



# Appalachian Teaching Project

The Appalachian Teaching Project (ATP) engages students and regional citizens in posing answers to the question, "How can we build a sustainable future for Appalachian communities?" The project teaches students and communities about the work of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). Its state and local partners, and the goals of the Commission's strategic plan. The Consortium of Appalachian Centers is currently composed of 15 colleges, universities, and community colleges from the Appalachian region that are dedicated to working more closely together in service to the Appalachian region to improve the quality of life for its residents.

# Heirloom Seed Keepers & Their Stories

"We had no idea that enrolling in this class meant embarking upon a journey that would transcend the bounds of traditional curriculum and guide us into hills, gardens, and living rooms of a small North Georgia county. We were able to engage in research that made a difference."

-Jonathan Winskie, senior



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## Partners

Appalachian Regional Commission  
Dahlonega Farmers Market  
Downtown Development Authority  
Department of Visual Arts, UNG  
Department of Biology, UNG  
School of Education, UNG

# Growing Community & Sustainability through Arts based Research

For their 2012 Appalachian Teaching Project, the *Introduction to Appalachia* class, selected a methodology that would provide students and community members with reciprocal opportunities to engage in the local food system through cultural literacy. They interviewed local traditional bearers about foodway practices and heirloom seeds. Then they collaborated with students in the Arts Education program to create the communograph, a collective memory bank that artistically represents not only the seed savers' contributions of donated seeds and shared stories but also the community connections and conversations that led to locating the cultural tradition bearers.



"We hope that this art-based research design will build more social bridges between new and long-term residents of Lumpkin County and foster the sustainability of the local food system."

-Appalachian Studies students

## The Grindles

The Grindles plant heirloom seeds every year. Some seeds were passed down for many generations, such as the Running Crowder peas, which date back to the 1800's. The Grindles choose not to use any chemicals but instead use alternative organic methods such as planting bamboo around the garden as an air filter and for beans to use to climb up to keep them off the ground and prevent rotting posts. They can their own vegetables and make their own jellies preserves from their garden. The Grindles live off the land, but still keep up with modern technology. They pass down their knowledge, Appalachian values and culture with each new generation. They realize that they must instill in their grandchildren the value of fresh, home-grown produce and self-reliance. So far, it seems they are successful. Elizabeth proudly claims, "our grandchildren love the green beans so much they would eat them for breakfast".



## The Monroes

The Monroes have been gardening in Lumpkin County for 18 years. Connie Monroe plants more than 20 types of beans, many having been given to her years ago. She prefers to plant before the rain and plants marigolds with her tomatoes to keep the bugs and animals away.



## The Caldwelles

The Caldwelles have been growing their own food for at least 45 years. They rely on a Farmer's Almanac to determine the proper phases of the moon to plant, cultivate, and harvest their crops. The Goldie Bean has been passed down for more than 100 years. They plant it with corn so the beans can climb up the corn stalks.

