

## **Appalachian Studies Association Workshop Proposal ASA 2015**

**Workshop Title:** Appalachian Transition: A cross sector approach to regional transition.

**Moderators:** Willa K. Johnson, Joey Aloï, Carol Davey, Mae Humiston, Catherine V. Moore, and Zachary D. Swick

**Format:** Workshop

**Section Track:** X other – This is a workshop that discusses many different tracks and sectors of work.

### **Abstract:**

Appalachia is made up of many mountains, many communities and many different sectors of work. The Appalachian Transition Fellows based out of the Highlander Education Center have spent 9 months working throughout central Appalachia to build cross sector bridges and to help further a positive growth in the region's economy. Through the fellowship people are working with different models of transition, including value chains, worker-owner cooperatives, local food initiatives, policy making, etc. In this session we will be breaking out into different groups each led by one or two fellows to talk about various ways these different models could be beneficial in different communities in Appalachia.

### **Breakout Work Groups:**

**Value Chains with Joey Aloï.** While supply chains have been the model for big business for industries, the value chain model of lifting up the economies of every community in the process is gaining momentum, this group will discuss what exactly a value chain is and why it is important to create healthy economies for everyone along the way.

**Worker-Owned Cooperatives with Willa K. Johnson.** This breakout group will talk about the importance of fair labor treatment and the possibilities of creating a new economy in Appalachia with the cooperative model.

**Sustainable/Green Economies with Carol Davey and Zach Swick.** There is an opportunity for Appalachian communities to train their young workforce for and position their industry toward a sustainable economy that will benefit the overall wealth of the region. These jobs will rely on individuals and communities who value renewable energy and energy efficiency and see the importance of waste reduction, reusing, and recycling.

**Local Food Ways with Mae Humiston.** With a history of family gardens and rich food traditions, our region is in a unique position to harvest from the past to feed the future. Participants will look at what knowledge and skills their community already has and how we can capitalize on those to improve healthy eating and support family farmers in our region.

**Communication and Community Engagement with Catherine V. Moore.** History and stories are important to the region and to the future leaders looking for what is needed and wanted within their communities. This workshop will focus on communication and engagement strategies around transition.

**Bios of Presenters:**

Willa K. Johnson  
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Willa Johnson is from the coal camps of McRoberts, KY and currently lives and works as an Appalachian Transition Fellow in Morganton, NC. Her fellowship position is working with the Carolina Textile District and Opportunity Threads Worker-Owner Cooperative where she works to help share the stories of the work happening in the textile industry. She was one of the founding members of the Stay Together Appalachian Youth Project (STAY) and is a current steering committee member.

Zachary Swick  
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Zach Swick is a social scientist whose work focuses on social-ecological systems and rural development. He received a master's degree in Appalachian studies, sustainable development, and geographic information science from Appalachian State University and graduated summa cum laude from the University of New Hampshire. In 2014, Zach won ASA's Carl A. Ross Student Paper Award and was inducted into the Cratis D. Williams Society. He currently serves as an AppFellow in Athens, Ohio.

Carol A Davey  
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Carol Davey is working in Athens, Ohio on a multisector collaborative project that focuses on reducing energy usage, educating the public on consumption, and creating a new economy for the county through the expansion and creation of clean energy businesses and jobs. Appalachians of all ages, but particularly the young, should visit her talk and discover how collaboration between government, business and communities can create a new and vibrant job market capable of sustaining Appalachian families.

Catherine Moore  
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Catherine V. Moore is a writer and multimedia producer from Fayette County, WV, where she is self-employed at Beauty Mountain Studio. She has worked as a newspaper reporter, radio producer, editor, archivist, college instructor, and galley cook. She loves poetry, people's history, and media representations of Appalachia, environmental stewardship, and narrative storytelling. She holds an MFA in creative writing from the University of Montana and a BA from Harvard University, where she wrote a thesis in comparative literature and a thesis in creative writing.

Mae Humiston  
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Mae Humiston grew up in a farming community in rural western Virginia. She left the region to attend Tufts University where she discovered a passion for issues plaguing family farmers and our food system. After working on several farms in Boston and Virginia, Mae joined the Appalachian Transition Fellowship, working with the Community Farm Alliance, Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky, and the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky to focus on food and farm issues in eastern Kentucky.

Joey Aloï  
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Joey Aloï is an Appalachian Transition Fellow working with the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, the Charleston Area Medical Center, and Corey Bros Produce. He grew up in Fairmont and then Buckhannon, West Virginia. He attended Warren Wilson College, where he studied Philosophy and worked for the Carpentry Crew. He continued his studies in Philosophy at The University of Montana and the University of North Texas, focusing on environmental thought. He lives in Charleston, WV.