A New Promise for an Old Place:
Revitalization and Re-Vision of a Small Rural Town

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September 1, 2013– April 30, 2014

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Final Report Narrative

Title of Project: A New Promise for an Old Place: Revitalization and Re-Vision of a Rural Small Town

Grant Period: September 1, 2013 – April 30, 2014

Grantee Name: Emory & Henry College

Project Director: Talmage A. Stanley

Description of Project:

In response to requests from the community of Glade Spring, Virginia, represented by the organization Project Glade, this project is another step in a multi-year, multi-pronged effort to offer logistical, technical, and strategic support for efforts to rebuild and revitalize this small rural community located three miles from Emory & Henry College. Students worked collaboratively with members of the Glade Spring community, the Glade Spring Town Council, and the officers of Project Glade to produce three deliverables. The three deliverables are: an operationalization of the community’s strategic plan to make Glade Spring Emory & Henry’s “college town”; a map and index of available retail spaces and lots that could be utilized for retail; and an index and map of assets that could be used to make Glade Spring a pedestrian-friendly community. These deliverables will be utilized in application for economic development grants.

Activities:

In addition to the conference presentation, posters, and other activities, please include full details regarding the following requirements of the 2013-2014 Scope of Work:

- Activities with community partners:
  - Planning Meeting with Leslie Peterson (president of Project Glade) and Dirk Moore (member of Glade Spring Planning Commission) to establish goals and objectives for work (September 26, 2013)
  - Working with Brian Martin (Glade Spring Town Manager) throughout project period
    - Mapping
    - Zoning
    - Retail inspections
  - Conference with Lee Coburn, Glade Spring Mayor (October 15, 2013)
• Presentations of student research to community groups other than the primary partner
  o Presentation to Glade Spring Town Council (Community Center, December 2, 2013);
  o Presentation to ATP and poster session (December 6, 2013);
  o Presentation to Appalachian Studies Association (March 28, 2014);
  o Final report and presentation to Project Glade and Glade Spring Community
    (April 9, 2014)

Project Outcomes:

1. Students actively engaged with Project Glade, as the representative of the community of
   Glade Spring, Virginia, throughout the semester. Though Project Glade was the primary
   partner, students also worked through the Mount Rogers Planning District, the Glade
   Spring Town Manager, the Glade Spring Planning Commission, and the Glade Spring
   Town Council. Students will met with representatives of Project Glade and the Glade
   Spring Planning Commission at the launch of the project

2. Students presented their research and results, along with a poster, at two national/regional
   meetings including the meeting of the Appalachian Teaching Project in Washington,
   D.C., on December 6-8, 2013. (See above)

3. Students provided progress reports to Project Glade and to the Glade Spring Planning
   Commission three times throughout the project.

4. Students produced three deliverables that have been presented to Project Glade and the
   Glade Spring Town Council
   a. An operationalization of the community’s existing strategic plan
   b. Comprehensive index and map of available retails space and lost suitable to retail
      development
   c. An asset map identifying community resources that can be deployed in making
      Glade Spring pedestrian-friendly

5. Other elements from Scope of Work:
   a. Each participating institution will offer at least one course in which students will
      address the question, “How do we build on community assets to shape a positive
      future for Appalachia?”: PPCS 460—Independent Study—Research for Place,
      Talmage A. Stanley, instructor
   b. Each participating institution will work with a local community to identify a
      critical community need or problem that affects its long-term sustainability. The
      institution will then develop a community-based research project (affiliated with a
      credit-bearing course) that addresses the community-identified problem and uses
      the local community’s assets to build sustainability. See report.
   c. Projects must meet the guidelines, goals, and outcomes identified below and must
      show concrete deliverables. Additionally, projects must go "the next step
Beyond folklore, ethnographic fieldwork, and volunteer or service-learning activities to promote long-term sustainability. See report of deliverables.

d. Common Guidelines
   i. Students will develop leadership skills and awareness of community assets that can foster sustainability—this was a learning goal for students and was accomplished
   ii. Students will be engaged as active learners and participants in community projects—this was accomplished, see report
   iii. Students will engage in active research to assist communities in creative approaches to sustainability through asset development—this was accomplished
   iv. College will provide a $1,500 match—this was satisfied through the time and support of the teaching faculty, Talmage A. Stanley, and the staff support of the Appalachian Center for Civic Life

e. Student Activities:
   i. Active engagement with a single, community partner-organization or group throughout the semester. The project cannot be strictly classroom-based. This was accomplished.
   ii. Presentation of research at a conference in Washington, D.C., on December 6–8, 2013. This was accomplished.
   iii. Creation of a poster for presentation at a poster session in Washington, D.C. This was accomplished.
   iv. In addition, students must participate in one (or more) of the following options:
      1. Presentation of research to at least one civic organization or to elected officials within the community, in addition to the primary community partner. This was accomplished.
      2. Presentation of research at a national conference. This was accomplished.
      3. Participation in a poster session or panel discussion, or delivery of a formal session at the Appalachian Studies Association’s Annual Conference in March 2014. This was accomplished.

Problems Encountered:

Students were often hesitant to propose big ideas or big solutions, accepting the narrow limits that have often defined community development initiatives in this region, and which limits are inculcated from the American middle class culture.

The student team sometimes demonstrated a lack of follow-through or a lack of organizational skills. As a whole, the student team did not have good presentation skills. The presentations tended to be weak and not an accurate picture of the breadth and depth of student learning. This problem was exacerbated by the reality that the instructor’s attention was often divided between a myriad of issues and questions, many of which were the result of other professional responsibilities, and the instructor did not have the time to spend honing the student presentation.
Program Continuation and Sustainability:

The partnership between Glade Spring and Emory & Henry is central to the mission of the College and will be sustained through the long-term commitment and support of the College’s Appalachian Center for Civic Life and the degree program in Public Policy and Community Service.

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Please refer to the final report to the Glade Spring Community.

Other recommendations:

- Continuation of the partnership will necessitate more outcome-focused work for student project teams; the research component has been nearly exhausted; student teams must begin to achieve tangible outcomes for and with the Glade community
- The Salt Trail, Arts Development Center and Incubator, Social Entrepreneurship business zones, and other collateral develops will require more nuanced work than has heretofore been possible among student teams
- Rather than expand the number of ATP schools, more financial support could be provided to existing long-term projects and partnerships, increasing their viability and the likelihood of their sustained success.

Attachments (in PDF format):

- Final Report
- Asset Map
- Glade Spring Town Square Map
- ASA Presentation
- Glade Spring Presentation

NOTE: The final report should document that all elements of the approved project proposal have been addressed, in addition to requirements of the Scope of Work.