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2025 Governor's School for Tourism

Jun 20, 2025 - Jun 29, 2025

June 20 - Friday



1:00 PM -
Parent drop-off at WVU Honors Hall



CHECK-IN 1:30 PM -
Check into Honors Hall



2:15 PM -
Meet in lobby



2:30 PM -
Brief orientation



WVU Campus Tour



Group Welcome from WVU Mountaineer & President



- 1 hr 30 min -
Dinner

June 21 - Saturday



8:00 AM - 45 min -
Breakfast at Summit Hall



DEPARTURE 9:15 AM -
Load onto buses



9:45 AM -
WVU Adventure Outdoor Education Center Team Building
Theme: Team Building

Contact: Garret Weigel (Program and Operations Coordinator at OEC)



12:00 PM -
Boxed Lunch



DEPARTURE 2:15 PM -
Travel to Coopers Rock State Forest



2:40 PM -
Hike to Coopers Rock Overlook

Established in 1936, Coopers Rock State Forest boasts some of the most iconic views in Almost Heaven. Located just off I-68, about 13 miles from Morgantown, the park features canyon overlooks, historical sites, picnic shelters, 50 miles of hiking and biking trails, sandstone cliffs for climbing and bouldering, cross-country ski terrain, a lake perfect for reeling in trout and a nearby river for rafting.



DEPARTURE 4:30 PM -
Depart for Reynolds Hall



6:30 PM -
Barbecue Dinner & Activities

Optional walk on River Trail and outdoor activities and a movie in the adjacent lecture hall or media wall.



8:30 PM -
Reflection & journaling

June 22 - Sunday



Pack up belongings & check out



Grab-and-go breakfast



DEPARTURE 8:00 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Depart to Blackwater Falls State Park

Drive time: 2 hours



10:30 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Choose your adventure!

- Horseback Riding
- Guided Mountain Biking
- Arts & Culture Experience - meet local artists in Thomas and explore galleries
 - Take in an afternoon show at Purple Fiddle



1:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Boxed lunch at activity



Meet WVSP staff

Discuss historic investment in parks system over the past 8 years and the ROI.



3:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Go chasing waterfalls! Explore West Virginia Waterfall Trail with WV State Parks Staff

Learn about how the Waterfall Trail came to fruition from Tourism and State Parks staff. Check in at two waterfalls located within Blackwater Falls State Park.

Theme: Outdoor/Adventure Tourism/ Connecting with the Community

Contact: Paul Redford and Brad Reed



Check in at Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge



Blackwater Falls State Park

1584 Blackwater Lodge Road, Davis, United States



Dinner at the lodge



Reflection & journaling

June 23 - Monday



Check out from Blackwater Falls State Park



Blackwater Falls State Park

1584 Blackwater Lodge Road, Davis, United States



Load buses



Depart for Stonewall Resort



Lunch at Stillwaters



Enjoy lake activities

- Paddle Boat
- Stand Up Paddle Boards
- Kayak Rentals



Travel to New River Gorge National Park & Preserve

Welcome to America's 63rd national park—the New River Gorge National Park & Preserve. Home to more than 70,000 acres of public lands, this park has been a hallowed spot for locals for centuries. The recent designation as the nation's newest national park invites travelers, like you, to visit, explore and discover your own slice of heaven. Come see why this spot is already considered to be [one of the best national parks in the USA](#).

Theme: Parks and Recreation Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Heritage Tourism, and Outdoor Economy



Check into Summit Bechtel Reserve



Dinner on site



Campfire & S'mores

Reflection & journaling



Lights Out

June 24 - Tuesday



8:00 AM -
Breakfast at Fork in the Road Dining Hall



9:00 AM -
Choose your New River Gorge Activity!

- **Bridge Walk Catwalk Tour**

Bridge Walk visitors travel on a catwalk among the structural beams of the New River Gorge Bridge 851 feet above the New River. Our unique belay system keeps you harnessed at all times while your guide educates you on the history of the New River Gorge and the building of the bridge. Offering some of the most scenic views of West Virginia.

Contact: Benjy Simpson and Cindy Martel

- **White Water Rafting**

West Virginia is home to the highest density of whitewater runs in the country. From family fun to wild adventure, there is a river for you in Almost Heaven. Are you looking to meander through nature and catch the magnificent sights? Whether it's a half-day experience or an extended journey, there is a river waiting for you. Regardless of your experience, you can explore any of the many rapids from Class I to Class V.

Contact: Haynes Mansfield

- **Guided Fishing**

Join professionals from the Division of Natural Resources for a day on the river.

Contact: Dillard Price



5:00 PM -
Dinner at Adventures on the Gorge



DEPARTURE 6:45 PM -
Load onto the bus



DEPARTURE 6:55 PM -
Depart for Summit Bechtel Reserve



DEPARTURE 7:30 PM -
Return to Summit Bechtel Reserve



8:00 PM -
Reflection & journaling

June 25 - Wednesday



7:30 AM -
Breakfast at Fork in the Road



CHECK-OUT 8:30 AM -
Check out



DEPARTURE 9:00 AM -
Depart for Rail Explorers



11:00 AM -
Rail Explorers experience

Rail Explorers Elk River offers the freedom of the outdoors and the magic of the railroad unlike anything you've done before. This 12-mile round trip along Buffalo Creek and Gauley Railroad follows the twists and turns of the creek through the magnificent forest and passes two beautiful waterfalls.



1:00 PM -
Boxed lunch picnic



DEPARTURE 2:50 PM -
Load onto the bus



DEPARTURE 3:00 PM -
Depart for Charleston



3:15 PM -
Clay Center for the Arts & Sciences

Spend time in the Avampato Discovery Museum, Caperton Planetarium & Theater, and the Juliet Art Museum.



6:00 PM -
Dinner - TBD



DEPARTURE 6:40 PM -
Return to the hotel



CHECK-IN 6:45 PM -
Check into hotel



7:15 PM -
Free time / Swimming



8:45 PM -
Reflection & journaling

June 26 - Thursday



7:45 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Breakfast at hotel



CHECK-OUT 8:30 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Check out of hotel



9:00 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Explore the West Virginia State Capitol & Museum

The State Capitol building is one of the most recognizable buildings in West Virginia. For many, it is the first thing they see when arriving in [Charleston](#), a bright and shining welcome to the state's capital city. Take a stroll around the Capitol Complex and participate in the brand-new audio walking tour.

Theme: WV History / Arts and Culture enrichment



12:15 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Boxed Lunch



DEPARTURE 12:50 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Load onto buses



DEPARTURE 1:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Depart for Hatfield-McCoy Trails



2:45 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Hit the trails!

The Hatfield-McCoy Trails is made up of over 1000+ miles of trails and located in the rich mountains of southern West Virginia. As one of the largest off-highway vehicle trail systems in the world, Hatfield-McCoy Trails is open 365 days a year and offers something for every skill level.

Theme: Adventure Tourism

Contact: Jeffrey Lusk (Hatfield McCoy Regional Recreation Authority); Chris Zeto (Marketing Manager - Hatfield McCoy Trails)



Tourism Enrichment Stations

- **Group 1** — Hit the trails!
- **Group 2** — Hands on Hatfield-McCoy history / Evolution of the area
 - Local historian join and describe where Southern WV began
 - Jeffrey to give overview of the trails and all of the economic development that's happened over the years
- **Group 3**— Tourism marketing presentation + activity/scavenger hunt
 - Create a reel
 - Learn about Almost Heaven brand

Theme: Tourism Marketing

Guests: Debrina Williams and Kansas Moore (Hatfield McCoy CVB)



6:30 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Dinner at the Broken Axle



DEPARTURE 7:45 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Travel to Chief Logan State Park

Located four miles north of Logan in the heart of West Virginia's southern coalfields, Chief Logan State Park is one of the most visited facilities in the West Virginia State Parks System. The park is also located within close proximity to the Hatfield-McCoy ATV trails for campers looking for a uniquely West Virginia adventure.

Contact: Valerie Williams (Meals and Lodging Contact); Lauren Cole (Nauralist)



CHECK-IN 8:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Check in at Chief Logan Lodge



Chief Logan Lodge
 P.O. Box 898, Logan, United States



8:15 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Reflection & journaling

June 27 - Friday



8:00 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Breakfast at the lodge



CHECK-OUT 8:45 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Check out of Chief Logan Lodge



Chief Logan Lodge
 P.O. Box 898, Logan, United States



DEPARTURE 9:00 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Depart for Heritage Farm & Museum



10:45 AM - Eastern Daylight Time
Visit Heritage Farm Museum & Village

Heritage Farm Museum & Village is a recreated 19th century Appalachian village that includes museums, animal exhibits, artisans, and an adventure park. Experience life for the region's settlers from the 1850s onward, interact with animals in the petting zoo and nature center, see talented artisans work, and embrace adventure on the ziplines, high ropes courses, and mountain bike park. Our friendly staff and museum guides are ready at every turn to help create a memorable day for guests of all ages.



- 1 hr 30 min - Eastern Daylight Time
Choose your adventure!

- Ziplining
- Bouldering Rock Wall
- Treehouse Trek
- Nature Center animal experience



1:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Boxed lunch picnic



DEPARTURE 2:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Depart for Marshall University



CHECK-IN 2:30 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Put belongings in dorm rooms



3:00 PM - Eastern Daylight Time
Campus Tour

**Dinner downtown**

Split up into groups to go to different restaurants?

**Enjoy 9th Street Live concert**

Taking place in downtown Huntington with local musical acts.

**Return to Marshall University****Reflection & journaling**

June 28 - Saturday



8:30 AM -

Breakfast in the Harless Dining Hall

DEPARTURE 9:15 AM -

Load onto buses

9:45 AM -

Tour of Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center

The Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center is the only fully intact atmospheric theatre designed by Scottish-born, American architect Lamb in the United States in 1928. The Keith-Albee Theatre features a Botticino marble staircase, ornate Spanish balconies, and a Mediterranean blue dome that creates a magical atmosphere for patrons. Initially built to showcase vaudeville performances, the theatre has transitioned into a live performance venue and is now operated by the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center. Its recent restoration has maintained its historic charm while updating the venue to serve modern needs.



11:15 AM -

Afternoon Activity

Choose your activity:

- Blenko Factory Tour
- Huntington Museum of Art + hiking trails
- We Are Marshall tour



1:30 PM -

Lunch

- 45 min -

Group discussions / reflections

5:00 PM -

Last night awards, celebrations & dinner

7:00 PM -

Choose your activity!

- WV Coat Cats Baseball Game

- Movie Night



**9:30 PM -
Lights Out**

June 29 - Sunday



**CHECK-OUT 8:30 AM -
Pack up dorms**



**9:00 AM -
Breakfast in the Harless Dining Hall**



**DEPARTURE 10:15 AM -
Bus takes Charleston pick-up group**



**10:30 AM -
Parent pick-up**