



volunteer
WEST VIRGINIA



VOLUNTEERS CLIMB MOUNTAINS

2021 Annual Report





2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Granted over \$3 million dollars to support AmeriCorps programs and volunteer programs.

Awarded over \$2 million dollars in AmeriCorps Education Awards.

Volunteer West Virginia's programming reached 53 counties.

In 2021, for every state dollar invested in Volunteer West Virginia, the state received an additional \$20.35 from federal, local, and private sources.

CONTENTS

Welcome PG 1

What We Do PG 2

A Message From The Board Chair PG 3

Volunteer Recognition Mini Grants PG 4

AmeriCorps PG 7

AmeriCorps Member Spotlights PG 13

Disaster Services PG 15

Community Emergency Response Teams PG 17

Special Mentions PG 19

Grants PG 21



WELCOME

We began 2021 in the winter of a global pandemic long after we had hoped that things would return to normal. Despite the continued challenges, I am so thankful to be a part of Volunteer West Virginia. Volunteer West Virginia staff, commissioners, volunteers, and partners continued to get things done for the mountain state.

This past year we focused on making it easier for West Virginians to volunteer. We worked with a committee of volunteers to create a new Rural Volunteer Management Curriculum, made mini-grants available to recognize volunteers, and received new funding to provide volunteer program capacity building support to small organizations across the state. It was truly a team effort by so many to get these things accomplished. I am overwhelmed by the perseverance of West Virginians in the face of huge challenges to come together and support their communities.

I am looking forward to 2022 and seeing new AmeriCorps programs begin, new training opportunities and funding opportunities made available to organizations and seeing what amazing work our network of partners accomplishes. We are so happy we will be returning to recognizing volunteers in person at the Governor's Service Awards in June of 2022. It certainly feels like we have been scaling a mountain, but the view from up here is exciting!

Thank you for being a part of our network and our work.



Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hawley Carlson". The signature is written on a white background with a vertical line to the right.

Hawley Carlson, Executive Director



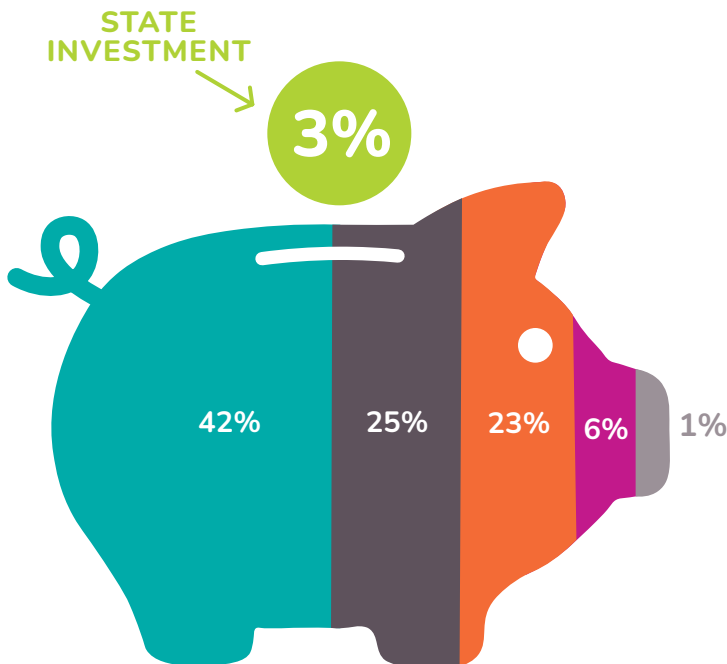
WHAT WE DO

- 1 Make it easier for West Virginians to volunteer.
- 2 Provide funding and support to AmeriCorps programs.
- 3 Support and strengthen West Virginia's nonprofits and volunteer programs.

OUR PROGRAMS



2021 FUNDING SOURCES



State Lottery Funds: 3%
\$374,980

Federal Grants to Communities: 42%
\$ 3,954,485

Cash Match: 25%
\$ 2,350,271

Education Awards: 23%
\$2,155,557

Federal Support Funds: 6%
\$595,370

Homeland Security Funds: 1%
\$70,000

Total 2021 Funding
\$9,500,664

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends of Volunteer WV,

As we navigate through this terrible plague of COVID, I want to take this opportunity to recognize the Volunteer WV network for outstanding efforts to ensure that West Virginia communities receive the benefits of volunteerism. No mountain is too high to climb when neighbors, friends and family come together to meet the challenges that arise in times of need.

This annual report will provide evidence that volunteering in our wonderful state is a tremendous asset that benefits those in need. Volunteer WV provides many opportunities for those who desire to help others and support the beauty and culture of West Virginia.

On behalf of the commission, I want to say thank you to the dedicated staff who work tirelessly to oversee these volunteer efforts and keep Volunteer WV in compliance with funding requirements. We are proud of your efforts and achievements.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dwight Coburn".

Dwight Coburn, Board Chair



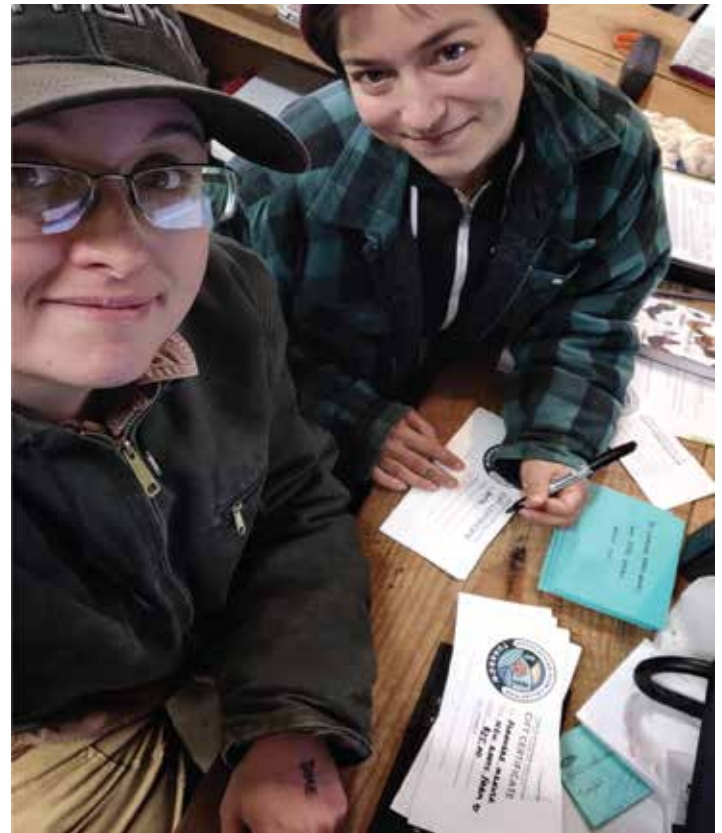
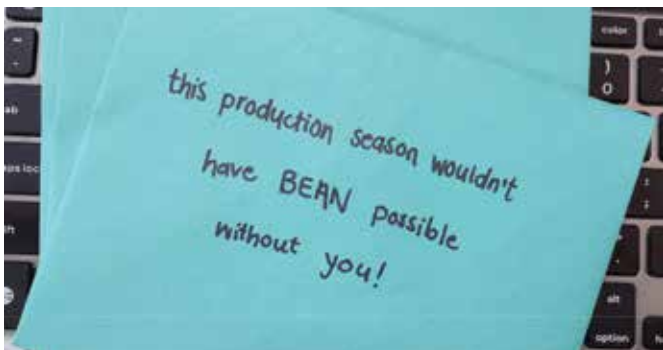
VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION MINI GRANTS



To thank volunteers who have continued to serve during COVID-19, Volunteer West Virginia developed a Volunteer Recognition Mini Grant program. Organizations were eligible to receive up to \$500 to host a volunteer recognition project. The response to the mini grant program was overwhelming. In total, Volunteer West Virginia granted \$25,575 to host 62 volunteer recognition projects throughout the state. Over 3,600 volunteers were recognized through this project.



Violet Schmalzer thanks volunteers at West Virginia Interscholastic Cycling League's last race of the season at Twin Falls State Park.



Natasha Keating and Skye Dexter, AmeriCorps members at New Roots Community Farm in Fayetteville, cook a homegrown dinner and give their volunteers gift certificates to Turnrow Appalachian Farm Collective to thank them for a successful growing season.

Lily Staley presents Ross Owens with a volunteer appreciation gift during On Eagles' Wings Therapeutic Horsemanship's Volunteer Appreciation Week. Patrick, the horse, is very interested in Ross' gift.



Eddie Greathouse receives a volunteer appreciation gift from The Calhoun County Family Resource Network for being a faithful food pantry volunteer.



WVU Monongalia County 4-H thanks their volunteers with an evening of guided painting at The Wow! Factory in Morgantown.



Volunteers from the Cockayne Farmstead in Glen Dale travel to Henderson Hall as part of a Marshall County Historical Society Volunteer Recognition Field Trip.





Bethlehem Farm thanks their dedicated volunteers for keeping their low-income home repair program going strong throughout the challenges of the pandemic.



Greg Savilla enjoys Charleston Sled Hockey's first ever volunteer recognition celebration. During the event, volunteers watched a special thank you video from the program's participants and received an appreciation gift. Charleston Sled Hockey offers adaptive ice hockey or "sled" hockey to youth and adults who are unable to skate in a standing position due to a physical disability.



AmeriCorps VISTA members from the West Virginia Community Development Hub meet virtually to celebrate their accomplishments from the past year. Each member received a surprise care package that included AmeriCorps gear and their favorite candy.



Mountaineer Area Rescue Group thanks their volunteers, and K9 search and rescue dogs, by surprising them with an embroidered beanie with the team's logo. The team will use the bright orange hats when searching for missing people in the winter.

AMERICORPS



AmeriCorps
West Virginia

BENEFITS

Monthly living stipend

Education Award for College or Student Loans

Health Insurance

Student Loan Forbearance

Career Experience

Each year, more than 350 AmeriCorps members serve throughout the state in programs funded by Volunteer West Virginia. These members serve in their hometowns, while others come from across the country to make West Virginia their home for a year.

Likened to the domestic Peace Corps, AmeriCorps members serve throughout the state at nonprofits, schools, and public agencies. AmeriCorps members mentor youth, preserve historic properties, grow local food, assist with high school credit recovery, diabetes prevention, and more.



WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE
THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH





AMERICORPS PLEDGE

AmeriCorps members take the following pledge:

I will get things done for America -

to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier.

I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities.

Faced with apathy, I will take action.

Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground.

Faced with adversity, I will persevere.

I will carry this commitment with me this year and beyond.

I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.



Samuel Dudgeon and Kamryn Grubb, West Virginia's Promise Summer Associate VISTAs, teach intergenerational gardening at the McDowell County Commission on Aging.



Philip Spurlock, a LifeBridge AmeriCorps member, assembles dinners for the homeless during COVID-19. Philip was able to get the food donated and drove around Charleston delivering meals to the homeless.



AmeriCorps members and program staff enjoy the 2021 AmeriCorps Conference. The four-day conference, hosted by Volunteer West Virginia, was held virtually this year. Over 260 AmeriCorps members, program staff, and alumni attended the training and Swearing-In Ceremony.



West Virginia's Promise Director Pam Mellott and VISTA Leader Morgan Weister visit AmeriCorps VISTA Ashley McElwee at Pollen 8 in South Charleston.



AmeriCorps members with the Education Alliance help with a trash cleanup in Monongalia County for their spring service project.



AmeriCorps Mentor Brooke Johnson and AmeriCorps VISTA Dale Bowyer work together to support at-risk students at Williamstown Elementary School in Wood County.

2021

AMERICORPS ACCOMPLISHMENTS



421,000

healthy meals provided.



40,300

children served.



14,500

volunteers recruited and managed.



9,200

Veterans and military family members served.



440

acres of public lands supported.



126

individuals received opioid and
drug intervention services.



40

historic properties restored.



Appalachian Forest National Heritage AmeriCorps members Dayla Woller and Morgan Glup help plant over 1000 Red Spruce trees in Kumbrabow State Forest.



Preserve WV AmeriCorps members, staff, and local volunteers help to preserve the historic Oak Grove Cemetery in Morgantown.

AMERICORPS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Mindy Robinson, LifeBridge AmeriCorps

"How can I help?" This question has shaped Mindy Robinson's life since she was a child. It's something she asks herself several times a day. It's how she ended up in AmeriCorps.

Mindy grew up one of five children in Buckhannon. She was a child of divorce, and her mom worked mostly under the table jobs, living on very little. She found that growing up in poverty made her empathetic and willing to help those in need.

As a fifteen-year-old high school student, Mindy joined the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership (HOBY) program. The flame ignited in her by HOBY still burns strong, so when Mindy's ex mother-in-law showed up at her house to pick up her grandkids with a proposition for Mindy to join AmeriCorps, she knew she had to pursue it. What she didn't know was how much it would change her life.

Mindy interviewed with LifeBridge AmeriCorps and was selected to serve; the rest is history, and she wouldn't trade it for the world. Mindy serves as the Financial Literacy Coordinator at Central West Virginia Community Action in Clarksburg. The mission of her program is to provide financial independence for all families as a stepping stone away from poverty.

Mindy spends the majority of her time preparing tax returns and doing intakes for those in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. The rest of the year she presents workshops and classes on financial literacy, including budgeting and couponing.

As she completes her fourth year of AmeriCorps service, Mindy knows AmeriCorps has guided her to where she is. In December, Mindy will be graduating from Marshall University with a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and Psychology. She recently purchased her first home, which just so happens to be right across the street from her twin sister.

Wherever the future takes her, Mindy knows AmeriCorps has changed her life and she plans to continue to serve her community. She urges you to ask: How can I help? Maybe you will end up igniting a flame of your own.



Kaitlyn Deskins, Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area

Endings are often not what we expect – graduations, retirement, the end of your favorite show. These endings are supposed to be joyful, but often they just beg the question, what happens next? This is the position Kaitlyn Deskins found herself in one year ago after graduating college with a degree in Geology from the University of Southern Indiana.

Kaitlyn grew up on 13 acres of land in Indiana. She was an only child living with her mom, dad, and a bunch of cats and dogs. During Kaitlyn's senior year of high school, her mom was diagnosed with stage four ovarian cancer. Despite the adversity of her senior year, Kaitlyn carried on and attended college as a first-generation student.

Four years later it was 2020, her mom was cancer free, and Kaitlyn had a college degree in Geology, and she didn't know what was going to come next. She and her friends applied for various entry-level positions. She struggled to find something she wanted to commit to. When she found AmeriCorps, it felt like the right place for her to be, so she applied.

Kaitlyn received an AmeriCorps position with the Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area (AFHNA) and was placed at the West Virginia Division of Forestry in Elkins. Throughout her service, Kaitlyn helped to build trails, lead tours, and teach adults and children about West Virginia's forests.

While attending a meeting as an AmeriCorps member, she met a professor from West Virginia University. He shared an opportunity with her: a graduate research position. Through the program Kaitlyn could receive a stipend and a scholarship to earn a Master's Degree in Forestry. Not one to say no, Kaitlyn jumped at the opportunity. In the fall, she moved to Morgantown to pursue a Master's Degree; an opportunity she would have never known about had she not joined AmeriCorps.

During her time here, Kaitlyn has grown to love West Virginia. After she gets her degree, she hopes to stay in West Virginia and work for the West Virginia Division of Forestry.

Endings are hard. But they are how we grow, learn, and find our passions. Kaitlyn is an example of how following your gut can turn an ending into a new beginning and even provide an opportunity to lend a hand along the way.



DISASTER SERVICES



How We Help:

- Support Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT).
- Promote disaster preparedness through Ready WV.
- Mobilize AmeriCorps members to help respond to disasters.
- Partner with response agencies to engage volunteers in disaster response and recovery.



As communities started to reopen from COVID-19, local emergency preparedness outreach begins to resume. Volunteer West Virginia provides Ready WV preparedness materials to local emergency response and volunteer organizations to help with these efforts.



AmeriCorps NCCC teams Delta 1 and River 5 deploy from Mississippi to help with COVID-19 vaccination clinics in West Virginia. They assisted over 21,000 vaccination clients, providing 2,800 volunteer hours.





COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program trains volunteers in basic disaster response skills, such as first aid, search and rescue, and disaster preparedness.

In 2021 CERT Volunteers

- Invested over 3,500 hours in their communities participating in emergency preparedness trainings, drills, outreach, and disaster response.
- Served 2,064 hours responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Helped to vaccinate and test over 135,000 people for COVID-19.
- Supported several local blood drives, assisting with sanitization, the canteen, and patient monitoring.
- Responded to local weather-related events.

West Virginia CERT Programs

Beckley CERT
Clay County CERT
Dunbar CERT
Hardy County CERT
Mason County CERT
Mercer County CERT (New)
Mid-Ohio Valley Regional CERT (Wood Co.)
Monongalia County Health Department CERT
Pendleton County CERT
Pleasants County CERT
Tucker County CERT
Tyler County Search & Rescue
Upshur County CERT


Beckley CERT participates in the 2021 Vigilant Guard disaster response exercise. The four-day exercise tests the state's disaster and emergency response capabilities.



Beckley, Monongalia, and Clay County CERT programs assist at local Covid-19 vaccination clinics.



After waiting over a year due to COVID-19, Clay County CERT delivers their first ever Basic CERT Training.



Clay County CERT, WV
Basic Training - Class of 2021



Amanda Douglas, Shawna Taylor, Aiden Taylor, Elizabeth Gallagher, Terri Smith, Misty Westfall (L-R)





SPECIAL MENTIONS

Staff

Hawley Carlson, Executive Director
 Krista Bradshaw, Finance and Operations Director
 Dana Bryant, Outreach Officer
 Christina Cochran, AmeriCorps Training Officer
 Gina Namay, Disaster Services & Planning Lead
 Shelia McEntee, AmeriCorps Assistant
 Pam Mellott, West Virginia's Promise Director
 Chloe Sockman, West Virginia Governor's Intern
 Hannah Stone, AmeriCorps Program Director
 MacKenzie Thaxton, West Virginia Governor's Intern
 Pamela Watts, Office Manager

Commissioners

Susan Aloï, Buckhannon
 Dwight Coburn, Chair, Huntington
 Leslie Baker, Beckley
 April Elkins-Badtke, Surveyor
 Quinten Burton, Charleston
 Angela Beblo, Charleston
 Mercedes Jones Castle, Scott Depot
 Monica DellaMea, Charleston
 Kim Good, Charleston
 Michael Hooper, Wheeling
 Blake Humphrey, Morgantown
 Julia Keehner, Buckhannon
 Philip Keith, Buckhannon
 Erica Mani, Charleston
 Susie Nelson, Wheeling
 Margaret Ann O'Neal, Charleston
 Gregg Puckett, Princeton
 Paul Smith, Wheeling
 Benjamin Stoltenberg, Philadelphia
 Jane Tabb, Kearneysville
 Brett White, Fairmont



AmeriCorps Advisory Team Members

Dale Bowyer, Education Alliance
 Kaitlyn Deskins, Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area
 Ethan Godby, Step by Step
 Michelle Lilly, Education Alliance
 Tammy McClanahan, LifeBridge AmeriCorps
 Mindy Robinson, LifeBridge AmeriCorps
 Caleb Rusk, Education Alliance
 Maya Mier-Thomas, West Virginia Community Development HUB
 Kalee Paxton, Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area
 Alisha Tolliver, Education Alliance
 Josh Wanstreet, Preservation Alliance of West Virginia
 Cheryl Workman, High Rocks

Volunteers

Diane Callison
 Sam Calvert
 Deborah Butler-Case
 Gregory Chase
 Dena Cushman
 John Kee
 Courtney Hill
 Erin Hurst
 Jennifer Johnson
 Tony Michael
 Johanna Murray
 Jordan Pruett
 Erin Ellis-Reid
 Callie Cronin-Sams
 Doris Selko
 Jeannie Smith
 Erin Susman
 Jennifer Waggener

GRANTS

AmeriCorps State and National

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area
Statewide, \$381,280

Grow Ohio Valley
Wheeling, \$209,457

High Rocks Educational Corporation
Statewide, \$668,894

Preservation Alliance of West Virginia
Statewide, \$262,091

The Education Alliance
Statewide, \$247,468

United Way of Central West Virginia - LifeBridge
Statewide, \$702,447

West Virginia University Research Corporation - Energy Express
Statewide, \$364,937

Washington Co. Commissioners - Appalachia HealthCorps
Statewide, \$148,420

Step By Step - StrengthCorps
Statewide, \$145,930



AmeriCorps VISTA

West Virginia's Promise
Statewide, \$19,000

Volunteer Recognition Mini Grants

Beckley CERT
\$500, Beckley

Bethlehem Farm
\$500, Talcott

Bridgeport Police Department
\$500, Bridgeport



Cacapon Institute
\$500, Great Cacapon

Calhoun Family Resource Network
\$150, Grantsville

Camp Virgil Tate
\$140, Charleston

Carnegie Hall Inc.
\$500, Lewisburg

CASA For Kids of Monongalia and Preston Counties
\$300, Morgantown

Catholic Charities Neighborhood Center
\$500, Wheeling

Charleston Sled Hockey
\$500, Charleston

Children's Home Society of WV, Logan We Can Program
\$400, Logan

Children's Home Society of WV, Princeton We Can Program
\$400, Princeton

Clay County Family Resource Network
\$500, Clay

Cockayne Farmstead
\$500, Glen Dale

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance WV
\$500, Statewide

Doddridge County Humane Society
\$100, Salem

Elk River Trail Foundation
\$500, Elkview

Elkins Depot Welcome Center
\$500, Elkins



Faith in Action of the River Cities
\$465, Huntington

Forks of Coal State Natural Area
\$250, South Charleston

Gabriel Project of WV
\$500, Charleston

Good Samaritan Free Clinic
\$475, Martinsburg

Good Shepherd Caregivers
\$500, Shepherdstown

Harmony for Hope
\$500, Mt. Hope

Heart and Hand
\$350, South Charleston

Heart And Hand House Inc.
\$500, Philippi

Lewis County Chamber of Commerce
\$500, Weston

Lincoln County Community Outreach Program
\$100, Branchland

Meadow River Valley
\$400, Rainelle

Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department
\$500, Parkersburg

Morgantown Area Meals on Wheels
\$400, Morgantown

Mountaineer Area Rescue Group
\$500, Morgantown

New Roots Community Farm
\$400, Fayetteville



Ohio County 4-H Teen Leaders Association

\$500, Wheeling

Ohio Valley Virtual Lions Club

\$500, Wheeling

On Eagles' Wings

\$500, Fairmont

Operation Underdog

\$400, Beckley

Parkersburg Art Center

\$100, Parkersburg

Preston County Caring Council Inc.

\$500, Kingwood

Putnam County 4-H

\$400, Eleanor

Ranson Community Gardens

\$375, Ranson

Regional Family Resource Network

\$400, Elkview

Shepherdstown Commission

\$400, Shepherdstown

Sundale Long Term Care and Rehab

\$500, Morgantown

Taylor County Historical Society

\$300, Grafton

The Education Alliance

\$500, Statewide

The Lighthouse Child Advocacy Center

\$400, New Martinsville

The Pantry Plus More, Inc.

\$500, Morgantown



The River House Arts and Music Community
\$500, Capon Bridge

The Shack Neighborhood House
\$500, Morgantown

Tri-State Literacy Council
\$300, Huntington

Wayne County 4-H
\$420, Wayne

West Virginia Black Heritage Festival Inc.
Kelly Miller Community Center
\$500, Clarksburg

West Virginia Horse Network
\$400, Elkview

West Virginia Interscholastic Cycling League
\$400, Cairo

WVU Monongalia County 4-H
\$500, Morgantown

Wetzel - Tyler Chamber of Commerce
\$500, New Martinsville

Wind Dance Farm & Earth Education Center
\$200, Berkeley Springs

Wood County Society
\$500, Parkersburg

WV Patch - Spencer Office
\$500, Spencer


Wyoming East High School Friends of the Earth
\$400, New Richmond



The best view comes
after the hardest climb.



AmeriCorps NCCC team Bayou 1 enjoys the view from Seneca Rocks. The team traveled from Mississippi to Tucker County to help restore trails, install signage, and plant native species with Friends of Blackwater and West Virginia Land Trust.

The background features a light blue sky with two white, stylized clouds. Below the sky is a green landscape with rolling hills, separated by white, wavy lines. A teal-colored path or stream flows through the bottom right of the hills.

Mission Statement: Volunteer West Virginia, the State's Commission for National and Community Service, challenges West Virginians to strengthen their communities through volunteerism and service. We identify and mobilize resources, promote an ethic of service, and empower communities to solve problems and improve the quality of life for individuals and families.

v♥lunteer
WEST VIRGINIA

<https://volunteer.wv.gov/>
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