

# FSU APPALACHIAN FESTIVAL SYMPOSIUM

*Panelists and presenters will explore the conditions that push residents to leave Appalachia and those that compel them to stay- or even relocate to the region.*

## 1 PM Choosing Appalachia

It is no secret that many people who grow up in Appalachia choose to leave the region. Recently released 2020 Census data shows that Appalachia suffered the steepest population loss in the entire country in the past decade, continuing a decades-long trend of population decline for the region. However, it is not uncommon for people who leave the region to return later in life—something that is much less frequently discussed. In this panel, we will hear from four individuals who returned home to Appalachia. They will discuss their reasons for leaving Appalachia, their subsequent motivations for returning, and the benefits and challenges they experienced upon coming home. Panelists include Dr. Rebekah Taylor, Associate Professor of Biology; Zach Shrewsbury, Field Organizer with Common Defense and Regional Director of West Virginia Citizen Action Group; Scott Ross, Owner, Scott Ross Services; and dr. angie luvara, Assistant Professor of Sociology.

## 2 PM The Push and Pull of Appalachia

Join students in IDIS 151: Experiencing Appalachia to explore the push and pull of Appalachia and share your own experiences in the region.

## 3 PM Encountering Appalachia: A Look at the Jewish Experience, Dr. Deborah Weiner



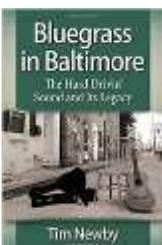
Why did numerous small Jewish communities develop in Appalachia during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century? And why did most of them disappear? This presentation will tell the story of the Jewish immigrants who made their way to the region and how they established small communities far from America's Jewish centers. It will track how subsequent generations maintained Jewish life and will explore the factors that led some to leave and some to remain.

## 4 PM The Mountains are Calling Panel Discussion



Throughout the region, entrepreneurs are investing in revitalizing Appalachia. Focusing on asset-based development, businesses that complement the area's mountainous landscape and historical architecture are creating new opportunities for local residents and visitors. Come hear how Adventure Sports is reshaping the region; learn about the redevelopment of historic structures into contemporary living spaces, and discover how the expansion of Broadband Technology sets the stage for positive growth in the region. Panelists include: Steve Green of High Mountain Sports, Mandela Echefu of Wheelzup Adventures, Sean Mullaney, Redevelopment Real Estate, and Cheryl DeBerry, Broadband & Energy Manager, Department of Technology & Communications, Garrett County Government.

## 5 PM Bluegrass in Baltimore, Tim Newby



The port city of Baltimore attracted rural migrants to work in the city's numerous blue collar jobs, many of whom moved from West Virginia and other parts of Appalachia. Like other industrial cities in the midwest these immigrants brought their music with them. With this influx of Appalachian migrants Baltimore found itself populated by some extraordinary musicians and was for a brief time the center of the Bluegrass world. Life in Baltimore for these musicians was not easy. There were missed opportunities, personal demons and always the up-hill battle with prejudice against their rural origins. Though the music came in many flavors, by the late 1940s the string band music that would become known as bluegrass flourished in Baltimore and the surrounding area. "From high on the

mountain to the streets of Baltimore,” explores the musical growth and evolution of bluegrass and the struggles these musicians from meager backgrounds had to face.

### **6 PM There and Here: Anti-racist Activism in Appalachia**



With ancestral roots in Garrett County, MD, activist panelists will discuss their choices to pursue racial justice in mountain Maryland while living outside of their home communities. From across county and state borders, and during Covid-19, panelists Chantelle Friend, Hannah Schroyer, and Elizabeth Sines, founders of Anti-Racist Appalachia, and Tifani Fisher, President of the Allegany County Branch of NAACP, have reached into their deep social networks to organize almost entirely virtually. These Appalachian daughters will explore their upbringing in Appalachia and the influence it has on their activism, what

kept their families here, why they chose to live and work in different communities, and what currently pulls them to work here for social change.

### **7 PM Dinner on the Grounds with Musical Performances**

Cap off the day with dinner on the grounds and musical performances with some sing-a-long opportunities with Sparky and Rhonda Rucker and Michael and Carrie Kline. Please reserve dinner ahead of time by contacting [krogersthomas@frostburg.edu](mailto:krogersthomas@frostburg.edu)