

URBAN APPALACHIAN COUNCIL RESEARCH COMMITTEE

January 19, 2007

DRAFT

Present: John Besl, Roberta Campbell (Board Liaison), Sarah Gideonse, Donna Jones, Bob Ludke, Bonnie Kroeger, Sherry Marshall, Ann McCracken, Kathryn Russ, Ryan Shadle, Bonnie Hood Smith, Maureen Sullivan (Executive Director), Chris Wilkey, Debbie Zorn (Chair)

The minutes of November 17, 2006, were approved with one change. The minutes should have read that Phil Obermiller said the UAC *Research Committee* should have a policy and research agenda.

The committee divided into two groups to discuss the research needs and existing knowledge around Health and around Education and Employment.

Health:

There are disparities in health conditions among Appalachians, especially women and children. We need to know more about underlying conditions that cause disparities. Health fairs seem to be important in bringing screening and information to where people are. Cardiovascular disease is very high among Appalachians in general. Evaluation data is needed.

Education:

Much anecdotal information exists with regard to education but more concrete data is needed. Retention rates in school, college, and jobs are low. Many Appalachian students aspire to blue-collar and gender-specific jobs. Females are more apt to graduate than males. Early college connections while in public school are important. A sense of belonging matters to students and there are forces that work against that. Also, it is important to recognize variability within diverse groups such as Appalachians. Bonnie Kroeger noted a group of organizations is coming together to study drop outs and UAC is part of that group.

Identity:

In both groups the issue of identifying Appalachians and of Appalachians identifying themselves as such is important in order to conduct research. Different measures of identity yield contradictory results. Bob Ludke and Kay Russ have used measures that emerged from the Research Committee, under the guidance of Phil Obermiller. One finding is that women are less likely to identify as Appalachians.

Next Steps:

The Research Committee will organize a spring event to address some of these concerns with other advocates and experts. Several suggestions for the event and the people to invite were discussed. A subcommittee will meet on February 2 to discuss this further.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 16, at 10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Roberta M. Campbell, January 21, 2007

