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May 1, 2023

BLUEFIELD - The Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau is excited to announce the Appalachian Ambassador program for local residents in Mercer County. The program encourages residents to enjoy area attractions in their hometowns, as well as foster a love for Mercer County.

"Mercer County, West Virginia, is more than just a place to call home," Executive Director Jamie Null said. "It's a Uniquely Appalachian experience. Whether you're a lifelong native or a newcomer, the natural beauty and small-town charm in our county make it a special place to live, work and play"

Ambassadors will earn Mercer County items, discounts and have the opportunity to be the first to try new restaurants, stores and much more. In return, ambassadors will document their positive experiences on social media.

Null hopes that the program will instill pride in area residents.

The launch coincides with National Travel and Tourism Week, May 7-13. In Mercer County, visitors spend \$130.7 million in lodging, food, shopping and more.

"Tourism is important to Mercer County," Null said. "For residents, it helps create a better quality of life through the outdoors, festivals, the arts and more."

To apply to the program, visit <https://visitmercercounty.com/ambassador-program/>.

For questions, call the Mercer County CVB at 304-325-8438.