

Appalachian Teaching Project
2017 Projects & Participants
(In Order of Presentation)
Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport
Friday, December 1, 2017

Developing Natural and Cultural Assets

9:00 am – East Tennessee State University

Rocky Fork State Park: Linking Natural and Economic resources through Oral Histories and Community Engagement

Description: ATP students from ETSU partnered with Rocky Fork State Park, Tennessee’s newest state park, which is located in Unicoi County. Students explored historic and current land use of the area that now includes the park by collecting oral histories. Of particular interest were local residents who were affiliated with the logging industry, which was very active in the area in the past. These oral histories also reflected current and changing community concerns regarding environmental and economic sustainability and land use surrounding the park. Additionally, the oral history narratives fostered continued community interest and participation in Rocky Fork’s development as an aspect of broader economic sustainability within the community.

Students built on this work to identify strategies to further develop the park as a sustainable economic and cultural asset, a goal that is part of Unicoi County’s efforts to honor local culture and broaden economic diversification.

Q&A Leaders – Zane State College

9:15 am – Frostburg State University

Establishing the Jane Gates Heritage House

Description: Frostburg State University ATP students partnered with the newly established Jane Gates Heritage House to document its establishment and host public outreach opportunities to help determine how this recently established center for African American History can best serve the community. The project hoped to show how a fuller understanding of Appalachian culture and history, which recognizes the deep legacy of African American heritage, can help to overcome racial division and forge a renewed sense of community cohesiveness in western Maryland and the surrounding region.

ATP students studied the impact of the Gates family and the lasting influence of western Maryland’s African American population; digitally documented the Center’s establishment; and recorded founders’ visions for the Center’s future. Drawing largely from those materials, students co-hosted informational meetings in Cumberland, Frostburg, and Westernport inviting input for the Center. Students developed digital versions of their findings for inclusion in the Heritage House’s archives.

Q&A Leaders – Appalachian State University

9:30 am –University of Tennessee

Night Comes to the Cumberlands...and It's Awesome: Promoting Night Sky Conservation and Development in the Upper Cumberland

Description: The 2017 University of Tennessee ATP class worked with the staff of Pickett Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Memorial State Park in Fentress County, TN to improve and promote dark sky facilities and programming. Pickett State Park is currently Tennessee's most active dark sky destination. The park has been conducting dark sky activities for the past four years and was recently awarded silver level certification by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA).

Park staff was the main partner during this effort, but UT students also reached out to additional stakeholders, including regional amateur and professional astronomers, local elected officials, park neighbors and the Upper Cumberland Development District.

ATP students focused on community outreach. Activities included studying similar educational programs in peer communities and exploring educational resources available at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center Educator Resource Center in Huntsville, AL. Students also reached out to local astronomy clubs and businesses to determine interest levels and assets. Finally, using their project findings, students created an outreach and engagement plan that included engagement strategies, funding sources, recommendations, and potential business opportunities.

Q&A Leaders – Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College

Investing in Regional Public Schools

10:30 am –University of North Georgia

Scrolling through History: Using digital storytelling to deliver social studies content to classrooms in Appalachian Georgia

Description: In Year 2 of our project to increase the interpretive capacity of The Foxfire Museum and Heritage Center, two new community partners were added to digitize and package last year's arts-based research about agricultural traditions and deliver it to Appalachian classrooms via the web: The Northeast Georgia History Center and The College of Education at the University of North Georgia. This new collaboration among organizations that have never worked together before leveraged the Appalachian Regional Commission's investment in northeast Georgia's cultural, educational, and heritage assets.

Last year's ATP students used narrative inquiry as a research methodology, they wrote an original script that highlighted major themes, and finally, created a "crankie," a long scroll illustrated with delicate paper cuts that is wound in a wooden box and hand-cranked while the story is told. This year, UNG College of Education students worked with their community partners to digitize and package the crankie performance into social studies content for Appalachian classrooms. The Northeast Georgia History Center used its production facilities to produce a "webisode," a short documentary that teachers can download on demand and the ATP students packaged the social studies unit by adding pre- and post-activities aligned with Georgia Performance Standards.

Q&A Leaders – Radford University

10:45 am – Fairmont State University
Appalachian Childhood Empowerment through Heritage Arts

Description: Fairmont State University students collaborated with a school in the Marion County School District to develop a childhood enrichment program centered on creating a sense of pride, identity, and confidence through achievement in Appalachian traditional arts. The intent of this ATP project was to bring the known benefits of early-childhood enrichment through the arts to children in an economically depressed area using heritage Appalachian arts and skills. The process was contextualized within the history of Appalachia as a region of resiliency with a tradition of using one's own skills and abilities to make a better life. Gaining tangible skills can help young children develop a sense of agency and achievement and a belief in their ability to affect their own lives.

ATP students worked with the school and at least two traditional arts practitioners to teach the skills and traditions to children and teachers and developed a prototype program centered on these heritage arts for continued use by schools.

Q&A Leaders – Alfred State College

11:00 am – Auburn University
Macon County Veterans Oral History Project in collaboration with students at Tuskegee Public School

Description: Building on the relationship established with Tuskegee Public School during the 2016-17 project cycle, Auburn University ATP students mentored sixth graders in the skill and process of interviewing military veterans and producing digital content as part of the Library of Congress Veterans Oral History Project. The Veterans Oral History Project provides volunteers an opportunity to collect oral history interviews that are added to a national collection and made available to the public via the Internet. During project, ATP students honed their interview skills, which are transferrable to many employment situations, and in turn helped develop similar skills in the sixth-grade students with whom they performed the interviews.

The ATP students and sixth graders recorded and produced interviews on a dedicated web page built by students, and they prepared files for delivery to the Library of Congress. Tuskegee Public School students joined ATP students by Skype and presented their work while ATP students physically handed the files over to the Library.

Q&A Leaders – University of Pittsburgh at Bradford

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Downtown Development and Community Leadership

9:00 am – Zane State College
Downtown Zanesville: A Bridge to Our Past

Description: Zane State College ATP students collaborated with the Zanesville-Muskingum County Chamber of Commerce, Zanesville Public Service Commission, and local historians to create an interactive downtown walking tour in order to stimulate both local and outside tourism and to promote engagement with local youth. Students used an existing map, advice from community partners, and their own research to decide what to include on the interactive walking tour. Once research was completed, students downloaded information into the Munzee app and placed coordinating scan codes at each location.

The central focus of the project was to engage the community, especially youth, in the history within a ten-block walking distance of the city center in order to foster pride, knowledge, and connection with the region's heritage. Currently, the designated area is often bypassed and overlooked by locals and tourists alike as they choose to explore outside the community with competing tourist attractions and events. ATP students planned to establish an energizing and interesting walk in the city in order to encourage community growth and pride.

Q&A Leaders – Auburn University

9:15 am – Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College
Planning Our Future The Harlan County Project: Phase 17

Description: Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (SKCTC) ATP students collaborated with the Harlan County Community Foundation in an ongoing strategic planning process focusing on downtown development in Harlan County. This collaboration was initiated by the donation of a building in downtown Harlan to the Harlan County Community. SKCTC has also applied for an ARC Flex-E grant through the Brushy Fork Institute to engage the community and to develop a community-based plan for downtown development that incorporates the donated building.

As part of the planning process, ATP students studied best practices from similar communities, attended planning meetings, produced a written analysis of downtown Harlan, and presented research-grounded ideas for community development strategies. The students' work was incorporated in the final report and plan produced by the community coalition. Some SKCTC ATP students were part of the leadership presenting the findings of the group to the larger community.

Q&A Leaders – East Tennessee State University

9:30 am – Alfred State College

Connecting Built and Natural Environments: A Vision for Preservation, Sustainability and Growth in Canaseraga, New York

Description: ATP students partnered with the Town of Burns and Village of Canaseraga. Working individually and in small groups, students documented the subject area and completed a Neighborhood Development Analysis, which included a visual survey of the defined neighborhood pattern and design of the existing community.

The information generated was used as a point of departure to illustrate a positive vision for preservation, sustainability, and growth of the Village of Canaseraga through community engagement. The overall goal for student engagement with the community was to develop an inclusive Community Visualization Study that includes a series of design interventions based on the *2014 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Burns and the Village of Canaseraga*. The study included a series of before and thematic after images intended to help stakeholders envision possibilities for future development. Implementation will be possible through grant funding that will require the community to have a clearly defined vision to supplement the recently adopted comprehensive plan.

Q&A Leaders – Fairmont State University

Enhancing Health and Quality of Life in Appalachia

10:30 am – Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Northern Appalachian Foodways: Sustainability and a Seat at the Table

Description: ATP students from the Anthropology of Food class assisted their community partners, the Downtown Indiana Business Improvement District and the Food Co-Op of Indiana County, in gathering local recipes and publishing a cookbook that will be sold to support food justice initiatives in the community. These initiatives included the goal of addressing the “food desert” that has been identified in downtown Indiana by establishing an outlet for healthy, local produce and food items.

Students studied the many foodways of the Appalachian region and identified local “memory keepers” who were raised in the county and could recount the food systems of their childhoods. More specifically, student and community participants aimed to create an inclusive food history project that could help to unify the town and university as they worked together to connect the past to the present and record the foodways of Northern Appalachia. The project hoped to create an interconnected food history of Indiana that can be engaged through the cookbook, which, in turn, will create networks between residents, the university, visitors, the past, and the envisioned future of the community.

Q&A Leaders – University of Tennessee

10:45 am – University of Pittsburgh at Bradford

Bradford Community Immunization Access: Bridging the Gap

Description: In 2016-2017, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford students began the important work of assessing the feasibility of a Vaccine Access Network for the Bradford Community. The analysis of last year's data revealed that, while the project has support from the community to move forward, the voices of mid-level providers, viewed as key stakeholders, were largely omitted from the initial efforts. In addition, project leaders have recognized that a more comprehensive assessment of current community resources was needed.

The 2017 ATP students, in partnership with the Mckean County Collaborative Board, incorporated input from mid-level providers and other key stakeholders, cataloged current resources, developed strategies for the creation of a community Vaccine Access Network, and developed strategies for community and provider education to enhance identified assets and reduce identified barriers to immunization within the Bradford, PA community. Feedback and assistance was sought from the full board to assist with moving the project forward during formal student presentations at the MCCB Annual Meeting.

Q&A Leaders – University of North Georgia

Tourism Development of Regional Waterways

11:15 am – Radford University

Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI) Building Social and Economic Capital in Southwest Virginia with Oral History Collecting

Description: Radford University continued its collaboration from 2016-17 with the Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI), a multi-member grassroots organization comprised of several Southwest Virginia counties, to collect oral histories, or river stories, from individuals who have grown up along the Clinch River. Students asked interviewees about their education and work history, about what life was like growing up along the Clinch River, how life has changed over time, their recreational activities in or near the river, as well as their relationship with the river.

The project hoped to bolster community pride, identity, and sense of place. The collected stories will result in a book to be sold at Clinch River venues and online to both locals and tourists. Select audio clips from the interviews will be used in kiosks along the Clinch River. Radford's ATP students hope that these activities will also help to support CRVI's goals to 1) Offer environmental education to people of all ages and 2) Revitalize and market downtowns along the river, boosting entrepreneurial opportunities.

Q&A Leaders – Frostburg State University

11:30 am – Appalachian State University

Assessing Riparian Health and Land Use on the New River of Ashe County, NC

Description: ATP students partnered with the New River Conservancy and the New River State Park (NRSP) to prioritize projects by providing deeper knowledge in three areas: understanding the extent of land subdivision along the New River, assessing the need for restorative work along riverbanks, and determining public interest in recreational tourism development.

Students surveyed the number and state of undeveloped lots along the river. They canoed along approximately 10 miles of the New River with GPS and cameras to create a geo-locatable database of riparian health conditions along the riverbanks, and surveyed the general public at high-traffic recreational areas in the NRSP to assess public interest in conservation and development. This data provided useful information to assist the community partners in project planning and prioritization.

Q&A Leaders – Indiana University of Pennsylvania