaching, marketing and planning assistance, and real estate development projects as owner/developer.

**CDFI Story: Abjuration Brewing, McKees Rocks, PA**

When Dave and Tom decided to expand their Abjuration Brewing company, they learned that The Progress Fund had backed several brew pubs. The Progress Fund refinanced their debt and financed equipment to triple their production.

Abjuration means rejection of an oath or belief, and Dave and Tom renounce the practice of making the same beer over and over. Instead, they’re adding mouthfeel to the McKees Rocks entertainment scene with a constantly changing menu that might include an Oaked India Pale Ale, Boysenberry Fruited Sour, Milkshake Ale, Rye Brown Porter or anything else they conjure up.

"This loan from The Progress Fund has secured us into McKees Rocks for the long-term," says Dave, "and we couldn’t be happier about that."