

# McDowell County Annual Report 2020

## 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 McDowell 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

- Two new 4-H & Youth Development agents joined the McDowell County team on June 8, 2020.
- Expanded focus and outreach efforts of youth programming to include special interests, such as cooking, outdoor recreation safety and community involvement.

## 4-H and Youth Development

#### Camping

- 111 youths, two volunteers and eight WVU Extension staff participated in McDowell Campin-a Bag. Camp was different than in previous years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and offered free of cost for all participants.
- 19 hands-on and virtual activities were provided to campers in a 4-H drawstring backpack and distributed at four locations within McDowell County. Additional supplies were provided to complete activities.

#### 4-H School-Based Programs

• 59 youths participated in school-based virtual programs focused on educational lessons related to art and West Virginia history.

#### Traditional 4-H Programming and Clubs

- 38 youths registered for the McDowell County 4-H program from October to December 2020.
- Traditional in-person programs were temporarily put on hold by WVU Extension Service to ensure the safety of the participants. All programming was transitioned to virtual in March 2020.
- A county-wide club was formed with an average of five youths attending virtual meetings each second Monday of the month.

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• One youth collaborated with four Wyoming county members to form a cooking club that meets twice a month virtually. More club members have been joining monthly.

#### Special Interest Programs

• Both 4-H agents were trained as ATV Safety Instructors in order to deliver life-saving ATV safety education to youths throughout McDowell County.

#### **Community Service**

• 4-H agents created 103 Smiling Buttons for McDowell County school personnel to allow students to see smiling adult faces, even during the middle of a pandemic.

## Family and Community Development

#### Family and Community Development

- Worked as an Extension Certified Research Assistant (ECRA) to assist with HSTA club at Mount View High School. Provided STEM education and research project assistance as well as statewide programming through both in-person and recorded video instruction.
- Taught a lesson for the Grandfamilies program, which was sponsored by McDowell County Commission on Aging. The lesson was focused on stress reduction and mindfulness.
- Partnered with McDowell County Commission on Aging to film three 30-minute sessions of tai chi at Panther State Forest, which were made available to McDowell County residents.

## Family Nutrition Program

#### Youth Health Education

- In McDowell County, 424 students received education through the Family Nutrition Program in McDowell County ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade. Students participated in lessons from the Show Me Nutrition program as well as gardening classes. Students improved with the following changes:
  - 89% of youths who participated improved their abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendations or gained knowledge about the subject.
  - 39% of youths who participated now use safe food handling practices more often or gained knowledge about the subject.
  - 42% of youths improved their physical activity practices or gained knowledge about being more active.
- Provided Teen Cuisine lessons, part of an evidence-based nutrition and physical activity education program designed for youths in sixth through 12th grade, to 25 students involved in the River View High School HSTA program, 10 students involved in the Mount View Middle School HSTA program, and 30 students at Sandy River Middle School.

#### Adult and Family Health Education

• Delivered the Eating Smart, Being Active program, a research-based nine-week nutrition education program designed for low income families in rural communities, to 70 adults throughout McDowell County.

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- Provided Food of the Month lessons to parents at Save the Children and Head Start in Bradshaw and Iaeger with 15 participants.
- A kid yoga training was provided to Parents as Teachers via Zoom with seven participants in December 2020.
- A nutrition lesson on healthy Halloween treats was held via Zoom for seven Parents as Teachers with a box of ingredients to take home for each person.

#### Community Health Education and Outreach

- The WVU Extension Service Family Nutrition Program in McDowell County has developed a strong partnership with Reconnecting McDowell over the years. In 2020, this partnership helped Reconnecting McDowell secure a grant to establish a mobile farmers market, which will sell fresh produce grown by Mount View Middle School students to residents throughout the county. The mobile farmers market brought in \$144,000 dollars into McDowell County through grant money, vegetable sales and hired personnel.
- Assisted with student food box distributions at Mount View High School and Welch Elementary School. Distribution at the high school served 150 students and families each week, while the elementary school site, hosted by Mountaineer Food Bank, served more than 200 youths.