

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.

Making Connections

Welcome Our Newest Team Members!



AMANDA SHELTON
COMMUNITY AND
SCHOOL LIAISON

Greetings to the residents of McDowell County! My name is **Amanda Shelton**, and I am proud and excited to be one of the newest members of the Reconnecting McDowell team.

I was born in Montgomery, W.Va., was raised as a military brat in Berlin, Germany, and then moved to Orlando, Fla., and earned my bachelor's degree in 1999 from the University of Florida. After graduating, I returned home to our beautiful mountains and was a special education teacher for Clay County Schools until taking this position in mid-September. While teaching, I earned my master's degree in special education from Marshall University in 2007.

As a teacher in Clay, which is very similar demographically to McDowell, I saw the need for community outreach and improved early education. I was inspired by the Reconnecting McDowell project and its efforts to connect and support community and education, so I worked with my local union to help develop a community school and school garden in one of the neediest areas of the county.

I hope that my experience and passion for education and people will empower students and local leaders to further develop and take ownership of the work of Reconnecting McDowell and our partners. I look forward to being part

of the McDowell community in ways that impact children and especially their futures. And I look forward to meeting and working with anyone interested in making this gorgeous and historic County the best of our wild and wonderful West Virginia!

I'd love to hear your ideas. If you are passionate about giving our kids a promising future and helping McDowell County flourish again, please contact me at ashelton@aftwv.org or 304-610-8232. Let's work together!



CHAD WEBB
PARTNERSHIP
COORDINATOR

My name is **Chad Webb**, and I was born and raised in Williamson, W.Va. I'm the son of Terry, a coal miner, and Sherrie Webb. I graduated from Williamson High School in 2001 and attended the University of Pikeville and Western Michigan University. In 2012, I obtained a J.D. degree from the West Virginia University College of Law, and I'm currently completing my master's in public health from Marshall University. My areas of professional interest are healthcare access, labor dynamics, and job recovery and economic development in southern West Virginia.

I'm excited to nurture both new and existing partnerships in a way that will empower the people of McDowell County to envision and create the future they want for themselves.

A New Role

Kris Mallory Begins New Position with AFT-West Virginia



Kris Mallory during a Broader Horizons mentorship trip to Charleston in 2016. ▲

After four years of service, **Kris Mallory** has left the Reconnecting McDowell team to become AFT-West Virginia's program director/special assistant to the president. While it saddens us to see Kris go, we're happy to know he hasn't gone too far.

Congratulations, Kris, on your new position, and thank you for your dedication to working families and West Virginia, and for pouring your heart into your work and into McDowell County!

—Your Reconnecting McDowell Family

Meet McDowell



▲ **Betty Jones, director of the McDowell County Convention and Visitors Bureau, at the Meet McDowell launch event.**

The McDowell County Convention and Visitors Bureau launched its new tourism campaign, Meet McDowell, in September at the Houston Coal Company Store. The event highlighted the County's recreational attractions, such as Wild Willy's ATV Rezort and Ashland Resort, and attendees toured the store, which will eventually house the County's new Convention and Visitors Center. Reconnecting McDowell staff were in attendance to support the organizers throughout the day.

Visit **MeetMcDowell.com** to explore the three wildlife areas, 22 restaurants, 13 lodging options and 17 historic sites that McDowell County has to offer! And watch JJN Multimedia's new video showcasing these attractions at <http://bit.ly/MeetMcDowell>.

Upcoming Meeting

At Reconnecting McDowell's next partners meeting, to be held Jan. 8-9 at the Charleston Embassy Suites, staff and partners will discuss strategies and partnerships to strengthen our work. Details are forthcoming.

For a list of Reconnecting McDowell partners, visit 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 Chad Webb (cwebb@aftwv.org) or Debra Elmore (delmore@aftwv.org or 304-552-5766).

IN MEMORIAM

THOMAS VINEYARD

Reconnecting McDowell sends condolences to the family and friends of Mayor Thomas Vineyard, who passed away in September at the age of 52. Vineyard served as the mayor of Gary for 10 months, as a volunteer coach at Mount View High School and on our board of directors for a short time until his passing. He was also the father of one of our beloved Broader Horizons mentees, Chantel Vineyard. Our heart goes out to Chantel and her family.

HENRY PAUL

Reconnecting McDowell honors the memory of Mayor Henry Paul, who passed away in September at 97 years old. Paul served as the mayor of Gary from 1991 to 2001. We extend our condolences to his family and friends for their loss.

Let's Connect

Follow Reconnecting McDowell on social media to receive the latest updates and news. We share information on webinars, job-training opportunities and upcoming community events. We also highlight our partners and their work in McDowell County and the state.

Social Media

 Follow us on Twitter:
@ReconnectMcD

 Follow us on Instagram:
@ReconnectMcD

 Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/ReconnectMcD

