BSPH Student Bethany Mackey Awarded NICHD Media-Smart Youth Teen Leaders Award

BSPH student Bethany Mackey and two of her fellow Resident Advisors, Sarah Roberson and Lindsey Higgins, will soon be implementing a National Institute of Child Health and Human Development "Media-Smart Youth Teen Leaders" program for middle school children in Erwin.

From the NICHD website: "Media-Smart Youth: Eat, Think, and Be Active!® is an interactive education program designed to teach youth about the complex media world and how it can influence their health.... throughout the program, youth analyze advertisements and make media messages of their own, try healthy snack recipes, and discover fun ways to be physically active."

To implement the program, Bethany and her colleagues will be working with College of Public Health alumna Ashley Davies, MPH, who is the health educator at the Unicoi City Health Department. Together, they will implement the project with middle school children who attend the Unicoi County Family YMCA after school program.

The program will provide the student leaders with training, leadership experience, community service hours, recognition from the National Institutes of Health, and a grant of $1,000 to cover program expenses. The program will run from March – April, 2015.

According to College of Public Health faculty member, Megan Quinn "I received an email about the Media Smart Youth program and immediately thought of Bethany. She is an extremely engaged and driven student and I hoped that the program would be of interest to her. Bethany took the initiative to establish a team of peer leaders and I connected her with Ashley as a community partner. I am extremely excited for Bethany and her colleagues and have no doubt that this program will be a great community partnership to focus on the health and wellbeing of our youth.”