Spotlight on Regional Impact 2007-2013

United for Success
This year marks the sixth anniversary of the formation of the Office of Regional Outreach (formerly Regional Stewardship and Outreach) at Murray State University. It has been my pleasure to be a member of the Regional Advisory Council since its inception and currently serve as the chair. I am honored to be one of 21 individuals committed to assisting Murray State in its effort to strengthen our partnership with the service region.

We have been fortunate to be able to support the implementation of many programs that touch all levels of education. These pilot programs have spread region-wide and have introduced innovative learning in the fields of science, technology, engineering, math, cultural awareness, health and much more. The following highlights a great deal of the work that has been accomplished, and we intend to do much more.

With the support of the president, the MSU Board of Regents and the university partners, we will continue to identify and address needs to accomplish the mission of partnership between the council and the university to improve educational attainment for all citizens of far west Kentucky. We feel it is through this attainment that we will see the most improvement in the region’s welfare. Here’s to even greater success and impact for the next five years.

John H. Rufli
Chair
Regional Advisory Council

As the executive director of the Office of Regional Outreach at Murray State, I am honored to serve as the chief advocate for linking the resources and knowledge of the university to the needs of our 18-county service region. This initiative, which was legislated in 2006 through the support of the Council on Postsecondary Education, seeks to promote regional and statewide economic development, livable communities, social inclusion, creative governance and civic participation through public engagement activities led by faculty, staff, students and citizens of the region.

Indeed, Murray State has a rich history of institutional service. Its mission embraces teaching, research and service excellence as core values and guiding principles that promote economic development and the well-being of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. I am grateful for the thoughtful, thorough work that is contained in this report and pleased to share the significant results from the past six years (2007-2013).

The mission of Regional Outreach is not to maintain the practices of today or fix the problems that may arise, rather to plant the seeds of change that will build a better quality of life for future generations to succeed in the 21st century. The success of this vision includes continuous strategic planning, implementation and assessment — which can be attributed to the dedication of our staff, Advisory Council members, project leaders — and continued support of university administration.

Thanks to all who are helping to create a brighter future for our region.

Gina Winchester
Executive Director
Office of Regional Outreach
Regional Outreach

Vision Plan

The Murray State University Regional Advisory Council shares a vision of a united West Kentucky changing its culture to succeed in the new century.

This United for Success Vision Plan is the direct result of a state legislative initiative called Regional Stewardship and Outreach. It was enacted by House Bill 380 through the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) in the spring of 2006 to support the Public Agenda established by House Bill 1. The Regional Stewardship and Outreach Program creates and sustains partnerships between universities and other organizations to tackle problems that are important to the quality of life and economic prosperity of their regions.

With the guidance of CPE, the first step in the process was to form a Regional Advisory Council comprising local community leaders from across Murray State University’s 18-county service region to assist in identifying regional needs, and to set stewardship priorities. In the spirit of partnership, it was crucial that this leadership group be intergenerational and broadly diverse, representing a cross-section of stakeholders.

The 21-member Regional Advisory Council, after being tasked with the challenge of collectively assessing the needs of the region, spent most of six months gathering data and soliciting ideas from citizens throughout West Kentucky on how to make their communities a better place to live and work. The result included 73 pages of information which is now housed on our website at www.murraystate.edu/outreach.

In developing the vision plan, the Council also conducted a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats analysis using the expertise of an outside consultant, NewCities Institute. The shared vision created by the Advisory Council led to four specific goals and projects highlighted on the next few pages. These goals are interlocked by shared values of excellence, partnerships and innovation centered on educational attainment.

“It has been a rewarding privilege to work with leaders from all across this region in an effort to build a foundation for regional improvement and success. It is my hope that the work that has begun will continue in order that every corner of this area may become all that its resources will allow and its citizens deserve and desire.”

- Greg Pruitt, Past Council Chair

Regional Impact

Below are some numbers that help illustrate the impact of this initiative across West Kentucky from 2007-2013:

- 61 projects funded
- Funded 36 sponsorships
- 475 regional events
- Formed over 200 strategic partnerships
- Over 188,000 people reached
- Over $1,270,960 invested in communities
- Over $2,700,000 in outside funds leveraged in support of educational attainment
4 Strategic Goals

1. Educational Attainment
2. Job Creation/Entrepreneurial Spirit
3. Collaborative Partnerships
4. Quality of Life

Project $ by Impact Category

- Educational Attainment: 69%
- Job Creation & Innovation: 15%
- Collaborative Partnerships: 10%
- Quality of Life: 6%
Outreach by the Numbers

- Attention was given to each of the strategic goals, but the top priority in project funding is educational attainment, accounting for 69 percent of funding and over half the number of all grants and sponsorships awarded.

- Over 70 percent of all outreach efforts have been targeted at K-12 populations — future potential MSU students.

- Every county, school and district within the 18-county service region has been impacted by the project work of Regional Outreach with the main focus area being on STEM education.

- Regional Outreach has assisted in creating 70 new jobs and over 180 strategic partnerships.

Programs by Targeted Populations

- Pre-K: 2%
- Elementary: 24%
- Middle: 12%
- High School: 31%
- Community: 9%
- Educators: 8%
- Professionals: 7%
- College: 7%
- Arts/Culture: 0%
- Educational Leadership: 4%
- Business and Entrepreneurs: 4%
- STEM: 14%
- Community & Nonprofits: 1%

Funds Invested by Focus Area

- Early Childhood: 41%
- Reading: 14%
- Health: 10%
- Environmental: 11%
- College Prep: 0%
- Agriculture: 1%
- Community & Nonprofits: 2%
- Arts/Culture: 4%
- Educational Leadership: 4%
- Business and Entrepreneurs: 5%
- STEM: 8%

Types of Grants and Scholarships

- External Projects: 50%
- Internal Projects: 38%
- Sponsorships: 12%

- Internal: Granted to MSU-based organizations
- External: Granted to Community-based organizations
- Sponsorships: Non-grant monies invested in outreach work
A united West Kentucky will prepare its citizens to compete in the new global economy by increasing the number of degree holders at every level and raising academic performance to national standards, while providing opportunities for lifetime learning.

Shakespeare in the Schools/Shakespeare Festival

Shakespeare in the Schools was created by faculty in MSU's Department of English and Philosophy to address changes in educational standards put forth by Senate Bill 1. This partnership initiative has trained dozens of regional teachers in a range of pedagogical approaches to poetry and drama using the works of Shakespeare. Dr. Barbara Cobb was asked to present her research on improvements in reading, listening, speaking and writing in grades 3-8 as a result of this initiative at the prestigious National Conference of Teachers of English in November 2012. The project is anchored by MSU’s wildly popular annual Shakespeare Festival featuring performances by the American Shakespeare Center of Staunton, Va. In 2013, the festival attendance topped 2,800, about half of which were middle and high school students.

Project leaders: Dr. William “Rusty” Jones and Dr. Barbara Cobb, professors of English, College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Reggio Emilia Conferences/The Wonder of Learning Exhibit

Working in partnership with Audubon Area Community Services, Henderson Community College and Fine Arts Center, University of Southern Indiana and the Community Early Childhood Councils in the region, MSU helped to promote an international traveling exhibit for early childhood educators in the region. Over the course of the 2012-13 year, 600 early childhood educators across 13 states attended the conferences, with over 15,000 individual visits to the exhibit. As a result, several Reggio-inspired classrooms have been and will continue to be developed in the region. The project received a national award from the Southern Early Childhood Association and a state award from the Kentucky Association for Early Childhood Education.

Project leaders: Nancy Roberts - Audubon Area Community Services, Inc. and Terry Green - Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation

First Lady Jane Beshear meets with visitors at Reggio exhibit
**Graduate Kentucky**

The Office of Regional Outreach worked with Kentucky’s First Lady Jane Beshear to increase awareness about dropouts in Kentucky and share best practices by which communities can help reduce the dropout rate. In February of 2010, MSU hosted Graduate Kentucky: A Community Approach, A Regional Dropout Prevention Summit. To date, 14 of the 24 school districts in our service region have opted to sign on early to legislation passed in 2013 to increase the dropout age from 16 to 18.

**Falcon Academy**

In 2009, Robbie Rudolph, a Murray businessman with roots in Fulton County, and his wife Lisa, created a foundation to provide financial educational assistance to four schools in the river counties. The Four Rivers Foundation assisted Hickman County High School in establishing the Falcon Academy, which offers juniors and seniors the opportunity to take dual credit courses from several institutions. In the first year, all 54 seniors graduated with 777 credit hours. In the second year, 48 seniors earned 842 hours. In the third year, 111 juniors and seniors earned 1,149 hours. MSU partnered with the Falcon Academy in 2010 offering up four courses both online and in the classroom. This pilot program gave birth to Racer Academy which now offers dual credit courses to students all over the state of Kentucky. As a result of this partnership, the Falcon Academy has changed the culture of Hickman County School by improving the average ACT score two points and going from 140th in the state to second for college and career readiness. This program has been showcased across the nation.

**STEM Initiatives**

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Conservation District of Calloway County secured four regional grant awards to host educational events centered on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) initiatives. In 2008, we brought to the region a traveling science exhibit from the Louisville Science Center called “The World We Create.” The exhibit was promoted in every school in the region via combining Conservation District and MSU resources. Over 3,000 visitors from 10 counties attended the exhibit. In 2009, another traveling exhibit called “The Wonders of Physics” was secured and toured around the region. In 2010, 2011 and 2012, Jason Lindsey “The Science Guy” partnered with us to take his Hooked on Science show to schools in all 18 counties. Over the course of three years, over 75,000 children have experienced the excitement and wonder that Jason brings to learn about science.

*Project leader: Cindy Cossey, USDA Conservation District of Calloway County*

Regional Outreach also supported three years of internally-based STEM-related programs through a partnership with MSU’s Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology (CSET). CSET coordinated numerous well-attended campus events for K-12 students across the region including Project Lead the Way, Girls in Engineering, JETS/TEAMS competitions, National Boy Scout and Girl Scout and CSET field days.

*Project leaders: Dr. Carrie Cox, CSET outreach coordinator and Dr. Danny Claiborne, CSET chair*
Educational Attainment continued

Environmental Education

Regional Outreach supported two environmental education initiatives across the region since 2008. Through MSU’s Center for Environmental Education, over 90 K-12 teachers have attended a seven-day residential institute at Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area providing hands-on learning they can take back to the classroom. The Pennyrile Resource Conservation and Development Area Council also received grants to coordinate environmental education programs at Jeffers Bend Environmental Center and Botanical Garden in Hopkinsville. Over 40 presenters and 1,500 individuals participate in the hands-on sessions every year. They also offer workshops specifically for teachers regarding ways to incorporate nature and the environment into their curricula.

Project leaders: Dr. Joseph Baust, Center for Environmental Education and Charles Turner, RC&D coordinator, Jeffers Bend Environmental Center and Botanical Garden

Agricultural Education Initiatives

MSU’s Hutson School of Agriculture partnered with Regional Outreach on a variety of projects to strengthen linkages with regional community colleges and high schools to promote education in the food and agricultural sciences. “Project Access” spearheaded their initiatives in 2008 by placing adjunct agriculture instructors in community colleges and has subsequently expanded to offer college credit courses to high school students via the Racer Academy. In addition to curriculum development, a Regional Precision Agriculture Seminar and Field Day was held to expose as many as possible to new field technologies.

Project leader: Dr. Tony Brannon, dean, Hutson School of Agriculture

Math Out of a Bag

Math Out of a Bag, created by faculty from MSU’s College of Education, provided assistance to schools indicating non-proficiency in mathematics as a response to the call to assist these schools with the implementation of Senate Bill 1 directives. The project targets four area elementary schools to augment professional development to teachers, provide math instruction training to parents and students, and establish math clubs to continue focus on mathematics. “Family Math Nights” were an integral component of Math Out of a Bag in which parents and/or other caregivers learned alongside their children. These fun-filled evening math fairs provided instruction from MSU student teachers at learning stations devoted to mathematical concepts like time, percentages and fractions.

Project leaders: Pam Matlock and Greg Gierhart, College of Education
LEGO® Robotics

By popular demand, the College of Education expanded its reach to interested students by taking the LEGO® Robotics Summer Camps from MSU’s campus to several schools in the region and incorporated a teacher training workshop into the program. In the spring of 2012, Dr. Brandi King worked with 13 regional teachers on how to use LEGO® Robotics in the classroom to teach math and science concepts. The pilot program involved teachers attending the workshop, observing a summer robotics camp, and using one of the robotics kits for a year within their classrooms or in an afterschool program. Research is being conducted to determine impact on student learning patterns. Regional grant funds helped to provide LEGO® kits to the teachers and offset the cost of travel for training.

Project leader: Dr. Brandi King, assistant professor, College of Education

Superintendent Leadership Academy/ New Principal Mentor Program

The West Kentucky Educational Cooperative and the MSU College of Education, in collaboration with the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, partnered with Regional Outreach to host a Superintendent Leadership Academy and New Principal Mentor Program. These partners implemented a seminar series for current and aspiring central office and school administrative personnel. The series enhanced leadership and personal skills in the areas of finance, personnel and instructional management through exposure to a variety of nationally recognized experts in the field. School districts selected a mentor for each new principal/superintendent with the expectation that each mentor would commit to a minimum of 20 contact hours. The need for this partnership was particularly acute in the service region due to the large number of new hires in the schools and the fact that state funding was cut this year for the Kentucky Principal Internship Program. The series served 160 administrators in K-12 education from 18 counties. The success of this initiative has lead to the creation of a similar program for principals across the state through the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.

Project leader: Dr. John C. Settle, Executive Director, West Kentucky Educational Cooperative

Picturing America

Sixty-eight school systems in West Kentucky benefitted from a collaboration between MSU’s Teacher Quality Institute and the Office of Regional Outreach. A successful federal grant application from the National Endowment for the Humanities secured for each school 40 large, high-quality reproductions of notable artworks and a comprehensive resource book for teachers. Picturing America brought significant works of American art to classrooms and libraries to help citizens of all ages explore history and culture through art. In addition, MSU offered a graduate course for teachers to spark ideas for incorporating art and writing into various disciplines, thus improving communication skills while broadening knowledge in a range of content areas.

Project leader: Constance Alexander, Teacher Quality Institute faculty scholar in arts and humanities
Job Creation/Entrepreneurial Spirit

A united West Kentucky will become a national leader in rural entrepreneurialism, thereby improving its existing labor markets and supporting the current workforce.

Junior Achievement of West Kentucky

Junior Achievement (JA) of West Kentucky sought Regional Outreach funding to make a seed investment to establish regional headquarters in our service region. Through this partnership they have been able to strengthen their presence and add a full-time staff person working to expand JA programs in regional schools. The mission of JA is to ensure that every child in West Kentucky has an understanding of what they call the three pillars of success: financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship. The project is well on its way to reaching its goal of establishing a program in each of the 18 West Kentucky counties — within the first six months, five new counties have initiated programs.

Project leader: Dan Douglas, president, Junior Achievement of West Kentucky

West Kentucky AgBioworks

MSU’s Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business, the Jesse D. Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology, the Hutson School of Agriculture, and the Regional Business and Innovation Center partnered with Regional Outreach and others in a five-state 98-county study to explore the development of alternative crops and value-added processing to create a new “bioeconomy.” The study cites positive outcomes for West Kentucky to produce and benefit from the sustainable growth and harvest of biomass, including the potential to create 50,000 jobs over the next two decades. As a result of this study and continued involvement with Memphis BioWorks, the West Kentucky AgBioworks and an associated Farmer Network were created to accelerate research and development in sustainable and renewable technologies and resources, create new agricultural opportunities and new industrial processing opportunities that assist the growth of a biomass industry in our economy.

Project leader: Loretta Daniel, director, Regional Business and Innovation Center
Transfer of Wealth Study

In Spring 2009 at the suggestion of Dr. Robert Long, Regional Outreach secured a grant from the Kellogg Foundation to fund a Transfer of Wealth Study for the 18-county West Kentucky service region. This study was conducted by the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) Center for Rural Entrepreneurship of Lincoln, Nebraska with the assistance of Project Manager Don Macke. The research helps individuals, communities, donors and organizations recognize the remarkable transfer of wealth opportunity that exists in each county. The study provided not only a good idea of the size of the opportunities, but also the ability to set development goals that can translate to endowment building and strategic grant making for rural community development. As a result, the Kentucky Philanthropy Initiative picked up the study and conducted one for the entire state in 2010, which lead to legislation being passed by the state to support tax incentives for the creation of community foundations.

Project leader: Mike Hammons, executive director, Kentucky Philanthropy Initiative

Creative Entrepreneurial Initiatives

Grant provides Entrepreneurial Seminars

The Madisonville-Hopkins County Economic Development Corporation (MHCEDC) was awarded a Regional Outreach grant in 2011 for their proposal to promote and implement an Entrepreneurial Development program. The program, led by Dr. Larry Cox of Pepperdine University, focused on “creative entrepreneurship” — the process of helping potential entrepreneurs think creatively about the kinds of businesses that could be started in an area, consistent with the area’s need and demands. MHCEDC offered a series of “train the trainer” seminars to regional college and high school faculty members to help them incorporate creative entrepreneurship principles into their courses. As a result of these seminars, Dr. Cox was invited to present at a regional entrepreneurial conference at the Hopkinsville Community College.

Project leaders: Michael Wortham, coordinator/manager, WKEDC, and Gerald Cook

Youth Entrepreneurship/Next Big Thing

The Entrepreneurial Kids Fair, held in spring of 2009, developed out of a relationship with MSU’s Center for Economic Education. Participating children came up with ideas for business and created posters to present on campus describing their businesses. In 2012 this event was replaced by The Next Big Thing Innovation Competition, hosted by MSU’s Regional Business and Innovation Center (RBIC), which involved students working as teams to create businesses and then enter a competition on campus for prizes. Regional grant funds helped to support both initiatives. In addition, Regional Outreach worked with the Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business to host the Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour to encourage young people to think about starting businesses.

Project leaders: Loretta Daniel, RBIC, Barry Brown and Steve Dublin, professors in the Arthur J. Bauernfeind College of Business

Dr. Robert F. Long, visiting distinguished professor of Nonprofit Leadership and former vice president for philanthropy and volunteerism programs at W.K. Kellogg Foundation, serves as ex officio member of the Regional Advisory Council.
A united West Kentucky will support local governments working together to improve effectiveness of services, maximize efficiency in utilizing resources, and improve the quality of life and economic well-being of the region.

**Kentucky Humanities Council**

**Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit**

MSU’s Wrather West Kentucky Museum, along with fellow campus entities Regional Outreach, Town and Gown, and Teacher Quality Institute collaborated to bring a Smithsonian traveling exhibition to the MSU campus in spring 2012 — the only stop in West Kentucky. This exhibition explains how our evolving mobility changed our nation and how transportation made it grow. Journey Stories is a Museum on Main Street project organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service sponsored by the Kentucky Humanities Council and funded by the United States Congress. Regional Outreach made a successful application for a $1,500 grant from the KHC to fund humanities-based educational events in conjunction with the exhibition. Judy Schwender, curator of the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, Ky., created a “Quilt Journeys” exhibition featuring the works of three nationally-known quilters.

*Project leader: Kate Reeves, Wrather West Kentucky Museum*

**Kentucky Chautauqua**

Regional grant funds supported performances by Kentucky Chautauqua, a group of living history characters created by the Kentucky Humanities Council. Funding included support for visits to area schools and a special on-campus presentation.

*Project leader: Virginia Carter, executive director, Kentucky Humanities Council*
West Kentucky Mentoring

A newly formed nonprofit called West Kentucky Mentoring contacted Regional Outreach to support the work of the former Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in the region. In 2011 and 2012 regional grant funds aided the expansion of this program from one county to several. Mentors from all ages were matched with students in elementary and middle schools.

Project leader: Suzy Crook, director, West Kentucky Mentoring

Construction Career Day

Construction Career Day supported by Regional Outreach in 2011 and 2012, is a collaboration of the Associated General Contractors of Western Kentucky, MSU Department of Industrial and Engineering Technology, Western Kentucky Community and Technical College, University of Kentucky Engineering and regional high school vocational programs to introduce junior and senior high school students to career pathways to post-secondary institutes, skilled trade apprenticeship programs or employment opportunities. Representatives from schools, apprenticeship programs and construction firms engaged students in real-world activities such as Computer Aided Design, surveying, operating machinery and bricklaying. Over 1,750 students and 50 volunteers representing 16 West Kentucky counties participated in the day.

Project leader: Chris Nelson, executive vice president, Associated General Contractors of Western Kentucky

GetConnected

In a unique request from six United Way agencies working together across west Kentucky, regional grant funds helped to create an online volunteer management system to connect volunteers with nonprofit needs in the region. Galaxy Digital, a technology company based in Asheville, N.C., worked with each agency and MSU to implement this innovative system.

West Kentucky Capacity Building Alliance

In the fall of 2011, Regional Outreach, along with the United Way of Murray-Calloway County and the Endowment for Health Care at Murray-Calloway County Hospital joined to form the West Kentucky Capacity Building Alliance. This alliance, guided by nonprofits in the region, offers seminars and workshops upon demand, depending on need. Topics covered so far include risk and volunteer management, board governance, financial and strategic planning, grant-writing and best practices in nonprofits. Experts from across the country were sponsored by the alliance to present the free sessions. Attendance has steadily grown to an average of 50 participants per seminar.

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West Kentucky Capacity Building Alliance/GetConnected

Murray State University and United Way staff members cut the ribbon for the new GetConnected system
A united West Kentucky will preserve its national reputation as a great place to live by promoting tourism, providing quality healthcare services, fostering cultural and recreational opportunities, and maintaining its natural resources.

Quality of Life

Cultural Awareness Series

MSU’s College of Humanities and Fine Arts created a dynamic and prolific series focusing on arts and humanities outreach to regional schools and by local, national and international artists, musicians, and scholars. A major goal of the series was to support greater student access to cultural performances, events and workshops held on campus such as the Athena Festival (devoted to the study and performance of music composed by women), Japan’s Taiko Drummers, the Foreign Language Festival, and the Jazz Festival. A free “Celebration of Music” performance at the Luther F. Carson Four Rivers Center involving 300 MSU student performers, 23 faculty and 14 administrators attracted over 800 individuals. The series marked World AIDS Day with a liturgical performance by Dr. Patrick Evans, Associate Professor in the practice of sacred music at Yale University. Regional Outreach grant funds supported production of an “Artsworks” arts education and career opportunities video geared towards middle and high school-aged children. Outreach Coordinator Laynie Mitchell also arranged for MSU art and music students to lead creativity workshops for younger children at regional libraries and art guilds.

Project leader: Dr. Sonya Baker, assistant dean and professor of music, College of Humanities and Fine Arts

Regional After School Fit Club Programs

Fit Club is an hour-long after school program providing physical activity and nutritional education to children in grades 3-8. The goals of the program include increasing self-esteem, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and enhancing nutritional knowledge. By using MSU College of Health Science and Human Services students as volunteers, the children gain positive role models and an increased exposure to diversity. The program also fosters partnership between MSU and rural area school systems.

Project leader: Stephanie McDaniels, College of Health Sciences and Human Services

Operation Respect

Operation Respect, a nationally-recognized bullying prevention program founded by Peter Yarrow of the folk group Peter, Paul & Mary, was presented on MSU’s campus as a collective effort of the College of Education, Center for Environmental Education, Kentucky Center for School Safety, and the Teacher Quality Institute. The program made available free curricula and training on bullying prevention for school administrators, teachers, law enforcement officers and child abuse center directors. The workshop was supported by area stakeholders wanting to address the bullying problem in our local, regional and state areas. More than 538 teachers, administrators and students attended the two-day workshop. Peter Yarrow provided the keynote presentation during the workshop and gave a free concert as well.

Project leaders: Dr. Jack Rose and Karen McCuiston, Kentucky Center for School Safety

Project leader: Dr. Sonya Baker, assistant dean and professor of music, College of Humanities and Fine Arts
Purchase Area Schools Dance Project

The Dance Project provided 10 dance workshop sessions to area schools during the 2010-11 academic year. The workshops introduced dance vocabulary and concepts outlined in the core content guidelines for arts and humanities to approximately 4,000 students including those with physical, behavioral and learning disabilities. Using the concepts covered in the workshops, students created dance compositions that were presented to the public and all participating schools at two end-of-year assembly programs held in MSU’s Lovett Auditorium along with the dances of the Jackson Purchase Dance Company. Participating teachers were assisted in integrating movement into future thematic units of study. The project challenged students to think and move creatively as well as express emotions in a positive way while broadening their experiences and promoting cultural resources in our area.

Project leader: Karen Balzer, artistic director, Jackson Purchase Dance Company

Chamber Music in Regional Schools

The MSU Music Department faculty members and their student chamber music ensembles, supported through a grant from Regional Outreach, visited area schools in an effort to provide educational and cultural experiences to districts that do not have easy access to on-campus performances. The ensembles — from flute duo to jazz combo to trombone choir — performed short concerts followed by faculty lectures or private lessons from music students. The project, created by Dr. Eric Swisher, catered to each school’s needs. Each school determined what type of visit would be most beneficial to their students, as well as who would be in the audience — music students or the entire student body.

Project leader: Dr. Eric Swisher, associate professor of music, College of Humanities and Fine Arts
Regional Spinoff Projects and Recognitions

As a result of the Regional Outreach initiative, other organizations and communities have stepped forward with ideas and projects to support the region, some of which have secured national recognition for West Kentucky.

Civic Health Roundtable

In November of 2012, Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes began a statewide tour of roundtable discussions at Kentucky’s universities and colleges to improve Kentucky’s overall civic health. Grimes developed the initiative to establish new partnerships and formulate fresh strategies to reverse the trend of declining civic engagement revealed by the Civic Health Index her office released in March 2012. On Jan. 31, 2013, MSU hosted the fifth of 15 scheduled roundtables around the commonwealth. Topics discussed by the panelists and audiences spanned all facets of citizenship and engagement, including voter registration and participation, volunteerism, community involvement and civic education.

Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes chats with Dr. Renae Duncan, associate provost, during her visit to MSU.

West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance

Regional Outreach is an active member of the West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance, a group formed in 2009 to build an alliance of 14 chambers in far west Kentucky, provide a unified voice for local businesses in those counties, and serve as catalyst for leadership and action, bringing together resources for legislative, educational, infrastructure and economic development advocacy. Regional Outreach Executive Director Gina Winchester serves as an ex officio board member for the Alliance. This partnership has been instrumental in connecting the university with the region.
MLK Day of Service

Regional Outreach is one of the leaders of MSU’s annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, held every January. In 2012, Regional Outreach applied for a Campus Compact grant to initiate the “Collegiate Challenge” model for service activities. In this model, volunteers are randomly assigned to teams and given a service challenge for the day — painting and organizing classrooms in an area elementary school, assembling personal care kits for the local Red Cross chapter, creating promotional materials for free tax assistance offered by the United Way, or collecting donations door-to-door for a consignment shop whose proceeds fund a clinic for the medically indigent. Volunteers worked together to problem solve, formulate plans, gather supplies and accomplish service goals.

Total number of volunteers: 104
Total number of hours served: 624
Total number of projects: 6
Estimated number of unduplicated community members assisted: 20,509
Estimated combined volunteer services worth: $10,920

Pay it Forward

A federal grant called “Pay It Forward” was secured three years in a row (2008-2011) from the National Learn and Serve America through Kentucky Campus Compact to be used as seed money to teach students about philanthropy. These grants were used by classes of the Youth and Nonprofit Leadership program to re-grant money back into the community. As a result, a new initiative called Giving Back Scholars was formed to continue this work. Dozens of nonprofits in the region have received $500 or $1,000 awards for their philanthropic efforts.

President’s Honor Roll

Murray State University has been named to the national President’s Honor Roll every year since 2009. The President’s Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. Regional Outreach has lead the tremendous effort to compile the data and information required for Murray State to apply for this distinction. Selection to the Honor Roll is recognition from the highest levels of the federal government for MSU’s commitment to service and civic engagement on campus and in our community and nation.
Regional Advisory Council

The formation of the Murray State University Regional Advisory Council began as a state mandate in January 2008, when President Randy Dunn selected 21 leaders from the 18-county service region to serve as liaisons for providing input and information to the University. The mission of this governing body is to work with the Office of Regional Outreach to design and implement programs that align institutional resources and infrastructure to support their mission as stewards of place and create partnerships that engage activities across the region. Each Advisory Council member agrees to serve a one-to-three-year team and attend quarterly meetings throughout the year. The Council shares a vision of a united West Kentucky changing its culture to succeed in the new century.

BALLARD COUNTY

Barbara Jones* is the provider relations representative for the Purchase Area Region 1 and a portion of the Pennyrile Region 2 for Coventry Cares of Kentucky, one of the Managed Care Organizations for the Kentucky Medicaid Program. As former Ballard County Chamber of Commerce executive director, she implemented the Farmers Market, Quilt Trail exhibits, the community emergency shelter and more. Jones was the plant manager of Air Relief Inc. and worked in the centrifugal air compressor business for over 30 years. She is also a board member of the American Red Cross, Paducah Area Chapter for Ballard County. Jones’ term of service was 2007-10.

Julie Thomas is the community education and PR director for Ballard County schools, currently serves as president of the Ballard Chamber board of directors, is on the marketing committee of the West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance, and is a Kentucky School Public Relations Association board member. She was the first executive director of the Ballard Chamber, and served as membership and marketing director of the Paducah Area Chamber. Thomas won 10 Kentucky Press Association awards while at the Mayfield Messenger from 1988-95. Her term of service is 2010-14.

CARLISLE COUNTY

Kevin O’Neill* is coordinator of continuing education and community services at West Kentucky Community and Technical College. He is a graduate of Murray State University. Before coming to WKCTC, O’Neill spent 22 years recruiting engineering talent for the automotive industry. He recruited for Original Equipment Manufacturers as well as Tier-1 and Tier-2 suppliers of rubber, plastic and metal stamped products. O’Neill is vice chairman of the Carlisle County board of education, chairman of the Carlisle County Senior Citizens board, and is an active member of Bardwell Baptist Church where he currently serves as chairman of the deacons. O’Neill’s term of service is 2007-14.

CHRISTIAN COUNTY

Shawn Reynolds* is the vice president of sales and service for BB&T Bank in Hopkinsville, Ky. Originally from White Plains, Ky., he is a graduate of Murray State University. Reynolds has been employed with the bank for over 10 years and serves on numerous community organizations including the Hopkinsville-Christian County Chamber of Commerce board of directors. His term of service was 2007-10.

Caldwell County Free Clinic and the Princeton Kiwanis Club. Van Hooser graduated from Murray State University with a B.S. degree in management in 1985. Her term of service was 2007-10.

CALLOWAY COUNTY

Eric Walker* is currently the communications/marketing associate director of mission support for the American Cancer Society and assists community promotions chairs in Kentucky, Arkansas, and the West and Middle Tennessee areas. He formerly served as the editor of the Murray Ledger & Times newspaper overseeing the editorial department. Walker’s writing has appeared in several publications, and he has received Kentucky Press Association’s annual Excellence in Kentucky Newspapers awards. Walker earned a B.S. degree in journalism from Murray State University. His term of service was 2007-09.

Diane Coney-Turner has served as finance director with Pennyrile Allied Community Services for 35 years. She is president of the Kentucky Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, a board member and treasurer of the Hopkinsville/Christian County Crime Stoppers, and active with the Pennyrily Area Museum and Focus 21st Century Minority Leadership. Coney-Turner is also a member of the Christian County Revolving Loan Fund Committee and BB&T
Hopkinsville advisory board. In December 2010, she was recognized by Cambridge Who’s Who for showing dedication, leadership and excellence in finance management. Coney-Turner received a B.A. in management and human relations from Trevecca Nazarene University. Her term of service is 2010-14.

* Hollis White III is co-owner of Propulsys Inc. in Hopkinsville, Ky. He works as vice president in the company and has held executive positions in engineering, operations and supply chain. White serves on the Pennyroyal Hospice board of directors and was a board member for the Hopkinsville YMCA. He holds a B.S. in manufacturing engineering from Purdue University and an M.B.A. from Vanderbilt University. White’s term of service is 2010-14.

**CRITTENDEN COUNTY**

Bobby Martin* is the co-owner of Turner and Conyer Lumber Co. in Marion, Ky. He has been with the company for over 30 years. Martin graduated from Murray State University in 1967 earning a B.S. degree in industrial technology. He serves on the board of directors for the Western Kentucky Industrial Foundation. Martin has also been involved with Kentucky Colonels since 1999, and is a deacon and trustee at Marion Baptist Church. He has previously served on the board of directors from the People’s Bank, Kentucky Forest Industries Association and Crittendon County Hospital. Martin’s term of service was 2007-09.

Ryan McDaniel is vice president of operations for Tyler Manufacturing in Marion, Ky. — a Par 4 Plastics business, which he co-owns. McDaniel has served with the Par 4 Plastics team for the last 12 years in the custom injection molding and value added assembly work business. He has also served on various boards in Crittenden County, along with being a past president of the Crittenden County Chamber of Commerce. McDaniel attended Murray State University and has three children. His term of service is 2009-14.

**FULTON COUNTY**

David Gallagher* has served as the Fulton County judge executive since being elected in 2006. He began his public service as city manager of Hickman, Ky., and currently serves on various boards and committees including chairing the Fulton County-Hickman County Economic Development Partnership and the board of directors at New Pathways for Children. Gallagher was born in Heidelberg, Germany, and graduated from Murray State University in 1971 with a B.S. degree in English and history. He taught for 28 years in the Murray Independent and Fulton County school systems. Gallagher’s term of service was 2007-09.

Eddie Crittendon is the executive director of the Fulton County- Hickman County Economic Development Partnership — a two-county partnership formed in 2007. Previously, he served as administrator of the Park Terrace Assisted Living facility in South Fulton, Tenn. Crittendon served two years as vice mayor of the city of Fulton before being elected to his first term as mayor in 2000. He was re-elected in 2004. Crittendon also served as constable of the First District in Fulton County. He was born and raised in Fulton, Ky., and is involved in the community through youth activities, currently serving as president of the Twin City Youth League. Crittendon’s term of service is 2009-14.

**GRAVES COUNTY**

Renee Buckingham* is the service region administrator for the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. She was licensed by the State Board of Examiners of Social Work of Kentucky in 1986, and has served as a social worker in Graves County since 1985. Buckingham graduated from Murray State University in 1981 with a bachelor of work degree and recently completed a master’s degree in social work from Western Kentucky University. In 1996, she was selected to participate in the Empower Kentucky Initiative conducted by Gov. Paul Patton. Buckingham was recognized in 1997 as the Social Worker of the Year by the Kentucky Foster Care Review Board for outstanding service to foster children. Her term of service is 2007-14.

**HENDERSON COUNTY**

Kevin Shelley* was hired in July 2005 to form Northwest Kentucky Forward, a four-county economic development organization that serves Henderson, Union, Webster and McLean counties. As president and CEO, he is responsible for organization management and business attraction. Shelley has more than 15 years of experience in economic development in Kentucky and Tennessee. He has led organizations receiving several honors including the LG&E Community Innovation award, James J. Coleman East Kentucky Power Community Professional of the Year, and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Excellence in Economic Development award. Shelley is a graduate of Union University and is a past president of the Kentucky Association of Economic Developers (KAED). His term of service was 2007-11.

Betsy Wells-Jones is coordinator for education and workforce development for Northwest Kentucky Forward in Henderson, Ky. She is from Glasgow, Ky., and moved to Henderson in 1987. Wells-Jones worked at Big Rivers Electric Corporation in economic development for many years. Over the years, she has served on many boards, committees and organizations in the Henderson area. Since she joined Northwest Kentucky Forward, Wells-Jones coordinated the 2010 Rally 4 Education which was a huge success. She is currently working with numerous education advocacy teams in the Northwest Kentucky region as well as the school districts. Her term of service is 2011-13.

**HICKMAN COUNTY**

Greg Pruitt* has served as Hickman County judge executive for over 20 years, while also maintaining a legal practice focused on business development and real estate. During those years, he has served on many committees and organizations at the local, regional, state and multi-state levels, most of those focusing on multi-jurisdictional and developmental issues. Pruitt is a 1981 graduate of Murray State University with a B.S. degree in political science and a 1983 graduate of the University of Kentucky College of Law. He served as chair throughout his term of service, 2007-11. Pruitt continues to serve as an ex officio member to the council.

**HOPKINS COUNTY**

Judith Moore* was assistant to the president in charge of special projects at Madisonville Community College, until her death on Friday, May 20, 2011. She received an M.A. in business administration from the University of Kentucky. Moore taught for 25 years before going into administration. She also served as a marketing representative for IBM. Moore’s term of service was 2007-11.

Deborah Cox has served as the chief academic officer at Madisonville Community College for the past eight years. Prior to this position, she served in a variety of roles at the college since 1982. Cox received a B.S. degree in psychology from Murray State University in 1975, an M.A. in counseling from Eastern Kentucky University in 1976, and an Ed.D. in policy studies and analysis from the University of Kentucky in 1996. Over the years, Cox has served on numerous boards and committees in the region working to improve community services and economic opportunities. Her term of service is 2011-14.
Robert Brooks* is vice president of the Education and Research Foundation at Triver Health System in Madisonville, Ky. He is responsible for the comprehensive educational programs, research and telemedicine activities, and serves as the health system’s liaison to the state legislature. Brooks is the past chairman of the board of directors of the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and current chairman of the board of directors of the Kentucky Institute of Medicine. He also serves on several other boards and is a member of many professional, civic and governmental agencies and organizations. Brooks’ term of service was 2007-11.

Brenda H. Glover is the Madisonville District Director of Leadership and Discipleship Formation for the United Methodist Church. As a retired educator, she spent 15 years teaching vocational home economics, nine years in the Kentucky Department of Education as director of certified personnel evaluation, and another nine years as the professional development director of the Badger Regional Cooperative for Educational Enhancement. Glover’s term of service is 2011-13.

> LIVINGSTON COUNTY

Darrell Jones* is the Livingston University of Kentucky extension agent for agriculture and natural resources. He formally served as a field representative with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture and retired in 2009. Jones is a 1985 graduate of Murray State University where he received a B.S. in agriculture. He serves on the Livingston County Farm Bureau board of directors and is a board member on the Livingston County Conservation District. Jones and his wife, Mechelle, have one son, Weston, and live near Smithland, Ky. He enjoys working on the farm and baseball. Jones’ term of service is 2007-14.

> LYON COUNTY

Jim Moore* is director of business development at North Eastern Strategic Alliance in Florence, S.C. Prior to his current position, Moore served as president and CEO of the Lakes Area Partnership for Economic Development in Caldwell and Lyon counties. After graduating from the University of Georgia with a degree in organizational management, his 15-year career in economic development has spanned rural communities and large cities, the electric utility industry and construction companies. Moore’s term of service was 2007-09.

Chris Sutton* is the executive director of the Pennyrile Area Development District, a nine-county planning and development agency headquartered in Hopkinsville, Ky. He has worked at the ADD for over 20 years, previously serving as the assistant director, economic development specialist and projects coordinator. Sutton is a graduate of Murray State University holding both B.S. and M.B.A. degrees. He served on the Eddyville city council from 1994-2000 and on various other community boards. Sutton is currently serving on the boards of the Hopkinsville Christian County Chamber of Commerce and Lyon County Water District. His term of service is 2007-14.

> MARSHALL COUNTY

Betsy Hudson Flynn* is the president, CEO and chair of the Community Financial Services Bank and has been with the company for over 30 years. She holds many leadership positions with the Marshall County Tourist Commission and is on the Purchase Regional Industrial Park board and executive committee, the Regional Entrepreneurial Center Board of Directors and Executive Committee, chairs the Economic Development Committee and is on the City of Benton/Marshall County Industrial Development Authority. Flynn is an active member of the PADD Loan Committee, Action Inc., Economic Development, KY P-16 Council on Education and the Purchase Area Workforce Development Committee. Her term of service is 2007-13.

Dr. Gene Gilliland is assistant vice president of strategic planning and public relations at Community Financial Services Bank (CFSB) where he has been employed since 2004. Prior to coming to the bank he preached for over 30 years in Alabama, Tennessee, Ohio, California and Kentucky. Gilliland has four degrees from three universities including one doctorate (in church growth). Since joining the bank, he has also completed three banking schools graduating magna cum laude last May at the Barret School of Banking in Memphis, Tenn. Gilliland believes strongly in community involvement as he is an active member of the McCracken, Calloway and Marshall Chambers as well as being on the board of the West Kentucky Regional Chamber Alliance. Other organizational involvement includes Reidland Church of Christ, Benton Lions Club, Marshall County Needline and Character Counts. Gilliland’s term of service is 2012-15.

> MCCRACKEN COUNTY

David Denton* has been actively involved in the practice and management of the highly respected firm of Denton and Keuler in Paducah, Ky., for more than a quarter-century. Based on a successful history of handling clients in both state and federal courts and within a broad spectrum of the law, Denton is continually energized by the unique cases and challenges that come his way. Beginning with a background in municipal and governmental law, the firm of Denton and Keuler has grown to include an array of banking, utilities, insurance, health care and maritime clients. With deep roots in Paducah, Ky., Denton is a tireless proponent of local commercial and civil programs as well as a dedicated participant in professional organizations and special judicial assignments. He formerly served as special justice for the Kentucky Supreme Court and is a Life Fellow of the Kentucky Bar Foundation. Denton’s term of service was 2007-09.

Terry Reeves serves as executive director of EntrePaducah, a small business development agency in McCracken County. Reeves uses his background in retail, franchising and communications to help entrepreneurs launch their businesses. After beginning his career in radio in Tennessee, Reeves later became news director and anchor at WPSD-TV in Paducah. In 1996, he joined Dippin’ Dot’s as marketing director for the Paducah-based maker of cryogenically frozen ice cream products. Reeves’ term of service was 2009-11.

Dona Rains is director of marketing and planning at Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah, Ky. She directs the hospital’s communications, public relations and advertising, as well as business and strategic planning. Rains is a member of the board of directors for The Carson Center and is in the Immanuel Baptist Church choir. Previously, she was a writer and editor at The Paducah Sun and public relations coordinator for Paducah public schools. A Mayfield native, Rains is a journalism graduate of the University of Kentucky. She has two sons, Dr. Martin Rains and Taylor Rains, both of Lexington. Her term of service is 2011-13.

> PADUCAH-

Debbie Wattier* is director of development at the Luther F. Carson Four Rivers Center in Paducah, Ky. She also serves on the board of directors for Freedom Forever Ministry, which ministers to women incarcerated at the McCracken County Jail and the West Kentucky Correctional Complex in Fredonia. Wattier has served on the boards of Rotary Club and United Way of Paducah-McCracken County. She formerly worked as a federal contractor at the U.S. Department of Energy’s Paducah Plant. Wattier has taught public relations and news reporting at Murray State University, where the Omicron Delta Kappa student leadership honor
society selected her as an Outstanding Teacher. She earned a B.A. from Baylor University and an M.S. degree from Northwestern University. Wattier’s term of service was 2007-11.

Ashley Wright has served as the executive director of the United Way of Paducah-McCracken County since 2008. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Berea College and a master’s degree from Washington University in St. Louis. Before joining the United Way, Wright worked in the areas of domestic violence and children in the juvenile justice system. She has one son, Henry. Wright’s term of service is 2011-13.

TRIGG COUNTY

John Rufli* is the executive director of the Land Between The Lakes Association “Friends of LBL.” He is responsible for general oversight of the daily operations, membership, funds development, budget oversight and staff supervision. Rufli received a B.S. in biology from the University of Illinois in 1971, and an M.S. in biology from Murray State University in 1975. He worked as an interpretive naturalist for the Kentucky Department of Parks at Lake Barkley State Resort Park for eight years. Rufli was business manager for Lake Barkley SRP for 10 years and resort park manager for 12 years. Rufli’s term of service is 2007-13, and he is currently the advisory council chair.

Charles Moore* is a senior partner at Moore, Malone and Safreed in Owensboro, Ky. He holds a B.S. from Transylvania University and a juris doctorate from the University of Louisville School of Law. Moore’s bar membership includes Kentucky, U.S. District Court-Western and Eastern Districts of Kentucky, U.S. Court of Appeals-6th and 8th Circuits, and U.S. Supreme Court. He is a member of the Daviess County and Kentucky Bar Associations where he served on the board of governors, American Association for Justice and Kentucky Justice Association. Moore was also included in 2002-12 editions of The Best Lawyers in America and was named one of Kentucky’s Super Lawyers and Top 50 Attorneys. Moore’s term of service was 2007-09.

Drew Wells is an insurance agent for J. Craig Riddle Company in Madisonville, Ky., where he holds a license for life, health, property and casualty insurance. Wells has been with the company since 2006. After graduating from Union County High School, he attended Kentucky Wesleyan College where he was a member of the 2001 national basketball team. Currently, Wells resides in Union County with his wife and daughter, where he assists in managing the family farm. Wells’ term of service is 2009-14.

WEBSTER COUNTY

Michael K. Farris is the father of two girls, grandfather of two, and husband to Janet Farris. He received his bachelor’s degree in physical education and a minor in history from Oakland City College (Indiana), and his master’s degree in counselor education and Rank I in school administration from Murray State University. Farris served 35 years in education as teacher, principal, supervisor of instruction, assistant superintendent and superintendent in Hopkins County and Webster County. Since retiring he has served on the boards for NorthWest Kentucky Forward, Green River Economic Development, Four Star Industry Park Authority and Webster County Economic Development, and served as director of Madisonville Community College. Farris has been a team leader and member for School Scholastic Review and Audits Teams for the Kentucky Department of Education as well as a coach for Pilot School Scholastic Reviews Teams in Arkansas. His term of service is 2012-14.

Tommy Chandler* is a retired circuit judge serving 13 years for the 5th Judicial District of Webster, Union and Crittenden Counties. He also served 16 years as commonwealth attorney for the 5th District as well as eight years as Webster County attorney. Chandler earned a bachelor’s degree in pre-law from Murray State University and a law degree from the University of Kentucky. His term of service is 2007-12.

* denotes original council member

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

~ Nelson Mandela
January 2006 – The Council on Postsecondary Education rolled out a new grant initiative called Regional Stewardship and Outreach to all state public institutions and MSU was awarded.

August 2007 – The Office of Regional Stewardship and Outreach was established and Gina Winchester was named executive director.

January 2008 – A 21-member Advisory Council was established as the governing body for the initiative.

April 2008 – New City Institute was hired to conduct an extensive regional needs assessment.

May 2008 – The Advisory Council set a vision and goals for the initiative based on the needs.

August 2008 – The Advisory Council granted $300,000 through academic units to fund projects in the region.

June 2009 – Project leaders reported a total of 15 partnerships created with MSU.

August 2011 – Regional Outreach reported to the Board of Regents 41 projects funded over a three-year period totaling $813,000. The funding invested in 156 regional events impacting 52,000 individuals and leveraging $1 million for educational attainment.
Spotlight on Regional Impact 2007-2013

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