



Empowering Children Through Experiential Learning

The Evergreen Heritage Center (EHC), located on 130 acres of Federal Hill in Allegany County, is an historic Maryland farm that pre-dates the Revolutionary War. The property is on the National Register for its architectural significance (such as its 200 year old recently restored Evergreen Barn) and its role in the early settlement of Western MD. The EHC Foundation, a 501(c)(3) public charity, was founded in 2008 to utilize this historical property to provide hands-on enrichment programs in Western Maryland counties where the average per capita income is less than 60% of that of Maryland overall. To pursue that mission, the Foundation and its partners have developed and participate in multiple award-winning programs for the benefit of the Western MD community. These impactful enrichment programs currently **serve over 8200 annually** while providing a showcase of best practices in sustainability relative to agriculture, forestry, and the environment. These programs include:

- **STEM Enrichment** that includes field trips, in-school, and after school programs, provide the opportunity for K-12 students to discover the wonders of science through hands-on learning in the outdoors. These award-winning field classes, which are aligned with the Maryland State Curriculum, **increase student STEM literacy by 25 to 50%** (per pre/post-tests) and serve as a model throughout the State. Photos from these programs are attached.
- **Healthy Living**, developed in partnership with the Western Maryland Health System, focuses on human wellness, teaching children where food comes from, how it grows, and the importance of healthy eating. This initiative includes a Garden Discovery program for pre-K and an in-school Elementary Edibles gardening program for K through grade 5 students, **increasing student interest in healthy eating as well as food/nutrition literacy by 25%.**
- **Environmental Arts** provides activities for all ages that include art workshops, summer camp, events, and grade level-wide in-school programs that **increase art literacy by 25-65%, as well as art appreciation** per pre/post-tests and surveys.
- **Higher Education and Research** offers real-world experience for 200+ college students each year as they gain marketable job credentials through EHC science, art, and business projects.
- **Professional Development** workshops, consistently rated as excellent by participants, are offered to educators to teach them how to use hands-on outdoor activities to increase learning retention.

The EHC Foundation has received recognition for its work including:

- **2015 Maryland Sustainable Growth Award** for preservation and conservation
- **2015 Richard A. Johnson Award** for excellence in education
- **2016 Allegany County Entrepreneurial Spirit Award**
- **2017 Maryland Outdoor Educator of the Year Award**
- **2018 Citation from the Maryland House of Delegates for innovation and dedication**