

(Project Title)

**Foodways , Wildcrafting, and Natural Products:
Creating Sustainable Systems in Western Maryland**

(Sub-Contract Grantee Name/Authorized Signatory/Address/Phone)

(This is not the same person as the ATP faculty director.)

President Jonathan Gibraltar

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(ATP project date)

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(Date this document was submitted)

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Final Report Narrative

Name of Project: Foodways , Wildcrafting, and Natural Products: Creating Sustainable Systems in Western Maryland

Grant Period: August, 2013 – May 31, 2014

Grantee Name: Frostburg State University Project Director: Dr. Kara Rogers Thomas

Description of Project:

Working with Mountain City Traditional Arts (MCTA) and the Frostburg Farmers Market, students in two courses taught by Dr. Kara Rogers Thomas, (Folklore in Appalachia-Fall and Sociology of the Environment-Spring,) worked closely with community partners to foster a stronger appreciation for and raise awareness of sustainable foodways, wildcrafting, and natural products offerings in western Maryland. As part of the project students documented the work of those engaged in traditional sustainable practices in the region. Those short documentaries were premiered at Frostburg State University's "Focus Frostburg" campus and community sustainability event in April. Broken into segments, the films will be published through the Appalachian Independent, www.appindie.org, the MCTA Blog and will be available on YouTube. Additionally, students planned and produced several programs for MCTA featuring regional wildcrafting, foodways, and sustainable arts including a symposium on traditional split white oak baskets, a hands-on workshop on honeysuckle basketmaking, "Lore and Legends of the Hagerstown Almanack," "Huron Traditions and Sustainability with Ghost in the Head," and an early "Spring Seedling and Plant Sale," highlighting local Community Supported Agriculture.

Activities:

In Fall 2013 and Spring 2014 students enrolled in "Folklore in Appalachia" and "Sociology of the Environment" assisted in the production of the following events:

Antique Baskets Road Show and Basket Makers Exhibit, Saturday, October 19, 1-5 PM with Panel Discussion at 3 PM

Researched by FSU "Folklore in Appalachia" students, this event highlighted basketry traditions in Western Maryland while also providing participants with a free expert basket evaluation. Mr. James W. McCrobie, the last of six generations of basket makers, joined us for that day as the expert in McCrobie baskets. More than 60 baskets were assessed during the day. Folklore students recorded what basket owners knew about the baskets' histories and measured and documented each basket.

Basket Making Workshop with Lori Senese, Saturday, November 2, 2-4 PM.

Lori Senese specializes in both traditional and contemporary baskets. Traditional forms include Native American inspired pine needle, sweetgrass, honeysuckle and Cherokee design baskets; and full-size and

miniature Nantucket Lightship baskets. In this workshop, students and community members learned to craft a honeysuckle basket--completed during the workshop. Folklore students planned and advertised the event as well as participating in the workshop.

The History and Lore of the Hagerstown Almanack, Saturday, November 16

This regional publication has been an important resource for many folks for the past 216 years. It has the distinction of being the nation's second oldest almanac. It is also one of the most talked about almanacs around the world, providing some of the most accurate weather predictions available, as well as health, home and gardening tips. There are even predictions of the gender of unborn children. Folklore students planned the program and advertised the event.

Huron - Ghost in the Head- Demonstration and Talk, Sunday, November 24 at 3 PM.

Ghost in the Head, a Huron hailing from Pennsylvania, shared and demonstrated a treasure trove of museum quality hand-crafted reproductions of traditional Huron artifacts. Dedicated to the preservation of Huron heritage and practices, Ghost in the Head has appeared in multiple movies and TV shows. He works for a large variety of museums, teaching classes on Native American traditions, and has twice been recognized by Congress for his efforts to maintain Native Heritage. Folklore students planned the program and advertised the event.

Split White Oak Basket Symposium and Exhibit, Saturday, April 5, 1-3 PM

Mountain City Traditional Arts and the Center for Research in Basketry, Inc. (CRB) hosted a symposium and exhibit on the art and craft of Garrett County basket maker James McCrobie, Sr., on Saturday, April 5. The symposium launched an exhibit of McCrobie baskets, which continued through April 11. The event focused on McCrobie family stories highlighting a basket maker and his family who made and sold baskets to support themselves during the Depression. Sociology of the Environment students assisted in facilitating the discussion and advertising the event.

Seedling and Plant Sale with Local CSAs, Saturday, April 12, 10AM-2PM

Local CSAs--Community Supported Agriculture-- shared organic farm-fresh eggs, sausage, baked goods, and seedlings. Shitake mushroom logs from Backbone Food Farm were also available for anyone wanting to grow their own mushrooms and CSAs brought goat's milk soap, maple syrup and other regional favorites. Students in "Sociology of the Environment" assisted in planning and advertising of this event.

Students also met with area farmers with a passion for sustainability to document their work. Working by themselves or in pairs, students in both classes produced a combined total of 12 short videos documenting the following locations.

Backbone Farms CSA, Garrett County, MD

Cedar Rock Farm CSA, Mt. Savage, MD

Deep Creek Lavender Farm, McHenry, MD

Savage River Farm CSA, Garrett County, MD

Cider Documentary with Willis Summers of Beachy and Sons, Salisbury PA, and the Riverside Hotel, Friendsville, MD

Goodness Grows CSA, Centerville, PA

Frostburg Grows, Frostburg State University

Alpaca's at River's Edge Farm, Oldtown, MD

Organarchy Hops Farm, Oldtown, MD

Creation Laundry- Solar Powered Laundry Mat, Cumberland, MD

Spruce Forest Artisan Village, Grantsville, MD

Eby's Sawmill, Clearville, PA

Project Outcomes:

Presentation and Poster Presentation at the annual gathering of Appalachian Teaching Project participants in Washington, DC- December

Presentation at the Appalachian Studies Association's Annual Meeting, Huntington, WV –March

12 short documentaries

1 Program Sampler Documentary for Mountain City Traditional Arts

Documentary Screenings and Presentation at "Focus Frostburg" Campus and Community Sustainability Event- April

Problems Encountered:

Using the Frostburg Farmers Market as the jumping off point proved challenging for some students considering that by the time classes began in September there were only a handful of Farmers Markets remaining in the season. For the most part, however, the programs went smoothly in the Fall. Our most challenging task was getting students comfortable with interviewing techniques and video editing. In early Spring, students in "Sociology of the Environment" encountered several snow days, creating some scheduling issues that interfered with planning and scheduling.

Program Continuation and Sustainability:

The entire project was developed as a way to increase awareness of local agriculture and sustainability pursuits in western Maryland the surrounding region. In that regard, the project has been successful. Because of their participation in this project, FSU students are much more aware of area CSAs and farmers markets and have a better understanding of the rural community. Moreover, the programs and documentaries created as part of this project have generated broader recognition of local sustainability

initiatives. Local CSA farmers were so pleased with the seedling and plant sale that they have agreed to participate in a monthly off season farmers market at MCTA running in late October –early April. Finally, the films and programs will be featured in the 2014 FSU Appalachian Festival and all of the individuals interviewed will be invited to participate in the event.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the project was incredibly successful in exposing students and members of the regional community to the area’s sustainability initiatives. The programs at MCTA were well attended, with those on Huron practices and the Hagerstown Almanack attended by 45 and 40, respectively. Further, the Spring plant and seedling sale was quite successful, with more than 150 people visiting the shop over the course of the day.

In retrospect, more instruction and guidance in video editing should have been offered students; and instead of relying on verbal critiques of each project, typed feedback should have been provided. Moreover, a grade on both draft documentaries and students’ final projects should have been offered. Without that differentiation several students failed to revisit their projects after recommendations for improvement were made.

Attachments (and in PDF format):

[MCTA Movie- Sampler of Fall Programs](#)

[MCTA Blog- advertising](#)

Documentaries—The videos have not yet been uploaded. Those listed below are what the students themselves uploaded. In upcoming weeks, each of these and the rest will be posted to Youtube and the Appalachian Independent, www.appindie.org as well as to the MCTA blog.

[Backbone Farm](#)

[Goodness Grows](#)

[Savage River Farm](#)

[Cider Documentary](#)

[Frostburg Grows and National Dong Hwa University](#)