

Update on Morgan Scott Project

The Serve Mission Team visited the project April 1, 2014. Mrs. Ella Smith, ezxecutive director, had lunch prepared and shared a lot of information about the activities and programs sponsored by MSP. It is evident that Morgan Scott is one of the most successful mission projects that the Presbytery sponsors and it deserves even more support than is being provided. In addition to assistance from the Presbytery and many of our churches, Morgan Scott receives support from other denominations, primarily the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ. The consistent leadership provided by Ella over the past seven years has enabled the project to make a highly significant impact toward lifting citizens out of poverty. Key to the success of Morgan Scott is the commitment to education. According to Ella, the three “*Rs*” in this area refer to “*reading, writing, and the road out of town.*”

Broadly, management consists of Ella and two AmeriCorps volunteer, Jessie a 19 year old student at Roane State and Lori a young woman that has been a part of Morgan Scott for many years as a volunteer before she started with AmeriCorps. With the help of many community volunteers (an average 75 hours/week), as well as partnering with Appalachian Service Projects and Habitat for Humanity, Morgan Scott have greatly expanded their community outreach. This outreach consists of programs such as educational grants and even weekly food banks.

It is significant that Morgan Scott has made effective use of their two AmeriCorps members and a host of volunteers to package seeds and manage work camp programs, giving out Christmas presents and school backpacks, running the thrift shop and many other activities. It would seem that homelessness would require little attention in a rural situation, but it does exist and the Project is effectively addressing the problem.

These programs provide assurance to the Presbytery and the other sponsors that Morgan Scott Project will continue to successfully address poverty in Scott and Morgan counties with their support.

Through God’s many blessings and leadership of Ella Smith and the help of many volunteers, Morgan Scott Project will continue to be a vital support system for Morgan and Scott counties.