Hancock County Annual Report 2018

Putting Knowledge to Work!

The West Virginia University Extension Service works to provide solutions in your community through key programs and resources, including agriculture and natural resources; 4-H and youth development; food and nutrition; health and wellness; financial planning; and home gardening. These research-based programs and services are available to all Hancock County residents thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners, including the Board of Education and County Commission.

Highlights

- The WVU Extension Service agent for 4-H youth development co-presented two workshops at the 2018 NAE4-HA conference in Columbus covering camper-counselor connections and workforce development curriculum.
- The WVU Extension Service agent for 4-H youth development implemented four “train the trainer” workshops in the LifeSkills Training program in 2018 with an anticipated reach of 800 youths.
- The WVU Extension Service agent for family and community development in the Northern Panhandle taught a board training program for the West Virginia soil conservation elected officials at their annual conference. He also provided assistance and oversight for a $200,000 grant to hire a soil conservation specialist for Hancock County and the Northern Panhandle. The grant was approved and the position will provide much needed technical assistance to farmers and land owners in the area.

4-H and Youth Development

Energy Express Program

- 74 youths participated in the Energy Express program at two sites in Hancock County – Weir High School and Oak Glen High School.
  - Transportation to the program was provided by the Hancock County Board of Education.
  - Program evaluation results indicated that students increased their abilities in word identification, reading comprehension, reading fluency and broad reading, with an average age equivalent gain of 1.7 months in broad reading achievement.
  - More than 1,650 hours of volunteer hours were contributed to the county program by area youths and adults.
  - 12 young adults served as AmeriCorps members for the program.
Camping

- 64 youths participated in the annual 4-H camp held at Tomlinson Run State Park. Teen 4-H club members actively served on the camp planning committee. 24 adults served as volunteer camp staff throughout the week.

4-H School-Based Programs

- 200 youths were reached with financial management programming.
- LifeSkills Training program was taught to eight grade students at St. Paul’s School.

Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs

- The Newellies 4-H club was formed in 2018.
- 51 4-H members submitted a resume for consideration for scholarships to state and national 4-H events.

Special Interest Programs

- Collaborated with Weirton Area Chamber of Commerce to plan and implement the Youth Leadership Weirton program for 33 high school sophomores and assisted with the Dr. Barbara Matey High School Business Symposium with 105 high school juniors.

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Master Gardener Program

- Tri-State Area Master Gardeners Association volunteers provided more than 1,300 hours of service and received 875.5 hours of education in 2018.
- 10 new volunteers completed the Master Gardener program classes.

Family and Community Development

Community Educational Outreach Service

- Hancock County CEOS County Council continued collaboration with volunteers who provided more than 9,000 hours of service in 2018.

Health and Wellness Programming

- The nutrition outreach instructor for Hancock and Brooke counties reached 542 Hancock County youths with nutrition programming.
- The WVU Hancock County Extension Service office collaborated with Advocates for Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition by providing technical assistance for planning and implementing evidenced-based prevention programs and activities in Hancock County.

Tourism and Economic Development

- Regional tourism is really taking off in Hancock County and the region. 11 counties from the tri-state area are working together to promote the region and increase its tourism capacity. Together, the group recently established a Visit Upper Ohio Valley website and will begin efforts to develop a social media presence for the group by March 2019.
Brownfield Development is an important area that the WVU Hancock County Extension Service office is working on. The WVU Extension Service has been engaged in serving on a regional committee to identify brownfield sites in the region and secure funding to abate the contaminants. Once the property is cleared, that opens the door for developing the property for reuse. Hancock County has one of the premier sites – the Taylor, Smith & Taylor Company pottery site in Chester. The site has been reclaimed and won some state awards with the brownfield reclamation efforts. Now, the owners are working on developing the site as an economic development property in northern Hancock County.