



ENERGIZING ENTREPRENEURIAL COMMUNITIES

A Pathway to Prosperity



Source: *The West Virginia Hub*, September 3 2019, provided by [The Hub](#)

[LINK](#)

Young people are working together to change the future of Boone County, *by Cynthia McComas*



Attendees at the Dig in Madison first Buy Local Pledge Event during local Art Walk ([image via Dig in Madison Facebook page](#))

Young people in Boone County are working together to make the change they hope to see in their community with new initiatives through the Next Generation Communities Project and a new community volunteer team, Dig In Madison-Danville.

In Madison, Main Street businesses like Gypsy Sisters Tattoo and Ma & Pa's BBQ have been coming together to support small business development in the community. Earlier this year, Boone County volunteer, Kandi Workman, organized a series of small business events called the Madison Meet Ups with help from a mini-grant provided by The Hub. The meet ups were planned to encourage current and aspiring small business owners to work together to overcome the difficulties of operating a small business in a rural area.

Now, she and another volunteer, Forest Dolin, are working together on a new community project in an effort to transform the Boone County E-Communities team into a self-led volunteer team, Dig In Madison-Danville.



Through Dig In, Forest planned a “Buy Local” kickoff campaign and pledge party to publicize the efforts of the team. For the pledge party, volunteers brought small business owners and community members together to inspire ideas about supporting the local economy.

“We want to hold each other accountable for being loyal to the community,” said Forest.

The team hopes that these events will encourage more entrepreneurs to open businesses in the county. Forest said he’d particularly like to see a business incubator and a coffee shop open up on Main Street in Madison.

In an effort to make these goals even more possible, Boone County volunteers have also signed on to a new program through [The Hub](#) and [Generation West Virginia](#). The Next Generation Communities Project is led by Taylor Bennett, The Hub’s Policy Coordinator, and Kayla Wright, the Network Engagement Director of Generation West Virginia. By participating in the program, the volunteers are doing the work of making their communities more attractive for young people to live and work by making necessary community development and policy changes to get new projects off the ground throughout West Virginia.

The project specifically targets young people because the organizers believe they have the greatest potential to increase the local economy, population, and livability in West Virginia communities. “I think that [young people] can do this by coming together to create a shared vision for their communities, then by building relationships with their local elected officials so that they can effectively communicate that vision and push for local change,” said Taylor.

To better understand how local policy change can affect your community, head over to [this blog post](#) written by our resident policy expert!

And to learn more about the projects in Boone County and be a part of the conversation, visit the [Dig In Madison-Danville](#) and [Generation WV](#) Facebook pages.

