

HCHS students present community problem solving projects to legislators, others at state capitol

A team of Harlan County High School students infiltrated the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort today to celebrate the education and exciting projects of schools in the Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative Region. Harlan County is a member of the KVEC organization, participating in the Appalachian Renaissance Initiative which includes civic engagement for students.



The team of Jordan Blevins, Chelsey Caldwell, Breanna Epperson and Ryan Sergent presented community problem solving projects and their entrepreneurial project, High Point Mountain Spring Water.

Schools from around the KVEC region also presented projects.

The HCHS students said they were excited to meet with Harlan County's state Representatives Rick Nelson and Chris Fugate and Senator Johnny Ray Turner.

Nelson took the HC team on a tour of the capitol building. "We got to sit in the House of Representatives Conference Room while Mr. Nelson gave us some advice on politics and our futures," said Epperson. "He gave us packets about the legislative process. He also took us to Governor Matt Bevin's office, but he was in Louisville at the time."

The students commented that it was a great experience as we were able to see the impact that public education has had on the youth of Kentucky. Without public education, none of the projects showcased today would have been possible.

“This was the first time that I have been in Frankfort, and it was wonderful to see everyone’s projects and the impacts they have had on their schools and communities,” said Epperson. “I really enjoyed touring the capitol. Representative Nelson was friendly and may have persuaded me to run for public office one day.”

“The capitol building was beautiful,” said Caldwell. “Everyone was very friendly. It was truly an amazing experience to share what we have accomplished. Many people do not know how hard we work and how big of an impact our school projects have in our communities. It was also really neat to talk with politicians and for them to share their thoughts with us.”

“This was a very fun learning experience that showed us the importance of public education in Kentucky,” said Sergent. “It was wonderful to speak with our Representatives and see that they truly care for our students and their education.”

Blevins said, “The overall experience was neat. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I’m so glad that my teammates and I had the chance to come to Frankfort and meet the representatives of Kentucky. If you are ever invited to come to the capitol and go on a private tour, definitely do it.”

Harlan County Schools Career and Technical Education Director David Hensley and Community Problem Solving Coach Virginia Rice accompanied students for their presentations.