



The Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education

OUR MISSION IS TO EDUCATE
AND EMPOWER GIRLS SO
THEY CAN BECOME LEADERS
IN A NEW APPALACHIA

2022 Annual Report

PAGE | Rebuilding Community

Annual Report FY January 1-December 31, 2022

In 2022, PAGE celebrated its second full year of operations as an independent 501c3 nonprofit, and its thirteenth year of programming in North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains. This was a year to be remembered for our focus on *rebuilding community* since the pandemic lockdown months of 2020 and early 2021.

Once again, our PAGE team was able to offer high-quality learning opportunities in the arts and humanities. Middle school girls explored their worlds through photography, storytelling, and digital media. Interns from Berea College and Duke University led girls on empowering journeys of discovery in small summer literature groups.

In 2022, we also launched a new PAGE chapter. Thanks to three-year grant funding from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund's Student STEM Enrichment Program (or SSEP), we were able to premiere some exciting new STEM learning opportunities. Participants in grades 6-10, Interns, and staff explored local ecologies and plant life in a garden classroom and experienced the joys of "space time" in a new astronomy STEM Lab. PAGE officially introduced STEM learning into its menu of place-based learning for girls.

This goal arose in part from a recognition that across its first decade PAGE developed a robust menu of learning opportunities in the arts and humanities. Our staff and Board recognized that for girls in Appalachian communities to experience educational equality and full access, they need meaningful engagements with STEM. They need opportunities to be inspired by young women who work in STEM fields, and to engage in innovative,

creative ways with science, technology, and engineering.

This new investment in STEM opportunities for girls is part of our commitment to helping underserved girls—girls from rural communities, working-class or working-poor communities, indigenous communities, and communities of color—achieve their full potential and imagined futures. We believe that inspiring engagements with STEM can be life-changing for the girls who will become Appalachia's next young women scientists and leaders.

We were also pleased to deepen our investments in Appalachian arts and crafts. As much as we recognized the empowering possibilities of STEM education for girls, we wanted to strengthen our work with traditional crafts. Our partnership with Berea College proved immensely helpful for reaching this goal. Berea College's Director of Craft Education and Outreach, **Steve Davis-Rosenbaum**, led staff and Interns in a virtual broom-making activity, part of his commitment to helping us imagine our own Appalachian crafts curriculum. We welcomed a new team member, **Denise Benson**—an advanced undergraduate student at Mars Hill University, as Appalachian arts and crafts Intern. Another *first* for PAGE.

We hope that this creative blending of old and new skills will strengthen girls' positive sense of local and regional identity, even as we help prepare them for the new worlds they will build.

Our biggest challenge in 2022 was to rebuild our community, in a teaching culture that—we learned—had changed since the pandemic lockdown. Across the most difficult months of the pandemic

in 2020-2021, many girls had become disengaged from school in ways that were detrimental to their well-being and learning. Teacher colleagues spoke of students who have lost the equivalent of one-two years of learning due to the pandemic and its ripple effects for *rural* students. Girls shared feelings of social isolation.

Our team is proud of PAGE's achievements in this challenging post-pandemic time. Thanks to generous grant funding and donations and the passion and commitment of our leadership team, staff, and Interns, we made strong progress toward rebuilding a thriving community. Each team member's contributions made a difference. The smiles and warm welcome each morning from PAGE's "kitchen angels"—local women, **Priscilla** and **Teresa**, who greeted our students, Interns, and staff with delicious, organic farm-to-PAGE breakfasts and lunches; the infectious energy of our inspiring Interns—**Amy, Anupriya, Emily, Jessica, and Mina**; the amazing contributions of project facilitators—artists, scientists, and digital storytellers—who guided girls through our innovative labs and projects and our literature groups.

Our year ended with a sense of hope and excitement about what lies ahead. Our Board and our leadership team have begun to imagine PAGE's next phase of growth. We can look ahead to our new MobilePage strategy as an opportunity to develop outreach programs for girls in Southern and Central Appalachia, beyond our program home in Madison County, North Carolina.

In the sections that follow, we hope to bring you inside PAGE and share highlights from our programs, our work together, and our students: the girls and young women of Appalachia.

Deborah Hicks-Rogoff
Founder and Executive Director

Our 2022 Team



YEAR-ROUND STAFF

Executive Director
Deborah Hicks-Rogoff

Program Director
Maia Surdam

Assistant to Program Director
Deborah Chandler

Communications Specialist
Ryn McCall

Documentary Arts Specialist
Jenny Jacklin-Stratton

**Interim Literature
Program Coordinator**
Langley Ellman



BOARD of DIRECTORS

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Emily McGinty

Board Treasurer
Betty Hurst

Board Members
Annie Ager, Sarah Baker Coombs, and
Chris Green

President (Non-Voting)
Deborah Hicks-Rogoff

PROJECT FACILITATORS: PageLabs and Projects

Visual Diary Project
Jonna McKone, Documentary Artist

Digital Storytelling
Allison Myers and Mary Ann McNair,
StoryCenter Facilitators

Heritage Garden Lab
Lucy Lowe, Microbiologist

Astronomy Lab
Miriam Fuchs, Scientist

College Pathways Workshop
Robin Wolfe Shoor, College Admissions
Specialist

VISITING WORKSHOP LEADERS

Scientific and Botanical Illustration
Helen Wykle, Artist

Lichen Discovery Walk
Laura Boggess, Biologist and
Environmental Studies Professor

COLLEGE INTERNS

Anupriya Dixit (Berea College)
Mina Jang (Duke University)
Jessica Sue-Kam-Ling-Lewis
(Duke University)
Emily Noe (Berea College)
Amy Stemann (Berea College)

EXTERNAL EVALUATION TEAM

Evaluation Director
Jessica Sperling (Duke University)
Evaluation Project Manager
Megan Gray (Duke University)
Research Analyst
Erin Haseley (Duke University)

SUMMER and AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM STAFF

Farm to Table Coordinator
Lindsay Montgomery
Summer Program Cooks
Teresa Decker and Priscilla Boles
Summer Program Bus Drivers
Ryan Cutshaw, Jimmy Massey
and Danielle Swaney
Summer Instructional Assistant
Danielle Swaney
After-School Bus Driver
Ryan Cutshaw

As I reflect on 2022, it seems, above all, a year of growth that has moved us a step closer toward maturity. To share some of the highlights of this past year, I would like to think about the pieces that make PAGE possible.

P = Partnerships

We deepened our longterm partnerships and nurtured new ones. This aspect of our work depends on the people who form our communities.

Who were some of the people who made this year a success? Educators from the Madison County Public Schools provided us with places to gather and opportunities to connect. Teachers and bus drivers spent their summer vacation months working with PAGE. Local volunteers shared their time and skills to create enriching opportunities for our students: farmer and miller **Lindsey Giglio**; garden educator **Natalie Hesed**; biologist and lichen-lady **Laura Boggess**; nutritionist **Jessica Mollet**; illustrator **Helen Wykle**; and scientist **Lucy Lowe**, just to name a few. Parents and guardians supported their daughters by giving them rides, sharing their feedback with us, attending our celebratory events, and encouraging their children's participation season after season. Experienced teaching artists returned to work with PAGE's Summer Program, like **Jonna McKone**, **Allison Myers**, and **Mary Ann McNair** in June, and first-time project facilitator and astronomer, **Mimi Fuchs**, took our students on a tour through the galaxies in July.

A = Appalachian

We explored the rich cultural traditions of our region. With the guidance of our partners at Berea College Student Craft, we introduced an Appalachian arts and crafts curriculum as a Club Day experience for girls at the Madison



Left: Student collecting eggs. Right: Program Director Maia Surdam in a lichen workshop.

Middle School. A Mars Hill University student and Montgomery Scholar, **Denise Benson**, helped to facilitate these lessons. The Club Day opportunity allowed girls to get to know PAGE and our approach to hands-on learning during their regular school schedule. In the fall and winter, we decorated (and made-up stories about) gingerbread people, practiced therapeutic doodling, carved apple heads, wove tapestries on bowl looms, and made pinch pots. In doing so, we followed in the Appalachian tradition of making things with our hands using readily available materials.

G = Girls

We connected with the creative, thoughtful, exuberant, and interesting young people who form the bedrock of our community. After two years of cancelled or constrained programming because of the pandemic, we happily brought back a full array of after school and summer opportunities. We met a new group of rising 6th grade girls in June who used polaroid cameras to create visual diaries for their first project with PAGE. We took a group of older girls out to the Grassland Observatory

in Little Pine to gaze at the nighttime sky through a giant telescope. In the Spring and Fall, we spent Wednesday afternoons with girls who drew in their lab journals, planted garlic and spread compost, mixed herbs into butter and tossed it with potatoes, and peered through microscopes at the miniature organisms living among us. Through these activities, girls expanded their horizons and pushed themselves into new territories.

E = Education

We found inspiration in the world around us. Through our collective efforts, we demonstrated to girls that learning can happen in myriad ways and through various pursuits. We learned by reading and writing, by sitting and listening, by observing and drawing, by making and sharing, by laughing and dancing, by gathering and paying attention. Our hope is that PAGE will nurture a love of lifelong learning among all who join us.

With gratitude and hope,
Maia Surdam
PAGE Program Director

Middle & High School Programs

In our Middle School Program, we focus on place-based learning that helps each girl connect in positive ways with the local people, places, and stories of Appalachia. We offer new ways to learn and connect through multi-media learning projects. As girls prepare for and enter high school, we provide mentoring that helps them imagine and create future pathways, including college and careers.

Over the 2022 year in PAGE, girls created photographic diaries about their lives, created multi-media digital stories, explored the different habitats of a heritage teaching garden, and built their own telescopes so they could study the Appalachian night sky. Girls dove into novels in small literature groups led by College Interns from Berea College and

Duke University, and they wrote and sketched out ideas in journals. They experienced the joy of creative, confidence-building activities: photography, journal writing, digital storytelling, gardening, Appalachian arts and crafts, farm to table baking—and *more*.

During this post-pandemic time of rebuilding community, we focused on our core programs for girls in middle school (grades 6-8) and the early years of high school (grades 9-10). To engage as many girls as possible in our community, we welcomed veteran participants in grades 9-10 to join us for a new summer program STEM lab: **Appalachian Stargazing**. In this exciting new STEM lab and in our beloved literature groups, girls in grades 8-10 happily worked together. We have learned that flexibility, choice,

and most importantly *community* are important for helping girls find their way back into PAGE.

For our most senior participants, young women in grades 11-12, we once again offered our week-long College Pathways intensive workshop. Meeting on a local college campus, Mars Hill University, helped the young women workshop participants imagine how their futures could include college. Though we were unable in this post-pandemic year to offer one of PAGE's most impactful offerings, a three-night college visit, our team looks forward to offering this college immersion experience once again in 2023.

We are pleased to share with you highlights of our programs and learning labs across 2022.

PAGE After School



Middle School Science teachers **Jamie Calloway** and **Lindsay Montgomery** spent years dreaming of and bringing to fruition a heritage garden—featuring edible plants and heritage seeds—in a pasture (part of an old farm) next to Madison Middle School. In 2022, Program Director **Maia Surdam** and Assistant to the Program Director **Debbie Chandler** were proud to launch a PAGE After School Program in this garden classroom and the nearby Patriot Place building on the campus of Madison Middle School.

In spring and again in the fall of 2022, girls at Madison Middle School had the opportunity to explore and inquire through multiple lenses: through the layer of science inquiry—learning about plants and seeds, biological processes, botany, and soil composition; through the layer of environmental education—learning how they can be stewards of the lands and farms they will inherit; and through the layer of Appalachian foodways—learning how local food can connect with culture, storytelling, and local farming traditions. Girls' inquiries and observations were documented in a creative tool for learning and exploring: illustrated lab journals.

These spring and fall of 2022 learning activities were part of PAGE's commitment



Left: Astronomer Mimi Fuchs guides a 1-on-1 exploration of a refracting telescope. Right: A student's illustrated STEM lab journal.

to offering innovative after-school learning opportunities that deepen our support of STEM and arts and humanities (or STEAM) learning for girls. Participants in grades 6-8 took part in this PAGE after school program once weekly over an eight-week period in the spring and over an additional eight-week period in the fall.

An important part of this new STEAM lab were opportunities for girls to learn with women scientists and scientific illustrators. In spring 2022, girls learned through guided inquiry from Project Facilitator **Lucy Lowe**, a local microbiologist and native plants expert with deep roots herself in Appalachia—Lucy's family has for generations farmed in the community of Spring Creek. They also learned about the art and craft of scientific illustration with **Helen Wykle**, an Asheville botanical artist who was born at the historic Pine Mountain Settlement School in Eastern Kentucky.

In fall 2022, girls participated in a special workshop led by Mars Hill University Environmental Studies and Biology instructor **Laura Boggess**, also a Western North Carolina native. Laura is a specialist on studies of lichen.



As part of girls' science inquiry and learning, Laura led participants on a lichen discovery walk. Girls sketched, recorded their questions and observations, and joined girls across the globe who study their natural worlds using tools of science, the arts, and their own curiosity.

PAGE Spotlight: Appalachian Stargazing STEM Lab



A photo gallery from PAGE's Astronomy STEM Lab.

Thanks to a grant from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund's Student STEM Enrichment Program (SSEP), PAGE was able to develop an exciting new STEM lab for participants in our annual summer program.

We were pleased in July 2022 to introduce our newest STEM Project Facilitator, astronomer and scientist **Miriam 'Mimi' Fuchs**. Mimi previously worked as a telescope systems specialist at the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope on the Big Island of Hawaii. She recently completed a Master of Science in Systems Engineering degree at Drexel University.

Mimi was honored in March 2022 at an IfThenSheCan exhibit at the National Mall, featuring 120 3D statues celebrating women in STEM. She serves as an ambassador with If/Then, "an initiative designed to activate a culture shift among young girls to open their eyes to

STEM careers." In July, Mimi joined our team on site in Madison County.

Mimi kicked off a new STEM lab by leading girls on a journey of discovery into space and the solar system. It didn't hurt that beautiful images had just been released from the James Webb Space Telescope. Girls' lab journals began to include creative renderings of nebula and other phenomena. Our participants were learning the new language of astronomy.



Midway through the first week of this PageLab, girls began to do hands-on astronomy. With mentoring from our Interns from Berea College and Duke University—Amy, Anupriya, Emily, Jessica, and Mina—and under Mimi's guidance, each participant built a telescope modeled after the one that Galileo used. These new 'Galileoscopes' were given names and decorated with Washi tape. New science tools also became tools of self-expression and creativity.

By night from their homes in small towns and rural communities, girls in this new STEM Lab were stargazing in new ways with their Galileoscopes. By day, they were also getting to know and learning from young women astronomers. Project Facilitator Mimi Fuchs was joined by Zoom by two colleagues from the James Clerk Maxwell Telescope on the Big Island of Hawai'i. Two native Hawai'ian astronomers, **Leinani** and **Alexis**, joined Mimi and our participants for a dialogue about local views of astronomy and big telescopes, some on sacred mountain tops. PAGE girls also engaged in small group creative activities around the theme of women in astronomy.

We wrapped up with nighttime stargazing at the breathtaking Grassland Mountain Observatory with members of the Asheville Astronomy Club. By the close of this STEM lab, girls were doing place-based astronomy, joining astronomers across the globe in studying the night sky with telescopes (big and small), writing in lab journals, and coming up with creative questions.

With our new STEM learning opportunities, we aspire to engage adolescent girls in the study of the universe by giving them the same tools used by professional scientists. We hope to foster an interest in science, technology, and engineering as well as build girls' confidence in tackling STEM concepts.

Arts & Humanities Opportunities

PAGE has a long history of commitment to learning opportunities that celebrate the arts and humanities. Our youngest participants in grades 6-7 work with digital tools and technologies that help them tell their personal and family stories in new ways. Our returning participants in grades 8-10 work with Project Facilitators—real artists, historians, photographers—along with each year’s team of Interns to explore themes such as the past, present, and future of local schools or Appalachian foodways.

Our arts and humanities learning opportunities bring together the best of the old and new. They help girls engage with the people, places, and stories of Appalachia by using multi-media tools for learning and connecting.

The 2022 year in PAGE marked the launch of a new storytelling and visual arts opportunity for our entering participants in 6th grade, and the reprise of one of our earliest projects—digital storytelling.

For PAGE’s youngest participants in 6th grade, we launched a new entry-level opportunity for exploring stories from girls’ personal worlds, their communities, and the places and people in their lives. 6th grade participants in PAGE’s After



School Program as well as rising 6th grade girls in its annual Summer Program created multi-media visual diaries using Instax cameras (similar to Polaroids)

This new storytelling project was designed in its earliest phases by PAGE’s Documentary Arts Curriculum Specialist, **Jenny Stratton**. Program Director **Maia Surdam** collaborated with visiting documentary artist **Jonna McKone** on finishing touches for the project, and Jonna served as project facilitator for its launch in June. Under Jonna’s leadership and with support from our Interns, 6th grade participants learned how to tell stories of places and people with multi-media tools: collage, personal journal writing, photography, and the collection of oral family histories.



“I liked creating my [Digital] Story because it allowed me to express a part of myself I wouldn’t usually share. My story will forever be a part of my heart... I hope it encourages others to share their own [stories]. I believe that it has a lasting and positive impact.” —Katlyn

We believe this fun and engaging project will help prepare our youngest participants for the more complex arts and humanities projects—digital storytelling, oral histories, podcasts, humanities labs—they will encounter as they move through their PAGE journeys.

For rising 7th/8th grade participants in PAGE’s annual summer program, we were pleased to once again offer the empowering experience of creating digital stories about their lives and dreams.

We welcomed back, for the first time since 2019, a team from StoryCenter: an educational nonprofit dedicated to helping youth and adults engage in meaningful ways with media and digital literacy. StoryCenter project facilitators **Allison Myers** and **Mary Ann McNair** joined us on site for PAGE’s first summer program session. Working as a teaching team, Allison, Mary Ann, and our Interns helped each girl fully engage in a two-week process of creating a multi-media

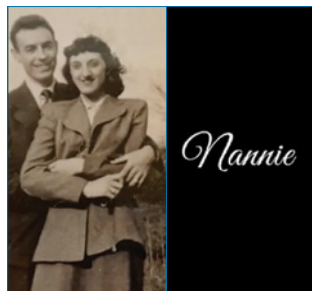
project about a personal story, a moment in their lives, and a dream for the future.

Our participants worked on individual MacBook computers, using film editing software to learn how to create digital projects. The design, composing, and editing of multi-media stories engaged girls with new literacy tools and technologies. With these new tools, participants were able to tell their stories in new ways, for new audiences and purposes. They gained a sense of empowerment and more confidence with technology.

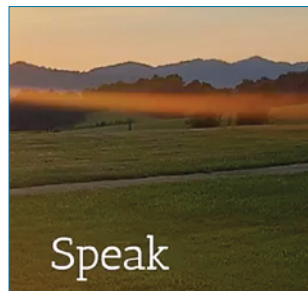
This learning opportunity exemplifies PAGE’s commitment to creating education that integrates the Arts & Humanities with STEM in fun and empowering ways. The use of story as a tool for connecting with digital learning was important for girls who need positive ways to honor their experiences and identities growing up in Appalachia as they connect with others outside their local communities.



► Brooke Cody’s story



► Mila Dispenza’s story



► Maria McDaris’s story

Appalachian Arts & Crafts



Tradition becomes Tangible...

With an intentional focus on place-based learning, 2022 saw the introduction of Appalachian arts and crafts programming that focuses on the traditional craft work of the region. With support from our partners at Berea Student Craft, girls were guided through fiber arts such as tapestry and bowl loom weaving, natural material crafting that included broom making and natural dyeing, and other Appalachian traditions. Weaving the storied histories of these processes through hands-on learning labs, students engaged in an immersive cultural experience that reflects the lives, both current and ancestral, of folks living right here in Appalachian North Carolina.



Our Farm to Table Food Program

A typical Summer day in PAGE starts with a delicious breakfast at 9 a.m. Our whole team eats together—students, staff, and interns alike. We might have pancakes and bacon; yogurt, fruit and granola; or sourdough toast with eggs. No matter what food we put on our plates, we are sure to be greeted by warm, smiling faces when we step into the cafeteria. This is one of many reasons we love the “Kitchen Angels,” the people who feed and nurture us, and make our Farm-to-Table Food Program possible!

Our food program is led by **Lindsay Montgomery**, a 7th grade science teacher, homesteader, and modern-day renaissance woman. Lindsay first came to know PAGE in 2018 when she volunteered as a narrator in our oral history project about Appalachian foodways. During that summer, she shared her story with us and taught us how to milk her goats and make cheese. Since 2021, Lindsay has been running PAGE's summer food program, ensuring that the breakfast and lunches we eat are flavorful, fresh, and nutritious.

Lindsay sources local ingredients as much as possible, knowing that the food choices we make have a direct impact on the health of our communities. This means we get to sample a variety of foods that reflect a vibrant Appalachian food culture stemming from Madison County artisans, craftspeople, farmers, and businesses. The sourdough bread and bagels we eat come from Mars Hill Bread and Butter bakery, for instance, and the 2 Studs Ranch in Hot Springs provided over 20 dozen eggs for us! We have a variety of ferments on the menu from Fermenti, a Madison-County based company. And Lindsay herself often

makes hummus and flavored goat cheese from scratch. We source meat and fish from the Highland Station in Marshall. Our spices and pantry items often come from the Wild Violet in Mars Hill or Madison Natural Foods in Marshall.

The Kitchen Angels take these raw materials, prepare them into meals, and serve them with love. **Teresa Decker** and **Priscilla Boles** both work as teaching assistants in the Hot Springs Elementary School during the year and work with PAGE as cooks in the summer. And, lucky for PAGE, they will be joining us again in 2023! What do they enjoy about this work? Priscilla says, “I love seeing the girls try food that is new to them and enjoying it.” And Teresa agrees. “When they come through the food line with all the sweet compliments and appreciation, it gives me one more reason why I love cooking for PAGE girls.”



Above: Our kitchen angels excitedly await the arrival of our students for lunch. Below: Maia Surdam (left) and Lindsay Montgomery (right) prepare a bounty of local food.



Our Summer Literature Program

Literature is an Essential Part of Our PAGE Programs

Since Since PAGE's earliest days, our literature program has remained one of its most impactful and popular programs. In small summer literature groups led by members of our intern team, our participants gained a new sense of themselves as readers, thinkers, and members of local and global communities.

Our college interns spent weeks in April and May, while still on the campuses of Berea College and Duke University, pondering YA literature titles for use in their book groups. The interns met over these months with Interim Literature Program Coordinator, **Langley Ellmann**, and **Amy Stemann** (below) a returning Berea College intern who assumed an additional leadership role in 2022. Amy, an English and education major who is passionate about YA literature, served in a new role as Langley's assistant.



Langley first arrived at PAGE as interim literature program coordinator in 2021. Ten years prior (in 2011), she served with PAGE as an undergraduate intern from Duke University. After graduating from Duke, Langley worked with educational nonprofits in the U.S. and the U.K., taught at the elementary school level in North Carolina public

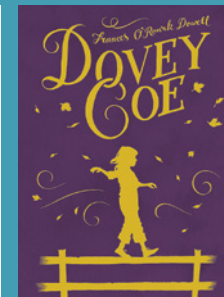
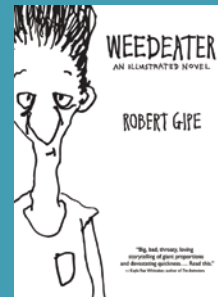
schools, and completed a Master's in Education from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.

In 2022, Langley grew into a dual mentoring role. In the months prior to our summer program, she helped each intern settle on two YA literature titles and a teaching plan for working with the books. During our summer program, she functioned in a supportive role for intern Amy Stemann's mentoring work



with her colleagues on our intern team. This way, each intern, and Amy in her new leadership role, received the full support they needed to help our PAGE participants enjoy finding themselves on the pages of novels and memoirs.

“I really liked having conversations with the group instead of it just being my own point of view. I thought it was very eye opening.”—Aubrey

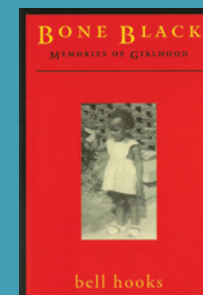


Over the summer, the PAGE girls deeply engaged in literature through these small groups. The group reading *Dovey Coe*, a historical fiction text set in 1920s Appalachia, forged deep connections between the spunky, adventurous narrator and their own adventures in the same region.

The girls loved exploring the differences and similarities between Dovey's life and their own—albeit 100 years apart, they identified cultural elements that had endured over time and also forged a new appreciation for some of the changes.

An older group of PAGE girls read *Weedeater*, a graphic novel set in rural Kentucky. While reading this text, girls were invited to share stories of their own lives in a combined visual and literary way. Each girl interpreted this activity differently, yielding maps, comic strips, and even a large oak tree where each branch told a different piece of one girl's story.

Emily, one of our interns, also selected *Bone Black* by bell hooks for our second session with the older students, saying:



“This book is a beautifully surreal memoir about her experience growing up in a poor southern family. Learning how to tell your own story and grow from the surroundings you were imagined in is a huge part of growing up. Bone Black does exactly that in the best way possible and is a perfect example to show us all how to tell our own stories. In reflection, one student named Anna shared that ‘Reading Bone Black was so different from how I grew up. Reading how [bell hooks] experienced racism isn’t something that I have experienced, and it feels important to talk about... We all have a childhood, but they don’t all look the same.’”

With the support and mentoring of our Intern team, girls in PAGE were once again able to enjoy summer reading in our Literature Program. These small reading groups helped girls reconnect with one another—so important after the social isolation of the pandemic lockdown months—and grow as readers and lifelong learners.

“The seeds of dreams are often found in books, and the seeds you help plant in your community can grow across the world.”
—Dolly Parton

College Internships



College Interns are core members of PAGE's team each year. Since 2010, Interns from Duke University and now Berea College have served as inspiring role models and mentors for the adolescent girls we serve.

We invest deeply in the mentoring we provide for the Interns, so they in turn can help create empowering learning opportunities for girls. Interns work under the mentoring of project facilitators in STEM and the arts and humanities. Our seasoned leadership team provides added guidance, support with team building, and an occasional home-cooked, farm to table meal. Interns reside on the campus of Mars Hill University.

From a competitive application process that took place in the last quarter of 2021, we invited five undergraduate students—three from Berea College and two from Duke University—to join our 2021 Intern team. It was inspiring to watch the strong teamwork and leadership that emerged among the Interns, and their passionate commitment to PAGE's educational mission.

Amy Stemann from Berea College joined our Intern team for a second year. This time, Amy served in a unique leadership role especially crafted for her. An English and education major, Amy is studying to be a future middle school English teacher. She is also committed to teaching in Appalachia after she graduates from Berea College. Amy is passionate about young adult literature, creative writing, and the integration of Appalachian studies. We were delighted that Amy returned in 2022 as a senior intern and an assistant to Literature Program Coordinator **Langley Ellman**.

Our Intern team included **Anupriya Dixit**—an international student from

India. Anupriya joined our team as a communication major and film minor at Berea College. She is a photographer and videographer who is developing a portfolio of work in media and visual arts. In our first summer session in June, Anupriya joined our digital storytelling team, where she mentored PAGE students in the process of creating multi-media stories. In July, Anupriya joined PAGE Communications Specialist **Ryn McCall** to work on photography and social media stories in support of PAGE communications strategies.

Mina Jang joined our team from Duke University, where she is majoring in English, with minors in creative writing and education. Mina joined us from her home in sunny California. She was inspired by a former high school English teacher who became a mentor to pursue an English major and do creative work: writing, zines, and videos. Mina served as a member of our digital storytelling team, an enthusiastic builder of Galileo telescopes (even as a humanities major!), and as an inspiring group leader and mentor in two literature program groups.

Jessica Sue-Kam-Ling-Lewis also joined our team from Duke University. A global health and cultural anthropology co-major, Jessica was especially interested in helping create empowering educational opportunities for girls in her home state of North Carolina. Jessica is the daughter of immigrants, and she is aware of the unique challenges of girls and young women navigating the unfamiliar when applying to college or first time or even reading books from different cultures. Jessica's positive energy was a memory our team will cherish from 2022, along with her love of astronomy. She inspired PAGE girls to read deeply, be creative,



Jessica



Amy (with telescope)



Emily (standing)



Jessica, Mina, Amy, and Emily



Anupriya (right)



Mina (left)

study the stars, and develop confidence in their own voices and dreams.

Emily Noe grew up in Eastern Kentucky, and she knew that as a young woman in Appalachia she could have benefited from PAGE. Now a student at Berea College, Emily is majoring in English, with a creative writing minor. Our literature program and new visual diary project held special interest for Emily. She introduced to our students the beautiful memoir *Bone Black* by one of Berea's most celebrated and beloved professors, bell hooks. She also brought to our team her experience working as an outreach

assistant in Berea College Student Craft. Emily helped guide our Intern team and staff in broom making, our teaching team's joyful first steps into Appalachian crafts.

The imprint of these inspiring young women leaders will linger in PAGE through girls' greater confidence; their new aspirations; and their new interests in STEM, the humanities, and the creative arts.

We are deeply grateful for the generous support of **Brad and Shelli Stanback**, which has made possible our continued investment in Internship opportunities such as these.

Evaluating Our Impact

A thoughtful evaluation of PAGE's impact is one of the important aspects of our work. We need to understand PAGE's short, medium, and long-term impact to make sure we offer the highest quality programs possible, meet the needs of our participants, and continue to improve each year.

In PAGE's second full year of operations as an independent nonprofit, we were fortunate to continue our engagement with an evaluation team from Duke University's Social Science Research Institute (SSRI). **Jessica Sperling**, Ph.D., lead SSRI evaluation and engagement researcher, directs PAGE's evaluation team. Jessica was joined by Duke University SSRI colleague **Megan Gray**, researcher and project manager. In August 2022, **Erin Haseley** and **Noelle Wyman Roth** stepped in to replace Megan on the evaluation team.

The PAGE evaluation is intended to inform and engage the various stakeholders involved with PAGE, as well as to inform the continual improvement of our programs. We disseminate the evaluation findings in accessible formats

(reports and memos) and invite our partners and major funders to engage in further dialogues around what the data reveal. The evaluation is meant to be a collaborative opportunity to engage, to reflect, and to make data-informed decisions about PAGE programming.

In 2022, the lens of our evaluation turned to our summer programs, largely to evaluate participants' shorter term responses to our new STEM learning opportunities. The tools used to learn about impact were surveys offered to 6th-10th grade participants at the close of each of our summer program sessions in June and July. A total of 24 participants (89%) summer program participants completed a survey. The evaluation questions included:

Q1: *How do program participants experience our PAGE summer programs? How does this vary by program component/session?*

Q2: *To what degree does the PAGE summer program affect participants in shorter-term anticipated outcomes? How does this vary by program component/session?*

By the Numbers

In its 13th year of program operations, PAGE reached 74% capacity towards its three-year goal of serving 70 participants annually at our demonstration program site in Madison County. 52 participants from rural communities and small towns in Madison County participated in our Middle School and High School Programs in 2022. This steady growth trajectory reflects the realities of rebuilding PAGE community in the post-pandemic time period.



Lessons Learned from 2022 Evaluation

- A majority of girls in our Summer Program reported facing a variety of hardships during the 2021-2022 year. After "other major challenging life issue" the most frequent life challenge indicated was "serious illness or death of a close family member or friend." Several respondents indicated they had experienced a "major family structure change" or "unusual family financial circumstances."
- Participants reported a **very positive experience with summer programming**. Overall, **92%** of respondents on the summer program survey indicated they were "**very satisfied**" with their PAGE experience. Satisfaction levels were especially high in our digital storytelling and our new astronomy STEM labs. 100% of respondents were "very satisfied" with these two learning opportunities.
- **Some parts of our summer programming stood out as particularly enjoyable for our participants**. Satisfaction was especially high (4.5 or higher on a scale of 1-5) for "working with college interns," "learning about astronomy," and "using photography to learn and express myself."
- **Participants reported positive growth in all outcome areas addressed by PAGE's summer program: social inclusion; peer connections; education and future plans; community connections; STEM**. The highest *growth* as well as lowest pre-program *baseline* was evidenced with social inclusion. This may reflect the lingering impact of the pandemic on girls' feelings of connection and social inclusion.
- **Participants in our newest PAGE opportunity, an astronomy STEM lab, indicated high levels of satisfaction, as well as growth of interest in science and growth in social skills.**

The PAGE evaluation data support the positive responses of the participants to our new STEM lab. Our participants particularly benefited from learning with and from female scientists such as **Mimi Fuchs**, a young astronomer. As noted on page 8 of the memo, 50% of participants in the new STEM lab had not met a female scientist prior to the astronomy session...When asked about the best part of their PAGE experience, one respondent explained: "***I never have met an astronomer before this session with PAGE. It helped me understand more about space and make me more interested in it now.***"

One final lesson from PAGE's 2022 Evaluation Memo concerns a higher pre-program *baseline* as well as lesser *growth* for an important outcome: education and future plans. As the evaluation memo notes on pg. 7, this could indicate that the participants in the summer program already had a sense of their future education plans. However, we would like to learn more. Helping girls aspire to future education beyond high school is an important outcome, and we therefore need to deepen our efforts in PAGE to achieve this goal. The next step will be to research how we can strengthen our programming, particularly for girls in grades 8-12, to inspire girls to imagine and seek higher levels of education. These lessons learned about our impact provide insightful direction for improvement as our staff and Board continually seek to understand girls' needs and opportunities for PAGE's growth.

*Evaluation Memo: *Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education, 2022 Summer Programming*. Prepared by Jessica Sperling, Ph.D.; Erin Haseley, MA; and Noelle Wyman Roth, MEM. Duke Social Science Research Institute, October 2022.

Our Funders and Partners

2022 was a year of solid, uplifting progress towards our long-term strategic development goals. As PAGE entered its second full operating year as a 501c3 nonprofit organization, we began to look forward and envision a future that includes a new MobilePage strategy for outreach to communities outside Madison County, North Carolina.

PAGE benefits from strong leadership, a track record of success with program growth and funding, investment by major local and national foundations, and new partnerships on the horizon. PAGE is well positioned for long-term sustainability and growth.

PAGE was formerly the recipient of two grants from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and benefits from generous support from local and national foundations, including major foundations and trusts such as The Grable Foundation, the William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and Tides Foundation. This foundation and trust support is coupled with support from private donors who generously support PAGE on an annual basis. In order to sustain our growth at PAGE's demonstration program site in the Blue Ridge Mountains and expand the reach of our programs to new sites, our development strategy has increasingly focused on funding opportunities for general operating support. This strategy will allow PAGE to expand in a nimble way that is responsive to the people and cultures of new communities where we hope to serve.

By end of the fourth quarter of 2022, PAGE's total Revenue was \$683,711.24. New grants from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and the Tides Foundation



were generously directed for general operating support. The financial success of PAGE's second full year as a nonprofit was due to the generous support of these and other grant funders as well as private philanthropy:

- Private donations: Individual donations, both offline and through our Classy online donation platform, increased over this first year. These generous private donations accounted for \$88,861.74 of PAGE's 2022 revenue.
- PAGE was honored in July 2022 with a new grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation. The foundation provided PAGE with a two-year \$50,000 grant for general operating support.
- PAGE was also selected for a new \$50,000 grant from Tides Foundation, which seeks to support social change and justice by working with innovative partners. Earlier, the NoVo Foundation had transferred to Tides Foundation its portfolio of grants under 'Advancing the Rights of Adolescent Girls'—the program area that included PAGE. PAGE now works with the 'Adolescent Girls Fund' program team at Tides. We were honored

in December 2022 to receive one-year funding for general operating support, while the 'Advancing Girls Fund' team at Tides continues to review its longer-term strategies.

- Numerous family foundations provided generous repeat funding awards in 2022. These included the Beattie Foundation, the Gradison Foundation, the Edward E. Haddock, Jr. Family Foundation, the James G.K. McClure Educational & Development Fund (administered by the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina), and the Ernst and Gertrude Ticho Charitable Foundation.
- Finally, in the first quarter of 2022, PAGE began working to expand its menu of STEM opportunities for girls in Appalachian North Carolina, thanks to three-year funding from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund's Student STEM Enrichment Program (SSEP). This grant provides \$165,000 in support over three years for PAGE's deepening of STEM learning opportunities: part of our vision for long-term growth.

Private Foundations

Burroughs Wellcome Fund (SSEP: Student STEM Enrichment Program)
The Grable Foundation
The Stavros Niarchos Foundation
Tides Foundation

Community Foundations

Community Foundation of Western North Carolina

Family Foundations

The Beattie Foundation
The Gradison Foundation
The Edward E. Haddock, Jr. Family Foundation
The Ernst and Gertrude Ticho Charitable Foundation

Funds and Charitable Trusts

The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust
The James G.K. McClure Educational and Development Fund
The Helen A. Powers Fund (Bank of America, N.A., Trustee)

And generous private donors from across North Carolina and our nation.

Partners

Berea College, Office of Internships
Madison County (NC) Schools

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

—Nelson Mandela



In the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, PAGE is helping Appalachia's girls and young women learn and connect in new ways.

Join the movement to create empowering ladders of opportunity for girls in Appalachia!

On January 1, 2022, PAGE began its second full year of operations as an independent 501c3 organization, and its thirteenth year of high-quality educational programs for girls in Appalachia. We are proud to celebrate and share with you highlights from this year: a time of growth with new STEM learning opportunities, a deepening of our arts and humanities curriculum, and the expansion of our vibrant community of learners and educators.



Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education

INSPIRE. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

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