

Glenville State's 'hands-on' approach prepares land resource program graduates for real-world success

FROM WV NEWS REPORTS

In a career in natural resources management, it only makes sense that workers expect to get their hands a little dirty.

But getting that "hands on" experience to break into the field can sometimes prove challenging.

At Glenville State College and its highly respected natural resources management program, "hands on" are the two words most often used by instructors, graduates and students.

Finding the perfect balance of in-classroom lectures, textbook studies and hands-on experience, the program prides itself in providing learning experiences that duplicate the real world.

Thomas Snyder is a Glenville State graduate with a mixed degree encompassing Forestry, Surveying and Business. He has been with the college for more than 30 years.

"The 'hands-on' approach to education is a very important part of our programs," Snyder said. "An example: You can read about doing a task and know something, but by doing a task you will know a lot more about how it is done. In land resources fields, experience is very important."

From its state-of-the-art Landplenty Center within the Waco Center, as well as on 300 acres of land adjacent to the building, Glenville State professors and instructors provide tremendous guidance while challenging students to find the right fit for their futures.

Luke Poling is a 2007 graduate in Forestry and Natural Resources Management. His career with First Energy has led to personal and professional success.

"I'm a forester with First Energy, managing their right-of-ways," Poling said, crediting Glenville State with putting him



on the proper pathway.

"It's a very hands-on school, and I learn better by doing," Poling said. "There's classroom work, but then you have to be able to implement it in the field."

"Glenville State's staff is very supportive in helping students and help to create a great base foundation and teach students how to learn. I was definitely better prepared for a career."

"It's a great program; they expect a lot out of you," Poling said. "But they prepare students with real-world experience, and it's easier to step into the workforce."

With an average 15-to-1 student-to-professor ratio, students have a chance to receive individualized instruction while growing and learning from like-minded outdoor enthusiasts.

"Since students are cross trained in various aspects of Natural Resource Management, this provides a wide array of jobs that students could potentially qualify for other than their own major (forestry, land surveying, environmental science, energy and land management, criminal justice and wildlife management)," Department Chair and Forestry Professor Rico Gazal said.

The department offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Natural Resource Management

with six major areas: Criminal Justice, Energy and Land Management, Environmental Science, Forest Technology, Land Surveying Technology and Wildlife Management.

Two associate degree programs, in Forest Technology and Land Surveying Technology, are also offered.

"The main difference that set our programs apart from other programs is the hands-on learning," Associate Professor of Forestry Brian Perkins said.

"Students learn about a topic in the lecture and then spend time out in the field applying their knowledge running equipment, taking field measurements and collecting and analyzing data."

Many students want to have a career that takes them outdoors, and all our programs do that.

"We do some really cool and fun things in forestry that other schools just don't do like learning how to operate a chainsaw, drive a skidder or a bulldozer. Each year our students perform a prescribed burn after they have received firefighter training. Plus, we have the only two-year Surveying program in the state."

That program has highly successful graduates like Marshall Robinson, president and CEO of Allegheny Surveys, Inc.

Chairman of the school's land resources advisory board, Robinson said the school's programs provide a great opportunity for those wanting a career in the outdoors.

"I employ graduates on a regular basis," Robinson said.

"The school and program have a great history and tradition of producing outstanding students in natural resources, surveying,

all areas of land management," Robinson said.

"It's the right niche for some people, myself included. I started as an English major (before graduating with an associate degree in land surveying in 1985)."

With the skills he learned at Glenville, he broke into the surveying field and now runs a company that employs 45 people in three offices in West Virginia, doing work in about six states.

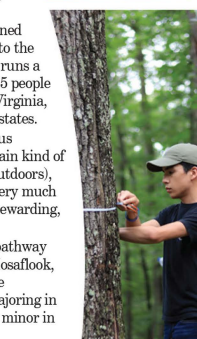
"Combining the various programs attracts a certain kind of student (geared to the outdoors), but it is a niche that is very much needed and can lead to rewarding, enjoyable careers."

One of those on that pathway is Clarksburg's Logan Hosaflook, a senior natural resource management student majoring in forest technology with a minor in environmental science.

"I chose Glenville because of the long legacy they have of producing quality students who are going to make a difference in their field," Hosaflook said.

"The hands-on experience paired with being held to the highest standards by my professors, classmates and past graduates has driven me to give 110% in everything I do."

"My dad is a Glenville graduate, along with countless other foresters that I am lucky to work with everyday, and I want to work hard to carry on the legacy and reputation that they have instilled on our state's forest & wood product industries."



Forestry students at Glenville State receive plenty of practical, hands-on experience in the woods of West Virginia.



Glenville State students learn how to use a controlled burn for environmental purposes.



These students receive individualized instruction in surveying techniques and principles.

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Explore Natural Resource Management at Glenville State College

Housed in the Landplenty Center within the Waco Center, the Department of Land Resources has state-of-the-art facilities and nearly 300 acres of land adjacent to the building for outdoor learning.

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