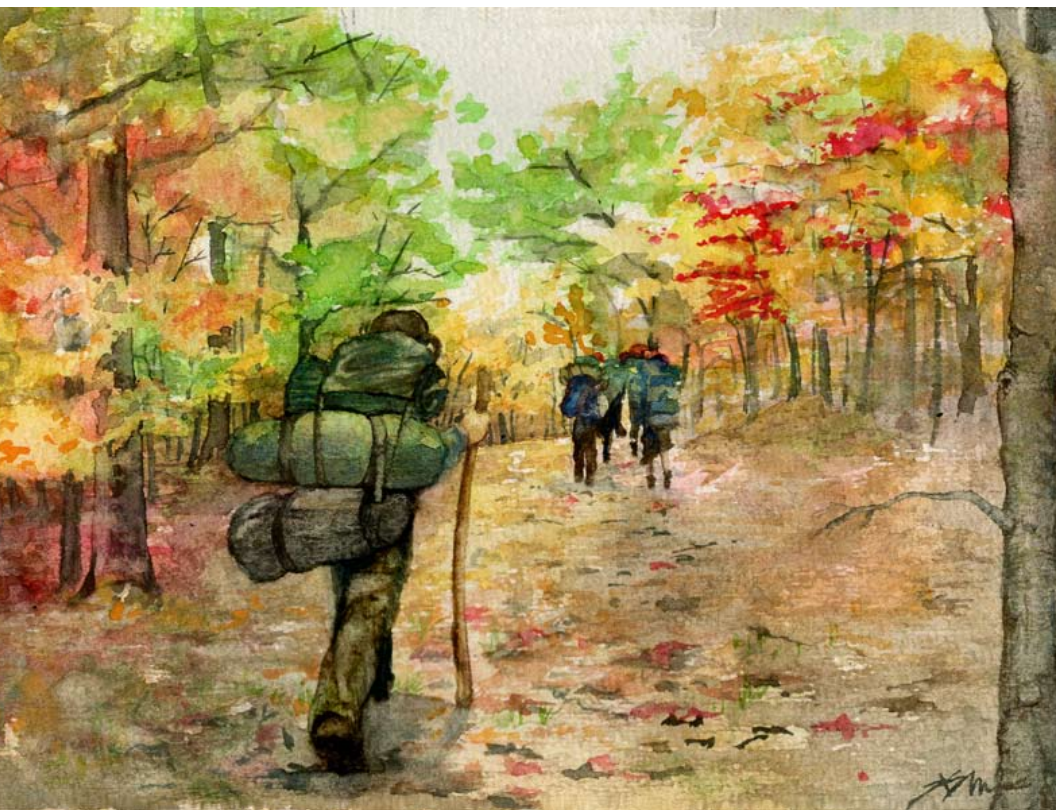




experience
LEARNING

2018 IMPACT REPORT



the power of wild places

Stop what you are doing for a moment. Imagine this place:

Breath-takingly beautiful. Lushly green, wild, and remote; yet safe, warm, and welcoming. At this beautiful place, you might stay for a day, a week, or for months on end. You are supported through mentally and physically demanding situations. Your thoughts and worries are heard and responded to. Your advice and skills are needed. Your imagination is flying by the time you leave. And you CARE.

This place exists. You know it: Spruce Knob Mountain Center. In 2018 Experience Learning programming helped 3,500 kids and adults find the joy in becoming more active members of their communities. Kids spent over 2,000 nights out in the woods with us, firing up their sense of wonder, learning skills, understanding the intricate interconnectedness of the world around us.



We take groups canoeing, climbing wild rocks, and backpacking in all sorts of weather. Our participants learn lots of facts about the watersheds and ecosystems of the Appalachian Highlands. But the most important part, the part we are most passionate about passing on through these activities, is what we call “the fine art of giving a damn.”

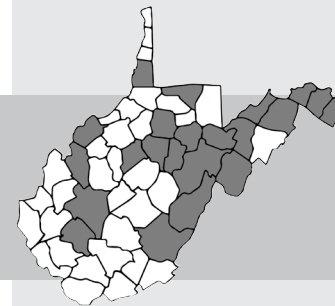
Because when one child, one adult, or one staff member leaves the mountain with a heart full of love for the world and a head full of ideas, curiosity ignited, we have accomplished our mission. And when we can accomplish this day after day, child after child, school after school, we will start to see our communities, our state, our world become the place it needs to be.



IMPACT AND REACH

FIND YOUR VOICE

Our mission is to develop effective community members through beyond-the-classroom, outdoor learning opportunities for children and adults.



We served 22 West Virginia counties in 2018

51 School programs

2,021 Kid-nights camping

35 West Virginia streams analyzed

\$14,100 Camp scholarships awarded

1,400 Community service hours



We worked with schools and kids from New York City to Raleigh, NC, and many places in between.



In Their Own Words...

I liked actually doing the things that we were learning about.

I thought, ‘There’s no way I can do that.’ But together with my friends and teachers - we did! Now I have a whole new attitude towards challenges that may face me: with a positive attitude and the help of my classmates, I can do anything!

I learned how other people live their lives and how to see the world from a different aspect.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Do you believe in the power of wild places?

We believe that these places have the capacity to inspire, engage, and empower us all.

In our programs kids completely disconnect from technology and focus on building connections with the people and world around them.

We believe that these experiences have a ripple effect and can radiate out into families and communities for decades to come.

Your contribution directly supports kids in doing things that are hard. Your support provides them a safe space where they can take on challenges that might feel scary.

Join us today to bring these life-changing experiences to more kids and more communities, more frequently. Because we know that our young people can, and will, be a positive force of change in the world.

Individual donations are essential to the ongoing stability and flexibility of our programs..

We hope you will consider a tax-deductible contribution today.

THE COMMUNITREE PROJECT

Students create their own edible schoolyard in the middle of a food desert

As part of our ongoing project with North Fork Elementary to engage the students in their community, the upper elementary students spent a morning planting 16 fruit trees in their schoolyard. The lower elementary students came out to observe their work and learned their own lessons about the project in the afternoon.

Alongside our staff, Rosey Santerre from the WV Division of Forestry and Connor Roessler of the Cacapon Institute helped the students plant 4 apple, 2 apricot, 4 peach, 2 Asian pear, 2 persimmon, and 2 plum trees. They talked about the different types of trees, the planting process and tools that are used, and they talked with the students about their jobs in the forestry industry.

After planting the trees, the students learned about nutrition specific to fruits and vegetables, the overall health of their schoolyard, and how these things relate to their physical and mental well-being.

John Jenkins, principal at North Fork, was impressed by the lack of discipline issues during the day's activities. All the students were engaged, interested, and excited to be a part of the project. A 6th grade boy asked at the end, "Can we plant more trees?"

Those who planted these trees will be long gone from North Fork Elementary before they bear a crop of fruit but they will always benefit from the experience of planting those trees and the lessons they learned while doing so.



HI-TECH ON SPRUCE KNOB

Colgate University geography students put their knowledge to work on Spruce Knob



Technology is one of those things that isn't typically placed on the front line when developing a mountain learning course. In fact generally we insist teachers and students leave their smartphones at home.

Throughout a week with Colgate University students their physical geography professor Mike Lorranty facilitated lessons in drone mapping and aerial photography.

We used GPS to create waypoints for campsites and trails and at our Sweetwater Farm campus and we installed a Davis Weather Station that can record data. As our organization grows the information that was collected by the Colgate program will provide Spruce Knob Mountain Center with tangible and lasting information.



This trip was part service learning, part outdoor experience, and part cultural immersion. In addition to their GPS work on both of our campuses, the students visited the town of Cass and learned about land use and land cover changes over the years from extractive industries in the area. They studied hydrology in our region by analyzing data from stream gauges on the Cheat River. And they turned their eyes to the skies at the Green Bank Observatory.



TEST. ANALYZE. ENGAGE.

Clarksburg students investigate their drinking water sources

We took students at RC Byrd High School in Clarksburg, WV out to run quality testing on their local drinking water sources. They were surprised at the results and showed up at the next Clarksburg Water Board meeting to see what else goes into managing a small community's water resources.



Participating student Hayleigh Ward said they performed tests on local bodies of water to determine their chemical content.

"We were in three different groups," she explained. "There was chemistry, biology and physical. We looked at the stuff on the outside of the streams, and we tested the pH levels."

Another student, Will Bertnell, said the results of the experiment were surprising. "It's pretty clean," he said. "I didn't know Clarksburg had such good water."

The unit is meant to help students answer a simple question: Where do we get our drinking water from in Clarksburg?

Cindy Bryant, a science teacher at the high school, said the unit teaches students not to take water for granted.

"You need to learn this because that's what you're drinking every day," she said.

as reported by Charles Young from the Exponent Telegram on WVNews.com, April 24, 2018 in article "RCB freshmen attend Clarksburg Water Board meeting Tuesday", used with permission.



The High Camp Society was established in 2017 to create a solid foundation for the future growth of Experience Learning. We are grateful to these charter members of the High Camp Society for their continued support of life-changing experiences through outdoor learning.



Spruce Level
\$5000 and up

King and Jane Seegar	Elizabeth Seegar
Daniel Taylor	Jennifer Taylor-Ide
Nick Ide	Northern Virginia Astronomy Club
Bill Beddow	Brooke Shuman



Maple Level
\$3000 - \$4999

John Eckman and Carole Nash
Marianne Skeen
Joanna Ganning



Beech Level
\$1000 - \$2999

Janet Underwood
Mark, Dare, and Nina Wenzler
Laura Wray
Don Johnson
Ted and Calvert Armbrecht
Rachael Grasso

In-Kind Donation:

Sanjay Suchak for his many hours spent filming and editing this video for Experience Learning:

experience-learning.org/video

Mrs. Angus E. Peyton
Gat and Susan Caperton
Susan Mazuy Martin
Augusta Molnar
Glenn Rehberger

<http://experience-learning.org/hcs>

2018 DONORS THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AT EVERY LEVEL

over \$1000

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Aimee Verdisco
Ryan Walsh
Charles Wernitz

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

J. King B. E. Seegar III, MD (*Board Chair, Medical Director, Pendleton Community Care Clinics (PCC), Franklin WV*) is one of the founders, and the first board chair. He has spent 32 years as a pediatrician at PCC, a non-profit clinic started and spun off by Woodlands in 1983, carrying on our legacy of community learning and service. Coming full circle, he is returning to work on our board in support of Experience Learning.

Jennifer Taylor-Ide (*Board Secretary, Behavioral Health Counselor, PCC School-based Health Clinics, Franklin WV*) is another of the founders, returning to transition Experience Learning to independence. She developed many of Woodlands/TMI's beyond-the-classroom programs and philosophies, headed up our professional development projects, and worked for many years with the school programs.

Daniel Taylor (*Board Treasurer, President, Future Generations University, Franklin WV*) another of the founders, developed Woodlands' international programs, still ongoing at The Mountain Institute in Washington DC. He has authored half-a-dozen books sharing his insights from four decades of working for social change and conservation. He went on to develop the eight Future Generations organizations worldwide, including the accredited Future Generations University.

Brian Kain (*Wildlife Manager, Potomac Wildlife Management Area, WV Division of Natural Resources, Franklin WV*) is based in Pendleton County, and his service area includes Tucker, Randolph and Grant counties. He served on the board for Mountain Springs Heritage Farm, working and living there as well, and brings his experience with that land to its new purpose as Experience Learning's agricultural center, Sweetwater Farm.

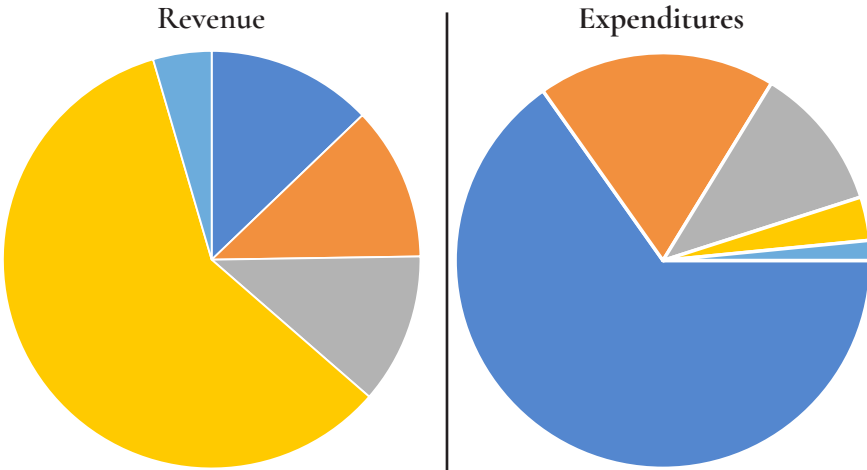
Erin Casto Chrest (*Director of Major & Planned Giving, Maryland Public Television, Baltimore MD*) is a West Virginia native who is dedicated to helping

non-profit organizations secure the philanthropic resources they need to achieve ambitious goals. Erin participated in TMI's WV Scholars' Academy as a high school student, sparking a deep love for our mountains and a passion for wilderness-based education and leadership training. An alumna of Wheeling Jesuit University, she earned her Masters in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University.

Dave Martin, managing director, and Brian Kain, board member, share a quiet moment with their babies at Spruce Knob Mountain Center.



INCOMING AND OUTGOING CITIZEN SCIENCE IN A TASTY PIE CHART



State Grants	\$91,195	Personnel	\$496,570
Foundation Grants/Donations	\$84,608	Program Implementation	\$141,193
Individual Donations	\$82,659	Facilities	\$86,208
Tuition and Fees	\$419,568	Communications	\$25,790
Other	\$32,166	Professional Fees	\$11,840
TOTAL REVENUE: \$710,196		TOTAL EXPENSES: \$761,601 *	

* The difference in revenue and expenditures is a result of investment in programming. Similar to a start-up we are investing heavily in programs to help us meet our mission and serve a broader audience. We honor transparency in all that we do.

to view full financial reports visit experience-learning.org/2018

Plant a Tree Today: Join the High Camp Society



As the proverb says, the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is today. Let's do both.

We put down roots on Spruce Knob 45 years ago as Woodlands and Whitewater Institute and you are the forest of participants, employees, founders, and friends who have grown up around us. Help us keep the forest healthy and strong for our children and grandchildren.

Contact Vicki Fenwick-Judy at 304.637.6644 or vfenwick@experience-learning.org to join the High Camp Society today.



We envision a world where individuals have the competency and confidence to bring positive change in their own lives, the lives of others, their communities, and the world around them.



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18 Woodlands Way
Circleville, WV 26804
304.567.2632

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