### Education Access

West Virginia has some of the brightest students in the country. But, due to unfunded scholarships, the cost of the college is enormous. This is a problem of understanding of higher education system. Our students do not have choices for undergraduate education.

### Appalachian Scholar Project

**Using Scholarship to Promote Academic Excellence in West Virginia**

Education Access is urgent. It is driven through our communities looks like burned out villages in Kosovo from the 90s. We have the 2nd lowest median household income in this nation. We rank at the bottom end of the pack in nearly every metric the census measures a state. But, in every community, there are exceptional students. We need to give these students access and pathways to potenti for the future.

West Virginia’s population is the least educated in the country. Currently, we stand at 88% of children with bachelor’s degree. Our Number one University, West Virginia University has a 22% 4-year graduation rate.

According to a National University study, students in West Virginia are the least likely to study in college. This creates a circular system of reduced access. Our solution to this problem will be to open up this education, industry, private and government sector.

### Team Members

**Chair:** Co-Chair of the College of Social Studies/Co-Chair of the Center on International Politics

**Email:** cmiller@wesleyan.edu

**Major:** College of Social Studies/Latin American History

**Class:** 2019

Bom and raised in West Virginia, Dennis joined the Army at the age of 22. After 10 years of military service, much of that time spent in leadership roles, I began to work towards an undergraduate degree through the Kosovo scholar program. During that time, I was spent countless hours advising fellow veterans on elite college application process. I've spent countless hours advising fellow veterans on elite college application process.

### Budget Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facilities Rental</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books &amp; Supplies</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering Services</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Metrics

**Metric 1:** acceptance into a dream school

**Metric 2:** Complete freshman year, return to our program to assist in establishing our program

**Metric 3:** Complete 4-year undergraduate education program

These are our latest statistics for success. However, we encourage all our scholars to go and live and learn in places like Boston, NY, San Francisco and on the college campus of their choice. The next step is to build our network through these first hand stories and our students will be the mentors for the next cohort.

### The Timeline

**Exact date when you plan to do this and when you have done it.**

- **Date:** June 10th
- **Date:** June 30th

Once a month check, or as needed by scholar

### Budget

The beauty of this program is that we only need facilities, books, supplies, and food for the students during our four-week boot camp. Everything else will be provided by the staff either through their own funding sources. Until we can find a cheaper facility, with all of the things we need, our greatest expense will be food and transportation costs. Football is king, Education plays a minimal role in West Virginia and assist in rebuilding our state.

### Training, Mentorship, and Followthrough

My approach to this problem will be threefold. The first aspect of our approach will be Training. The second aspect is through close mentorship beginning with myself and my staff followed by self-facilitating approach through their peers. Third, once goals have been established, follow through on a mentor of multidisciplinary college through the mine applications.

The cornerstone of our program will be training. We will put our recruited Appalachian Scholars through a 4-week boot camp in Charleston West Virginia. During this time period, our students will create a actionable college application plan, to be exposed to variety of top tier colleges around the country. Build confidence in formal level reading and writing, meet with admissions, find out which scholarships that best meet their needs, mentor, and finally work with a mentor to assist in college applications of this along with a completed common app.

The next crucial element will be handing down to future generation students here in West Virginia. The student will then work with each mentor and myself to go over milestones in the application to ensure completion. Once the student is accepted we will tap our extensive network of peers, friends, and partners to assist students with a soft landing on the campus they arrive on. The mentorship process will continue on a monthly basis with myself and mentors for the following year. After a successful completion of summer boot camp, they will be the mentors for the next cohort of students.

### Training

- **Begin training:** June 10th
- **End training:** June 30th

### Followthrough

- **Next cohort:** Summer 2020

Success for our program will be to see our student accepted to the best possible university we can match them to and complete their four-year education. Short term, we plan to bring as many students back for the second cohort to talk about best practices at their universities.