

# Kanawha County Annual Report | 2016

## Putting Knowledge to Work!

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

## Highlights

John Porter, Ag and Natural Resources Extension agent, won a national communications award from the National Association of County Agricultural agents for his “Garden Guru” column in the Sunday Charleston Gazette-Mail. His articles reach nearly 70,000 subscribers each week through the paper and online formats.

Kerri Wade, Families and Health Extension agent trained 977 state employees on financial management in response to a change in the pay date schedule for state workers- 69% stated they learned something new and 81% said they intended to do something different as a result of the class.

West Virginia is known for its camping program. In 2015, 252 Kanawha County youth attended one of five 4-H camps offered in the county. These camps include the Older and Younger Overnight camps at Camp Virgil Tate, Cloverbud Camp, STEM Camp, and Sustainability Camp. 27 Kanawha County youths attended a state 4-H camp at Jackson’s Mill.

## 4-H and Youth Development

Over the past century, West Virginia University Extension Service has flourished in Kanawha County by keeping pace with the needs of young people, their families and their communities. Today’s 4-Hers tackle the nation’s top issues and are committed to making a difference in people’s lives. 4-H young people are making lifelong friends, gaining STEM skills, and increasing their knowledge about healthy living.

- Through Kanawha County’s 4-H program, over 4,000 youth participated in 4-H county programs at schools, afterschool, 4-H clubs and 4-H summer programs.
- 4-H Teen Leaders documented 900 volunteer hours.
- 252 youth attended county 4-H camp and 27 attended a state 4-H camp.
- Four youth attended the National Leadership Washington Focus 4-H Conference

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- 184 were active members of a community 4-H club.
- 603 youth increased science skills through the national award winning 4-H STEM Ambassador program.
- 455 youth learned about healthy living with 123 youth being reached through the new Teen Health Ambassadors program.
- 501 youth increased STEM knowledge through in-school and afterschool programs.
- 637 4<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in the WVU Extension 4-H Outdoor Classroom.
- 2,081 youth received nutrition education offered through 4-H Family Nutrition Program.

## Agriculture and Natural Resources

Kanawha County is composed of a unique blend of rural and urban areas, and farmers and home gardeners in each of these areas face unique challenges. Agriculture and Natural Resources programming through Kanawha County Extension Service works to meet the needs of both rural and urban producers through traditional means and emerging technology such as social media.

- 85 certified Extension Master Gardener volunteers provided 1512 hours of service to the community through educational and beautification, which has an estimated value of \$34,900 for the community. In addition 40 students participated in the largest Master Gardener training course ever offered in the county.
- 350 soil tests were performed, resulting in improved nutrient utilization, reduced costs to growers, and reduced risk of nutrient run-off pollution in streams.
- 180 individuals were educated on best practices for gardening and farming in an urban setting at the second annual West Virginia Urban Ag Conference held in Institute.
- Extension Agent John Porter received a national communications award from the National Association of County Agricultural Agents for his “Garden Guru” column in the Sunday Charleston Gazette-Mail. His articles reach the nearly 70,000 paper subscribers each week and through online formats.
- School garden programs helped students at over 25 schools, childcare centers, and community centers learn about growing healthy and nutritious fruits and vegetables.
- Working with volunteers, Extension Agent John Porter began a research project evaluating the new gardening technique called “Straw Bale Gardening.”
- In an ongoing partnership with the Habitat for Humanity ReStore, gardening classes were offered to 185 individuals in the “Grow Green” workshop series.

## Families and Health

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Because Kanawha County is so diverse and large it is difficult for one person to fulfill all the extension needs of stakeholders. Agent Kerri Wade concentrates the majority of her efforts on programs that provide great reach and satisfy high needs within the county. This year, programing efforts concentrated on early childhood care education and financial education.

- 102 hours of instruction was provided to 227 child care providers improving the quality of education for our youngest citizens.
- 977 state employees received instruction on financial management in response to a change in the pay date schedule for state workers- 69% stated they learned something new and 81% said they intended to do something different as a result of the class.
- 58 community members learned how to cook healthier utilizing the Mediterranean Diet.
- 59 state employees attended Stress Less – a five-week stress reduction and management class.
- 41 community members learned how to safely preserve locally grown produce.
- 25 diabetics learned how to better manage their disease.
- Two Energy Express sites served 64 youth who received 3,840 meals and 384 personal books. In addition, summer employment was provided to two professionals and 10 AmeriCorps Members were hired for a summer of service. Locally, more than \$14,000 was raised to implement the program.
- 220 adults and 38 youth attended the FNP multi-week nutrition education program and made numerous behavior changes such as eating more whole wheat and low-fat dairy.

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