**Appalachian Marriage**

**Project:**

Understanding Factors and Characteristics of
Strong Marriages in the Region

**Principle Investigators**
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## I. Project Description

The Appalachian culture has a long and ric
its roots to the vibrant experiences from Scottish a
the regional culture embodies a set of community
values and beliefs that has retained much of its vi
centuries (Keefe, 2005). While the cultural vibranc
attracted much scholarly interest, most of the res
limited to the intersections of political, economic,
phenomena (Lefler, 2005), while at the same time
decades have especially explored how families exp
as poverty, economic depression, unemployment

for national, regional, and local levels. At the national level a great deal of importance is placed on understanding and developing cultural awareness of the various subcultures in our society, and this awareness allows for greater tolerance and appreciation of the

partners have begun to help us identify potential married participants for the study.

- 6WXGHQWV ZLOO FRQGXFW 30 Couples interviews with participants will continue their training of basic interviewing skills including appropriate rapport building and probing techniques.
- 6WXGHQWV ZLOO FRQGXFW 30 couples interviews with
- 7KH UHVHDUFK ZLOO DLP WR HVWDEOLVK D VWURQJH local Appalachian community and NGCSU.

**Second half of the funding period:**

- 3UHVHQW D SRVWHU DW WKH 6(3$ &RQIHUHQFH LQ 1H regarding marriage in Appalachia (Intent-to submitted).
- &UHDWH D EURFKXUH DQG ZRUNVKRS SUHVHQWDWLR the theoretical and practical aspects of the research for the community
- :ULWH D VFKRODUO\ SDSHU RQ UHVXOWV RI WKH UHV a peer-reviewed journal.
- $VVLVW WKH PHQWDO KHDOWK VHUYLFHV LQ WKH $S through the dissemination of study results.

I. **Plan for Involvement of Undergraduates in the Project or Activity**

To date, seven student researchers have been involved in the Appalachian Marriage Project (Angel Jones, Karly King, Thomas Smith, Ryan Shepard, Brittany O'Bryant, Claude McCurry, and Dakota Fidram). These students have participated in development of the IRB application (submitted summer, 2011), the development of the qualitative “strong marriage” questionnaire and helped compile an initial list of potential research candidates. In addition, some of these students have begun their training in preparation for conducting the individual interviews of select participants. In the first half of the funding period students will be conducting all interviews. Further, all students will participate in the analysis of the interviews and in teams of two will develop independent research questions based on the themes that emerge from the interviews. Finally, students will be responsible for creating and presenting their research at a regional conference. At this point we have already submitted an intent-to-submit for the South-Eastern Psychological Association conference in New Orleans, LA. We plan on submitting another undergraduate poster presentation at the Georgia Sociological Association sometime next year. Finally, students will also help develop a community brochure

about the research and participate in the community workshops which among other places will be conducted at local churches.