



BRUSHY FORK

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE OF BEREA COLLEGE

As 2022 comes to a close, Brushy Fork staff members reflect upon a year that has included reviving a classic program, building community connections for leaders who support outcomes for children and youth, and creating a framework for communities to become welcoming places for all workers. The year also brought opportunities to support nonprofits carrying out important work in the region and to work with eastern Kentucky's communities that are picking up the pieces after historic summer floods. Through it all, people are at the center of this work. Our appreciation goes out to them and to the funders and sponsors who have supported our efforts. Brushy Fork looks back on 2022 with gratitude and enters 2023 with excitement as we continue serving leaders throughout central Appalachia.

A REVIEW OF 2022

**Reviving Brushy Fork's Core Community
Leadership Program**



Brushy Fork re-envisioned and implemented the team-based leadership program that was the organization's core founding work more than 35 years ago. With a focus on both individual leadership development and action in the community, this program brings together leaders from all walks of life.

In the spring of 2022, staff recruited teams of 15 diverse leaders in both Jackson County, Kentucky, and Scott County, Tennessee, to participate in the Brushy Fork Community Leadership Program. The cohort of 30 leaders explored leadership strengths and styles, developed their team, created a shared vision for the future of their community, and designed a project to work toward that vision while applying their leadership skills. Their projects, described below, will have lasting impact.

Jackson County, Kentucky

This team engaged local residents in cleaning up the community to support tourism development. Adopting the name Take Pride Where We Reside, the group also created a slogan, "Company's Coming." Over the course of the six-month program, they held two community clean-up events, led activities with students on the importance of cleaning up and recycling, and advocated for the county to enforce local ordinances related to litter and pollution. The group adopted a mascot and provided information at events to educate about local tourism and encourage people to clean up and beautify the county. Learn more about their ongoing work on their Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/TakePrideWhereWeReside>.

Scott County, Tennessee

Adopting the name Connect Scott, the Scott County team created a directory, both in print and online, that would connect agencies providing services such as food, housing, health care, employment, education, etc., to help community

members access needed services. Modeled after a similar project they found in Florida, the group plans to distribute printed directories to teachers, police officers, social workers, and others who might be able to refer people in need to resources. The county will help maintain the online version of the directory, which is at: <https://www.connectscott.com/>.

Launching the People Ready Communities Leadership Program



On November 9, Brushy Fork hosted the People Ready Communities workshop led by Haley McCoy, President and CEO of the Kentucky Association for Economic Development, and Judy Sizemore, arts and culture consultant. Thirty leaders gathered from throughout eastern Kentucky, representing various sectors, including education, public health, small business owners, tourism, and community development. The People Ready Communities concept advocates that everyone in the community plays a role in economic development by creating a place that welcomes and makes space for a diverse workforce to thrive.

In 2023 and 2024, the Brushy Fork Leadership Institute will offer the interactive, team-based Brushy Fork Community Leadership Program with

The framework engages local established and emerging leaders from various sectors, who will explore what it means to be People Ready and then will work toward building a welcoming and inclusive local economy. The program will position communities to respond to questions from industry, businesses, remote workers, and others who are seeking to locate in the region. Teams will develop and implement a short-term project that will support their community's People Ready Action Plan.

If you live in Bell, Clay, Floyd, or Perry County (Kentucky) and want to learn more about how you can join a team of 15 people from your community for a six-month leadership experience, please reach out to Program Coordinator, Jacqueline Corum,

Building places where children are safe, healthy, and supported

Through the Place Matters Initiative, Brushy Fork supported outstanding community leaders working to improve outcomes for children and youth in the Kentucky Promise Zone. As a member of the Appalachian Cradle to Career Partnership, which includes [Partners for Rural Impact](#), [Fahe](#), [Save the Children](#), and [EKCEP](#), Brushy Fork has:

- Led online Leadership Development workshops focused on communication, conflict management, and leadership strengths with more than 100 [Prosper Appalachia](#) interns, ages 16-24.
- Brought more than a dozen middle and high school students to Berea's campus for leadership training and tours of campus.
- Facilitated 25 board development trainings and led strategic investment planning meetings with the eight [Affiliate Community Foundation boards](#) of the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky; worked with the Affiliates on strategic grantmaking for organizations impacting children, distributing \$149,000 in grant awards using strategic grantmaking criteria.
- Distributed more than \$200,000 in grant dollars to support the following:
 - Arts and culture education for children at [Hemphill Community Center](#) and [Cowan Community Center](#), through creating podcasts about life in the mountains and managing theater productions with professional staging, sound, and lights.
 - Programming and supplies for Red Bird Christian School's STEAM Center to enhance career exploration and workforce readiness for students and community members, and improving transportation access for community members in Bell, Clay, and Leslie who utilize [Red Bird Mission](#) programs and services.
 - A leadership development program and community service project for six youth at [Thompson Scholars](#) in which the young people built a new fence around the community's splash pad, installed new playground equipment, and a painted a new mural; a hardship fund for 37 youth in Manchester,

KY, and refurbished computer equipment to allow for online learning for students.

- Opportunity Pine Mountain at [Pine Mountain Settlement School](#), in which 13 interns got hands-on experience with arts and crafts combined with workforce development training. Items created for sale by students can be found [here](#).



Listening Sessions to Support Flood Recovery Efforts in Eastern Kentucky—Breathitt, Knott, Letcher, and Perry Counties

In partnership with the [Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky](#), Brushy Fork launched a Flood Response Survey and facilitated listening sessions in Breathitt, Knott, Letcher and Perry Counties with folks directly impacted by the July 2022 flooding. More than 560 people responded to the survey and more than 450 attended listening sessions. The needs expressed by flood-impacted survey respondents and listening session attendees will inform the Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky’s investments in flood recovery efforts and can also be used by the counties’ Long-Term Response Groups.

Supporting Nonprofit Leaders

2022 Brushy Fork Leadership Summit

In September, 120 leaders from across Central Appalachia convened on Berea College’s campus for the 2022 Leadership Summit. This year’s Summit saw a record number of 19 high school students in attendance. Throughout the

Summit, participants created visionary art boards that later became part of an interactive exhibit at the Berea Arts Council. During the exhibit, community residents in Berea created their own art boards.

Becky McCray of [SaveYour.Town](#) shared the Idea Friendly method, which focuses on how small, rural communities can take local action for community development. The approach advocates for a willingness to listen to new ideas and take small, incremental steps toward big-picture goals. A recording of the keynote address is on Brushy Fork's YouTube channel, [here](#).

Nonprofit leaders gained skills through a variety of seven-hour workshop tracks focused topics such as legal management of their organization, developing sustainable fundraising plans, communication and conflict management, and empowering youth leaders. The tracks represent a total of 840 hours of professional development for nonprofit leaders in the region.

2022 Brushy Fork Leadership Summit

– by the numbers –

120 regional leaders

19 youth

4 workshop tracks

840 hours of professional development

Mountain Association's Small Nonprofit Peers Accelerating Rural Eastern Kentucky (SPARK)

Brushy Fork has supported the Mountain Association's work to empower leaders of nonprofits with budgets less than \$100,000 per year. Brushy Fork staff facilitated a half dozen monthly peer learning forums for members of SPARK, for nonprofit leaders to connect and learn from one another, pitch ideas, and tap into resources to support their organization. Additionally, Brushy Fork has provided coaching and consultation to SPARK members, including Thompson Scholars and the Southeast Kentucky African American Museum and Cultural Center. Learn more about SPARK, [here](#).



BRUSHY FORK

LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

A STRATEGIC INITIATIVE OF BEREA COLLEGE

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

The Brushy Fork team wishes all our community partners across the region a peaceful holiday season and a happy new year!

Have you experienced an impact from Brushy Fork?

We welcome your thoughts and stories about any impacts you have experienced with Brushy Fork this year. Send us an email at brushyfork@berea.edu or share to our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BrushyForkInstitute>.



Copyright © 2022 Brushy Fork Leadership Institute, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

Brushy Fork Institute | Berea College
CPO 2164, Berea College
Berea, Ky 40404

[Add us to your address book](#)