



**Executive Summary**  
Merit Badge University  
at  
West Virginia University



**MBU@WVU 2019**

West Virginia University again hosted Merit Badge University (MBU @ WVU) in collaboration with the local Mountaineer Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America on February 9, 2019. There were 347 youth, ages 11 through 17, registered for this one-day event, working on 334 merit badges. Of these Scouts, 46% were from the 12 counties of BSA's Mountaineer Area Council (MAC), with another 4% from elsewhere in WV, while the remainder were from four other states. MBU is a regional event. WVU President E. Gordon Gee welcomed and offered remarks to the Scouts, leaders, and parents at lunchtime.

There were 23 different merit badges offered, in 25 classes, ranging from Environmental Science, Robotics, Fingerprinting, and Digital Technology, to Cooking, Nuclear Science, and Emergency Preparedness (provided in concert with the Mon County Health Department), among others. In offering these badges, there were 17 WVU faculty, staff, and graduate students who were instructors and assistants, alongside 11 alumni and other community supporters. Adult leader training was offered by MAC's VP of Training, Paul White, MAC Commissioner Ralph Herron, and MAC Assistant Commissioner Gary Mofioli.

A steering committee chaired by Dan McNeil, Eberly Professor of Public Service, guides WVU's MBU, and includes Paul White, Ken Shanes, Don Miller, Kim Helmick, and Tony Wayne. Logistical and other support for MBU @ WVU 2018 was provided by Greg Corio, Executive Director for Campus Recreation and Outdoor Education, as well as 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 Medicine; and the University Police. WVU's BSA Partnership/ Scouting Initiative provided patches for Scouts and volunteers, as well as other support. WVU units and community sponsors helped support this year's MBU, including the WVU Center for Service and Learning, Hearts of Gold Service Dogs, Literati Information Technology, and Pepsico; the US Air Force provided a football toss "blow up" game, and there was a drone demonstration by Civil & Environmental Consultants. Accompanied by parents or Scout leaders, and with the WVU Rec Center as a base, Scouts traveled across campuses with WVU Student Guides, experiencing campus life. MBU brings together units throughout the University as "ONE WVU."

Student organizations mobilized to help register and guide Scouts at MBU, including Psychology Club, Psi Chi Psychology Honorary, Lambda Omicron/Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, and Engineering ambassadors and clubs. Helping to realize WVU's teaching mission, MBU provided a venue for didactic training provided for adult Scout leaders. There was an undergraduate WVU senior service intern, Sarah Lipinski, along with intern Taylor Johnson, who were involved with MBU @ WVU. They provided support for the event and learned about serving and teaching youth, and mobilizing volunteers. Significant support for MBU was provided by the WVU Rec Center, particularly Ben Orendorff, as well as the Mountaineer Area Council professional staff, including Scout Executive Scott Hanson and others, along with volunteer adult Scout leader guides. 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 who will be considering college choices. Plans are underway for MBU @ WVU 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

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