

# **WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE- THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH**

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**Mentor  
Protect  
Nurture  
Teach  
Serve**



**2020-2022  
Biennial Review**





BETTER  
TOGETHER





**"The Little Red Wagon. A symbol of childhood. It could be filled with a child's hopes and dreams or weighed down with their burdens. Millions of American children need our help to pull that wagon along. Let's all pull together. That is America's Promise."**

**-General Colin Powell**

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**LET'S ALL  
PULL  
TOGETHER**





# A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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## **Pamela Mellott, State Director**

"Through a global pandemic, with many continued challenges, West Virginia's Promise has proceeded forward. We expanded our AmeriCorps VISTA resources in Ohio, placed a record high of AmeriCorps VISTA members, hired our Outreach Director, Morgan who has compassion, drive, and initiative to work as a part of a team alongside with me. We have expanded our Promise Board that is composed of individuals who bring knowledge, skills, and commitment to the program development and implementation of WV Promise, provided Mini-Grants to our community programs, and recognized an outstanding West Virginia youth and child serving organization, presenting them with The Red Wagon Award.



As Executive Director, with a warm heart, it is my pleasure to present this Promise magazine; giving you a snapshot of the impact our program has made throughout WV & OH in 2020-2022.

I am looking forward to 2023 continuing our efforts with new beginnings, offering many ways for people to get involved in making a better place to live, work, and play. We are devoted to improving the lives of young people through the key supports known as the Five Promises: Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, An Effective Education and Opportunities to Help Others."



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTORS

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**Morgan Weister, Outreach Director**



“What a thrill it has been to see the lives of so many children and youth impacted across both West Virginia and Ohio, these last few years. Having served as a VISTA myself, under WV’s Promise for almost 3 years, and now working directly with the program, I have been privileged to experience both sides of greatness within this nonprofit. Just by simply spending time with a child or youth and understanding their needs makes more of a difference than most people realize. That is what continues to drive us... me, towards paving the way for success in the lives of our next generations.”





# WE ARE WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE



Founded in 1998, West Virginia's Promise has continued to develop, enhance and sustain educational programs for at risk youth, for the past 24 years.

These efforts to forever change the lives of our children and youth can only be accomplished through the provision of our 5 Promises:

- Caring Adult
- Safe Place
- Healthy Start
- Effective Education
- Opportunity to Help Others







# WHAT ARE THE FIVE PROMISES?

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## ***1. Caring Adults***

Aimed at providing all young people of West Virginia and Ohio, with sustained adult relationships through which they experience support, care and guidance,



## ***2. Safe Places***

Provide a safe place that nurtures young people's skills and interests, enriches their academic performance and gives them opportunities to contribute to their communities.

## ***3. An Effective Education***

Assist in securing an educational foundation in basic skills, such as reading, writing, mathematics, science, technology and communication, in order to ensure success in the rising youth.

#### ***4. A Healthy Start***

Educate and provide examples for a healthy lifestyle. Aid in access, services, and opportunities needed for caregivers and youth to maintain their health.



#### ***5. Opportunities to Help Others***

Provide the opportunity for youth to make a difference in their families, at schools and in their communities.



A large white sign with a blue border and a blue star above the 'i' in 'Ohio'. The sign is mounted on a metal structure against a blue sky with white clouds.

Welcome To *Ohio*  
*So much to Discover!*

In 2022, West Virginia's Promise expanded into the state of Ohio, now making us a multistate program ! As a result, children and youth of various communities are being reached.



# AMERICORPS VISTA RESOURCES

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**Since 2006, West Virginia's Promise-The Alliance for Youth has been placing VISTA resources across the state, to ensure a brighter future for WV, and now OH's children and youth. WV's Promise provides and supports both Yearlong and Summer VISTAs as they focus on eliminating and alleviating poverty within their local communities while developing, enhancing, and sustaining educational programs.**

## **Yearlong VISTAs**

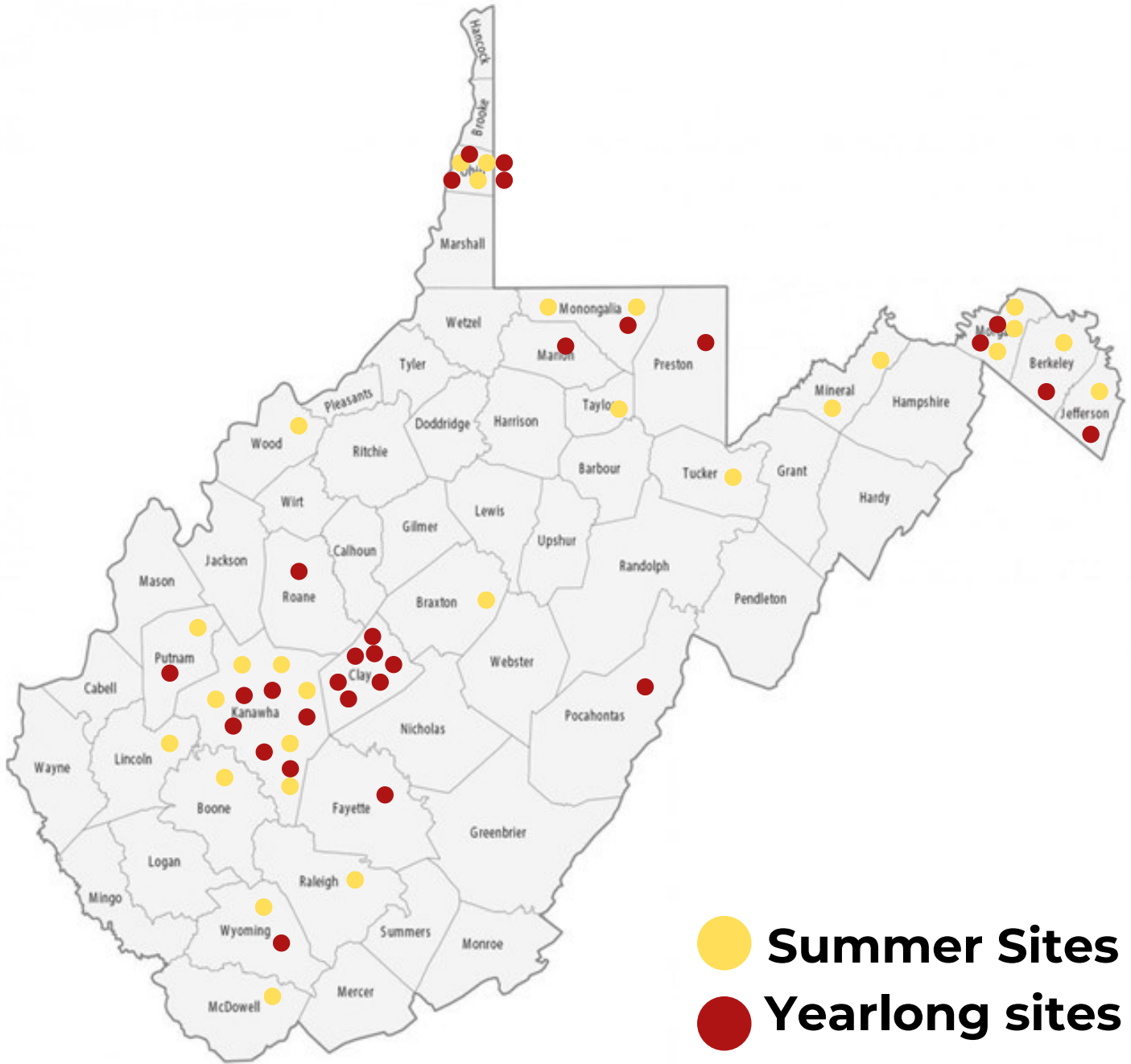
Yearlong VISTAs provide indirect services through capacity building, program development, volunteer recruitment, grant writing and community partnerships.

## **Summer VISTAs**

Summer Associate VISTAs provide direct services through everyday activities. Such activities include mentoring, tutoring and/or program facilitating to prevent summer learning loss in youth.



# FIND US ON THE MAP!



# FIND US ON THE MAP!





# OUR 2020-2022 IMPACT

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63

Yearlong AmeriCorps  
VISTAs served!

141

Summer Associate  
VISTAs served!





# 2020-2022 SUMMER ASSOCIATE VISTA IMPACT

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## Summer 2020

9,617



## Summer 2021

6,643



## Summer 2022

7,055



## Total

4 out of 5 promises were  
delivered to **23,315** children  
and youth





# 2020-2022 YEARLONG VISTA IMPACT

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**81,874** children were served through yearlong AmeriCorps VISTA programs.



**\$1,429,256** of in-kind contributions were leveraged through our yearlong VISTA programs.



**\$5,628,238** in cash resources were developed through yearlong VISTA programs.





# WORDS FROM OUR VISTAS

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## **Chloe Lefchak, AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer Coordinator-Grow Ohio Valley**

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Being a VISTA with Grow Ohio Valley has immersed me in a community that I love to serve and share my passion with. I have had the pleasure of meeting and serving alongside many wonderful people, both inside and out of my organization. I am especially proud of the relationships I have built with the leaders of community gardens in my town. With my organization's support, I am able to recruit community members to volunteer their time to maintain and improve these gardens. I am hopeful that these successful community gardens can inspire and help others grow their own food and live healthy lifestyles.



## **Rilei Levesque, AmeriCorps VISTA Development Coordinator- Youth Services System, Inc.**

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As a VISTA I engage in community development, grant writing and fundraising, community education and outreach, capacity building, and resource development. At Youth Services Systems, fellow VISTA's and I help plan, organize, and recruit volunteers to assist with important events and offer resources for children in the community and provide resources to adults in need as well. Youth Services Systems organizes impactful and educational events each year that are put on for members of the community. Some amazing events that YSS organizes and assists with each year are: Celebrate Youth, Kids in Care Picnic, The Good Samaritan Dinner, Logans Legacy Blood Drive, and many more! I feel very honored to serve my community and help the community gain knowledge of resources that are available to those in need. I live by the motto, "To give more than I receive" and I hope that everyone seizes the opportunity to give back!







# GROWTH DURING COVID-19

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In Summer 2022, State Director Pam Mellott, and Outreach Director Morgan Weister had the opportunity to share these books and masks with various programs and non-profits across West Virginia.



The Covid-19 pandemic was difficult on everyone. Several obstacles made day-to-day life more complicated, however, that didn't stop West Virginia's Promise! Despite the difficulties, WV's Promise continued growing! We gained and placed ten more AmeriCorps VISTAs across the state, and extended our partnerships with four more non-profits, placing AmeriCorps VISTAs in their programs as well.

In 2020, WV's Promise received a grant for \$10,000 from Save The Children. We were awarded another grant of \$5,000 from Save The Children in 2022, in addition to their generous donation of books and children's face masks to our program as well.

# 2022 MINI GRANTS

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WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE  
THE ALLIANCE FOR YOUTH

In 2022, West Virginia's Promise awarded 12 mini grants to assist other non-profits who are committed to building bigger and better community collaborations for children, youth, and their families.

These grants focused on programs fulfilling several of the Five Promises.

The total amount of funds awarded in these Mini Grants was \$5,975! All awarded funds sustained projects that support children and youth across the state.



# 2022 MINI GRANTS RECIPIENTS

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**Calhoun Family Resource Network:** \$500 – Calhoun County

**Charleston WV Thunder Sled Hockey:** \$500 – Kanawha,  
Lincoln, Putnam, Wayne, Clay Counties

**City of Ripley:** \$500 – Jackson County

**Dora B. Woodward Memorial Library:** \$500 – Wirt County

**Hamlin-Lincoln Co. Public Library:** \$500 – Lincoln County

**Hardy Co. Health & Wellness Center:** \$500 – Hardy County

**Logan Area Public Library:** \$500 – Logan County

**Monongalia Co. 4-H Leaders Association:** \$492.04 –  
Monongalia County

**North Elementary School:** \$482.94 – Monongalia County

**WVU Extension 4-H Office:** \$500 – Kanawha County

**WVU Extension Roane:** \$500 – Roane County

**WVU Family Nutrition Program:** \$500 – Raleigh County



# 2022 RED WAGON AWARD

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Since 2009, The Red Wagon Award has been granted to an outstanding organization devoted to improving the lives of young people, raising awareness, encouraging action, and engaging in advocacy to provide children the key supports we call the Five Promises.

We would like to recognize and congratulate our 2022 recipient:  
The Salvation Army: The Boys & Girls Club of Charleston





If your institution is interested in more information regarding the WV AmeriCorps Tuition Waiver, the financial office can refer to WV Code 18 B- 10 7 D. For additional information, you can also contact Hawley Carlson, Executive Director of Volunteer West Virginia/AmeriCorps West Virginia at [Hawley.r.carlson@wv.gov](mailto:Hawley.r.carlson@wv.gov) , Pam Mellott, State Director of WV Promise-The Alliance for Youth at [pamela.j.mellott@wv.gov](mailto:pamela.j.mellott@wv.gov) or Morgan Weister, Outreach Director for WV Promise- The Alliance for Youth at [morganweister@gmail.com](mailto:morganweister@gmail.com) .

# **WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE ADVISORY BOARD**

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**Annie Otto  
Community Liaison**

**Arthena Roper  
Jefferson County Magistrate**

**Audrey Morris  
Director, Morgan County Starting Points**

**Gwen Gaither  
Deputy Center Director, Harpers Ferry Job Corps**

**Jane Tabb  
County Commissioner, Jefferson County**

**Jen Grove  
Community Liaison**

**Jennifer Myers  
Director, Jefferson County Parks & Rec**

**Jessica Robinson  
Branch Manager, United Bank**

**Jim Klein  
Director, Shepherd University (Martinsburg Site)**

**Keith McIntosh  
Regional Coordinator, Senator Joe Manchin III Office**



# **WEST VIRGINIA'S PROMISE ADVISORY BOARD**

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**Kim Himes**

**Senior Vice President, Bank of Charlestown**

**Kimberly Moss**

**Director of Customized Training/  
Workforce, Blue Ridge CTC**

**Kristin Alexander**

**Director, Potomac Valley Audubon Society**

**Mark Peiffer**

**Program Manager, Community Markets**

**Mary Jo Brown**

**Community Liaison**

**Mercedes Prohaska**

**Realtor, Coldwell Banker Premier**

**Michelle Campbell**

**Community Relations Director,  
Hilltop An Inspirit Senior Living Community**

**Pat Hubbard**

**Workforce Specialist, Blue Ridge Community & Technical College**

**Shannon Winkleman**

**Site Administrator, P&G**

**Shawn Miller**

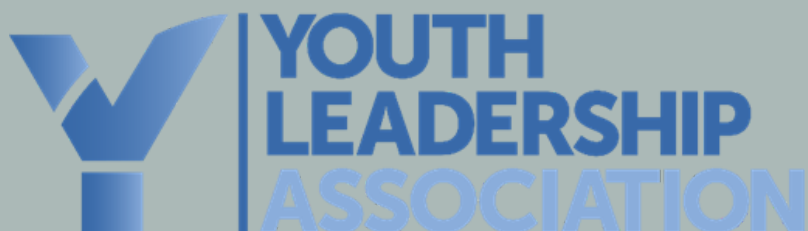
**Director, Harpers Ferry Job Corps**

**Tara Mahoney**

**Jefferson County School Board**

# THANK YOU TO OUR 2020-2022 SUMMER & YEARLONG HOST SITES

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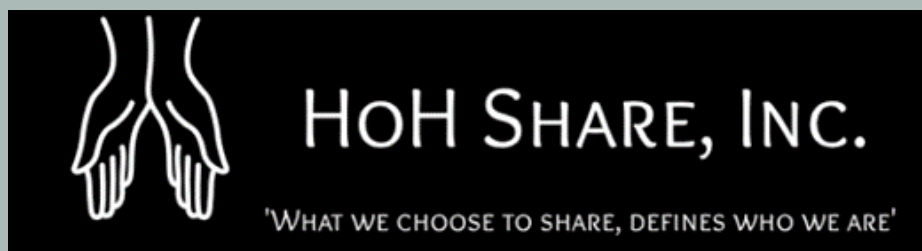
Elk City Renewal Association















*Thank You for Your Partnership!*



# GET INVOLVED

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Now is the time to make a difference and give back to your community. With substantial resources available, you can support and strengthen the lives of our children and youth in more ways than one. Start today. Be a caring person, show grace, lend a hand to someone in need, share your smile with those that you encounter..."Let's all pull together."

For more information regarding West Virginia's Promise- The Alliance for Youth, please visit [www.fivepromises.wv.gov](http://www.fivepromises.wv.gov)

If you are interested in serving as a VISTA or becoming a Partner Host Site for a Promise VISTA, please contact WV's Promise Director, Pamela Mellott at [pamela.j.mellott@wv.gov](mailto:pamela.j.mellott@wv.gov) ; or WV's Promise Outreach Director, Morgan Weister at [morganweister@gmail.com](mailto:morganweister@gmail.com)



# VISION

All young people in West Virginia are prepared for success in school, work, and life.

# MISSION

Mobilize national, state, and local partners so every young person in West Virginia receives the Five Promises.

# GOAL

West Virginia's Promise will mobilize communities, raise awareness, and support policies that increase the support young people have in communities where they live, work, and play.

**THE  
FUTURE IS  
BRIGHT**



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