



The Road to STATE'S REAFFIRMATION 2015



WVSU: Mission in Action

As we learn more about the reaffirmation of accreditation each week in *The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2015*, we will examine how select elements of West Virginia State University campus life and culture interact with the Self-Study Report. It is essential that the University engages with external constituencies and communities. Therefore, let us briefly review just a few of the ways in which West Virginia State University engages with our community.

WVSU understands the vital role it plays in meeting the educational and economic development needs of the Kanawha Valley and beyond; however, the University also understands it serves a population of individuals who may not possess the financial resources to engage in cultural enrichment activities that promote diversity. Because of this understanding, the University often offers free programs to the public, or it allows individuals to participate at discounted rates.

WVSU offers courses through its Lifelong Learning through Continuing Education that are educational, but affordable. For instance, the Silver Surfers Program, which aims to educate adult learners age 65+ to use technology, is a class that is offered free while the most expensive course, mosaic tile, is affordable at \$150, which includes all necessary supplies.

As an 1890 land-grant institution, it is important that the University support the African-American community and other communities throughout the state including low income residents. WVSU provides several initiatives that aim to meet this goal:

- **Black Business Association Supporting Entrepreneurs (BBASE).** The BBASE initiative works with 140 black professionals through a series of workshops and monthly meetings to network and share vital information that is essential to the growth and sustainability of the business.
- **Children, Youth, and Families at Risk (CYFAR).** Funded by a USDA grant, the program targets middle-school youth in an effort to promote smart purchasing and obesity education in West Virginia.
- **Economic Development Center (EDC).** The EDC works with individuals in one of the state's most socio-economically depressed communities—Charleston's West Side—that has a high level of crime and an unemployment rate of 35 percent. The flagship program at the EDC is DigiSo, a digital and social media development incubator that is teaching individuals how to utilize social media, and other innovative ideas, in current and future business endeavors.
- **Sustainable Community Revitalization in Appalachia through Children's Hands (SCRATCH).** This program targets high-risk, economically depressed neighborhoods in Huntington. SCRATCH provides agricultural education by teaching children about the importance of agriculture through the development of urban community gardens built on abandoned lots using raised beds.

WVSU offers several programs designed to help students prepare for college regardless of their socio-economic background. For example, the University offers summer athletic camps that bring more than 300 students to campus at a minimal cost. It also operates several federally-funded summer programs (e.g., CASTEM, HISTA, STI, Upward Bound, and Upward Bound Math/Science) allowing the University to provide educational opportunities to individuals who may not otherwise be able to afford them. These programs alone bring hundreds of potential college-going students to campus and provide extensive educational opportunities in an environment conducive to learning while having fun.

The University goes to great lengths to support the educational needs of the community. It engages in outreach initiatives allowing it to leverage its land-grant status with the needs of the community in an effort to strengthen the individuals who live, play, and work in the Kanawha Valley and beyond. The University must continue to look for new and innovative ways to reach and influence communities in positive ways as it strives to promote higher education and economic development across the state and throughout the region.

For more information about The Road to State's Reaffirmation 2015, please click [here](#) to discover in-depth information about the process, read the University's Self-Study Report, and more!

For questions or comments regarding the University's reaffirmation of accreditation process or the self-study report, please send all inquiries and information to reaffirmation@wvstateu.edu or call (304) 204-4300.