

JHC REPORT • VOLUME 3

CONNECTING FOR EXCELLENCE

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY JUNE HARLESS CENTER FOR RURAL EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT



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The growing impact of the Marshall University June Harless Center has been an exciting journey. The thriving partnerships that have been forged over the years have enabled our staff to grow professionally and in number. The privilege of being an educational outreach for the College of Education and Professional Development is an opportunity that our entire staff is committed to, passionate about and one we sincerely appreciate.

~ Dr. Stan Maynard



JUNE HARLESS CENTER

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▲ The leadership of Marshall University, former Interim President Gary White and current (37th) President Jerome A "Jerry" Gilbert, meet with the youngest Marshall students at the MU Early Education STEM Center managed by the June Harless Center

Message from the Director



Dr. Stan Maynard
Executive Director

The mission of the June Harless Center from its inception has been to provide leadership in educational initiatives for West Virginia educators and students. Over the years partnerships have been forged with counties in West Virginia in order to embed research based best practices in the teaching and learning components of schools and school systems.

County and school partnerships have been purposefully established to focus on benefits for teachers, administrators and students. The goal of the work is ultimately higher student achievement as a direct result of highly effective teachers and highly motivated and engaged students in relevant and rigorous assignments

Recent work with preschool and kindergarten teachers in Logan County included scheduled professional development sessions, a book study, and on-site visits to the Marshall University STEM center preschool classrooms on the Huntington campus and at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center in Gilbert, West Virginia.

The partnership with Beverly Elementary in Randolph County has been in place for several years and has included a study of positive school culture, horizontal

and vertical teaming, best practices, mathematics, The Project Approach, and a book study of *An Ethic of Excellence* by Ron Berger. The most recent work has been an introduction to place-based experiential learning and the development of an outdoor classroom including a high tunnel greenhouse.

A partnership among Cabell County, the Harless Center, and the EL Network has paved the way for the Explorer Academy, which opened in the fall, 2015. The new school site will open fall, 2016. The administrators and staff have regular professional development opportunities to refine their skills in utilizing the EL best practices and classroom strategies. Several West Virginia educators and students have visited the school to review the progress of the implementation of EL Education.

Another partnership with Cabell County Schools and the Save the Children organization has been the provision of graduate assistants to support the very successful Spring Hill Elementary After-School Program. The graduate assistants serve as reading tutors for first graders.

A partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education Office of Early Learning has resulted in a significant grant of \$500,000, which has enabled the Harless Center to expand its staff to include Early Literacy Specialists. The Specialists serve and support every county in West Virginia as they progress in the WV Leaders of Literacy: Campaign for Grade Level Reading. Their role is to work with educators, as well as county campaign leaders, families and community partners to help transform schools and communities into highly engaging literacy learning environments focused on high-quality instruction, school readiness, attendance, and extended learning.

The June Harless staff takes every opportunity to submit proposals for programmatic funding. Among the successful proposals have been the

Improving Teacher Quality Grants from the Higher Education Policy Commission. One successful grant entitled Designing Quality Mathematics Lessons was awarded in 2015 for \$69,019 to provide professional development in mathematics for elementary teachers in grades K – 3 in Cabell, Lincoln, and Mason Counties. In 2016, Building Mathematical Understanding in Grades 3 – 5 was funded as an extension to the previous grant. This proposal was awarded \$81,288 to provide professional development in mathematics for grades 3 -5. Fix the LEAKS, another ITQ proposal for \$73,293, utilizes kit-based science to integrate science, mathematics, and literacy instruction in Mason County. The Harless Center was awarded two grants from the Whole Kids Foundation, each for \$2,000. One of the grants supports the building of a high tunnel at Beverly Elementary. The other grant provides funding for a raised bed garden and EarthBox Container Gardening System at the Explorer Academy for the Pre-K and kindergarten classrooms. The Harless Staff wrote a proposal to develop an Apiary Project at the Explorer Academy. This \$5,000 proposal was funded by the Lowes Foundation. The Harless Staff received funding from a \$15,000 Sprout Grant to develop the outdoor space at the preschool in Gilbert, WV. Most recently, \$3,000 was awarded to the Harless Center through a STEM Initiative Mini Grant sponsored by the WV Department of Education and the Arts to develop a program using littleBits technology. Another significant grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation for \$121,000 will support an outdoor learning incubator project. The project includes professional development for area teachers focused on enhancing their lesson plans with effective strategies, techniques and tools to be used in an outdoor classroom at each school site. These recent funding opportunities totaled \$871,600 for developing educational programs in southern West Virginia.

Explorer Academy: The Journey Continues

“There is more in us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps, for the rest of our lives we will be unwilling to settle for less.”

~ Kurt Hahn

The journey to establish The Explorer Academy within Cabell County, West Virginia, evolved from discussions between Dr. Stan Maynard, Executive Director of the Marshall University Harless Center, and Mr. Bill Smith, Superintendent of Cabell County Schools, regarding the educational beliefs touted by Ron Berger in his book, *An Ethic of Excellence*. From his perspective as a teacher, Mr. Berger conveys in his book the high standards he holds for both his students and himself. He writes of teaching as a craft and his requirement that his students produce beautiful, powerful, important work. He argues for a paradigm shift- a school wide embrace of an “ethic of excellence.”

These discussions led to observations of EL schools by Cabell County and Harless Center educators, visits by Ron Berger to speak with school system personnel about his philosophy as well as a thorough review of the research related to the achievement results of students who attend EL schools. These activities led to the decision to adopt the EL Education philosophy and methodology as the framework for the proposed Incubator School and solidified the partnership between Cabell County Schools and the Marshall University Harless Center.



EL staff then traveled to the school district to verify the commitment and capacity of both Incubator School partners to comprehensively implement the design principles and core practices of EL Education with fidelity. EL Education personnel left enthusiastic about the partnership between Cabell County Schools and the Marshall University Harless Center and agreed to accept the Incubator School into its nation-wide network of EL schools.

Based on the design principles and core practices of EL Education, Explorer Academy as the Incubator School, in effect, provides a three dimensional model for comprehensive school improvement. Both research-based and

data driven, the approach to teaching and learning is different at the Incubator School where learning is active, challenging, meaningful, public and collaborative. Curriculum, instruction, assessment, school culture, and shared leadership blend to produce hands-on, relevant learning experiences that lead to high quality student work. At EL schools, students are required to revise their work until they meet pre-established high quality standards set forth in rubric form. Multiple revisions occur as the result of self-critique, peer review and community panel appraisal. As a result, students, staff, parents and community members hold high expectations for all student work. Character development at the Explorer

Explorer Academy Apiary Funded by Lowes “Toolbox for Education” Grant

There is a lot of buzz being generated about the apiary being designed for Cabell County’s EL Education school, Explorer Academy. The apiary, home to different types of bee hives, is funded by a Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grant written by the June Harless Center staff as a result of the Center’s position as an agent for community support for the Academy. The apiary will be one of several outdoor learning spaces included on the campus of Explorer Academy. It serve as a place where students may complete fieldwork, investigating the interactions between pollinators and the plant life on the grounds of the school.

This project reinforces the core beliefs of EL Schools including the importance of craftsmanship and learning from experts. Experienced beekeepers in the community will assist Explorer students in their research of the craftsmanship of the bees as honey is made and in the craftsmanship of the beekeepers as they tend to the hives. Different types of hives, as well as variance in native flowering and vegetable producing plants in the school gardens, will result in opportunities for investigative research.

students in grades Pre-K through grade 12 can participate in learning environments that are active, real-world, authentic, adventurous and exciting. Explorer Academy’s teachers, students and parents are dedicated to empowering students to reach the highest standards of academic achievement, character, and service to the community by igniting each student’s motivation, engagement, persistence and compassion. At the Explorer Academy students take responsibility for their learning. They are “crew” not passengers.

Working as additional “crew” members with Explorer Academy administration and staff, are the June Harless Center staff members providing community support for this innovative teaching and learning model. The community support role played by the Harless Center has taken many different forms during this first year of Explorer Academy operation. Contacts have been made with Marshall University faculty and area businesses so that Explorer students have field experts to advise and critique the work of their student expeditions. Grant proposals have been written by Harless staff members to support projects that align with the mission and vision of Explorer Academy. Connections with community agencies have been established on behalf of Explorer teachers to assist in the coordination of community service opportunities for projects. In addition, Harless staff members have coordinated some of the first visits of educators who are dedicated to the pursuit of the educational philosophy and practices encapsulated in this statement by EL Education specialist Steven Levy that proposes to create “crystalizing experiences that connect a child to something that engages curiosity and stimulates further exploration.”

Academy is just as important as the academic development of its students. The culture of the school, established through structures and traditions such as crew, community meetings, service learning and exhibitions of student work, is based on mutual respect, responsibility, courage and kindness. Students are positioned to transcend self or societal imposed barriers in order to acquire the knowledge and character traits they need to succeed and become connected, caring and contributing members of the local and global community.

Using national, state and local partnerships, Explorer Academy desires to encourage the replication of EL’s well-researched, innovative practices so more



Garden Grant Plants Seeds of Learning at Explorer Academy



“Why try to explain miracles to your kids when you can just have them plant a garden.”

~ Robert Brault

The Pre-K and Kindergarten students at Explorer Academy in Cabell County will be planting and harvesting miracles this upcoming school year. The June Harless Center was awarded a Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant to provide enrichment to their learning environments.

The students' learning will take place inside and outside the school building through hands on gardening exploration. This grant enhances these learning experiences and provides the Pre-K and Kindergarten students with

an extensive array of opportunities. The gardens will consist of raised beds located in the Pre-K and Kindergarten outdoor environments and EarthBox Container Gardening Systems in each classroom.

The students will collaborate with teachers, families, and the community to bring holistic and authentic experiences to life. Through the Whole Kids Foundation Garden Grant, the Pre-K and Kindergarten students at Explorer Academy will nurture and reap their own miracles.

Summer Camps

SUMMER TIME IS CAMP TIME AT THE JUNE HARLESS CENTER

Summer is a busy time for the June Harless Center. More than 100 children attended camps last summer sponsored by the Center. Arts and Bots camps were offered on the campus of Marshall University, at the Huntington Museum of Art, and at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center in Gilbert, WV. The Arts and Bots program is a venue for students to design, build, decorate, and animate a robot, thus moving students toward technological creativity and fluency. Additionally, Transition camps for children entering Pre-K and kindergarten were offered at 2 elementary schools in Cabell County, WV and at the Marshall University Early Education STEM Center on the Marshall campus. Transition camps prepare children and parents for the transition into pre-school and kindergarten while Pre-K and kindergarten teachers collaborate to refine best practices in early childhood.

ARTS AND BOTS CAMPS HELD AT MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Two Arts and Bots camps were held on the campus of Marshall University. The theme for the camps were Exploring S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology,

Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics). Children from third to eighth grades were engaged using innovative computer technology and creative robotics while integrating the arts. Children spent 4 days designing and building a robot. On the last day parents were invited for a showcase featuring all of the robots built during the camp.

ARTS AND BOTS AT THE LARRY JOE HARLESS COMMUNITY CENTER

Last summer the June Harless Center hosted the second annual Camp Create at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center. Camp Create was held in memory of James H. 'Buck' Harless. Forty children ages 7 – 10 participated in the 4 day camp. The camp theme was Arts and Bots: Jurassic World. Each child created his/her own dinosaur robot which was displayed at the community center. A showcase of the creative robots was held for the families and community.

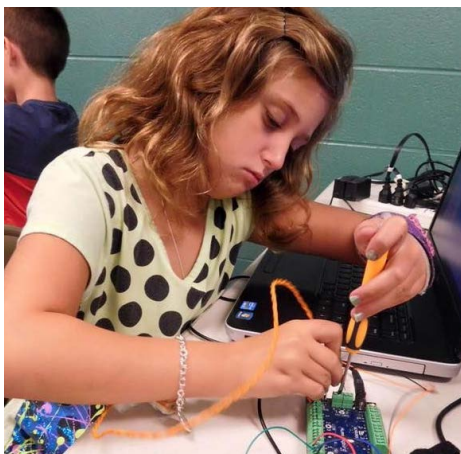
ARTS AND BOTS AT THE HUNTINGTON MUSEUM OF ARTS

The June Harless Center collaborates with the Huntington Museum of Arts to host camps for children in third through sixth grades. Campers design and construct robots in the afternoons using the Arts and Bots program.



TRANSITION CAMPS HELD AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN CABELL COUNTY

Transition camps were developed to create a seamless model of transition from preschool to kindergarten for children, parents, and teachers. Funding for the camps was made possible over the past 3 years through a grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. Last summer, 50 children participated in the camps at Guyandotte Elementary, Davis Creek Elementary, and at the Marshall University STEM Center. These camps provide training that supports collaborations between teachers, families, children and administrators.



Heritage Farm Partnership to Create an Incubator for Outdoor Learning

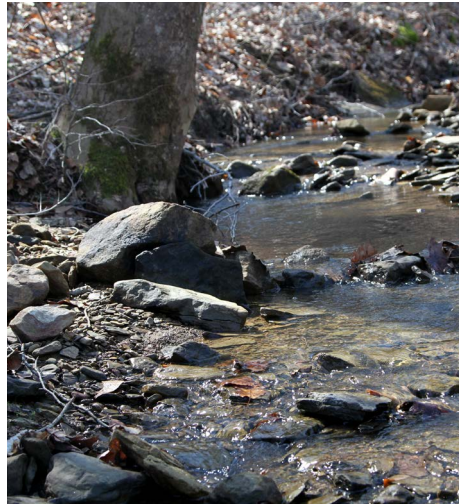
“No one among us wants to be a member of the last generation to pass on to our children the joy of playing outside in nature.”

~ Richard Louv

The June Harless Center is partnering with Heritage Farm Museum & Village to establish an incubator for outdoor learning. Using a grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, staff from the June Harless Center will train local elementary teachers and guides from Heritage Farm in outdoor learning strategies and techniques. Participants will use material from Project Learning Tree, Project Wet and Project Wild as well as tools from Carnegie Mellon’s CREATE Lab and appropriate hands-on science kits to develop and enhance their lesson plans. A cross disciplinary approach will be utilized in which students will gain an appreciation for the natural beauty of West Virginia while learning West Virginia’s content standards for science, mathematics, literacy, arts and history.

Staff from the June Harless Center and Heritage Farm Museum & Village attended facilitation training in Project Wild, Project Wet and Project Learning Tree. Completion of this training will permit the leaders of this project to access and use nature rich content and materials.

Plans for the summer of 2016, include having 21 practicing educators from six Southern West Virginia school systems to come to Heritage Farm Museum & Village for professional development in “nature-rich” teaching strategies and



content. Following their training, each team will develop a series of outdoor learning experiences, focused on state standards, for students at varying grade levels. Trainers from the June Harless Center and Heritage Farm Museum & Village will facilitate the development of the lessons that will engage students in West Virginia’s content standards for science, mathematics, literacy, arts and history in a cross-disciplinary manner. Grade level teams will present their plans for peer review to assure continuity across grades and appropriateness for diverse learners.

Once the education packages for each grade level are complete, the teachers who developed the units will pilot the lessons in an outdoor learning day in which 70 students in grades Pre-K through 5 will come to Heritage Farm Museum & Village to experience science, mathematics, literacy, arts and history in the outdoor environment.

Using data from the pilot, the teachers who developed and tested the lessons will modify the lessons to better meet the needs of students and to adapt them to use in schools in the region.

Throughout the 2016-17 school year, teachers will implement the lessons in their classrooms with support from the June Harless Center staff. The teachers will reflect on the quality of the units and will create modifications that will be incorporated in follow-up sessions throughout the school-year. During the follow-up meetings the grade level teams of teachers will edit and revise their education packages and will prepare the plans for the lessons/unit plans for publication in a guide for educators. The June Harless Center staff will visit the classrooms of each participating teacher to provide support during implementation of the lessons. In addition, the June Harless Center staff will be available by telephone or video conference to assist teachers in guiding their students through the units.

The exemplar lessons/units will be prepared in print form and will be housed at Heritage Farm Museum & Village and at the June Harless Center. In addition, these materials will be made available online and linked from the Heritage Farm Museum and Village and Harless Center’s websites for download.

Harless Center Awarded Improving Teacher Quality Grants

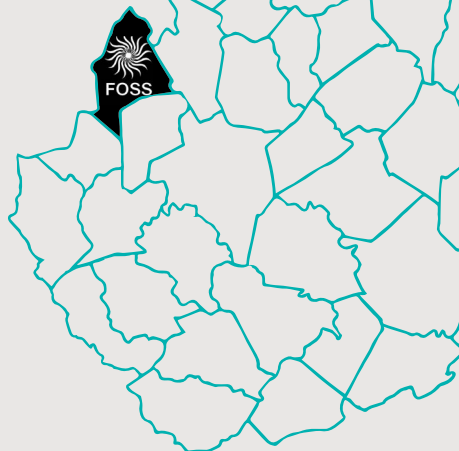
Project Fix the LEAKS

The June Harless Center has been awarded a 2016 Improving Teacher Quality Grant by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission for a project developed in collaboration with Mason County for their elementary teachers. This project named “Fixing Literacy, Engagement, and Achievement levels through Kit-based Science” or “Fix the LEAKS” is designed to support thirty teachers (kindergarten-5th grade) from schools in Mason County in the integration of science, mathematics, and literacy in their classrooms.

The participating teachers will take part in an implementation model, adopting the perspective of students, as they experience the engaging learning strategies promoted by the science kits during the integration of multiple subjects and the West Virginia teaching standards. As the teachers collaborate in their grade-level groups, content weaknesses will be addressed and confidence in instructional capabilities built during the professional development presented by Marshall University faculty, teacher consultants experienced with science kit implementation, and June Harless staff members.

“Fix the LEAKS” is scheduled to take place during the summer of 2016. There is much anticipation for the outcome of this project that provides valuable training in science kit implementation and promotes teacher experiences in exemplary strategies for integration of multiple disciplines. Moreover, teacher expectations are high as they look forward to sharing the hands-on science kits with their students during the new school year.

MASON COUNTY



Designing Quality Mathematics Lessons and Building Mathematical Understanding in Grades 3 – 5.

Building capacity in mathematics for elementary teachers was the focus during a four-day institute held last summer. Funding for the institute was provided through the grant Designing Quality Mathematics Lessons (an ITQ grant from the WV Higher Education Policy Commission). The Harless Center staff partnered with Cabell County and professors from Marshall University to lead the institute. Forty six teachers from Cabell, Lincoln, and Mason Counties studied and practiced strategies designed to increase student understanding of mathematics. The ultimate goal of the proposal was to provide the participants with a broad spectrum of tools to apply in the classroom as they work to transform their students into communicators and practitioners of mathematics. Teachers enthusiastically practiced new teaching strategies to apply in their classrooms. Additionally, grant funds provided much needed instructional resources to

engage students in the learning process. Four additional follow-up sessions were held during the 2015-2016 school year to provide continued support for the participants of the institute.

As an extension of this mathematics training in elementary classrooms, the Harless Center submitted and received another ITQ grant, Building Mathematical Understanding in grades 3 – 5. During the 2016 summer, the Harless Center will once again partner with Cabell County and Marshall University to provide instruction and support for third through fifth grade teachers in both Lincoln and Cabell counties. During the institute, teachers will focus on fractions and problem solving. An overriding purpose of both institutes is to enable elementary teachers to focus on developing mathematical tasks that build conceptual understanding by creating an environment that fosters communication, inquiry, and investigation.



CREATE WORK INSPIRED THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

In the fall of 2011, a partnership was officially established between Marshall University's June Harless Center and Carnegie Mellon University's CREATE Lab and has continued to make a great impact in the state of West Virginia. As a CREATE Lab satellite, the June Harless Center brings a rural network not otherwise accessible or familiar to the lab's existing outreach team. These educators and communities shift from being mere consumers of the systems developed in Pittsburgh to meaningful co-participants involved in shaping these systems. In providing this outreach, the Harless CREATE satellite helps to fulfill the CREATE Lab's mission of community empowerment, bringing the learning and innovation associated with robotics and technology to schools and beyond.

The Harless CREATE satellite provides outreach in various ways to support educators and students in technology fluency. Projects currently being disseminated include GigaPan, Arts & Bots, Children's Innovation Project, Message from Me, and Nearby Nature. Gigapan enables students to take panoramic images of their communities and share them with peers across the world. Arts and Bots integrate technology, literature, and history through the use of familiar art supplies,



robotic components and programming software. Students design, build and program robots to bring life to the technology. The Children's Innovation Project aims to engage young children in exploration and innovation with technology. Children explore and learn about electricity and simple circuits through hands-on engagement with a kit specifically designed for young hands. Message From Me enables young children to better communicate with parents and family members about their activities at school. Through the use of an application on IPADS, children can take images, record messages, and

directly send them via email or text. Lastly, Nearby Nature involves scientists, students and amateur naturalists in a global effort to reveal the extraordinary biodiversity of the ordinary settings where people live, learn and work.

Outreach for the CREATE projects occur in various ways. The Harless CREATE staff members over the past year have engaged in summer camp training, pre-service and in-service teacher professional development, conference proposals and presentations, and grant acquisitions.

Outreach Programs

CAMP CREATE

In honor of Buck Harless, a free Arts and Bots camp provided for children ages 7 – 10 in Gilbert, WV.

HUNTINGTON MUSEUM OF ARTS PARTNERSHIP

A great blend of STEAM curriculum by integrating the arts and technology for middle school aged students.

MARSHALL STEAM CAMPS

Two week-long camps provided to engage children at various ages with technology and science on Marshall University's campus.

EARLY CHILDHOOD OUTREACH

The Marshall University Early Education STEM Center is a preschool program that exists in three locations in West Virginia (on Marshall University's campus, at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center in Gilbert, WV, and at the Explorer Academy, a public elementary school in Cabell County). All three sites are demonstrating best practices in early childhood using technology with Message From Me, Arts and Bots, and Children's Innovation Program. Pre-service and In-service teachers use these three sites as a laboratory for clinical observations.

LENDING TECHNOLOGY LIBRARY

Local teachers from elementary, middle and high schools have borrowed the CREATE Lab technology from our lending library to implement programs in the classroom that are directly aligned to the state standards. We provide this service coupled with professional development to disseminate the engaging tools.

HIGHER EDUCATION CONNECTION AT MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Students at Marshall University have also had the experience of using real world technology tools in their coursework.

Freshman and Upperclassmen who are enrolled in a Freshman Year Seminar, Early Education Technology course, or the Instructional Technology and Computing course have had the opportunity to work with Arts and Bots and GigaPan technology.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers are a critical component for placing CREATE technology in the hands of students. In the past school year, our staff has worked with over fifty in-service teachers to support the implementation of a project.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Getting the word out to our local communities, state partnerships, and national audiences is an essential piece to our work. This year our team has presented in several venues including the CONTEXT conference in Pittsburgh, PA, the West Virginia Council of Teachers of Mathematics statewide conference, and the International SITE (Society for Informational Technology and Teacher Education) Conference in March in Savannah, GA.

ACQUIRED GRANTS

Our program would not be a reality without the support of outside funding. For this reason, our staff aggressively seeks any grant opportunities made available for our region. This year we

have been able to initiate or further extend two programs through grant resources. Nearby Nature was funded by the Benedum Foundation, is a partnership among Marshall University, West Liberty University, Intermediate Unit 1 in Pennsylvania, and the Create Lab. The Benedum Foundation also provided a grant to assist in the dissemination of Message From Me in West Virginia, specifically in RESA 3, which includes Kanawha, Boone, Clay and Putnam Counties.

According to Beatrice Dias, Community Outreach Coordinator for the Create Lab, the partnership has been invaluable. "The June Harless Center is an instrumental part of the CREATE Lab Satellite Network. They are true champions for the communities they serve in Huntington and surrounding rural areas of West Virginia. The June Harless Center team has been able to break down barriers and empower communities through meaningful integration of robotics and technology in education."

The Harless CREATE Satellite continues to grow exponentially every year. We anticipate more incredible opportunities for West Virginia teachers and students to develop due to the strong partnership of two universities willing to cross state lines and collaborate.





June Harless Center Flipped Learning Project Continues to Transform Classrooms

Since the 2011-12 school year, the June Harless Center has supported flipped learning in which teachers employ innovative techniques to use their instructional time in more meaningful and engaging ways. The project started with a handful of teachers from Cabell and Mason Counties, but by 2015, teachers from Cabell, Lincoln, Mason, Putnam and Wayne Counties had been trained in flipped learning. In addition, workshops on flipped learning have been held in Braxton, Kanawha, Randolph and Ohio Counties. Support from the Women's Education Forum enabled many classes to purchase iPad computers for student use in flipped learning initiatives. Preliminary research is showing that flipped learning maximizes utilization of instructional time, engages students in the content and focuses on state content standards. According to the project director, Dr. Stan Maynard, "Students in flipped learning classes are showing gains not only on test scores but in their attitudes toward school that far exceed our expectations."

The Shewey Science Academy Prepares for 9th Year in Mingo County



Throughout the school year, Mingo County educators are trained by staff from the June Harless Center and the Marshall University College of Science in science content and teaching strategies. The teachers plan and prepare for a week-long summer academy for any middle school student in Mingo County. The instruction is always linked to West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives in mathematics and science as well as Global 21 strategies.

In 2016 the Shewey Science Academy will be held in four locations in Mingo County (Gilbert, Lenore, Matewan, Williamson) from June 20-23. The staff members for the Shewey Science Academy are primarily middle school science and mathematics teachers from Mingo County. Each year, the activities of the Shewey Science Academy require the students to combine teamwork and problem solving skills to collect, analyze and evaluate a variety of evidence types to resolve a real world problem. To fully use the evidence, students need to apply basic principles of mathematics and science in preparing their responses. The week always culminates in an event in which the students present the findings from their research to teachers, parents

and community members.

In addition to the Mingo County teachers and June Harless Center personnel, the Shewey Science Academy utilizes Mingo County high school students who are alumni of previous years' academies. These alumni assist the teachers and students in providing a more meaningful learning experience during the projects. Also pre-service educators (student teachers) from the Marshall University College of Education and Professional Development engage in the lessons with the teachers and students. These future science educators use the innovative and interactive teaching strategies that are a crucial part of the Shewey Science Academy, thereby gaining important experience themselves.

According to Dr. Stan Maynard, Director of the Shewey Learning and Research Center, "We are so grateful to the Shewey family for their generous gift that is bringing so much excitement for learning to the students of Mingo County. By bringing these bright young people to science careers, the impact of their generosity will be felt for generations by the people of Southern West Virginia."



June Harless Center Forms New STEM Partnership

Members of the June Harless staff facilitated a presentation at the STEM Network Schools meeting in September conducted by the Education Alliance. From this meeting, a partnership between the June Harless Center and Wheeling Park High School emerged. The Harless staff will facilitate professional development primarily in mathematics

and science with the faculty at Wheeling Park High School. The primary focus will be collaboration with teachers to create engaging STEM learning opportunities. Professional development will emphasize the use of technology and application of real-world data for mathematics and science classes.

WV Women's Education Forum Awards Grant for 3rd Time

The June Harless Center has been very fortunate in its partnership with The WV Women's Education Forum ("WE"), a fund of the Foundation for the Tri-State Community. This group of dedicated and forward thinking women have partnered with the Harless Center on two previous projects. The first venture was in 2013 when fund raising efforts by the WE organization provided resources for teachers in Cabell, Lincoln, Mason and Wayne school districts to promote the success of a "Flipped Classroom" initiative. The second collaboration between the June Harless Center and the WE organization in 2014 was equally effective as the members were able to generate funding that assisted in the establishment of an early childhood STEM center located at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center in Mingo County, West Virginia.

The latest opportunity for the June Harless Center to team with the WV Women's Education Forum promises

fund raising efforts to support project S.K.I.L.L.S., Science Kit-based Instruction and Lending Library System. This project will build capacity in kindergarten through 8th grade teachers from elementary and middle schools in Cabell, Lincoln, and Wayne Counties in the integration of science, mathematics, and literacy through the implementation of kit-based science. The support will fund initial training and continued supplemental training for teachers in the use of the kit-based science modules and the establishment of a lending library of science kits maintained by the staff of the June Harless Center. After teachers have been trained in the use of the science modules, they will be able to request different grade-level appropriate kits from the lending library and utilize them with their students. Making quality education available to all of our West Virginia students is priority #1 for both the June Harless Center and the committed membership of the WV Women's Education Forum.

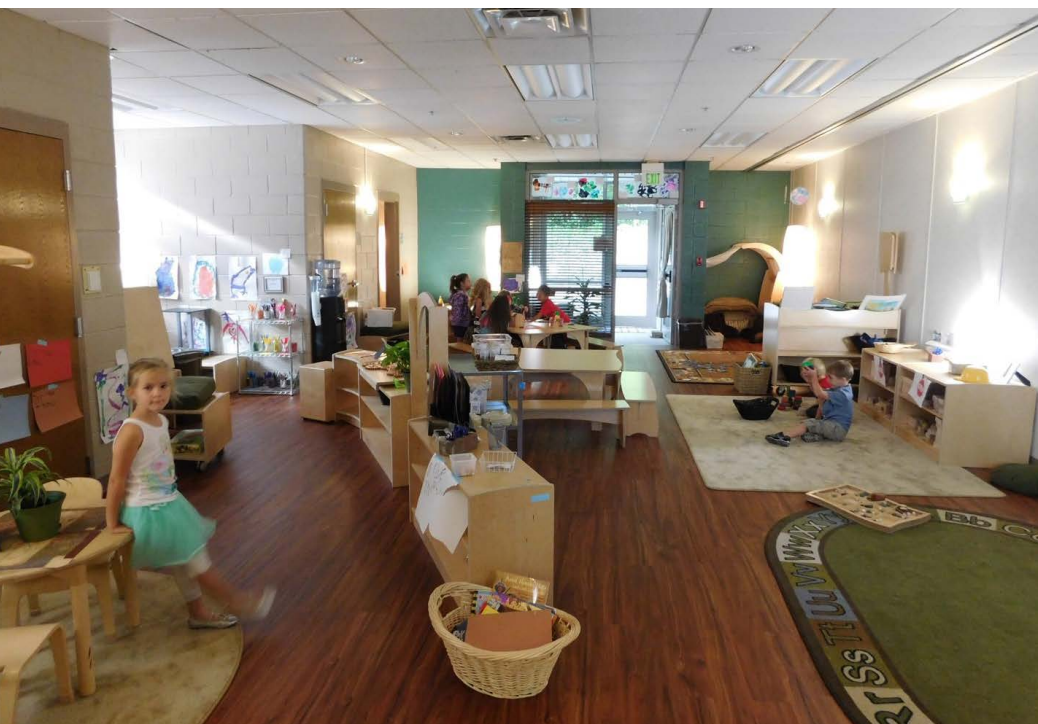


Local West Virginia Maker Networks Benefit from Harless Center

The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh is launching seven West Virginia Maker Networks. Support for the project is through the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, Chevron, and the Education Alliance. The June Harless Center will provide technical support and professional development to the following Maker Networks: the Larry Joe Harless Community Center in Gilbert WV, and the Heritage Farm Museum and Village in Huntington, WV.

The MAKESHOP® space at the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh was created for children and families to be able to use the same materials, tools, and processes used by professionals to make and design using "real stuff." Creativity, experimentation, and innovative ideas are encouraged. The purpose of the West Virginia Maker Networks is to replicate this space at the seven sites in West Virginia, providing opportunities for making as well as hands-on learning for children in rural areas in West Virginia.

This summer the June Harless Center will train and support staff at Heritage Farm in using CREATE lab tools. The first training will be in Arts and Bots, a program for children of all ages to design, build, decorate, and animate a robot using recyclables and art supplies. Children will move toward technological creativity as they build and program their robots.



Hannan Family Foundation Provides Online Learning Opportunities

Students at Hannan High School have access to online college credit courses through Marshall University's Online College Courses in High School (MUOCCHS). The generous gift by the late Raymond and Peggy Hannan provides funding for tuition and textbooks allowing students to complete many college graduation requirements before they graduate from high school.

The Hannan family has a long history of service to the community. Hannan High School's namesake, Thomas Hannan (1757-1835), was Cabell County's first white settler. Following his service in the American Revolution, Thomas Hannan blazed Hannan Trace, the first road in the area. This road led settlers from St. Albans, WV to Chillicothe, OH.

Thomas Hannan's descendant, Raymond Hannan graduated from Marshall College in 1938 with a BS degree in Engineering and was a lieutenant in the US Navy, serving in World War II. Mr. Hannan worked at International Nickel, the Electric Indicator Co. and for Raytheon as an engineer from 1955 to 1976. Peggy Hannan was a concert pianist, attended Julliard, and was an avid piano teacher.

According to the director of the June Harless Center, Dr. Stan Maynard, "The gift from the Hannan family will enable Hannan High School students to access advanced college courses for many years to come."

WV Department of Education and the Arts Funds New Harless Programming



The June Harless Center for Rural Educational Research and Development has a history rich in seeking out and delivering innovative practices for the benefit of both the teachers and students of West Virginia. In line with this continuing mission, the Harless Center is initiating a new program that will provide a learning tool that has the capacity to put the power of engineers into the minds and hands of our state's burgeoning creators, inventors, and contributors.

The tool is called "littleBits" and it is comprised of four types of electronic building blocks that are color coded according to function and snap together with magnets. No programming or soldering is required and no formal experience in electronics is needed to begin to configure the components into circuits that perform endless tasks limited only by one's imagination. This

limiting factor is countered by the typical collaborative format of the littleBits experience which fosters group problem-solving with project-based learning and engaging design challenges.

The June Harless Center has procured funding for this program through a STEM Initiative Mini Grant sponsored by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin and the West Virginia Department of Education and the Arts. The June Harless Center has also demonstrated its commitment to putting the power of electronics into the hands of everyone by uniting with the littleBits global network to become the first chapter representative for littleBits in West Virginia. It is very exciting to watch the positive impacts of this program that will result as the use of this creative learning tool expands and more students recognize their potential as trailblazers and game changers for the future.

littleBits

Partnership with Beverly Elementary



Whole Kids Foundation Grant Funds Greenhouse for Beverly Elementary

There is more food for everyone on the salad bar at Beverly Elementary in Randolph County, West Virginia. The June Harless Center, a long-time partner with Beverly Elementary, has assisted the school in securing funding from a Whole Kid's Foundation Garden Grant to expand the schools gardening program with a high tunnel greenhouse.

The students at Beverly Elementary have harvested fresh produce for surrounding schools as well as their own salad bar from their existing gardens since 2013. The new high tunnel green house will allow the students to extend the growing season of this northern locale and increase the variety of produce making healthy food options more accessible to all.

Assistance from the June Harless Center and a supportive community have been the recipe for success as Beverly Elementary immerses its students into this outdoor learning initiative. Educators and parents alike know that this project is fertile ground for growing a highly engaging program that integrates active hands-on learning involving not only mathematics and science, but literacy, social studies and the arts. In addition, Beverly Elementary is showing their appreciation to their supportive community and extending the healthy eating habits learned at school into neighboring homes by offering healthy cooking classes featuring recipes that use produce grown at the school.

Sharing Kit-Based Science in Beverly West Virginia

When the second grade students at Beverly Elementary School in Randolph

County, West Virginia describe their class pets as worms and bugs, one might suspect a visit from the exterminator is eminent. However these "pets" are the result of a life cycle investigation that is part of a FOSS science kit that the second grade teachers have been using with their students.

These teachers and others at Beverly Elementary have been utilizing the professional development services of the June Harless Center to provide training for FOSS science kits that integrate mathematics and literacy with hands-on, engaging science activities. The Harless Lending Library is set up so that teachers who discover the many student and teacher benefits of the FOSS system may borrow additional kits for their students to experience.

Building Relationships through Research - Hodges Summer Scholars Programs



Mary Hodges and her late husband, J. Churchill Hodges provide students from area high schools with in-depth research during the summer after their senior year. Hodges Scholars work at the Biotechnology Center on Marshall University's Huntington campus with leading researchers on topics such as nanochemistry and gene mapping. With support from Mary and Churchill Hodges, the students engage in cutting

edge research under the guidance of Drs. Norton and Murray, and their teams.

As a lifelong educator, Churchill Hodges understood the importance of engaging students in their learning through meaningful real-world connections. Mary Hodges continues this legacy through her support of the Hodges Summer Scholars.

Harless Center Supports MU Sustainability Department in Curriculum Pilot Project

The June Harless Center is very pleased to be partnering with the Marshall University Sustainability Department as well as the MU College of Science and the MU College of Education and Professional Development to develop, implement and test a new sustainability curriculum with middle school-aged students enrolled in the West Virginia Science Adventures Program.

This project is funded by a grant from the Dunn Foundation and involves the creation of a modular-based curriculum that will include elements of mathematics, science, social studies and literacy, and will be taught through green sustainability concepts and nature-based activities. The Green Sustainability Education Modules (GSEM) will be specifically designed for integration into existing county-adopted curricula and standards, according to Eve Marcum-Atkinson, Research and Community Outreach Assistant for the Sustainability Department.

RCBI to Present 3D Printing for WV Educators

The June Harless Center has teamed with the Robert C. Byrd Institute for Advanced Flexible Manufacturing (RCBI) to use a grant from NASA's Independent Verification and Validation Facility. The funds were used for workshops designed to bring educators together to share ideas about the potential for 3D printing in our WV classrooms. The series of workshops took place at RCBI's Manufacturing Technology Centers in South Charleston, Huntington, and Bridgeport. These professional development sessions covered a variety of 3D printing topics including an overview of 3D Printing technology, an introduction to design software, information concerning the maintenance of 3D printers, and guidance on incorporating 3D printing into the curriculum.

Charlotte Weber, Director and CEO of RCBI said of the project, "Using 3D printing in the classroom really gets students excited about learning. We're pleased to bring educators together to share ideas about how to use this innovative technology." It appears that the shared focus of bringing innovative opportunities and practices to the people of our state is what continues to make the partnership between RCBI and the June Harless Center work for the benefit of students and teachers across West Virginia.



ADVANCING
MANUFACTURING
TECHNOLOGIES

Early Childhood

Outdoor Education in Early Childhood at the MU Early Education STEM Center in Gilbert

Ask people what they remember most about the physical surroundings of their childhood and they're likely to describe a special place out of doors – a schoolyard, a patch of woods, a community garden. It is the outdoor space that is most conducive to the ebb and flow of spontaneous activities, offers rich and often surprising sensory input, and provides endless possibilities for exploration. If the classroom is the place where children are taught, the outdoors is where they learn on their own.

In the spring of 2015, the June Harless Center was awarded a Sprout Grant to assist in the construction of the outdoor learning space for the Marshall University Early Education STEM Center in Gilbert. Project A.C.O.R.N.S (A Classroom Only Roofed by Nature's Sky) focuses on creating an outdoor learning environment to serve as the third teacher. With this project, the Center has concentrated on the outside space by placing value on aesthetics, organization, thoughtfulness, provocation, communication, and interaction with each other. Tarabeth Brumfield, Director of the MU Early Education STEM Center said, "Our Center



educators believe that outdoor learning is as important as what occurs inside the classroom. The creation of meaningful outdoor spaces is important to our approach. By purposefully designing the outdoor space, children will be given opportunities to observe and interact with nature and learn social skills through exploration." These hands-on experiences provide many opportunities for children to develop skills such as classification, inference, description, and comparison. As we know, the outdoor learning environment can stimulate the child's imagination, creativity, exploration, discovery, engagement, and sense of wonder.

Elizabeth Houck, Studio Educator and lead teacher in Gilbert stated, "Another focus and need unique to this project is that learning will not only occur with children, but also with educators.

Pre-service and In-service teachers will have the opportunity to visit and learn from an approach to community engagement and outdoor play."

Many partners have been crucial to the success of this project and include the Gilbert Honeysuckle Garden Club, Hatfield Lumber, the Larry Joe Harless Community Center, Mingo County Schools, West Virginia Department of Education, Marshall University, and Women in Education Forum. This project has been a great example of how to engage children, families, community members, and community partners by providing a purpose to collaborate and learn together. Project A.C.O.R.N.S has truly exemplified the saying by Margaret McMillian, "*The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky.*"

Early Education

Dr. Seuss perfectly articulates what it means to transform, change, and renew in his book "Oh, The Places You'll Go." He wrote, "You're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so...get on your way!" The Marshall University Early Education STEM Center was given the opportunity to transform and expand to great places by creating satellite classrooms in two new locations bringing the total number of centers to three. This expansion includes a new site located in a Cabell County elementary school and in a community center located in Gilbert, WV in Mingo County.



In the fall of 2010, the first "STEM Center," was established on Marshall University's campus through a partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education, Cabell County Schools, Marshall University's College of Education and Professional Development, the CREATE Lab of Carnegie Mellon University, and the June Harless Center. This Pre-K environment, serving 3, 4, and 5 year olds has been shaped by the influences of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

Loris Malaguzzi, the father of the Reggio-Emilia Approach, stated, "Our task, regarding creativity is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible. No one can do more." This Reggio-inspired model has expanded to infuse the arts into science, technology, engineering and mathematics, better known as STEAM. Through a partnership with the CREATE Lab from Carnegie Mellon University, technologies such as Arts and Bots, Children's Innovation Project, and Message from Me have been an integral piece to this educational design. Below is an update of each site and a description of their unique qualities.

MARSHALL UNIVERSITY CAMPUS (CABELL COUNTY)

As the flagship classroom of the MU Early Education STEM Center and the original early childhood model for the West Virginia Department of Education, the STEM Center on the Marshall University campus continues to grow. As a collaborative Cabell County Pre-K, this site serves 3, 4, and 5 year olds.

This year has been full of fun, exciting, and engaging project work. The campus STEM Center is partnering with the College of Business at Marshall to participate in the upcoming "Lemonade Day." This special day allows children to collaborate with one another and practice entrepreneurial skills. Children will set goals, create their own product, be part of site selection, advertise their product and create a stand. The children began exploring lemons both through play and scientific experiments and will collaborate with Marshall's business students and staff on ways to advertise their product and create their own stand.

Also this year, a new focus has been placed on "Brain Exercises." These engaging exercises have been introduced to the children as a way to prepare their "whole-self" for the

learning process. The brain exercises demonstrated in the classroom are modified from Brain Gym Exercises. Brain Gym was developed by Paul Dennison in the early 1970's and integrates the left and right side of the hemispheric functions of the brain. Brain exercises bring the children opportunities for whole brain learning and helps them control emotional stress that is associated with new learning situations. By incorporating a few exercises into the daily routine and schedule, the children wake up their brain for learning.

EXPLORER ACADEMY (CABELL COUNTY)

Explorer Academy is a consolidated elementary school located in Huntington, WV. In fall 2015, Geneva Kent Elementary and Peyton Elementary came together to bring Explorer Academy to life in the old Geneva Kent school building. The Marshall University Early Education STEM Center at Peyton Elementary moved to its new home at Explorer Academy.

Explorer Academy is the first EL Education school in West Virginia. It was established to become an incubator school for the state and a model for the country. EL Education supports a hands-on approach to learning through natural and authentic experiences. EL also aligns with the holistic approach established in the Marshall University Early Education STEM Center philosophy and the Reggio Emilia influence that continues to make the classroom a powerful place for children.

In August 2015, the Pre-K children at Explorer Academy embarked on their first EL expedition. Through self-discovery, reflection, and high-quality work, the children learned about themselves, self-portraits, and perseverance. The children commemorated their expedition at the Celebration of Learning in February, 2016. We are excited to announce that Explorer Academy will welcome the



MU Early Education STEM Center Models Exemplar Practices for Logan County

The June Harless Center continues to nurture an established partnership with Logan County through professional development opportunities led by the Harless sponsored Marshall University Early Education STEM Center staff. The professional development focused on support for Logan County's Pre-K and Kindergarten teachers and staff. The goal with Pre-K was to develop positive approaches to project based learning inspired by the interests of children. The training included three full-day face-to-face sessions, an on-line book study and visits to the MUEE STEM Center located at the Larry Joe Harless Center in Gilbert, WV. The kindergarten teachers received training on how to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment by creating a daily schedule which reflects best practices and utilizes appropriate materials in the implementation of the kindergarten curriculum. This training included 3 half-day sessions and on-site visits to each participating school by the Harless Staff. Approximately 105 educators participated in these trainings. The MUEE STEM Center continues to be a model of exemplary practices and innovative strategies across the state of West Virginia.

MUEE STEM Center classroom in the fall of 2016 in a brand new, state of the art facility located at the former Beverly Hills Middle School in Huntington.

LARRY JOE HARLESS COMMUNITY CENTER IN GILBERT, WV (MINGO COUNTY)

The newest addition to the MU Early Education STEM Center is our location in Gilbert, WV in Mingo County. This Center has been made a reality through strong partnerships with the Mingo County Board of Education, Marshall University's College of Education and Professional Development, Women's Education Forum, Coalfield Community Action

Partnership, Southern Community and Technical College, and the Larry Joe Harless Community Center.

The purpose of this site in Gilbert, is to create a model classroom that provides pre-service teachers with high quality clinical placements and in-service teachers with professional development and ongoing support. Most importantly, the ultimate goal is to create the first nationally accredited early childhood site in the region.

Our classroom has served as an environment that encourages collaboration, problem solving, and creativity, while fostering children's interests. The children have become innovators and leaders of their own learning. The integration of technology tools, such as the Children's Innovation Project, have provided an experience for children to play and explore, notice carefully, and speak precisely, which are all habits of good innovators.

Not only are the children growing mind, body and soul but educators from around our state are coming to see the powerful and important work that occurs in these learning environments. Dr. Seuss continues to encourage our work and our program by saying, "Congratulations! Today is your day. You're off to Great Places! You're off and away!"





“The team of Early Literacy Specialists were recruited and employed based on their knowledge of best practices in reading instruction as well as their creativity and leadership skills. Our county systems work diligently to increase student achievement, however, as a state, we are still struggling. Our hope is that the team of Early Literacy Specialists can provide the much needed support that counties deserve.”

~ Tarabeth Brumfield
Program Development Officer

In August of 2015, The June Harless Center was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the West Virginia Department of Education to assist with the implementation of the WV Leaders of Literacy: Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. The WVDE Office of Early Learning is leading the campaign that aims to close the reading achievement gap of third grade students by the year 2020. The statewide campaign is an

extension of a national campaign to ensure that more children in low-income families succeed in school and graduate prepared for college, a career, and active citizenship. The WV Leaders of Literacy: Campaign for Grade-Level Reading is composed of four main components: school readiness, attendance, extended learning, and high-quality instruction.

Four Early Literacy Specialists have been employed by the June Harless Center to support the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading. The specialists work under the auspices of the WVDE Office of Early Learning and June Harless Center staff leadership to provide assistance to counties as they implement a transformative system of support for early literacy.

The literacy specialists collaborate with county Grade-Level Reading Teams in all 55 counties to assist in the implementation of individualized county plans. They are responsible for engaging community partners to permeate a culture of literacy for families and children, providing an outreach to assist in professional development, and assisting in the collection of data to drive high-quality classroom instruction. The specialists have become very familiar with county needs and have developed essential rapport with representatives from each county in order to publicize outstanding achievement and progress – “bright spots” – with our state and national partners.

As a direct result of the campaign, at least seven counties have funded Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library to get high-quality books in the hands of children every month from birth through age five; eight counties have contracted with ReadyRosie (an early education tool geared to increase parent engagement) in an effort to support readiness; several

summer feeding sites have partnered with book mobiles to fuel the minds and bodies of West Virginia’s children in the summer months; and at least fourteen summer and afterschool programs are engaging in literacy trainings offered by the literacy specialists in order to provide their students with high-quality, literacy-rich environments outside of school time. The literacy trainings will be offered by the literacy specialists of the June Harless Center at the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Conference in April as well as via online training modules. These impressive initiatives are just a fraction of the myriad bright spots that are occurring across the state. The June Harless Center is confident that with continued outreach and support, the goal of getting all of West Virginia’s third graders reading on grade-level by 2020 is certainly achievable.

“The Literacy Specialists assisted County Grade-Level Reading Teams in developing Action Plans specific to their local communities, and they facilitated new local, state, and national partnerships. Having them as part of the Campaign has allowed for a deeper level of support for the county teams which has resulted in significantly greater results in the areas of school readiness, attendance, extended learning, and high-quality instruction.”

~ Charlotte Webb
State Lead for the WV Campaign
for Grade-Level Reading



Harless Hall of Fame Inductees

2015

Dr. Robert Hayes
Robert C Byrd Institute
Mr. Gary White

2010

Governor Bob Wise
Cabell County School System
Frontier Communications

2005

First Lady Gayle Manchin
Dr. Keith Smith
Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation

2014

Mr. Ron Berger
First Lady Joanne Jaeger Tomblin
West Virginia Women's Education Forum

2009

Dr. Lowell E. Johnson
Governor Earl Ray Tomblin
Mr. Ralph Baxter

2004

Mrs. Lydia McCue
Mr. David Ice
Senator Robert Plymale

2013

Dr. Kathy D'Antoni
Mr. Michael J. Farrell, Esquire
Southern Regional Education Board

2008

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin III
Dr. Jack McClanahan
Dr. Rosalyn Templeton

2003

Mrs. Beverly Kingery
Mr. Jimmy D. Hale
Verizon

2012

Governor Gaston Caperton
Dr. Illah Nourbakhsh
Mr. A. Michael and Mrs. Henriella Perry

2007

Representative Mary M. Polling
Mr. C. Fred Shewey
Wayne County School System

2002

Dr. Jane McKee
Dr. Bernard Queen
Mr. James "Buck" Harless

2011

General Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong
Senator Lloyd G. Jackson II
U.S. Senator Jay Rockefeller

2006

Dr. Ruby Payne
Dr. Steven Paine
Pendleton County School System

The Hallie Harless Distinguished Teacher Award is made possible by the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. James Harless ('Buck' and Hallie). The award represents not only their generosity, but also their passion for exemplary classroom instruction for all students of West Virginia and especially Southern West Virginia. The monetary award is presented annually to an outstanding teacher from Boone, Lincoln, Logan, McDowell, Mingo, Wayne or Wyoming counties for his or her effectiveness in the classroom, diligence to the craft, and obvious love and commitment to young people.

Hall of Fame

“Individuals selected for induction into the Harless Hall of Fame have spent a lifetime providing creative leadership for educators and business and community organizations. This creative way of thinking about life and work is celebrated annually for individuals who have committed to improving the possibilities for West Virginia educators, families and children.”

~ Dr. Stan Maynard



James “Buck” Harless



James “Buck” Harless consistently supported and encouraged the initiatives of the June Harless Center for Rural Educational Research and Development named in honor of June Montgomery Harless, one of southern West Virginia’s most avid supporters of education and medical research. The educational support has been enhanced with the addition of the Hallie Harless Distinguished Teacher Award honoring outstanding southern West Virginia educators.

Buck Harless was truly an iconic individual in West Virginia. He made a positive difference in the lives of thousands of individuals and families. His sphere of influence was not limited to finance, politics or entrepreneurship. His greatest influence was in the area of education. He understood the economic gap that we see in West Virginia could best be narrowed by education. Buck was a “bridge builder,” who built bridges for individuals so they could journey from where they are to where they could be. Buck used his wealth and influence to assist the children of West Virginia to see the potential that abides in them and to provide them a “bridge” (educational opportunities) that help them to never settle for anything less than their best. A quote by Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound exemplifies Buck’s belief, “There is more in us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps, for the rest of our lives we will be unwilling to settle for less.” That is the mantra of the Harless Center staff members as we reach out to West Virginia students and teachers with professional development and programming that Buck supported through the years of our partnership.

Our challenge has always been to assure that “Buck’s” vision in the work of the Harless Center continues. The passing of Buck Harless on January 1, 2014, strengthens our resolve to make a positive difference in his honor. We miss Buck Harless as a friend, mentor, and example for what true service really means, but we are committed to continuing our work in his memory.



‘Buck’ has always believed in the importance of education and has been a generous benefactor of educational initiatives including the June Harless Center for Rural Educational Research and Development.

◀ The children from the MU Early Education STEM Center at the Larry Joe Harless Community Center enjoy reading on the porch of Buck’s office in Gilbert, WV. Buck would have loved joining them.



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