

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.

Broader Horizons Welcomes Its Third-Year Students

Reconnecting McDowell's Broader Horizons program—now in its third year of mentoring high school students—has welcomed 30 new mentees, split evenly between River View and Mount View high schools. The students and their families attended a program orientation on Nov. 9 and 10 where they learned about Broader Horizons and the trips planned for 2016, as well as what is required to participate in the program.

The students will take two weeklong trips, one to Charleston, W.Va., in January, where they will attend the governor's State of the State address, participate in career development activities and meet with their mentors, among other activities. The second trip will be to Washington, D.C., where the mentees will participate in training sessions, job shadowing and visits with members of Congress from West Virginia.



▲ River View students who will be participating in the Broader Horizons program pose for a picture at the orientation.

Reconnecting McDowell Attends Forum on Rural Education



Members of the Reconnecting McDowell team attended the third annual Rural Education National Forum held in Columbus, Ohio, on Oct. 26-27. The forum is a collaborative effort from Battelle for Kids, and the Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia departments of education, which brings together state superintendents, state and local education agencies, and

nonprofit organizations. Attendees strategized and shared best practices on ways to bolster student success, revitalize rural economies and boost STEM initiatives. Justin Boggs and Christine Miller of the West Virginia Department of Education led a workshop titled "Decreasing Dropouts Through Innovation Zones." They discussed how West Virginia schools and districts utilize funding

▲ The forum allowed stakeholders to strategize on how to utilize natural resources in rural areas, such as McDowell County, to bolster their economies.

and policies to identify at-risk kids and use the community school model to provide wraparound services for these students. The participants from Reconnecting McDowell made good use of the forum to connect with potential partners and learn about successful innovation and investment examples from other leaders who work in rural areas.

Manchins Hold Reconnecting McDowell Reception

Reconnecting McDowell Chair Gayle Manchin and Sen. Joe Manchin held a reception in recognition of Reconnecting McDowell on Nov. 4 in Washington, D.C. It was co-hosted by Sen. Shelley Capito from West Virginia, journalist Steve Clemons, and Sen. Charles Schumer of New York. AFT President Randi Weingarten and Gayle Manchin spoke about the work being done by Reconnecting McDowell partners, as well as the rich promise of McDowell County. The reception highlighted the County and increased awareness around Reconnecting McDowell's work. It was attended by journalists and potential partners who were all eager to learn more about the project and how best to facilitate the work being done in the County.



▲ **AFT President Randi Weingarten, Reconnecting McDowell Chair Gayle Manchin and Sen. Joe Manchin share Reconnecting McDowell anecdotes and accomplishments with reception attendees.**

Voya Foundation Awards Reconnecting McDowell \$50,000 Grant

Reconnecting McDowell has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Voya Foundation, the charitable giving arm of Voya Financial—a retirement, investment and insurance company. The foundation is committed to supporting and improving education for youth in grades K-12, especially children in underserved areas or facing economic disadvantages. The grant will be used to replenish the student and adult literacy centers throughout the County.






McDowell Expo Coming This Spring

The McDowell Expo has been rescheduled and will be held in the spring, with the exact date to be determined. The Expo will provide resources and information on job opportunities and community services, as well as offer health screenings for the community. If you'd like more information or are interested in being a vendor, contact Kris Mallory at kmallory@aftwv.org.

Become a Mentor!

Anyone interested in becoming a mentor as part of the AT&T/ Reconnecting McDowell Broader Horizons project, please submit your name, resume, and/or bio and contact information to Leah Daughtry at ldaughtry@aft.org.

Social Media

-  Follow us on Twitter @ReconnectMcD
-  Follow us on Instagram: @ReconnectMcD
-  Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/ReconnectMcD

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.