

Spring 2016

## Youth Retention : Mt. Carmel Revitalization

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### Recommended Citation

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# Youth Retention



## Mount Carmel Revitalization

GEOG 218—*Geographies of Justice*

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Spring 2016

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## Introduction

Many young people leave rural areas that they grew up in because they perceive that local employment opportunities are limited. Studies have shown that 50% of young people could see themselves living in the rural community that they grew up in if job opportunities were readily available. Clearly, young people have a desire to stay close to the communities in which they grew up. However, 42% reported that they see greater opportunity outside of their own communities (Schroeder 4). The perceived lack of opportunities drives young people away from their hometowns. In order for rural communities to thrive, they need to strategize ways to retain young people since the future of the community heavily relies on this portion of the population. Following our visit to Mt Carmel, our group chose to explore issues of youth retention in areas like Mt Carmel. With many of the town officials reporting that young people tend to leave the area after finishing high school, we became interested in strategizing different potential solutions to better help Mt Carmel entice its youth to stay upon graduating high school. As our research shows, grants, start-up businesses, youth entrepreneurship, improvements in bandwidth, internships with local government officials, mentorship groups and after school programs could help to keep the young population in Mount Carmel.

## Extracurricular Programming for Children

The following two programs, 4H and Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP), have helped communities like Mount Carmel address issues facing their youth by either engaging them with constructive activities or putting them in contact with caring adults able to guide them as they mature. By keeping youth active as they grow, the hope is to decrease youth idleness and recklessness by generating programs that provide kids with fun alternatives to less productive pastimes like sitting around watching television. In this way, these programs work to provide incentives for young families to either move into the area or stay located by increasing afterschool options that can engage children of working parents. These programs are thus meant to provide ideas to help Mount Carmel design programs tailored to the needs of its community.



**JUMP**  
Juvenile Mentoring Program

## 4H

An important way to develop and retain youth is through providing meaningful extracurricular activities. One of the programs designed for this task is the 4H program, which enables students to develop their learning skills even after school has ended. 4H is designed for students between the ages of 5 and 18. The program meets for up to two hours, either after school or in the evenings, and functions as a great way to keep students supervised and learning in a safe environment.

One way to do this would be to connect with 4H programs in the immediate area. 4H currently has centers in both Danville and Sunbury that are both in fairly close proximity to Mt Carmel. The only problem with 4H is that they do not typically come to the school that the children go to. Rather, they select schools to meet at that all participating children must be transported to. That leaves a few options.

Since setting up a 4H program directly in Mt Carmel could take some time, we must look into plans for the interim. For instance, 4H could potentially send some of their representatives to local schools as part of a trial period. 4H typically works with groups of students that come from a variety of schools in a district. However, given the amount of students that are lacking after school supervision, it is important that we emphasize the need for Mt Carmel to be the location of a new program of its own. Given the proximity of the local 4H headquarters, it is quite possible that 4H would be willing to set up a program in Mt Carmel entirely for the students in the town. Furthermore, this is a non-profit organization that would not cost the town any money unless they wanted to donate.

In setting up the program, the first step would be to contact one of the local chapters in either Danville, Sunbury, or Bloomsburg (See contact information below). If they are willing, then a schedule needs to be established that will sort the days of the week that 4H will work with the students. 4H is a very flexible program in terms of meeting times. They meet for roughly two hours either after school, in the evening, or on Saturdays. Given this situation, a program taking place right after school may work best, but evening meetings could also be a good option. The next thing to figure out is the location. If facilities in Mt Carmel are available and you would like to bring 4H to the town, we could work towards setting that up once a connection is established with the local chapters. However, providing transportation to an already existing chapter could also be arranged. If problems arise with getting all of the students to and from the local chapter at once, perhaps half of the students could go one day and the other half go on another (maybe two days a week for each group with Fridays off). 4H operates Monday through Saturday, so working around transportation issues should not be a problem. This program is available to students from the ages of 5-18, so it is essentially something that the entire school system could be involved with.

## Benefits of 4H

Ultimately, lack of supervision at home after school can enable students to develop habits of not doing homework because there is no one around to encourage them to do so. It can also lead to students getting caught up in bad things. If we can occupy these students with enjoyable and productive activities after school and cut their time spent home alone in half, the program would be a success. This program gets students involved in hands-on educational projects as well as social and recreational activities. Students will also have time to do homework from school with the assistance of the 4H representatives.

Being content as a child is just one of the steppingstones to retaining young adults. For instance, when I think about reasons that I want to stay in my town after I graduate, those reasons come to me in the form of all the great memories I have from when I was a kid. If we can get these kids on the right track and give them a positive experience in Mt Carmel starting at young age, we can better the chances of them staying in Mt Carmel after they are done with college. Job opportunities could still be a problem in the area after school, but at least these young adults will have motivation to look for opportunities to stay in the area. Some may even bring their businesses back to town.

There is a great deal of evidence available to support after school programs like 4H since they overwhelmingly succeed in keeping students out of trouble, providing them with supervision, and helping them learn while making positive memories. With more students staying out of trouble and getting involved in safe, productive, social, and educational activities, more of them may be inclined to want to raise a family of their own in Mt Carmel. Mt Carmel is an absolutely lovely town, but we need to do more in order to get young adults to want to stay in the area after they graduate from college despite the current limited working opportunities. By providing students with more and more great memories from their childhoods, we will be instilling in them a type of pride in their hometown. The more positive memories they have, the more they will miss home and want to return. By providing a safe and supervised atmosphere after school, the 4H program would be a great start on the path to leaving these children with great memories and learning experiences. Some of these great memories could ultimately lead to a higher youth retention rate in the years to come.



## 4H Contact Information

### **Danville Location**

114 Woodbine Lane, Suite 102  
Danville, PA 17821-9118  
Phone: 570-275-3731

### **Sunbury Location**

443 Plum Creek Road,  
Sunbury, PA 17801  
Phone: 570-988-3950

### **Bloomsburg Location**

702 Sawmill Road, Suite 102  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
Phone: 570-784-6660

In terms of trying to possibly start a new chapter in Mt Carmel, you would want to contact the primary state office for the 4H program:

Phone: 814-863-3824

For more information on this program, please visit: <http://www.4-h.org/about/>



## Juvenile Mentorship Program (JUMP)

Similarly, the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) could also aid in youth retention around Mount Carmel. Implemented as part of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention act of 1974, JUMP's purpose is to support at risk youth by providing them with one-on-one mentoring (Federal Funding in Out-of-School Time With Accountability Requirements and Evaluations). Typically, the mentor is an older, unrelated figure who will regularly spend time with the juvenile delinquent for a set period. The ultimate goal is to create a bond of loyalty between the two individuals so that the juvenile member can learn how to obtain success and stay on the right path.

Based on an experiment conducted in 1995 by Public/Private Ventures, youth in such mentorship programs are 46 percent less likely to get involved with drugs and 27 percent less likely to get involved with alcohol compared to a control group not participating in these programs. Additionally, they had a higher school attendance and maintained a better relationship with their parents. That participants of the program were able to accomplish such feats is really encouraging for mentorship programs.

In fact, areas such as Crawfordsville, IN that have implemented JUMP argue that the program "increases the self-esteem of the youth involved" by helping them to improve their academic performance and providing them access to a resource that "promotes positive emotional development" (Juvenile Mentoring Program). The county has outlined the following requirements for both mentors and mentees:

### Mentors:

- Must be 21 years of age or older
- Must be willing to commit one to two hours per week to the program for at least one year

### Mentees:

- Must be between 6-14 years of age
- Must reside in the county
- Must be willing to commit one to two hours per week to the program for at least one year
- Must obtain written consent of parent to participate

Additionally, the community outlines the follow application process for the mentor and mentee:

Mentor:

- Written application
- Three character references
- Personal interview with program staff
- Background check
- Driving Record Check
- Four hour mentor training

Mentee:

- Written application
- Parent/guardian interview with program staff
- Youth interview with program staff

For more information on the way this community implements JUMP, please see:  
<http://www.mcysb.org/jump.html>

While the Crawfordsville, IN JUMP program counters the cost of running the program through individual donations, businesses, and the County government, it is important to note that a JUMP grant exists. Information on this grant can be found on the next page.

## JUMP Grant

In order to obtain the JUMP grant, applicants must submit a request for a 3-year program period and include elements such as the nature of the partnership within local education, target population, and the programs goal, objectives, and design in their application (Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)). The design of the program should address the role of the mentor and the recruitment and screening processes in order to obtain such mentor. Mentors should undergo training including communication and relationship skills before being paired with a youth member. Additionally, it is important to remember to garner parental involvement, and each program should include a coordinator for the mentor to report to and receive support. The coordinator should be involved, and maintain constant contact with the mentor. Furthermore, the youth and mentor should meet at least once a week for an hour, and focus on being a friend rather than a teacher or preacher. Depending on the juvenile's age, different activities/support may be implemented during meetings during the application process, a 36-month budget with details of each expense should be provided. It is recommended to provide a \$75 cover for incidental expenses for each meeting between youth and mentor. The funds cannot be used to directly compensate mentors. The only compensation a mentor may receive is for personal expenses, such as transportation costs.

To sum up, the application must include the need for the program and target population. Additionally, dropout, teen pregnancy and, juvenile crime and gang rates should be included, as well as drug use and local economic conditions. If awarded a JUMP funded program, the maximum funds for an individual project include \$190,000 over 3 years (Novotney et al).

For more information on this program, please see:  
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojdp/182209.pdf>

## Student Programs

One problem apparent during our visit to Mount Carmel was the lack of opportunity for young adults to begin their career paths and explore different career options. With medicine and education the major career fields of the outlying area, it was expressed to us during our visit that students and young adults often felt limited by the choices available to them and often left the area as a result. To combat this dilemma, we propose utilizing Mount Carmel's small town structure to create programs focused on students and young adults interested in pursuing careers in government, nonprofits or business entrepreneurship. Specifically, we have listed several student programs implemented by Wittenberg University, University of California, Berkeley, and Syracuse University that are all designed to encourage youth to explore their interests through an internship or summer program setting. Since internships and summer programs not only help students gain experience, but also help them build their resumes and gain real life experiences, we feel that these programs offer valuable examples of different techniques Mount Carmel can use to capture and retain youth interest in the community.

## Local Government Management Internship

Implementing an internship program can encourage youth retention in the area more immediately. We suggest a local government internship modeled around two different programs currently take place at Wittenberg University and the University of California, Berkeley. The Wittenberg University program is called the Local Government Management Internship, and it is an unpaid internship for college students that runs for eight weeks each summer. It combines a local government internship with a class and provides interns with real world experience and projects. Through this program, high school and college students have the opportunity to earn valuable leadership qualities and learn firsthand how different sections of local government work. Furthermore, University of California, Berkeley has a local government internship program in which they place some of their interested students into the local governments of neighboring towns for a twelve-week internship. UC Berkeley's website describes the program: "Cal in Local Government (CLG) connects students and government agencies working on local issues in Berkeley, Oakland, Emeryville and other East Bay cities through project-based internships. Serving with host offices in a city or county level department or council or commission office, qualified student interns build healthy communities in the East Bay while learning about local policy issues and developing their leadership and professional skills."

To utilize Mount Carmel's small town structure, students from the area could be given the opportunity to apply for an unpaid internship in the town's local government. This could prove extremely beneficial since the internship can enable students to not only get their foot in the door and learn about different future career paths, but also enable them to gain experience and use their perspectives to help the town. Currently, we have observed that the younger generation of Mount Carmel residents have not had the opportunity to voice their opinions. By having students attend meetings, youth problems can be brought to the attention of local governing bodies. In this way, youth may begin to feel reconnected to their area and desire to stay after gaining the opportunity to address communal problems.

For Mount Carmel, the internship component could provide a great opportunity for students to attend weekly local government meetings as well as complete a handful of projects around the town. Different projects may include cleaning up the town's public park or starting a summer camp for children. They can also be in charge of planning different summer events such as picnics or concerts. These events add to the community adhesion aspect of Mount Carmel, which plays a big role in youth retention. Different small projects can benefit both the youth and town in this way.

We propose that Bucknell University allots some of its students for a similar internship program where interested students can volunteer in Mount Carmel for a summer internship and address the issue of youth retention as well as gain job experience in local government. Similarly, students from Mount Carmel that are attending universities other than Bucknell could possibly pursue the internship program and receive college credit through Bucknell University. This idea could be explored further if interest in the program arises.

This internship proposal could bring the problem of lack of youth retention in Mount Carmel to the forefront and have young adults provide their input while also gaining job skills and insight.

For more information on these programs, please visit:  
<http://www.wittenberg.edu/academics/polisci/mgtinternship.html> or  
<http://publicservice.berkeley.edu/clg>

## Syracuse Student Sandbox

The Central & Upstate New York area has faced similar problems with deindustrialization that central Pennsylvania has encountered. Universities in the Central New York area have created summer programs to promote entrepreneurship and involve youth in economic redevelopment. Syracuse University's 12-week summer program called the Syracuse Student Sandbox gives university-aged student entrepreneurs the tools that are needed to launch a successful startup company. Some of the companies that the Sandbox has accelerated have been in a variety of industries; fashion, technology and lifestyle companies have all been mentored with the help of the Student Sandbox. The program has a track record of success – it began with five startups in 2009 and has graduated 130 companies as of January 2015. Of those 130 companies, 35% are still in business and 40% of those remaining companies continue to operate in Central New York, showing that the program retains businesses in the area. Businesses that have been accelerated with the help of the Sandbox have generated over \$7 million collectively (Quick). Participants are provided with a workspace, funding, and experienced mentors who are involved in the local startup industry (Mataya). Students who participate not only gain entrepreneurial skills, they also receive up to 6 credits from the School of Information Studies (Quick). This type of program both creates jobs in the area and encourages youth to creatively imagine business solutions to issues they have identified in their communities. Implementing a similar program in Mount Carmel would not only offer business opportunities for youth, it would also presumably bring an influx of services attractive to the town of Mt. Carmel. As a result, this program could be a powerful tool for increasing youth retention.

For more information on this program, please visit: <http://startupcuse.com/student-sandbox/>



## **Regional Economic Development**

Lastly, encouraging youth entrepreneurship and innovation through internships and summer programs is a great way to ignite youth interest in the community. However, realistically, funds need to be in place not only to support these programs, but also to finance businesses that provide youth with jobs in the future. To incite new business into the community, we have found several programs and grant options that can potentially offer Mount Carmel the means of incentivizing companies to settle in the area. These grants include the Community Connection Grant, which provides funds for improving broadband speed throughout rural areas, as well as the Economic Impact Initiative grant, which funds the construction of facilities in rural areas. Both are offered by the United States Department of Agriculture, and both are just some of the ways that Mount Carmel can potentially improve its infrastructure to appeal to businesses that provide youth with jobs and encourage them to stay in the area.

## Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

Steven Stumbis, the Director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), informed us that entrepreneurs in Mount Carmel could receive assistance from the SBDC. The SBDC could provide no-cost, confidential consulting services or offer educational workshops for businesses and entrepreneurs in Mount Carmel.

The SBDC has helped many businesses in the Lewisburg, Mifflinburg and Danville area. Some of these businesses include Siam Restaurant and Bar, the Danville Pharmacy, and the Pompeii Street Soap Co. All three of these businesses needed help from professionals to create a business plan and financial projections so they could take out a loan to get their ideas off of the ground. The SBDC helped the owners of these businesses to turn their ideas into realities. Their success stories are below.

We understand that some individuals from Mount Carmel Downtown Inc. (MCDI) have been in contact with Steven Stumbis to bring some of the SBDC's workshops to MCDI's monthly meetings. However, we believe that these meetings could help a bigger audience if the events were advertised to more people. We also recommend that companies who could benefit from consulting services reach out to the SBDC for assistance. Their services are free, and have proven to be helpful for other small businesses in the area.

Creating a stronger relationship between the SBDC and small businesses in Mount Carmel could lead to economic growth that could encourage young people to stay in the community. If young people see small businesses in Mount Carmel thriving with the help of the SBDC, they will be more likely to see potential in the economic future of their town.

### Success Stories:

- Siam Restaurant and Bar:
  - <http://www.bucknell.edu/small-business-development-center/success-stories/siam.html>
- Danville Pharmacy:
  - <http://www.bucknell.edu/small-business-development-center/success-stories/danville-pharmacy.html>
- Pompeii Street Soap Co.:
  - <http://www.bucknell.edu/small-business-development-center/success-stories/pompeii-soap.html>



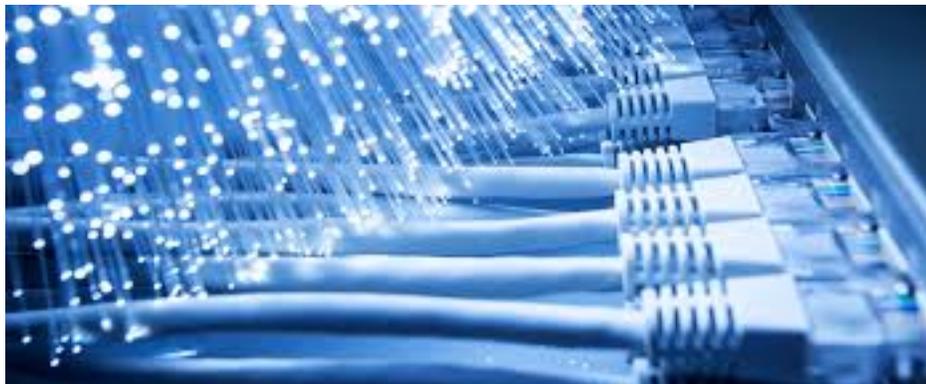
**Pompeii Street Soap Co.**



## Improving Infrastructure (Bandwidth)

An important improvement necessary to youth retention is improving local bandwidth. In 2009, a major goal of Obama's Stimulus Plan was to increase access to high-speed Internet across the country. \$7.2 billion in grants was allotted for this cause. These grants largely benefitted rural areas, as these places have historically had a problem with Internet access. The grants were given to companies who are able to provide broadband access to areas where 90% of households have no access to broadband at all, or where 50% of people have to access to broadband of 3Mbps, or locations where broadband is available but 40% or less of the population subscribes to the service (Goldman). There is a critical connection between high-speed Internet access and business productivity. Businesses are reluctant to settle in areas that have low quality Internet access. Presently, industries are very digitally oriented, and without high-speed Internet access, growing technological companies will not come to the area. Central Pennsylvania, particularly the area that Mount Carmel is located, should consider improving this service to catalyze business growth in the area. As funding may be of a concern, the Community Connection Grant outlined below offers a potential resource for Mount Carmel to use as it seeks to improve bandwidth capacity throughout the town.

Most modern businesses require high speed Internet to be able to thrive. Rural areas often lack access to high speed Internet because of the lack of infrastructure. This makes it difficult to promote economic growth and bring new businesses to rural areas. We envision Mount Carmel becoming an attractive place for companies to settle if the broadband speed is increased in the area. If broadband speed was increased, we think that businesses would find Mount Carmel an attractive place to settle because of the low cost of real estate. Low real estate expenses would allow business owners to minimize their operating expenses. We believe that bringing businesses to Mount Carmel would promote economic development, which in turn would give young people work opportunities and a reason to continue living in the community. Increasing bandwidth speed could also improve the educational offerings that the Mount Carmel Area School District can provide. There are many online applications and websites that are used to enrich the learning experiences of students of all ages. Improving bandwidth speed could improve the capabilities of using these programs in the classroom and engaging students in creative, technological ways.



## Community Connection Grant

There is a range of possible funding options for increasing bandwidth to rural areas, and Mount Carmel may be eligible for this funding. The Community Connection Grant offered through the USDA helps to fund broadband deployment in rural areas. State and local governments, non-profit organizations and for-profit corporations are all eligible to apply.

To qualify for the Community Connection Grant, the eligible rural area must have an existing broadband speed of less than 4 Mbps downstream and 1 Mbps upstream. Additionally, buildings constructed with grant funds must be located on property owned by the awardee.

The funds may be used to:

- Construct, acquire or lease facilities, spectrum, land or buildings used to deploy broadband service for residents and business customers located within the Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA) as well as participating critical community facilities (public schools, fire stations, public libraries, etc.)
- Provide broadband service free of charge to critical community facilities for two years.

For more information on this grant, please see: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-connect-grants>

## Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Grants

ARC (Appalachian Regional Commission) is an organization aimed at revitalizing communities throughout Appalachia by investing in entrepreneurial and business development strategies, improving education, knowledge and skills of residents, strengthening infrastructure and developing community members to become future leaders. Millions of dollars in grants are available to fund projects that address the five goals of ARC. These goals include:

- Investing in entrepreneurial and business development strategies that strengthen Appalachia's economy
- Improving the education, knowledge, skills and health of residents
- Investing in critical infrastructure, especially broadband, transportation, and water/wastewater systems
- Strengthening Appalachia's community and economic development potential by leveraging the Region's natural and cultural heritage assets
- Building the capacity and skills of current and next-generation leaders and organizations to innovation, collaborate, and advance community and economic development

Eligible activities to receive grant funding from ARC include:

- Business Development and Entrepreneurship
  - Ex: Projects that help firms create and retain jobs in the region
- Education and Training
  - Ex: Projects that develop, support or expand education and training programs
- Health Care
  - Ex: Projects that support rural health clinics and small hospitals or projects that address oral and mental health services
- Physical Infrastructure
  - Ex: Projects that stimulate the construction or rehabilitation of housing for low and moderate income residents
- Leadership Development and Civic Capacity
  - Ex: Projects that train local officials or provide organizational support for community organizations

To apply for any of the grants offered by the commission, contact Pennsylvania's ARC program manager to request a preapplication package. Eligibility will vary depending upon requirements of both the state and program.

For more information on this program, please visit:

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/96kit/jump.htm> or  
<http://www.arc.gov/funding/ARCProjectGrants.asp>

## Economic Impact Initiative Grant

The United States Department of Agriculture offers many programs designed to foster rural development. One of its programs that could potentially address Mount Carmel's infrastructure so that potential businesses are not turned away includes the Economic Impact Initiative Grant, which "provides funding to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural communities with extreme unemployment and severe economic depression" (Economic Impact Initiative Grant). Grants of up to 75% of eligible project costs are available, and funds may be used to construct or improve:

- Hospitals, nursing homes, assisted-living facilities
- Child care centers, community centers, fairgrounds, transitional housing
- Police vehicles, fire trucks, public works vehicles and equipment
- Food pantries, food banks

Public bodies and non-profits may apply. Eligible areas include:

- Rural areas including cities, villages, townships and towns with no more than 20,000 residents that have a "Not Employed Rate" greater than 19.5%.
- Median household income of community being served must be below 90% of the state non-metropolitan median household income

Additionally,

- Applications must be unable to finance the project from their own resources/ or through commercial credit at reasonable rates and terms
- Facilities must serve the rural area where they are located
- Projects must demonstrate substantial community support
- Environmental review must be completed and determined to be acceptable
- Priority given to projects related to public health and safety, energy efficiency and education

For more information on this grant, please visit: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/economic-impact-initiative-grants>

## Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program

Another option includes the Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program, which, under the REDGrant program, provides “grant funds to local utility organizations which use the funding to establish revolving loan funds” (Rural Economic Development Loan & Grant Program). These loans are used for finance projects that will create or retain jobs, and the grant does not immediately need to be repaid to the agency. Up to \$300,000 in grants may be requested to establish the revolving loan funds and up to \$1 million in loans. Funds may be used to finance projects such as:

- Business expansion
- Facilities and equipment for education and training for rural residents to facilitate economic development
- Community development assistance to nonprofits and public bodies

Nonprofit utilities that are eligible to receive assistance from the Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Programs, Current Rural Development Electric or Telecommunication Program Borrowers or former Rural Utilities Service (RUS) borrowers may apply. Eligible areas include:

- Rural areas or towns with a population of 50,000 or less

Terms for the intermediary:

- 10 years are 0%
- Grants require 20% match from the intermediary

Terms of the Rural Loan Fund for the ultimate recipient:

- Interest rate is 0%
- Maximum term is 10 years
- Up to 80% of project cost, with 20% from either the ultimate recipient or intermediary

For more information on this grant, please visit: <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-economic-development-loan-grant-program>

## Grant Resources

Gather funds to jumpstart programs can be tough. Luckily, several resources exist to help simplify this process. While the grant options proposed in this packet provide examples of potential funding available to Mount Carmel, it is important to note that the list included is not fully comprehensive. The following sites provide details on other grant sources available to communities like Mount Carmel:

- <http://www.grants.gov/>  
A comprehensive site that offers information tailored to researchers with both a basic and advanced understanding of grants and the application process. Visitors can search for grants based on funding instrument type (cooperative agreement, procurement contracts, grant, etc.), eligibility, category (agriculture, business and commerce, etc.), and agency (Department of Commerce, Department of Energy, etc). Additionally, communities can use the site to apply for grants and track their application's progress.
- <http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/programs-services-communities-nonprofits>  
Offers information on loan and grant programs aimed at fostering rural development. This site sorts the programs based on whether they aimed at businesses, lenders, developers, communities and nonprofits, etc.
- <http://www.arc.gov/grants>  
Provides information on grants designed specifically to strengthen growth in the Appalachia region.

Lastly, if needed, the follow link offers invaluable information on how to write grant proposals: <http://www.arc.gov/funding/HowtoWriteaGrantProposal.asp>



## **Conclusion**

Revitalizing a community can be tough. However, as the information above demonstrates, this process is not impossible. Plenty of programs are already in place that can serve as examples for Mount Carmel as it strategizes techniques to help retain youth, fix local infrastructure and generate job opportunities. Furthermore, numerous grants are available to help fund community ideas. You are not alone. There are many resources available to help the community thrive once again.

## **Acknowledgements**

Lastly, we would like to acknowledge all the people who aided us throughout this research process. Thank you to Judy Polites and Jake Betz for responding to our questions with invaluable information on different groups we could contact in Mount Carmel to provide further insight into youth lives and opinions.

Additionally, thank you to the Mother Maria Kaupas Center for hosting us during our field visit as well as all the members of the local community and Mount Carmel Downtown, Inc. for taking the time to meet with us and answer our questions on the community.

And finally, thank you to Professor Vanessa Massaro and Dr. Shaunna Barnhart for guiding us throughout all stages of this project and providing helpful tips when needed.

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