



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

2018 Appalachian Teaching Project
Projects & Participants
(In Order of Presentation)

Crystal City Marriott at Reagan National Airport
Arlington, VA

Friday, November 30, 2018

Appalachian Waterways as Natural and Cultural Assets

9:00 AM – Appalachian State University, Boone, NC
“Restoring Streambanks and Communities in the Upper New River Valley”

Description: Appalachian State University collaborated with The New River Conservancy to restore stream banks in the upper New River valley of Ashe County, North Carolina. The New River is a vital watershed in the region, touching 11 counties in three states. The project was designed to create a replicable model of streambank restoration that the NRC can use with additional schools and community partners throughout the 320-mile-long New River Valley. The project employed a combination of volunteer labor and local knowledge to increase the capacity of the community partners to improve water quality. Students met with community partners to develop a shared overview of the project and select a site for streambank restoration. Students then worked to develop a site-specific streambank restoration plan that integrated theories of cultural and environmental sustainability. After presenting the plan to community partners, students incorporated community feedback and worked onsite to execute their plan. This project was intended to help build the capacity of the community partners to efficiently utilize limited resources to sustain the rural economy and environment of Ashe County.

9:15 AM – Radford University, Radford, VA
“Building Social and Economic Capital in Southwest Virginia with Oral History Collecting and Esri ArcGIS Story Mapping”

Description: Radford University continued its collaboration with the Clinch River Valley Initiative (CRVI), a multi-member grassroots organization comprised of several Southwest Virginia Counties. Students collected oral histories from individuals who have grown up in the Clinch River Valley and gathered multimedia artifacts for an interactive story map. Students transcribed the oral histories, which will be published by CRVI and sold at Clinch River venues and online to both locals and tourists. Students also began helping CRVI with the editing process of the 18 oral histories collected last year. Select audio clips from the interviews will be used in kiosks along the Clinch River. In addition to the oral history collection and transcription, students collaborated with Radford University’s Geospatial Science Department to create a story map of the town of Dante, VA. Students

recorded information about the geography and environment of Dante by taking guided hikes and visiting historical points of interest and curated multimedia artifacts such as photographs, videos, and recorded narratives. Utilizing the ArcGIS platform, students produced an interactive map that combined maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content to present the stories of the people and the places in the community. The project was designed to increase community pride, identity, and sense of place, as well provide important content that can be used to promote tourism and economic development.

9:30 AM – Young Harris College, Young Harris, GA
“The Southern Appalachian Snorkeling Trail: Preserving Water Quality in Appalachian Communities by Promoting Native Fishes”

Description: Students in Young Harris College’s Ichthyology course collaborated with the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition to address the issue of sustainable water quality in Appalachian communities by developing the Southern Appalachian Snorkeling Trail Project. The project linked fish biodiversity to the water quality of local streams, through the recreational and experiential learning activity of snorkeling. The project was designed to encourage the intersection of fisheries science, environmental sustainability, and ecotourism in the region. The central focus of this project was to create a Southern Appalachia Snorkeling Trail. To accomplish this, students conducted research, both at the college and in the field, and used the findings to develop informational materials including a guidebook that contains maps, directions, site descriptions, and fish descriptions. These materials will be made available to the public, both online and through the Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition and local Chambers of Commerce. The project was intended to use the snorkeling experience to link the public to ongoing water quality issues and highlight the need for preserving and protecting water quality in southern Appalachian streams. The project hopes that it will help to increase appreciation for the waters of Appalachia as a unique natural and cultural asset.

Community Development through Cultural Heritage and the Arts

10:30 AM – Auburn University, Auburn, AL
“Macon County Veterans Oral History Project in collaboration with students at Tuskegee Public School”

Description: Building on the relationship established with Tuskegee Public School (TPS) during the 2017-18 project cycle, Auburn University 2018 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. In addition to the skills developed for interviewing and producing audio files and a website, the project provided a leadership opportunity for the sixth-graders as they developed cultural resources from their community. One significant plan for expansion of the project from last year included developing existing and future interviews as social studies classroom lessons. Students developed worksheets for each interview and tested them with TPS students. The project was also designed to increase the connections between the community and its veterans and to establish a repository of veteran interviews that will raise the profile of Macon County as a place where hardworking, successful, committed individuals live, work, and play, since we know that community perception is a critical element in community development.

**10:45 AM – Fairmont State University, Fairmont, WV
“Heritage Arts as Childhood Empowerment”**

Description: Fairmont State University students collaborated with Monongah Elementary School to implement a heritage arts enrichment program that will promote a sense of community, identity, creativity, and self-reliance. The project utilized student achievement in the Appalachian heritage art of dulcimer playing as a means to improve self-esteem, problem-solving skills, sense of place, and community pride. The program was intended to help equip students with useful tools to position them for future success in education, life, and citizenship. The ATP students, working with our community partners and elementary schoolchildren, built on last year’s project by interviewing last year’s students to gain an understanding of the impact of the program; learning basic playing techniques, heritage and history of the mountain dulcimer; learning instructional techniques; developing a template for using heritage arts to teach positive life skills; and implementing the program to an entire elementary grade level. The project built upon research demonstrating the positive value of arts education in increasing children’s self-reliance, problem-solving abilities, creative thinking, and ability to collaborate with others. The project was designed to provide a model of heritage arts education that can ultimately contribute to improving education attainment in the region.

**11:00 AM – Union College, Barbourville, KY
“Cultural and Natural Asset Mapping in Rural Knox County, Kentucky”**

Description: The Union College Appalachian Teaching Project worked with two community partners, Knox Arts, Crafts, and Humanities Council and Knox County Chamber of Commerce, to address the issue of out-migration and how natural and cultural assets and local business infrastructure can work hand-in-hand to help address the problem through special programs and business opportunities. The project was based on the realization that one of the greatest needs of the community was to determine what businesses and organizations could prosper there and help retain its citizens. To provide vital data to meet this need, Union College students assisted the community partners in identifying the natural, cultural, and entrepreneurial assets of the community. Students implemented both a Cultural Assets Inventory, which was developed by the students, community partners, and the Kentucky Arts Council (KAC); and an Entrepreneurial Assets Inventory, which was developed by students, community partners, and The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship (CRE). Students also engaged in ongoing service through partnerships with the community agencies as an integral part of the course. Using the data gathered in the inventories, students and community partners, with assistance from KAC and CRE, developed an asset map for the community. The findings from the project will provide valuable data for future planning by the community partners.

Economic Development through Partnership with State Parks

**11:30 AM – East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, TN
“Rocky Fork State Park: Linking Natural and Economic resources through Oral Histories and Community Engagement”**

Description: East Tennessee State University (ETSU) students collaborated with Rocky Fork State Park (RFSP) in Unicoi County, Tennessee to document oral histories of land uses and local cultural importance of the park and adjacent land areas. Working with the RFSP park rangers and members of the Friends of Rocky Fork State Park community group, students assisted in identifying strategies for further developing Rocky Fork State Park as a sustainable economic and cultural asset that is part of the community’s efforts to honor local culture and broaden economic diversification. Students learned the principles of ethnographic fieldwork, conducted archival research, engaged with the community through participant-observation and fieldwork, collected oral histories, and learned the skills of collaborative research and community partnerships. Following collection of the

oral history narratives, students transcribed the narratives for deposit into the ETSU Archives of Appalachia and presented their research in several venues. The project was designed to enhance cooperation and unity in the community and to further the development of creative strategies to utilize the natural and cultural assets of the park to promote ecotourism.

11:45 AM – University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
“Per Aspera Ad Astra: Creating a Model for a Dark Skies Observing Field”

Description: University of Tennessee students worked with several community partners, including Pickett CCC Memorial State Park, Friends of Pickett CCC Memorial Park, Cumberland Astronomical Society, and Knoxville Astronomers, to develop a plan for the dark skies observing field at Pickett CCC Memorial State Park. The project was intended to help the park better engage community members in dark skies activities and to develop programming related to the night sky resources. Students conducted research at the park and consulted with the park staff, stakeholders, and the astronomical. The students conducted a detailed assessment of the observing field site and created a plan for site improvements. The plan addressed such areas such as light controls, event planning, event management, land acquisition policies, and environmental impacts. The plan also included design recommendations and policy recommendations for the site and the concept for a new weekend-long dark skies event. Students condensed their findings into a brief and basic guide, which explains the steps and requirements necessary for developing observing sites and events. The guide will be made available to other communities interested in developing dark skies resources.

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Saturday, December 1, 2018

Community Planning and Asset Development

8:45 AM – Alfred State College, Alfred, NY

“Connecting Past and Present: A Vision for Preservation, Sustainability and Growth in Andover, New York”

Description: Alfred State College students completed a community visualization study of the Allegany County village of Andover, New York, to help the residents and municipal officials envision potential strategies for preserving and revitalizing their existing business district into a walkable village focused on promoting heritage tourism. Working individually and in small groups, students researched and documented the subject area and completed a Neighborhood Development Analysis, including a visual survey of the defined neighborhood pattern and design of the existing community. Students then returned to the village and used a charrette process to generate conceptual ideas for future development. The students and design professionals then assisted the community members in visualizing their ideas, and at the end of the day, each team made a brief presentation to the entire group. The initial research was used as a point of departure to illustrate a positive vision for preservation, sustainability, and growth of the Village of Andover through community engagement. The overall goal through student engagement of the community was to develop an inclusive Community Visualization Study that demonstrates a series of phased design interventions.

9:00 AM – Frostburg State University, Frostburg, MD

“Documenting and Promoting the Jane Gates Heritage House”

Description: Frostburg State University partnered with the founders of the Jane Gates Heritage House to promote the work of the site and to assist the site in developing plans for how this newly established center for African American history can best serve the community. While Appalachia’s ethnic diversity is often recognized, the region’s racial history and heritage has been too easily overlooked. This project shows how a fuller understanding of Appalachian culture and history, which recognizes the deep legacy of African American heritage, can help to create a more inclusive community, forging a renewed sense of community cohesiveness in western Maryland and the surrounding region. FSU students worked with the community partners to document the Center’s establishment, recorded the founders’ visions for the Center’s future, and co-hosted informational meetings in the community to help solidify the site’s goals and objectives and assist in building a strong volunteer base. Working with the feedback gained from those sessions, students developed an overview of suggested program priorities for the Heritage House and included a written portfolio including highlights of the sessions, recommendations for program development, a preliminary catalogue of artifacts and items for potential display, and a PowerPoint presentation of their findings.

**9:15 AM – Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College, Harlan, KY
“The Harlan County Project; Mapping & Painting Our Future”**

Description: Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College students worked with a coalition of community change partners in Harlan County, Kentucky, including Christian Outreach with Appalachian People (COAP), Southeast Kentucky Revitalization Project (SEKYRP), Harlan Country Schools, and Cawood Ledford Boys and Girls Club to implement downtown development plans and devise new economic development ideas. During the summer and fall of 2018, students worked with a youth coalition and professional artists to create murals in the downtowns of Harlan County as part of a downtown development strategy. Approximately 75 youth aged 12-24 participated in the creation of at least two large-scale murals. This work combined hands-on experience in project planning and execution, nature education through PMSS, participation in Boys and Girls Club mentoring programs, and hands-on experience for youth in art making. ATP students provided leadership and served as mentors to youth working in this process. In addition, fall 2018 ATP students worked with the University of Kentucky Appalachian Center to use the data gathered by Appalachian Land Study project at UK to engage the community in planning and generate new economic development ideas.

**9:30 AM – Ohio University, Athens, OH
“Using Social Science for Community Development in Southeast Ohio”
in collaboration with the Little Cities of Black Diamonds**

Description: Ohio University students partnered with the Little Cities of Black Diamonds (LCBD) Council to provide informative content at the annual (LCBD) Community Day and to produce a report on community assets and interests in order to guide future projects and programming. The LCBD is made up of 56 towns built during the coal boom of the late 1800s. Students worked with the community partner to plan the Community Day and developed “mini TED talks” to present at the event, providing new context and perspectives on local history. Students conducted a series of interviews and focus groups with residents to gather information on historical and current issues relevant to the community, and to identify community assets and interests. Students then developed a report of their findings based on the data collected from the interviews and focus groups. These activities provided students with opportunities to practice leadership skills and to gain experience working with communities. The goal of the project was to provide the LCBD with key insights into new directions to take toward their goal of maintaining their community in a sustainable way.

Health and Quality of Life in Appalachia

**10:15 AM – Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA
“Perceptions of Naloxone Use in a Rural Northern Appalachian Community”**

Description: Students from two classes at Indiana University of Pennsylvania collaborated with the Armstrong-Indiana-Clarion Drug and Alcohol Commission (AICDAC) to study attitudes towards the use of Narcan in the opioid epidemic by interviewing first responders (i.e., law enforcement, fire fighters, EMTs), in-patient and out-patient treatment staff, medical providers, and policy makers in their community. This project used a multi-method approach that engaged both qualitative and quantitative data to better understand the landscape, scope, and responses to the opioid epidemic in Indiana County. Students utilized ethnographic interviews and participant observation, as well as economic research and analysis, to understand the nature of the opioid epidemic in their county and the perceptions and practices around the use of Narcan. The project was designed to create broader linkages between the university community and Indiana County efforts to address the opioid epidemic; to establish data-informed, concrete recommendations around Narcan use in rural Appalachian communities; and to provide additional resources to help the community partner respond to the opioid epidemic in the community.

10:30 AM – University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, Bradford, PA**“Bradford Community Immunization Access: Closing the Loop”**

Description: The University of Pittsburgh at Bradford students collaborated with local physicians to help increase provider participation in appropriate immunization screening, referral for, and documentation of, adult vaccinations; and to create materials for increased community awareness of adult vaccination needs. The ability of individuals to maintain currency with recommended immunizations is important for the health of the community. With Dr. Jill Owens and the Bradford Family Medicine practice, students addressed the identified issues uncovered through previous research, with a threefold focus. First, students provided community education to increase awareness and enhance knowledge related to immunization needs and access. Second, students established provider/nurse education to facilitate increased utilization of the Pennsylvania Statewide Immunization Information System to enhance provider communication and limit duplication of services. Third, students facilitated the incorporation of nurse-managed protocols to build capacity and improve immunization delivery in a variety of healthcare settings. The project was designed to strengthen partnerships between the university and area healthcare providers as well as to increase awareness of immunization status and risk in the community.

10:45 AM – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA**“Addressing Community Health Concerns near the Radford Army Ammunition Plant”**

Description: In response to ongoing community concerns regarding potential environmental effects of the Radford Army Ammunition Plant (RAAP) on human health, Virginia Tech students collaborated with Pulaski County Board of Supervisors and Montgomery County Board of Supervisors to gather additional information about the possible presence of pollutants in the air. Students enrolled in the Appalachian Community Research course cataloged residents' concerns about the Radford arsenal, identified and collated existing relevant studies and data, and wrote a literature review. The class also conducted air sampling for carcinogenic organic compounds (and possibly for lead) on up to 10 properties in the vicinity of RAAP at the request of residents and school administrators. Students were trained and supervised in air sampling by researchers in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE). The project was designed to gather needed data, to gain a better understanding of community concerns, and to help community partners increase residents' understanding of scientific appraisals of RAAP's environmental effects. In addition, the project hopes to improve lines of communication and possibly trust between RAAP and surrounding communities.