

“Building Capacity and Gaining Public Knowledge Through Deliberative Forums”

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May 17, 2017

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Final Report Narrative

Title of Project: “Building Capacity and Gaining Public Knowledge Through Deliberative Forums”

Grant Period: January 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

Grantee Name: Auburn University/John Mason

Project Director: Mark Wilson

Description of Project

Our project began a new relationship between our university program and Tuskegee Public School (grades 4-6), and participating students in CCEN 2000: Introduction to Community and Civic Engagement coordinated several in-class visits to moderate classroom forums on “Strengthening Our Community’s Future: How Can We Find the “Good Life” in Our Community? We focused on 6th graders, and the forums provided an opportunity for students to weigh the pros and cons of various approaches to the issue, followed by a questionnaire related to their participation in various programs and activities already offered.

Activities (Scope of Work items in bold)

Thursday, August 25

Meredith, Karlee, Betty, and Mark traveled to Notasulga High School to meet with Counselor Sanford. Ms. Sanford provided an overview of Notasulga’s situation as a rural school. As the only counselor for the entire school, she worries about not having enough time to help the number of children who deserve help. She will allow Meredith to work with her this semester to provide leadership skill sessions with student groups. We discussed our classroom forums.

Thursday, August 25

Rylie, Cammie, and Foster met Mark at the Tuskegee History Center. The Center’s intern provided a tour of the Center and the cabin. We discussed our project with director Deborah Gray, who gave us some thoughts from her perspective as a non-profit organization leader. She is interested in providing real-world experience for young people, but she wants to be sure to offer compensation so that their efforts are rewarded. Re: our survey, she’s particularly interested in the number of students who have participated in summer offerings in Macon County.

Tuesday, August 30

Rylie, Foster, Randy, Rachel and Mark met with Guy Trammell at the Tuskegee/Macon County Ministerial Council’s food bank. Guy provided an overview of the mission and vision of the food bank, as well as the need for fresh food in Macon County. The food bank provides boxes of food each month, but their

longterm mission is entrepreneurship related to food. They have space and plans for a catering kitchen/classroom, which will help local people turn a hobby into a business.

Wednesday, September 1

Team had a conference call with Guy Trammell to discuss the questionnaire. Guy had several suggestions, especially regarding language used for 6th graders, as well as additional community programs to include.

Friday, September 9

Mark, Randy, and Ken traveled to Notasulga High School to meet with principal Lasisi Hooks. We overviewed the project and discussed three visits: 1) games with students on www.icivics.org; 2) the Forum; 3) Reporting on the forum and session on volunteering. Mr. Hooks had special interest in students helping to report out the results of the questionnaire. Icivics should not be a problem on student I pads. He is also interested in ACT preparation.

Wednesday, September 14

County Extension 4-H coordinator Daniel Sullen met with our group to discuss his work with youth. He has several opportunities that align with our work for the semester, and we will follow up with him. We are particularly interested in helping with his event to bring students to campus in November. Cammie will travel to Tuskegee on Tuesday and interview a student nominated by Daniel for a feature story.

Friday, September 16

Foster, Ken, Karlee, Randy, Rachel, and Mark traveled to Notasulga to work with the 6th grade class. I divided the students into groups with a college student. They interview the college student and then we played Apples to Apples to give the groups a chance to get to know one another. Following the game, the group worked on a "Skills" worksheet from a career exploration curriculum. We discussed skills that we might have that will translate into a job. The groups shared their responses. This visit gave college students an introduction to a K-12 school and a sense of their classroom.

Tuesday, September 20

Cammie and Rylie traveled to Tuskegee to interview a high school student nominated by the 4-H coordinator for a feature story. Unfortunately, when they arrived, no one was there. Evidently either the student or the coordinator had car trouble and could not make it. We hope to reschedule the meeting.

Friday, September 23

Mark, Rachel, Ken, and Karlee traveled to Notasulga for second visit to work with 6th graders. Students participated in the classroom forum on "Strengthening Our Community's Future," and discussed three different options. In addition to responses to questions as part of the forum, students learned the term "internship" and discussed several options for internship they would like to have when they are slightly older. Students expressed particular interest in arts education and

opportunities. We ended the session with the “human knot” activity and debriefed their experience and how it relates to life.

Tuesday, September 27

Mark and Matt traveled to BTW High School, Tuskegee to deliver materials related to the project to the principal. We then visited the principal and 6th grade teacher at Tuskegee Public School. They offered suggestions for the questionnaire, and we planned a return visit for Friday. We then visited Wil Golden, director of county extension. We discussed possible ways our work could connect to his work this semester.

Friday, September 30

Mark, Rachel, Randy, Ken, Foster, and Karlee visited Tuskegee Public School 6th grade classes. We worked with four classes in sequence. After a quick group activity, we asked students to draw on their Ipads a meaningful place in their community. Then we mapped those places with Ipads on the floor and took a photo of the collage. We then identified careers at those places where students might like to work. We introduced career preparation terms and discussed the ones they did not know (job preparation, resume). We solved a crossword puzzle related to these terms.

Friday, October 7

Karlee, Ken, Randy, and Rachel led a session with 6th graders at Notasulga School on career development. The session introduced terms (job shadowing, resume, internship, etc.) and the students “mapped” the most important places to them in their community.

Friday, October 14

Principal and teacher visit Auburn University to discuss a possible field trip for students in the spring. We met with the media specialist in the College of Liberal Arts, toured his studio, and assisted the teacher with specs on equipment for their media production room.

Friday, October 21

Rachel and Foster visited Tuskegee Public School and moderated a forum on the future of the community. Students completed the questionnaire.

Friday, October 21

Mark visited Notasulga. Students completed questionnaire.

Friday, November 4

Rachel, Cammie, and Rylie visited Tuskegee Public School, all four 6th-grade classes, to introduce students to I-clickers using questions related to workforce development.

Tuesday, November 15

Matt traveled to Nostasulga to lead a third ATP preparation session.

Monday, November 28

Foster traveled to Tuskegee to video a message from students for the ATP conference presentation.

Friday and Saturday, December 2, 3

Poster presentation and conference presentation to the ATP symposium in Washington, D.C. In addition to these activities, students met with Representative Mike Rogers while in D.C.

Friday, December 9

Wilson and Fields traveled to Tuskegee to meet with Principal Williams and teacher Moore. We delivered the questionnaire report draft and noted changes. We discussed and set dates for two activities for spring semester that grow out of the ATP project – March 7 “major fair” and April 27 visit with 6th grade video production club. Because the principal and teacher were our primary partners, this visit allowed us to summarize all of the semester’s work and report on the ATP Conference to them.

Wednesday, February 1

Trey Fields traveled to Tuskegee to meet with media production afterschool club. Fields will coordinate the April 27 field trip for students to campus.

Wednesday, February 8

Wilson and Fields traveled to Tuskegee to meet with Principal Williams to discuss March 7 major fair. Plan adjusted based on conversation. Met with Mr. Moore to film a one-minute announcement regarding the event.

Tuesday, March 7

College Major Fair with 6th graders at Tuskegee Public School led by Trey Fields and six Auburn undergraduates. In a speed-date style event, sixth graders heard college students discuss their college major, skills they’ve developed, courses they’ve taken, and their post-graduation plans for graduate school or work.

March 22-24

Student Trey Fields presented on the ATP project through a poster presentation to the regional conference Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement in Higher Education in Greensboro, NC.

Thursday, April 27

Twenty-one Tuskegee Public School students and two chaperones visited our campus for sessions with media professionals in the College of Liberal Arts and the student-run campus television and radio network. Students interviewed the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, as well as an associate dean in the Division of Student Affairs.

ADDITIONAL WORK

In addition to these visits, as a result of a request from the Notasulga High School Principal, ATP student Matt Black developed ACT preparation sessions, focusing

mainly on math and language, and led sessions on the following dates: Jan 25, Feb 1, Feb 8, Feb 15, Feb 22, Mar 1, Mar 29.

Project Outcomes

This project sought to address ARC Strategic Plan Goal #5: Leadership and Community Capacity. We sought to develop a sustainable relationship with Tuskegee Public School, and we were able to do so, evidenced by March 7 and April 27 events, led by a former ATP student who managed those events as part of a capstone in community and civic engagement. We exceeded expectations in classroom visits, although we had to deviate some from our original proposal (described in next section.)

We believe we increased student understanding of themselves as citizens, but also as professionals in the workforce and/or college attendance, based on the classroom activities.

We were unable to increase non-youth understanding of community issues, due to circumstances below, although there is still some hope, since we have submitted three feature stories on students for publication in *The Tuskegee News*.

Problems Encountered

A key component to our project was a post-forum questionnaire. The IRB process took longer than anticipated because of questions from the committee, and that delay caused a problem in our timeline. In order to consent students for the questionnaire, parents must review and sign a document. Our hope was to have the document approved by IRB by the day parents “meet the teacher” at the beginning of the school year and sign other documents. We missed that window by just a day or two, which meant that we had to depend on students to take the form home and return it signed. Despite our efforts to communicate to students (even with a fun video we produced), we were only able to receive a small percentage of consent forms back, which meant that our report information would be limited.

Additionally, despite having teacher and principal review the questionnaire, we found that the questions were too difficult for students to answer in such a short amount of time, so the questionnaires themselves were of limited value.

Program Continuation and Sustainability

Despite the problems described above, our willingness to shift focus slightly and align our effort to what we discovered about our partners yielded an exceptional amount of activity. For example, when a second principal mentioned that he would like a college student to provide ACT preparation sessions, especially in math, we put our ATP chemical engineering major to work to develop and deliver sessions in response to that request. We want to relate to our partners indefinitely, and all signs point toward the sustainability of that relationship.

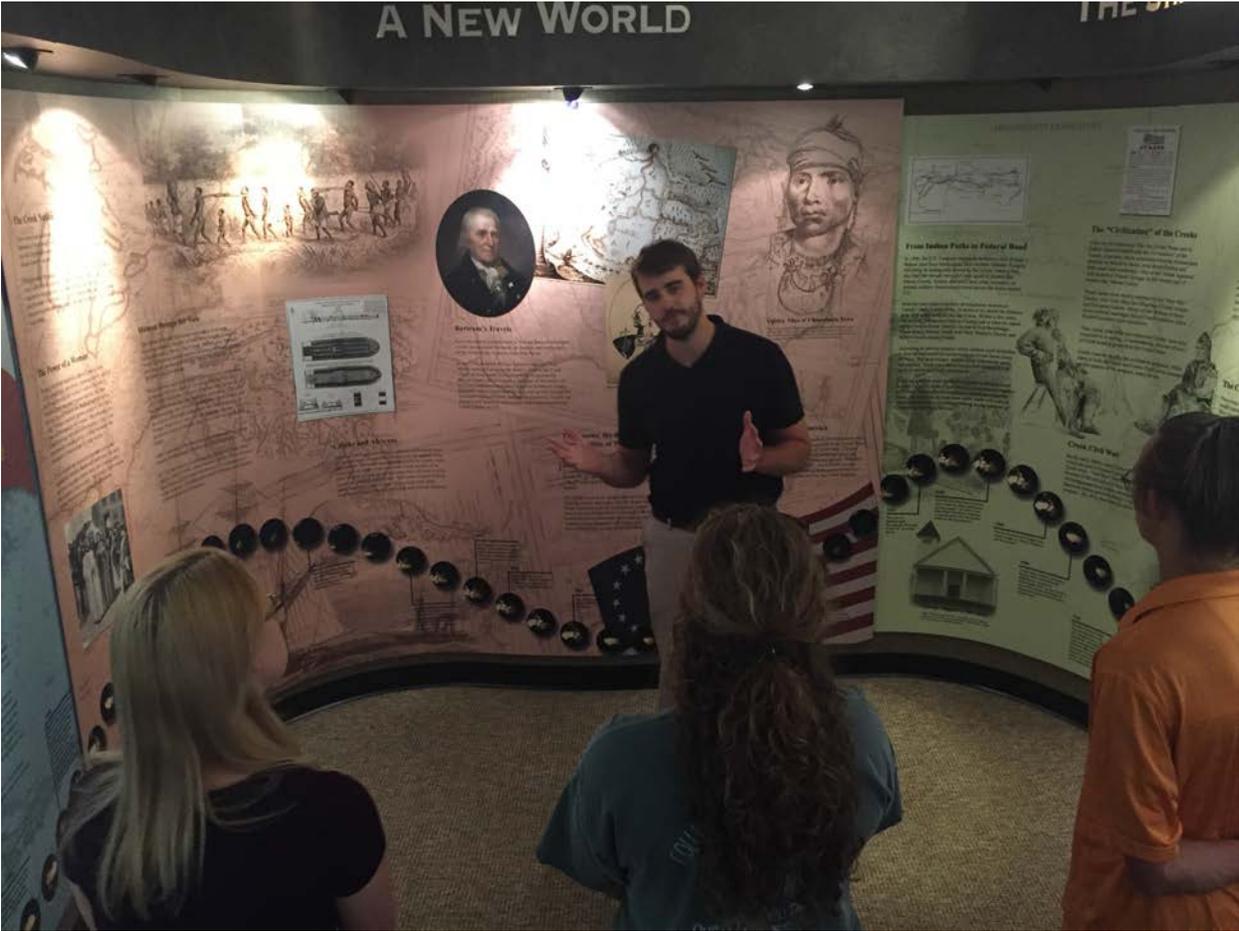
One of the best outcomes this year was that a former ATP student led projects (March 7, April 27) for his capstone in community and civic engagement with the students at Tuskegee Public School, more evidence of our willingness to listen and act when we discovered the interest and concerns of teacher, principal, and students.

Conclusions and Recommendations

“What changes did we hope would occur in the community as a result of the project?” We hoped a relationship between this school and Auburn University would develop, since we know that the resources of our university have great value in the community and economic development of our neighboring county. The working relationship expanded beyond the fall project and led to two significant leadership development opportunities for Tuskegee Public School students (college major fair on their campus and media workshop on our campus), outcomes that would not have been realized if we had not collaborated during the fall semester.

In retrospect, I should have begun the IRB process much earlier in the spring semester, well before the ATP project proposal deadline, since the process took much longer than I anticipated. I have already submitted information to IRB for next year’s project and received determination that it will not require an IRB protocol.

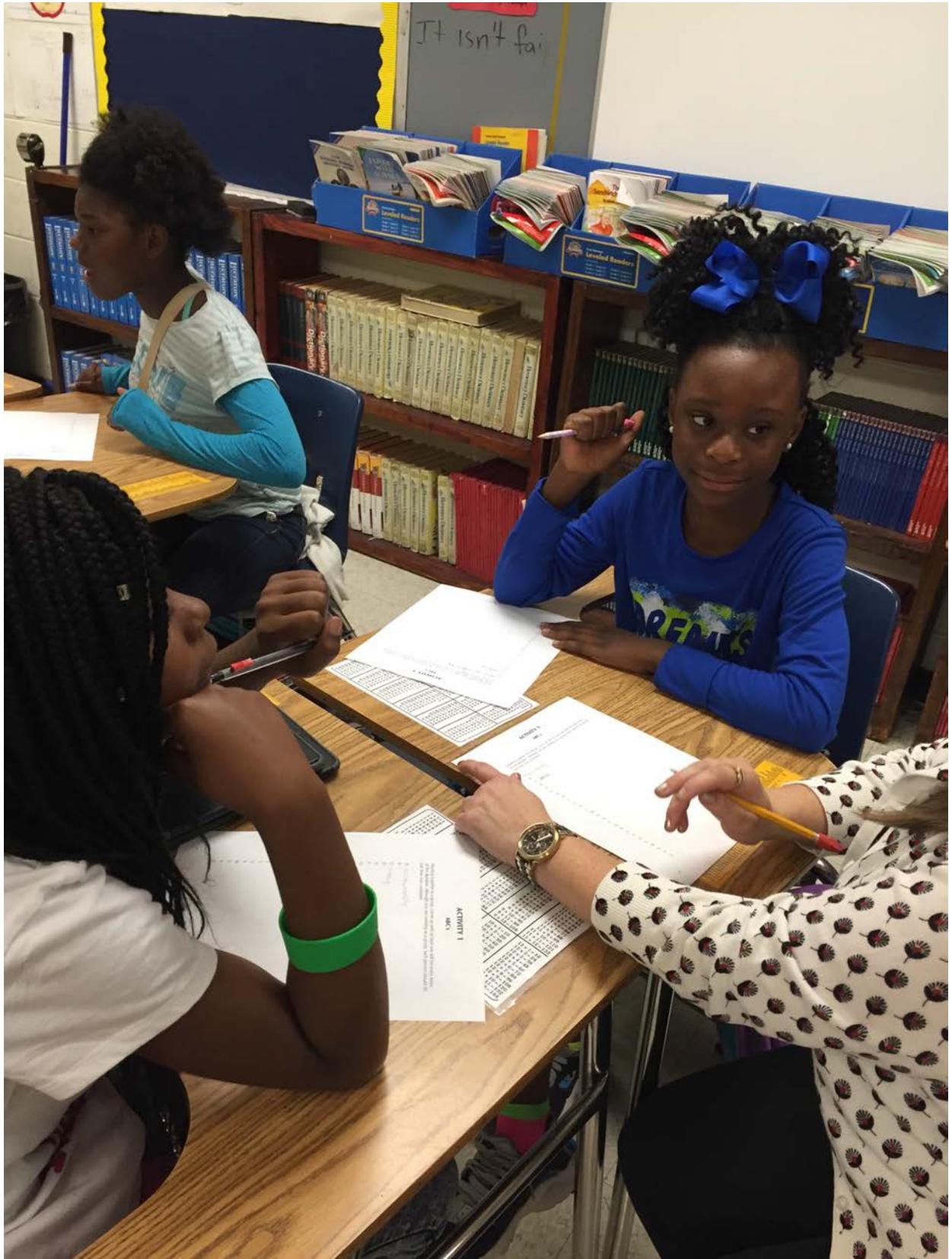
Auburn University 2016-17 Project Photos











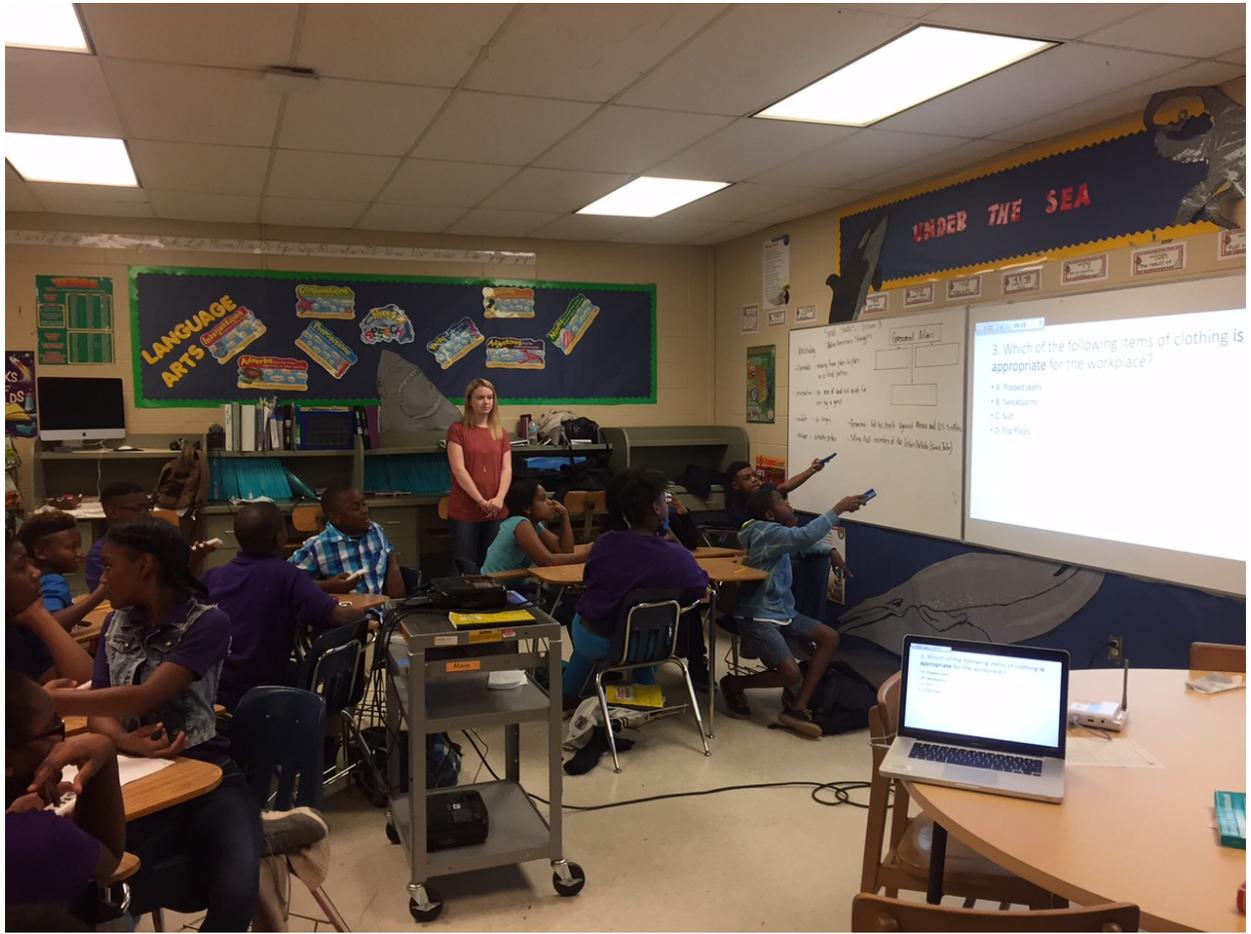












3. Which of the following items of clothing is appropriate for the workplace?

- A. Rolled jeans
- B. Sweatpants
- C. Suit
- D. Flip Flops

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Auburn University students head to Washington, D.C., for Appalachian Teaching Project symposium

Published: 11/30/2016

By: Maiben Beard (mailto:Maiben Beard)

A team of seven Auburn University students will attend the 16th annual Appalachian Teaching Project symposium Dec. 2-3 in Washington, D.C., where they will present the findings of their applied research project related to building a sustainable future for the Appalachian Region.

Hosted by the Appalachian Regional Commission with the Consortium of Appalachian Colleges and Universities, the symposium will welcome 150 students representing 14 schools from 11 Appalachian states.

Auburn's research team is led by Mark Wilson, who has been named an Appalachian Teaching Fellow for the 2016-17 academic year. Wilson is director of Civic Learning Initiatives and the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities in Auburn's College of Liberal Arts.

The Auburn team includes students from the course "Introduction to Community and Civic Engagement." Their research project, "Developing Students as Citizens in Macon County," included classroom activities on civic engagement and professional development in sixth-grade classes at Tuskegee Public School and Notasulga School and a survey of sixth-grade perspectives on Macon County and involvement in community activities.

During their trip to Washington, the Auburn University team will visit with Congressman Mike Rogers, tour the United States Capitol and be photographed with the Toomer's Oak descendant on the Capitol lawn.

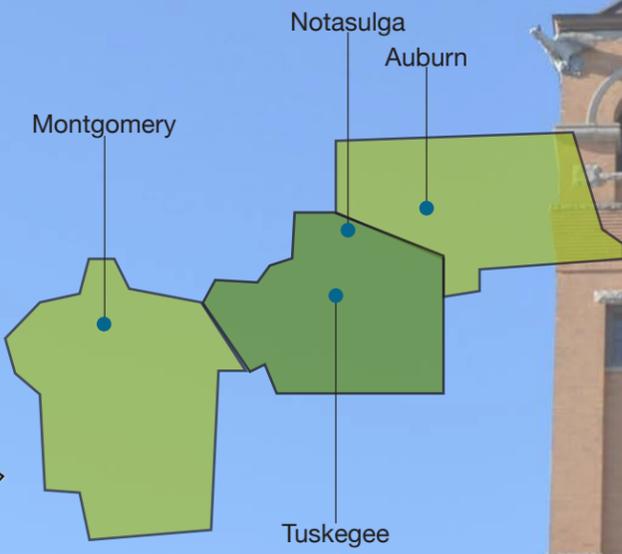
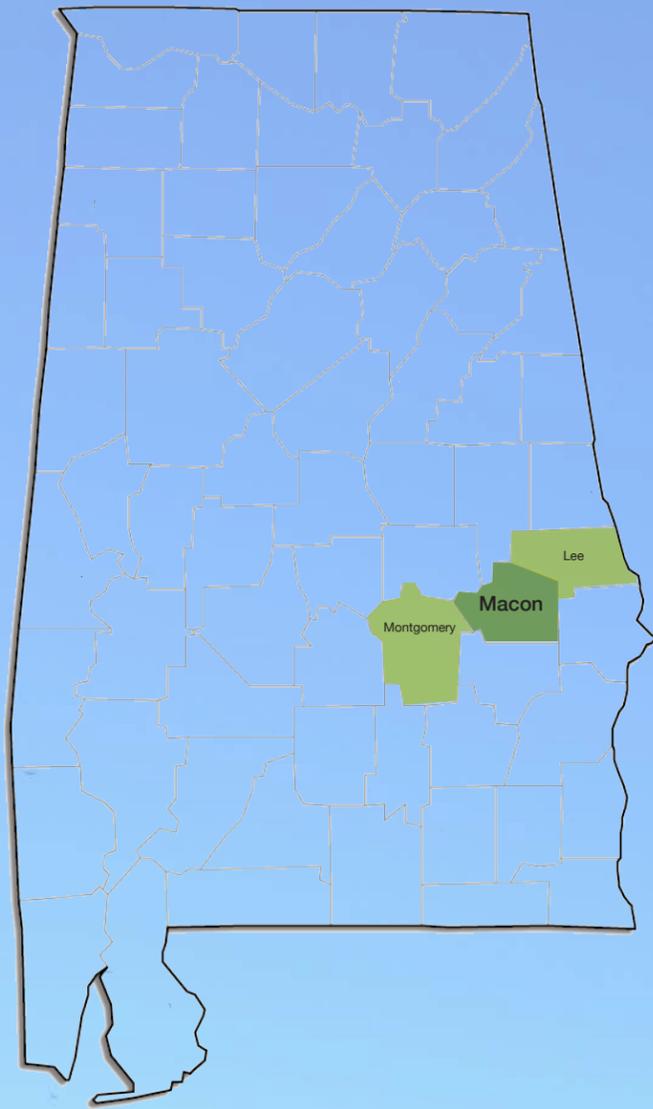
"Each year, the Appalachian Teaching Project brings together students from across the region to share their research, work and vision," said commission Federal Co-Chair Earl F. Gohl. "These next-generation leaders are energetic and innovative and give a glimpse into Appalachia's bright future."

Nearly 2,000 students from 20 colleges and universities across Appalachia have participated in the project since the program began in 2001. The Appalachian Teaching Project is supported by the Appalachian Regional Commission and organized by the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University.

The Appalachian Regional Commission, or ARC, is a regional economic development partnership of federal and state governments across 420 counties in 13 Appalachian states. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia.

For more information about the 2016 Appalachian Teaching Project conference, go to https://www.arc.gov/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=577 (https://www.arc.gov/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=577).

Last updated: 12/01/2016



“ We look at each other like brothers and sisters, so you know if we see one of each other down we offer to help.”

*-Marquez Hegley
Notasulga High School Senior*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Notasulga School
Principal Hooks &
6th grade teacher Mr. Williams

Tuskegee Public School
Principal Williams &
6th grade teacher Mr. Moore

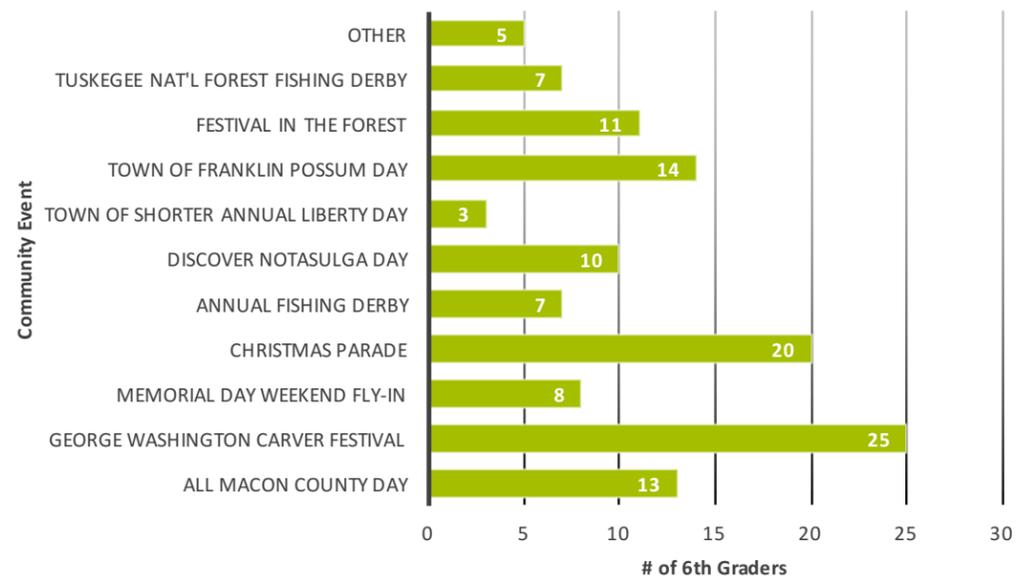
STRENGTHENING MACON COUNTY'S FUTURE

This report was created as a part of Auburn University's Appalachian Teaching Project. Report design by Foster Denney.

Results from a survey of 1/3 of Macon County 6th graders.



Macon County 6th grader **attendance** at community events:

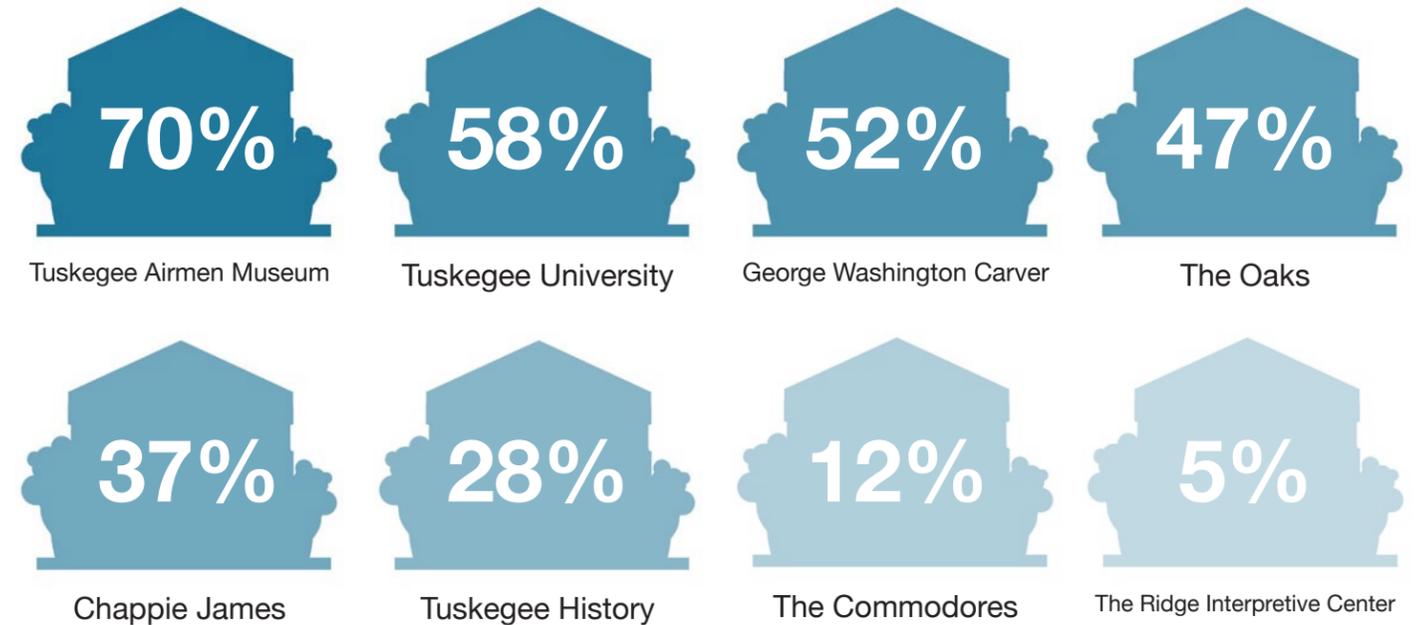


83%

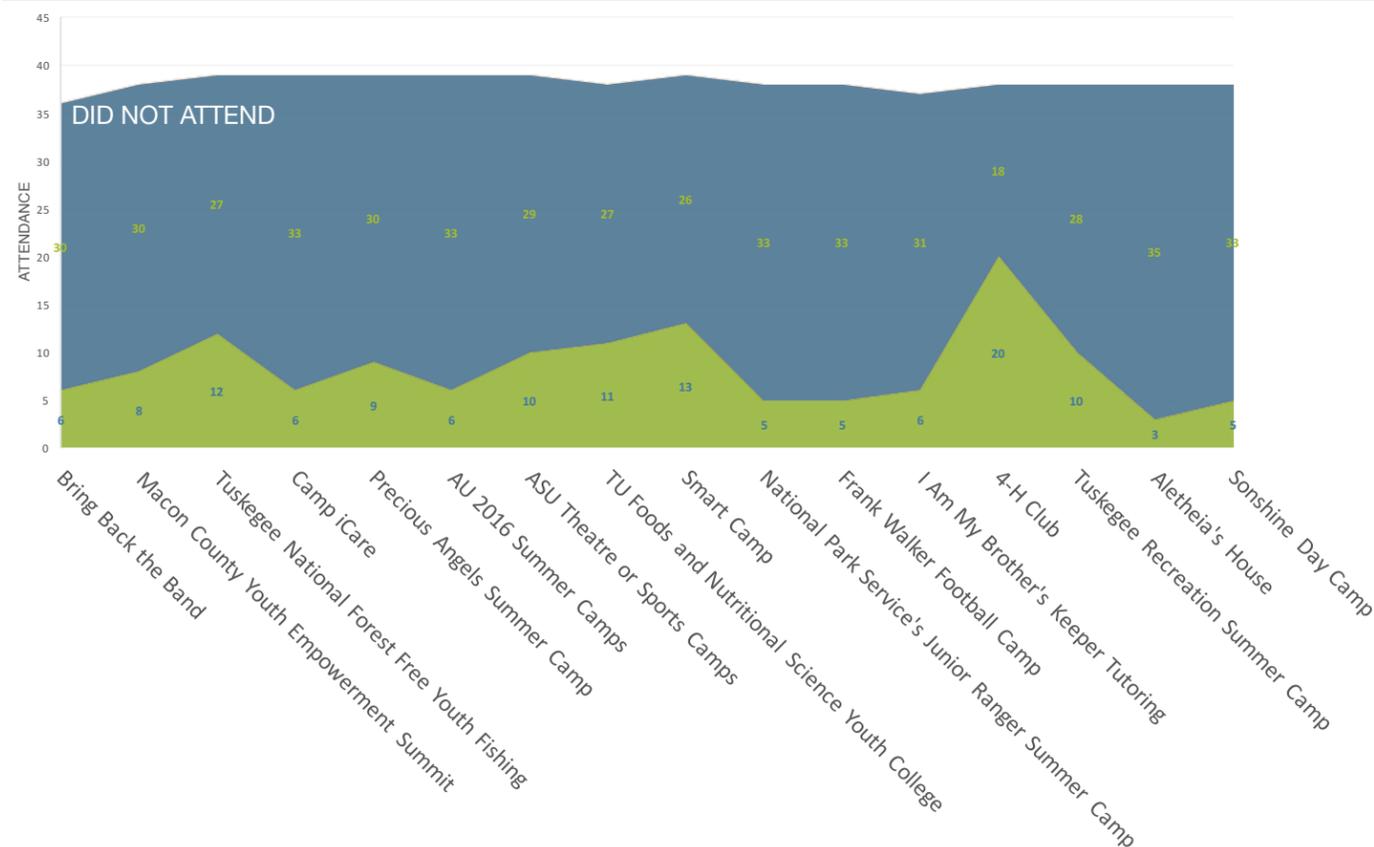
of surveyed 6th graders attended the George Washington Carver Festival and the Christmas Parade

What **museums** in Macon County do 6th graders visit?

% of 43 responses



What **youth programs** are 6th graders in Macon County attending?



What **activities** and **information** would 6th graders like to see more of in Macon County?

