

## Fayette 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 Fayette County thanks to the tremendous support of our community members, local organizations, volunteers and local partners – the Board of Education and County Commission.

### Highlights

**Andrea Mender, 4-H Youth Development agent, Fayette County**, coordinated the Reality Store financial literacy program for 340 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Ansted and Collins Middle Schools. Students were able to connect academic achievement with the kind of lifestyle they envision for themselves after graduation. They also learned the value of managing finances. Forty community and student volunteers made this program possible.

**Lauren Weatherford, Families and Health agent, Fayette and Nicholas Counties, Fayette County Living Well Workgroup** - Fayette County Living Well Workgroup is a community partnership formed to address chronic disease prevention. In 2015, there were 3,854 participants in walking groups, yoga classes, 5K's, healthy eating and healthy education programs; \$9,270 in grant funds have been awarded to the workgroup. The group is a partner with the Fayette County Commission and has participated in the formation of a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to ensure health is a priority in community recreation, and is in the process of establishing a working partnership with the West Virginia Foodlinks program to address food insecurity.

**Brian Sparks, Agriculture and Natural Resources agent, Fayette and Nicholas Counties** -Establishment of the Fayette County Farmers Market has allowed growers to acquire \$58,000 in sales for the 2015 year.

**Kelsey Laubach, Youth Health educator, Fayette County** introduced the Show Me Nutrition Curriculum, which introduced healthy eating and exercise habits that can be used for life to 832 children from 39 different classrooms, ranging from kindergarten through 5th grade. 77% of children who participated indicated an improvement in their abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendation, or gained knowledge.

### 4-H and Youth Development

#### 4-H Highlights

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- 110 youths attended the county 4-H camp.
- 200 youths were members of a 4-H club.
- 13 4-H'ers attended a state 4-H camp.
- 58 volunteers helped make these programs possible.

### **Energy Express**

Low-resource children have been found to have lower vocabulary levels when they enter school and continue to be behind other children throughout their school years. Children who participated in Energy Express in our county and who read and practice reading skills in the summer will enter the new school year better prepared. The better prepared students are to learn, the more likely they will graduate from high school and pursue college training. In Fayette County, the Energy Express program provided:

- 60 K-5 students a safe, positive place with a caring adult for 6 weeks this summer.
- 3,668 meals to youth 18 and younger.
- 1,679 youths and adults volunteered their time to serve the Energy Express program.
- 10 college student AmeriCorps Members and 2 site supervisors had life-changing summer employment.

### **Reality Store**

340 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from Ansted and Collins Middle Schools participated in the Reality Store program. Students were able to connect academic achievement with the kind of lifestyle they envision for themselves after graduation. They also learned the value of managing finances. 40 community and student volunteers made this program happen.

### **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math)**

The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation provided a grant to support a summer STEM Ambassador. This college student reached 1,025 youths with STEM activities. She also trained teachers, community volunteers and Extension staff in using STEM program activities.

### **Research**

Extension Agents Andrea Mender and Lauren Weatherford are conducting a needs assessment to study the life management skills youth need to succeed as adults.

## **Agriculture and Natural Resources**

- The Quality Assurance Calf Pool group has marketed 425 farm fresh calves from the area with an estimated premium of \$26,000. Agent Sparks has authored the Sweet Potato article in the WVU Extension Service Garden Calendar to which 90,000 calendars are distributed.

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- The Master Gardeners have provided 1,153 volunteer hours that have provided horticultural education to the citizens of Fayette County.
- The establishment of the Fayette County Farmers Market has allowed growers to acquire \$58,000 in sales for the 2015 year.
- The Strawberry Raised Bed project has provided funding and curriculum to 150 students and 6 teachers in Fayette County to help educate our youth about agriculture production and healthy eating habits.
- 85 soil tests, involving 1,000 acres were performed.
- 16 farmers involved in livestock management and beef quality assurance programs.
- 28 farmers/vendors involved in farmers markets.
- 13 adults in Master Gardener program.
- 8 youths involved in youth agriculture education activities.
- \$1,000 of grant money raised for agriculture and natural resource programs.
- As Fayette County producers compete in local food markets, more of the food dollar stays in the county or in West Virginia. In addition, buying local, fresh produce has benefits related to healthy eating and nutrition.
- If vegetable growers are able to prevent diseases in their produce, they can increase yield of cucurbits, tomatoes and potatoes in the county. Increased revenues improve the incomes of growers and the West Virginia economy grows through higher taxes. Additional health benefits are also accrued as citizens eat more fruits and vegetables that are grown locally.

## Families and Health

### Nutrition Education in Elementary Schools

- 832 children in Fayette County participated in the Show Me Nutrition curriculum. Encouraging healthy eating and exercise habits that they can use for life.
  - 77% of children who participated indicated an improvement in their abilities to choose foods according to Federal Dietary Recommendation or gained knowledge.
- Held a children's cooking camp. Children learned how to prepare a healthy meal start to finish.
- Connected with Fayette County's Farmers Market to promote SNAP use at the Farmers Market and will continue to do so next summer. SNAP participants may use their benefits to access fresh local goods.

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- Had incentive items to hand out at the markets.
- Got yard signs that indicated that SNAP was accepted at the market.
- Visited DHHR and WIC to inform participants about this options and the benefits.
- Will assist with the Strawberry Raised Beds Project by providing a nutrition lesson to the children. They will see how to prepare what they grow.

### **Financial Education**

Expanded delivery of programming and partnerships to Fayette County employees through the Smart Money program.

Received additional requests in both Fayette and Nicholas Counties for financial education. Programs are scheduled throughout 2016.

Overwhelmingly participants report improved knowledge gain from the pre- to the post-evaluation. And partners have reported observed behavior change in participants.

- Below is a sample of the evaluation results from Smart Money.
  - 77.8% (70/90) of respondents reported that they knew something they didn't know before, after attending this training.
  - 6.4% (68/90) of respondents reported that they plan to use information or skills learned in the training to manage their money in the next six months.
- Participants from WV SPOKES had the following comments from the Money Habitudes course.
  - "I thought I could just make my money better, but now I know I'm going to have to set goals and work on one thing at a time."
  - "I guess you have to think differently about money if you want to do better."
- Susan Leggett, Nicholas County SPOKES director, reported that one participant compared sizes and prices, then had food stamps left over at the end of the month.

### **Relationship Education**

- Received additional requests in both Fayette and Nicholas Counties for relationship education. Programs are scheduled throughout 2016.
- Overwhelmingly participants report improved knowledge gain from the pre- to the post-evaluation. And partners have reported observed behavior change in participants.

### **Summary of Service Activities**

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Service Area	Activity
National (4)	JNEAFCS Co-Editor NEAFCS 2015 Conference UK Content Reviewer Robert Wood Johnson Foundation – Culture of Health participant
State (5)	WVUES Dean/Director search committee FNP Specialist search committee WVAEFCS-WVAE4-H Spring Conference 2015 HOT Team Strengthening Families Team
Local (14)	(1) Nicholas County Program Coordinator (1) Fayette County Living Well Workgroup (1) Fayette County Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (1 )FNP- HE supervisor (6) Committee and network member (4) WVUES related activities: Energy Express, CEOS Adviser, 4-H Camp

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