APPALACHIAN RESEARCH AND ENGAGEMENT AT ISSE

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WHY APPALACHIA

• Includes 13 states and is home to almost 26 million people.
• One of the most biodiverse regions on the planet
• Home to vast environmental and economic resources
• Historical energy source for the U.S.
• Significant public lands and a $60 billion travel industry
• Also among the poorest regions of the U.S.
• UT is the oldest land grant in the region
Established in 2019
Sponsored by The Appalachian Regional Commission
40 fellows from 13 ARC states
Group includes public officials, elected officials, nonprofit leaders, advocates, and business owners.
Just selected fellows for class 4
ALI TEAM

• Dr. Tim Ezzell – ISSE
• Cat Wilt – ISSE
• Dr. Katie Cahill – Baker Center
• Dr. Tasha Hargrove – Tuskegee University
• Bruce Decker – Collective Impact LLC
• UT ALI Student Fellow
PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Program runs from October to July
- Seven Sessions held across the Region
- Sessions based on ARC’s investment goals
- Curriculum emphasizes active and experiential learning
- Sessions include team challenges, breakout discussions, site visits, and expert speakers
- Online during COVID, back in person now
2021-2022 SESSIONS

• Kickoff – Asheville NC
• Economic Opportunities – Chattanooga TN
• Ready Workforce – Birmingham AL
• Critical Infrastructure – Youngstown OH
• Natural and Cultural Assets – Abingdon VA
• Capacity Building – Cumberland MD
• Graduation – Washington DC
SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS

• The coal transition
• Sustainable forestry
• Sustainable tourism
• Public lands
• Electric vehicles
• Green infrastructure
• Climate change impacts
ALI ALUMNI NETWORK

• Now almost 120 ALI alumni
• Adding 40 per year
• ARC hosts up to 4 alumni events per year
• We have already partnered with alumni and alumni communities on projects and proposals
Today is bittersweet.

Last Summer I applied for the Appalachian Leadership Institute. Something that I truly thought wasn’t going to happen for me. To my surprise, I was fortunate enough to be accepted into the program.

As a fellow, I met some AMAZING individuals. Every fellow in the program is a passionate, forward thinking, innovative leader in their community. I am definitely the socialite in most rooms, but the first working group had me all kinds of ways. Nervous, out of sorts, and extremely intimidated. After lots of discussion, long nights, and several karaoke songs 😃, we became more than colleagues. We are now graduates and great friends!

The institute teaches people to collaborate, think critically, and create change across Appalachia. I challenge you to envision a better Appalachia. What exactly does that look like to you? Whatever that is, work hard to make it happen.

This has been the greatest experience. Can’t wait to see you all again!

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It’s hard to find the right words to adequately describe the impact that the Appalachian Regional Commission’s Leadership Institute has had on my professional and personal life over the last year. I have had the honor and privilege to get to know some of the most passionate and brilliant minds to serve our Region! Happy Graduation Day to all of the 2019-2020 Fellows! 😊 The opportunities we’ve had and the ones that we will have with the new Fellows 😊!
APPALACHIAN TEACHING PROJECT

• Established in 2020, UT a founding participant
• Engages college students across Appalachia in community-based research projects
• Students travel to DC to present at the end of the semester
• Sponsored by the ARC
• 2022 will be my 20th ATP class
MY ATP APPROACH

• Class is a practicum in community development
• Students develop the work plan, set the timeline and develop a budget
• Students work in teams to complete tasks
• Students met with local stakeholders and residents
• Most class sessions are like staff meetings
• Many alumni credit the class with helping them get invaluable experience and gain confidence.
LAST YEAR’S CLASS

• Evaluated EV infrastructure along ADHS highway corridors in Tennessee
• Surveyed local residents and EV owners about needs and perceptions
• Conducted fields research, driving Evs the length of three corridors
• Identified potential charger locations and design priorities
• Presented at a virtual ATP conference
• Purchased an EV charger for the town of Cumberland Gap TN
CURRENT CLASS

• Will use the Cumberland Gap charger to determine potential economic benefits of a level 2 charger in a small destination community
• Will examine ways to promote EV tourism
• Will develop strategies to promote outdoor recreation in Cumberland Gap