

Stay connected with McDowell

McDowell County is an American story that deserves a new chapter—one filled with promise, with goodwill, with the type of shared commitment that offers solid reasons to believe in a brighter future. Be a part of this historic partnership and show your support for McDowell's children and the greater community by joining the effort at www.ReconnectingMcDowell.org.

The Greenbrier Resort Welcomes Broader Horizons Students

In addition to their earlier trip to Charleston, students in this year's Broader Horizons mentorship program spent a day and a half (March 5-6) visiting the historic Greenbrier resort in White Sulphur Springs. The trip also served as a reunion for students who participated in the program in its first two years. The group of 28 high school juniors, seniors and college students took part in facilitated discussions that encouraged peer mentoring and networking.

The students, split into three groups based on the year they participated in the program, reflected on how the experience has helped them and the areas in which they most needed mentors to support them. The participants then were placed in four groups with a mix of all three years. In their discussions, many students expressed their worries about successfully filling out college applications, finances, moving away from home or doing well in school. However, words of advice, encouragement and candid discussions with their peers helped alleviate those fears. The college students shared their freshman experiences, opening up about the pitfalls to avoid and the struggles they had encountered, while reassuring the high school students that excelling in college was indeed possible. The high school juniors got tips for applying to college, learned about sources of financial aid and how best to utilize the opportunities that Broader Horizons offers.

At the Greenbrier breakfast buffet, Reconnecting McDowell trustee advisor and Greenbrier owner Jim Justice stopped by to speak with the students. He shared stories of his childhood and assured them that they could run their own Greenbrier one day. Emphasizing that it was his passion and enthusiasm which had catapulted him to success, and noting that the students had the ability to do the same, Justice made it clear that Reconnecting McDowell was committed to supporting them.



Broken into three groups—high school juniors, seniors and graduates—Broader Horizons students discuss their plans for the future, hopes for McDowell County and favorite memories from the mentorship program.

The students then toured the Greenbrier Bunker and learned about the top-secret government facility built during the Cold War to shelter members of the U.S. Congress in the event of a nuclear attack.

For aspiring athletes in the group, seeing the Sports Performance Center was an exciting experience; they toured the summer training camp of the New Orleans Saints football team—walking through the locker rooms, weight room and onto the football field.

In reflecting on the trip, the students thought it should be an annual event, which would allow them to meet new mentees and reconnect with old ones. The advice and discussions helped assuage students' fears about the future, newfound independence and managing college classes. The trip gave the students an opportunity to have in-depth conversations with peers who are on similar paths and gain insight on navigating life away from home.



Broader Horizons mentees listen attentively as Greenbrier owner Jim Justice talks about his background and the role it has played in his success.



River View High School junior Justin Riggs surveys equipment in the Greenbrier sports center.

Share My Lesson Launches New Website

Share My Lesson, the free digital collection of lesson plans and resources for educators has launched its new website. Share My Lesson is designed to help educators reduce the hours they spend developing countless lesson plans, by providing a platform where users can collaborate and share lesson plans and resources on various topics and subjects appropriate for all grade levels. The user-friendly site boasts more than 312,000 resources that can be searched by grade, subject, state or topic. All content can be downloaded free of charge. The website now houses new material and provides broader content for educators at all grade levels. As a Reconnecting McDowell partner, Share My Lesson will soon launch a resource collection specifically designed for McDowell County educators, parents and guardians. Visit the site at ShareMyLesson.com.



Southside K-8 in Need of Donations

Southside K-8 School is seeking financial support and in-kind donations to develop its playground, which currently lacks equipment. Southside welcomes donated picnic tables and small trees, as well as monetary donations that will go toward buying a play set, swings, a geo dome climber, and other playground equipment, which will be used by students in prekindergarten through grade 5. Contact Flo McGuire at 304-320-5600 to make in-kind donations. Checks should be made out to Reconnecting McDowell with "Southside K-8" in the memo line and mailed to:

SSK-8 Playground Project
c/o Reconnecting McDowell
Attention: Debra Elmore
1615 Washington St. East
Suite 300
Charleston, WV 25311



Southside K-8 School's current playground lacks equipment for kids to play on.

McDowell County Schools Holds Early Childhood Fair



McDowell County Schools

Climb
Explore
Learn
Touch

McDowell County Schools will host the **TOUCH A TRUCK** Early Childhood Fair on April 15th, 2016 from 10:00am-1:00pm at the Welch National Guard Armory.

Children ages **birth to five** are invited to attend this **free event**.

Explore cool trucks and equipment while taking photographs in the driver's seat of some amazing vehicles!

- Construction Trucks
- Ambulance
- Fire Truck
- Police Cars
- Limousine
- Farming Equipment
- Race Car
- Military Vehicles

Face Painting
Mini-Bike Course
Science Experiments
Bounce House
Door Prizes
Free Books
Community Resource Providers
Meet Early Learning PreK & Headstart Staff
Free Lunch



Enrollment screenings for 2016-2017 PreK and Headstart Classrooms will also take place at the event!



◀ Special needs children at the early childhood fair can enjoy a designated quiet hour between 10 and 11 a.m.; there will be no noises or sirens during that time. For more information, call Amanda Fragile at 304-436-8441, ext. 250, or email afragile@k12.wv.us.



McDowell Expo Postponed

The McDowell County Expo has been postponed. Details on the rescheduled Expo will be forthcoming.

Upcoming Community Meeting

McDowell County Community Initiatives will hold a meeting on April 21 at Welch First United Methodist Church. Discussions will focus on community initiatives that will address the problems facing the County. For more information, contact Joel McKinney at 304-887-9989.

Social Media

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For a list of Reconnecting McDowell partners, visit <http://www.ReconnectingMcDowell.org/partners>

Want to get involved or learn more?

For more information about Reconnecting McDowell or to find out how you can get involved, contact Kris Mallory, kmallory@aftwv.org, or Debra Elmore at delmore@aftwv.org or 304-552-5766.