Appalachian Higher Education Network

Shawnee State University (2011)

A former Ohio Appalachian Center for Higher Education program site.

Appalachian Ohio

OACHE, established in 1993, unites colleges, universities, K-12 schools and the private sector to increase the region's college-going rate, which is currently only half the national average. It worked to build an uncommon partnership between public postsecondary institutions and public high schools in Ohio. Shawnee State University's efforts to increase postsecondary education access and success include three TRIO programs and College Credit Plus, Ohio's dual credit program. Over the last three years, the number of high school students participating in the dual credit program increased from 100 to 500. The greatest achievement appears to be an acceptance of the role of postsecondary education-going and succeeding in improving the region's economy.

20 Public Schools Served

6,000 Students Served

First-Generation College Students Served 60%

Services & Resources Provided

School/Community Displays
School-wide Activities and Celebrations
Career Exploration Activities
College Visits
Entrepreneurship Programs
College Test Prep
JobFest Annual Career Fair
Computer Coding Academy
Summer Bridge to Success Program

Participating High Schools' On-Time Graduation Rate 90%

Participating High Schools' Postsecondary Enrollment 1,500 students

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INVESTMENTS IN OHIO
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The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a federal-state partnership. Its mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in 420 counties across the 13 Appalachian states. ARC’s strategic plan identifies five investment goals to advance this mission: creating economic opportunity; preparing a ready workforce; building critical infrastructure; leveraging natural and cultural assets; and cultivating leadership and community capacity.

In partnership with the Ohio Governor’s Office of Appalachia, ARC has supported 41 projects in Ohio totaling nearly $9.7 million. These investments have been matched by $34.4 million and will attract an additional $5.0 million in leveraged private investments in Ohio. They will also create or retain 750 jobs, train and educate more than 400 students and workers, and benefit the two million residents in Ohio’s 32 Appalachian counties.

INVESTMENT PRIORITIES IN OHIO

The Ohio Governor’s Office of Appalachia has prioritized these three ARC investment goals:

**ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**
ARC has invested nearly $2.2 million in entrepreneurial and business strategies to strengthen the economy in Appalachian Ohio.

**READY WORKFORCE**
ARC has invested over $2.2 million to increase the education, knowledge, skills, and health of Ohio’s Appalachian residents to work and succeed.

**CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**
ARC has invested nearly $3.9 million in Ohio’s critical infrastructure development, including broadband, transportation, and water/wastewater systems.

**ADDITIONAL PRIORITIES**
ARC has invested nearly $1.4 million to leverage cultural and natural assets and cultivate leadership and community capacity in Appalachian Ohio.

IMPACT ON DISTRESSED COUNTIES

In Appalachian Ohio, 7 counties were considered economically distressed in fiscal year 2016. 21 projects totaling 74% of ARC investment dollars will have a direct impact on these counties.

INVESTMENTS IN ACTION

Momentum is growing to help southeast Ohio train workers, build infrastructure, and expand market opportunities to meet the needs of the growing renewable energy market sector and diversify the local economy. For instance, ARC invested $1.4 million for Hocking College in Nelsonville, Ohio, to develop the Appalachia RISES (Revitalizing an Industry-Ready Skilling Ecosystem for Sustainability) Initiative and work with other training institutions to create and support workforce development to meet the needs of several emerging alternative energy sectors, including solar. Another grant went to Rural Action in The Plains, Ohio, to develop a strategic plan and feasibility study for the Appalachian Ohio Solar Supply-Chain Initiative. This regional planning effort will focus building a partnership to develop a regional solar manufacturing supply-chain in response to a major utility’s plan to deploy new solar resources in Ohio and could create hundreds of new jobs in the solar industry.