Oh what a summer it was. With over 75 middle and high school youth coming together in Norwich, this year’s LPP summer program was the biggest and most robust to date. Students participated in five weeks of themed activities focused around STEAM, team-building and decision-making, community service and service-learning, nature, self-care, and much much more. Additionally, student participants came to the Morrisville Norwich Campus where they got to spend time being on and learning about the college campus.

Activities during the summer program included those that took place on-site either facilitated by staff or by guest speakers and community partners or those that took place off-site via service project—such as making scarves for local schools and senior residence facilities or hosting a dog wash (which raised $250 for the SPCA), trips to the park—to collect or distribute rocks for Chenango Rocks or to pick up garbage or even weekly field trips that wrapped up each of the five themed weeks.

Field trips this year included trips to the Greek Peak Ropes Course, Gilbert Lake, Animal Adventure, The Most Museum, Robert Treman Park and Water Safari. We even snuck in a trip to the Artist’s Palette to do a painting project with Jill Kraft as well as weekly trips to the town pool.

An often-overlooked challenge that students face in rural communities is finding new opportunities to give back. Unlike their peers in more urban areas, rural youth are less likely to be able to walk to community centers, residential homes, animal shelters, or soup kitchens; many rural areas do not even possess them. Our district, Otselic Valley, falls into this category. School administration, faculty, and staff have come up with many creative means for students to participate actively in the community. The OVCS LPP’s aim is to develop even more opportunities for students to give back. Making use of the 5 raised gardens at the high school, we intend to grow vegetables that will be donated back to the community. This project provides further opportunities for community service, contributes overall health education, and contributes to ‘agriculture culture’ of our valley. We are excited to take on this endeavor together. ~Craig Brown, OVCS Advocate
Our program works diligently to prepare our students for the future each and every day. In order to make sure they are as well rounded as possible I have started an after school program on Tuesday afternoons (2:11p-3:30p) that focuses on 2 important topics – college and career exploration! Students will learn all about writing resumes, interview skills, applying to college, FASFA, among many other topics. This program is open to all high school students, so swing by to take plunge towards planning your future!  ~Jamie Foote, Norwich Advocate

Norwich LPP is working to provide extra supports for student academics and has started a tutoring program running every Monday from 2:11-3:30 in the LPP room. Peer tutors will be available to students who need further clarification on a specific subject matter. If your student is struggling to complete homework or understand a specific module being taught in class, have your student stop down and work with a peer tutor or Misty to bring those grades up.  ~Misty Golden, Norwich Assistant

Unadilla Valley LPP is off to a great start already! I am seeing students much of the day and have enjoyed hearing about their summer. I am looking forward to the programming we have coming up for Unadilla Valley students. I am excited to offer UV students some new after school activities this year. Not only will we be continuing our collaboration with Eat Smart NY, cooking and learning about healthy food and exercise options; we will also be participating in the Dig In program. Dig In will offer hands on lessons about gardening and edible plants. Along with Dig In we will be adding more STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) activities to our after school program. I am very excited to see what UV students will create!  ~Stacy Wilcox, UV Advocate and LPP Assistant Director

The BG LPP program started a gardening project last spring and we are very excited to share that we are expanding our efforts this year by participating in a Gardening Service Learning Project. We will be reserving two garden boxes, which are located at the Community Gardens on Walnut St. With this project, we will be collaborating with educators from Eat Smart NY and Grow, Cook, Eat. Students will be learning the basics about gardening and healthy eating. We will be working with educators this winter to begin planting seeds indoors that we can transplant to our garden boxes in the spring. As part of the service project, students will research what types of plants can be used in soup kitchens in our area and select items to plant based on what they learn. Everything that is grown will be donated.

Another new program that will kick off in October is the LPP/Reality Check Program. Students that choose to participate in this program will meet twice a month after school. The purpose of this new program is to learn about the impact of tobacco use; spread tobacco-free messages to young people and to promote life-long health.

In addition to these two new opportunities, the BG LPP program will also continue to offer afterschool programming, 1-1 peer mentoring, afterschool tutoring, STEAM activities and other volunteer/service projects throughout the year. If you are interested in having your child participate in any of these activities, please contact Pat Yaddow.

~Pat Yaddow, BG Advocate