

2025 Annual Report

Greetings from **MOUNTAINEER** **COUNTRY** *West Virginia*

Where Story Meets Strategy

VISIT
MOUNTAINEER
COUNTRY.com

One more *night*, one more *dollar*
to benefit the communities we serve.

WHY TOURISM MATTERS HERE.

\$309.4 MILLION

was the total economic impact of tourism in North Central West Virginia

\$830.2 MILLION

of visitor spending was reinvested in our local communities

7,948 JOBS

in North Central West Virginia, were directly supported by tourism

\$667 SAVINGS

in taxes per North Central West Virginia household

Source: 2024 Tourism Economics Snapshot





A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

TOURISM LEADERS AND PARTNERS,

Tourism in Mountaineer Country is built on intention. It is guided by data, shaped by partnership, and rooted in a deep respect for place and community. Every decision we make is informed by insight, strengthened through collaboration, and grounded in a clear understanding of what makes North Central West Virginia special.

As the gateway tourism organization for the region, we welcome thousands of students, families, and event attendees each year in service to West Virginia's land-grant institution while also attracting visitors from across the country and around the globe. Under the direction of our Board of Directors, we are proud and unapologetic promoters of Mountaineer Country and the State of West Virginia. We believe every community and partner plays an important role in the story of our state, and we are grateful to represent and promote them.

The impact of tourism across our region is real and measurable—from the local businesses and jobs it supports to the experiences that encourage visitors to stay longer, return often, and invest more deeply in our communities. Our data and partner testimonials consistently show that this work strengthens our partners and contributes positively to West Virginia's tourism economy.

Because visitors don't see boundaries, our work often extends beyond a single destination. Visit Mountaineer Country actively participates in regional and statewide initiatives including Leave No Trace, Mountaineer Gravel, the Mountaineer Trail Network, Civil War Trails, international visitor initiatives, and more.

We take seriously our responsibility to fulfill the role of a Convention and Visitors Bureau: attracting new visitor spending into our communities, serving as a credible source of information, operating within West Virginia Code and industry best practices, and stewarding our resources responsibly under the direction of our Board of Directors.

Every day, our team works to strengthen our destination and leave a lasting impact on the communities we serve. We measure success not by a single campaign, but through long-term trends, industry benchmarks, and the economic results we see in our region's lodging tax receipts and visitor spending.

As we move into 2026, our focus remains clear: stewarding tourism in ways that strengthen local economies, enhance quality of place, and deliver lasting value for residents and partners alike.

Sincerely,

Susan Riddle, President & CEO
Visit Mountaineer Country CVB

What 2025 Data Tells Us

#1

**Mountaineer Country
Ranked #1 in West
Virginia for Overnight
Stays and Day Trips**

4.2 MILLION

**Mountaineer Country
Saw 4.2 Million Unique
(Non-Repeating)
Visitor* Trips**

295 THOUSAND

**Mountaineer Country
Welcomed 295k
Visitors* Per Month,
on Average**



***Visitors are defined as any
person traveling more than
50 miles to the destination.**

Source: Placer.ai Report

OUR 2025 JOURNEY

A year that added up, mile by mile

We hosted the **Governor's Conference on Tourism**, welcoming 400+ peers to Morgantown, and took home three industry awards for the **Future of Tourism**, **Tourism Development**, and **Digital Media Innovation**.



We launched a new **apprenticeship program**, strengthening workforce development and supporting talent retention in North Central West Virginia.



We launched **The Holler**, a new placemaking podcast sharing the stories of the people and places that shape North Central West Virginia.



Belington Lodging Tax Ordinance Passed

We launched the **Mountaineer Gravel** project, a series of **1,500+** miles of creatively curated public gravel routes.



We revitalized partner communications with **The Pulse**, a monthly newsletter delivering timely resources, updates, and opportunities.



FEB

Newburg Lodging Tax Ordinance Passed

JAN



NOV



We installed three new **Civil War Trail** signs, further investing in heritage tourism and regional storytelling.

OCT



We hosted the inaugural **Mountaineer Monster** bikepacking event, hosting 60 riders and introducing a new signature experience for adventure bikers.

SEPT

AUG



Leave No Trace training resumed in Monongalia, Preston, Taylor, and Barbour Counties.

JUL

Tunnelton Lodging Tax Ordinance Passed

MAY



We hosted **GeoWoodstock XXI**, bringing more than 5,200 geocachers from all 50 states and 22 countries to Mountaineer Country.

**40
YEARS**

We celebrated **40 years** of tourism leadership at our annual **Mountaineer Country Tourism Summit**.

**VISIT
MOUNTAINEER
COUNTRY.com**

We launched a new **website** that now features an AI-powered chatbot, enhanced accessibility tools, and translation plug in.

POSTMARKED 2025

Stories Traveled. Results Delivered.

**623,842
PLANNERS**

**used our website to
plan their visit**

Jan. 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025

**76,476
SUBSCRIBERS**

**received our
monthly e-blasts**

Leads as of Dec. 31, 2025

**8,584
DREAMERS**

**entered to win at least
one of 15 giveaways**

Jan. 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025

**57,105
ENGAGERS**

**followed us on one or
more social media accounts**

Followers as of Dec. 18, 2025

**13,589
USERS**

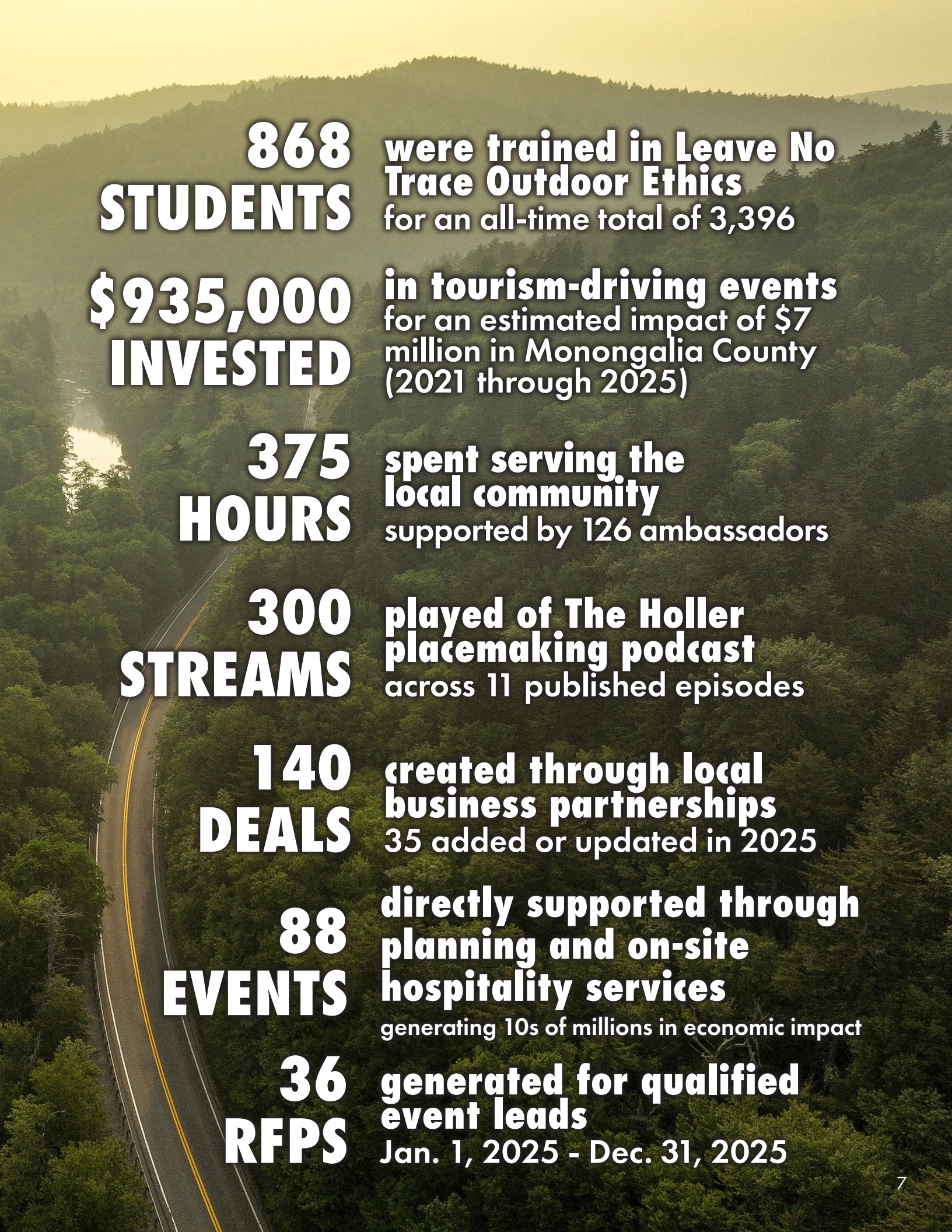
**downloaded our trip-
planner app, Visit Widget**

2,265 users added in 2025

**663
EVENTS**

**submitted to our regional
events calendar**

Jan. 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025



**868
STUDENTS**

**were trained in Leave No
Trace Outdoor Ethics**
for an all-time total of 3,396

**\$935,000
INVESTED**

in tourism-driving events
for an estimated impact of \$7
million in Monongalia County
(2021 through 2025)

**375
HOURS**

**spent serving the
local community**
supported by 126 ambassadors

**300
STREAMS**

**played of The Holler
placemaking podcast**
across 11 published episodes

**140
DEALS**

**created through local
business partnerships**
35 added or updated in 2025

**88
EVENTS**

**directly supported through
planning and on-site
hospitality services**
generating 10s of millions in economic impact

**36
RFPS**

**generated for qualified
event leads**
Jan. 1, 2025 - Dec. 31, 2025

FROM VISION TO PLACE

Steps that Shaped the Destination

Morgantown Airport

Following the new EAS service with United Airlines by SkyWest, Visit Mountaineer Country helped lead marketing efforts for the Morgantown Airport. Through a strategic partnership with the ArkStar Group, Visit Mountaineer Country saw the airport through its first official marketing campaign, driving it to reach 10,000 enplanements, unlocking \$1 million in federal funding.

West Virginia Gravel Series

In an effort to maximize exposure for the newly launched Mountaineer Gravel brand, Visit Mountaineer Country pursued a strategic sponsorship of the West Virginia Gravel Series. Through supporting the series and a physical presence at **8 gravel events** throughout West Virginia, Mountaineer Gravel became top of mind for thousands of adventure bikers. The sponsorship returned **929 qualified gravel leads**, reinforcing gravel cycling as a signature tourism product.

New Destination Offerings

Visit Mountaineer Country supported several key projects that expanded visitor amenities and strengthened destination infrastructure across the region. We supported the opening of the **KOA**, increasing overnight accommodations for visitors and families, and celebrated the opening of the **Hope Gas Ice Arena** at Mylan Park, which enhances Mountaineer Country's capacity to host sporting events and large-scale competitions.

Arts & Culture

In 2025, Visit Mountaineer Country expanded arts and culture as a core tourism strategy, supported by a full-time Arts & Culture Specialist and a new Arts Council subcommittee.

2025 SNAPSHOT

**\$137,000
AWARDED**

to arts organizations through the Monongalia County Commission and the City of Morgantown's Organizational Arts Grant, facilitated by the Arts Council of Greater Morgantown (ACGM) and Your Community Foundation (YCF)

**4,103
FOLLOWERS**

on ACGM social media platforms

Mountaineer Placemaking

In 2025, Visit Mountaineer Country established Mountaineer Placemaking, a new 501(c)(3), creating new capacity to pursue grants, private investment, and partnerships. This allows tourism-driven placemaking projects to move forward more flexibly and sustainably than traditional funding models allow.

STEWARDS OF THE DESTINATION

Our Staff & Board of Directors

Susan Riddle
President & CEO

Joe Vessetchia
Development Director



Tami Wood
Sales Director

Brianna James
Sales & Events Specialist



Hannah Winaught
Creative Director

Stella Hehnly
Brand Experience Manager

Rachel Johnson
Arts & Culture Experience Specialist

Our Apprentices

Eliza Hoc
Kendall Heffernan

Lexie Wentela
Callie Briggs



For more than 40 years, now, Visit Mountaineer Country has been a key connection for visitors to tourism partners in our area. As we look ahead to our next 40 years, there has never been a more exciting time for tourism in North Central West Virginia.

The award-winning innovation of The VMCCVB team has positioned our industry for continued growth, positively impacting our local economy, increasing revenue, and expanding opportunities for community development.



Terry Jackson, Director
WVU Visitors Center
2026 Board Chair

Executive Committee

Terry Jackson
2026 Chair

Matt Wells
2026 Secretary

Justin Reedy
2025 Chair
2026 Treasurer

Mark Nesselroad
2025 Secretary

Kerry Gnik
2025-2026 Vice Chair

Frank DeMarco
2025 Treasurer

Aly Goodwin-Gregg

Additional Members

Robbie Baylor

Bob Lucci

Steve Blinks

Kim Moyers

Tom Bloom

Don Smith

Erik Carlson

Lauren Thomas

Jolene Downs

Danielle Trumble

Laura Dulaney

Beth Warnick

Jean-Manuel Guillot

Barbara White

Patty Lewis

Frank Witt, III

BUILT ON PARTNERSHIP

*Our Municipal Relationships Strengthen
Lodging Tax Stewardship*

**OUR SERVICE AREA
GENERATED MORE THAN
\$1.8 MILLION
IN LODGING TAX THIS YEAR.**

Strong municipal partnerships are foundational to the way tourism works in Mountaineer Country.

Our relationships with local governments are built on trust, communication, and a shared understanding that accurate, timely information strengthens the entire region. Knowing when lodging tax revenue is coming through the door allows us to plan responsibly, invest strategically, and support partners where resources are most needed.

These partnerships are a model for how shared responsibility and open communication lead to better outcomes for everyone involved.

Relationships Are Our Superpower

We're relationship builders by nature. Our team's dominant CliftonStrengths primarily fall within the Relationship-Building domain. **Connection is how we lead.**

TRANSPARENCY IN PRACTICE

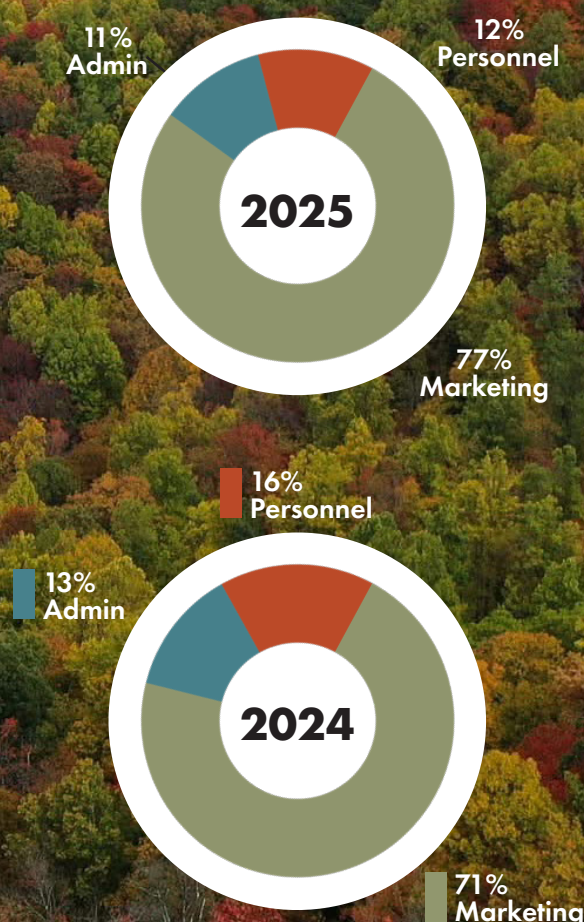
2025 Financial Statement of Activities

December 31, 2025 and 2024

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Current assets:		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 448,136	\$ 487,665
Certificate of deposit	110,000	324,148
Prepaid expenses	19,169	20,470
Accounts receivable	304,263	248,516
Total current assets	881,568	1,080,799
Noncurrent assets:		
Property and equipment:		
Furniture and equipment	224,248	109,773
Leasehold improvements	212,811	212,811
Vehicles	101,798	101,769
Asset not yet in-service	1,800	-
Less: accumulated depreciation	(286,914)	(232,978)
Net property and equipment	253,743	191,375
Certificate of deposit	100,148	-
Right-of-use assets - operating leases, net	580,017	630,069
Total noncurrent assets	933,908	821,444
Total assets	<u>\$ 1,815,476</u>	<u>\$ 1,902,243</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities:		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 109,662	\$ 146,542
Accrued wages and compensated absences	33,604	36,047
Funds held for others	33,110	-
Deferred revenue	116,466	133,112
Operating lease liability - current	87,240	88,888
Total current liabilities	380,082	404,589
Noncurrent liabilities:		
Operating lease liability - noncurrent	492,777	541,181
Total noncurrent liabilities	492,777	541,181
Total liabilities	872,859	945,770
Net assets:		
Net assets without donor restrictions	942,617	956,473
Total net assets	942,617	956,473
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 1,815,476</u>	<u>\$ 1,902,243</u>

	2025	2024
Revenue and support:		
Hotel occupancy tax	\$ 1,885,288	\$ 1,788,864
Event hosting	94,500	-
Pass-through grant revenue	191,646	109,196
Other revenue	9,923	48,284
Interest income	2,514	20,405
Total revenue and support	2,183,871	1,966,749
Expenses:		
Program services	1,956,537	1,786,983
Management and general	241,190	192,532
Total expenses	2,197,727	1,979,515
Change in net assets without donor restrictions	(13,856)	(12,766)
Net assets without donor restrictions - beginning of year	956,473	969,239
Net assets without donor restrictions - end of year	<u>\$ 942,617</u>	<u>\$ 956,473</u>

YOY PERFORMANCE



**TOURISM INDUSTRY
BEST PRACTICES**

40% Marketing

40% Personnel

20% Administrative

WITH OUR THANKS

Partners, Collaborators, and Supporters

Allegheny Trail
AllTrails
Alpine Lake Resort
American Discovery Trail
Arthurdale Heritage
Ascend WV
BOPARC
Camp Dawson Event Center
City of Shinnston
Civil & Environmental Consultants
Civil War Trails
Clarksburg History Museum
Coopers Rock State Forest
Country Roads Trails
Friends of Deckers Creek
Friends of the Cheat
Greene County Historical Society
Harrison County Chamber of Commerce
High Ground Brewing
Leave No Trace
Main Street Morgantown
Monongahela River Trails Conservancy
Monongalia Arts Center
Monongalia Co. Beekeepers Association
Monongalia Co. Commission
Monongalia Co. Lodging Properties
Monongalia Co. Parks and Recreation
Monongalia Co. Schools
Morgantown Area Partnership
Morgantown Municipal Airport
Mountaineer Deals Partners

Mountaineer Sports Properties - Learfield
Mountaineer Trail Network
Mylan Park Foundation
Mylan Park KOA
Mylan Park Properties
Our Lady of the Pines Church
Pike Street Bikes
Preston Co. Chamber of Commerce
Preston Co. Commission
Preston Co. Economic Development Authority
Preston Co. Lodging Properties
Preston Co. Parks and Recreation
Preston Co. Schools
Rowlesburg Area Historical Society
Rowlesburg Revitalization Committee
Shinnston Lodging Properties
Smith Outdoor Economic Dev. Collaborative
Szilagyi Center for the Arts
Taylor Co. Adventure Club
Taylor Co. Commission
Taylor Co. Development Authority
Taylor Co. Historical & Genealogical Society
Taylor Co. Lodging Properties
Taylor County Schools
The Anna Jarvis Museum

The Arts Council of Greater Morgantown
The Morgantown Mall
Travel South USA
Tygart Lake State Park
Tygart Lake State Park Foundation
Village to Village Trails
West Virginia Botanic Garden
West Virginia Dept. of Agriculture
West Virginia Grant Resource Centers
West Virginia Gravel Series
West Virginia Hospitality & Travel Assoc.
West Virginia Land Trust
West Virginia Mountain Biking Assoc.
West Virginia Scenic Trails Association
West Virginia University Athletics
West Virginia Association of CVBs
WV Department of Tourism
WV Trail
WVU Extension
WVU John Chambers College of
Business Economics
WV Welcome Centers
Your Community Foundation

We Officially Represent

Monongalia County

City of Morgantown
City of Westover
Town of Granville
Town of Star City

Preston County

City of Kingwood
Town of Bruceton Mills
Town of Newburg
Town of Tunnelton

Taylor County

City of Grafton
City of Belington

**These counties and municipalities have adopted a
Lodging Tax Ordinance.**

Malia Rae Photography

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