



Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education

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****For Immediate Release****

Trust Foundation announces a \$15,000 gift to support “Homegrown and Healthy” farm-to-table and entrepreneurial initiative for rural Appalachian girls.

The middle school girls enrolled in [PAGE](#), Partnership for Appalachian Girls' Education, know a lot about farming. Many live in remote rural communities in Madison County, North Carolina – known for its beautiful and rugged mountain landscapes. Their elders always had small family farms, some with pigs, cows, and chickens. But farm-to-table eating in a school setting is much less familiar. Thanks to a gift from Trust Foundation by the Haddock family of Central Florida and Spring Creek, North Carolina, that's about to change.

With a gift of \$5,000 and a matching gift of \$10,000, rural girls attending PAGE's six-week summer program will now have the chance to enjoy meals cooked with organic farm foods grown in the rich soil of their own county. The girls enrolled in this intensive summer program spend six weeks in the summer learning digital literacy skills, reading book titles ranging from *The Hunger Games* to *Jane Eyre*, and learning about leadership from Duke University undergraduates. The goal is to help girls from rural Appalachia have the chance to excel in middle and high school, and to create new college and career pathways.

Trust Foundation's gift will allow PAGE to work with local organic farmers to bring homegrown, healthy food into the summer program and its curriculum. The PAGE girls will enjoy fresh pizzas made with vegetables from [Mountain Harvest Organic](#) farm in Spring Creek and eggs and traditional “sausage biscuits” made with fresh, local foods. The “Homegrown and Healthy” project will also take girls to the farms supplying their summer food, to teach them about the health and economic benefits of eating local.

The Haddocks' gift will have an added benefit: Older PAGE students will create their own small business involving local food resources. A Homegrown Entrepreneurship project will allow girls entering grades 8/9 to learn firsthand about how to be rural entrepreneurs





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in a county struggling with job loss and yet rich local food resources.

PAGE girls sample strawberries at Mountain Harvest Organic farm in Madison County.

"I can't wait to eat food from around the county," says Faith Loflin, an 8th grader from Hot Springs who will be in PAGE's summer program.

"Since PAGE launched in 2010, we have dreamed of serving local Madison County foods to our students," says PAGE Executive Director, Deborah Hicks. Now this dream is about to come true, and we'll also have the chance to teach middle school girls about being rural entrepreneurs. This is a big step toward helping girls achieve life-long health and economic benefits from the resources on their own family farms."

The Haddocks' gift presents a challenge: to raise \$10,000 in matching funds. Donors who wish to help PAGE meet this challenge or wish to learn more can do so by visiting www.carolinapage.org.