



Report on
Merit Badge University at
West Virginia University



MBU @ WVU 2016

West Virginia University again hosted Merit Badge University (MBU @ WVU) in collaboration with the local Mountaineer Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America, as well as the Black Diamond Council, Girl Scouts, on February 27 2016. There were 280 Boy and Girl Scouts, ages 11 through 17, in attendance at this one-day event, a 15% increase from last year and the greatest number ever known to attend MBU @ WVU. Of these Scouts, 54% were from Monongalia, Marion, Preston, or Taylor counties, while the other 46% were from elsewhere in West Virginia and from three other states and Washington, DC. MBU is a regional event.

There were 21 different merit badges offered, ranging from Nuclear Science, Cycling, Personal Management, Engineering, and Robotics, to Fingerprinting, First Aid, Cooking, Sustainability, Journalism, Citizenship in the Community, and Space Exploration (provided by the NASA IV & V program), among others. In offering these merit badges, there were 20 WVU faculty, staff, and upper level students who were instructors and assistants, alongside 5 WVU alumni and other WVU community supporters who also provided expertise in teaching the content areas.

A steering committee chaired by Dan McNeil, Eberly Professor of Public Service, guides WVU's MBU, and includes Ken Shanes, Don Miller, Kim Helmick, Kevin Keener, and Bill Petros. Strong logistical and other support for MBU @ WVU 2016 was provided by Greg Corio, Director of the WVU Rec Center and Adventure West Virginia, as well as Cate Schlobohm and Ryan Sigler of the Statler College of Engineering and Mineral Resources, and Kim Helmick of the School of Medicine. Also involved were faculty, staff, and students from the Eberly College of Arts & Sciences; Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design; College of Business & Economics; School of Dentistry; School of Pharmacy; School of Public Health; and the University Police. WVU's BSA Partnership/Scouting Initiative provided patches for Scouts and volunteers, as well as other support. For the first time this year, Girl Scouts joined Boy Scouts at WVU's MBU. Accompanied by their parents or Scout leaders, and with the WVU Rec Center as a home base for MBU, Scouts traveled across campuses accompanied by WVU Student Guides, experiencing campus life. WVU cheerleaders were on hand to welcome the Scouts. MBU brings together faculty, staff, and students from units throughout the University, and so exemplifies "ONE WVU." The *Dominion Post* and *Daily Athenaeum* provided press coverage.

Student organizations mobilized to help register and guide Scouts at MBU, including Lambda Omicron/Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, Eta Tau Pi Eagle Scout fraternity, Engineering ambassadors and Engineering clubs, Psychology Club, and Psi Chi Psychology Honorary. Helping to realize WVU's research mission, MBU provided a venue for a WVU doctoral student to collect research data from adult volunteers; the University's teaching mission was addressed by didactic training provided for adult Scout leaders. There were two undergraduate WVU service interns who were involved with MBU @ WVU this year, Zach Hough and Tyler Wurtz, providing support for the event and allowing them to learn about serving and teaching youth, and mobilizing volunteers. Significant support for MBU was provided by Mountaineer Area Council volunteer and professional staff, with adult Scout leader guides for every merit badge.

MBU helps fulfill WVU's service mission, and allows youth a WVU college campus experience, which is a significant recruiting opportunity for WVU to reach talented, high-performing youth early enough to influence their college decisions. Plans are underway for MBU @ WVU 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

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