

West Virginia PTA Newsletter February 2016



Janelle Sperry WV PTA President 2015-2017

February is an important month for the PTA because it's a time to reflect on our past and celebrate the legacy and work of our founders, Alice McLellan Birney, Phoebe Apperson Hearst and Selena Sloan Butler. Even though women did not have the right to vote in 1897, they believed mothers would support their mission to improve the lives and future of all children. Founder's Day, February 17, is a time to reflect and take pride in our achievements and renew our commitment to be a powerful voice for all children and advocate for public education.

Now, more than 100 years later, today's PTA is a network of millions of mothers, fathers, families, students, teachers, administrators, and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools.

Your West Virginia PTA Board of Managers is very proud to work with the National PTA to continue our mission of bettering the lives of every child in education, health and safety. This effort will culminate in the 93rd Annual West Virginia PTA Convention at the Lakeview Golf Resort in Morgantown on April 15-16, 2016. PTA volunteers from across West Virginia will attend valuable workshops on the importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), grant writing, internet safety, and have a chance to discuss Common Core and the status of student assessments in West Virginia with a member of the WV Department of Education.

This year, we have made it a priority to welcome special needs families into the PTA and have provided two (2) free memberships to each local unit to encourage their involvement. We are very proud to include workshops in the convention in April to help parents better understand the IEP process as well as provide resources and the tools they need to be an effective voice for their child at school, in the community, and beyond.

Aside from the valuable information received in workshops, the convention will include a fun Hawaiian luau and game night, and feature the Student Award Recognition Luncheon for our Reflections and Student Healthy Recipe winners. As always, the convention will conclude with the Annual Awards Banquet recognizing our outstanding volunteers and PTA's from across the state as well as honor the winners of the West Virginia PTA Scholarships.

Each of you have been busy planning meetings, organizing events, and volunteering at your schools with multiple events, and now it's time to register for the state convention to network with other PTA's, receive valuable information on the latest topics involving education and our children, and receive the awards you've earned for your PTA. Remember this is a legitimate expense for your PTA so make sure it's in your approved budget and look for the "Call to Convention" coming soon. You won't want to miss this convention!

Yours in PTA,

Janelle Sperry President The mission of West Virginia PTA is make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

GET READY TO

Set Sail!



FOR THE 93RD ANNUAL

West Virginia PTA Convention

Lakeview Golf Resort, Morgantown April 15-16, 2016

- ✓ New workshops on Grant Writing, STEM, Internet Safety for Parents, Updates on Common Core and Student Assessments
- ✓ Friday Night Hawaiian Luau and Game Night!
- ✓ NEW Workshops for Special Needs Parents on Self Advocacy for your children and understanding the IEP!
- ✓ Youth are welcome to attend!

Look for the "Call to Convention" with all the details coming soon!



West Virginia PTA Awards Reminder! <u>Deadline</u>: March 1, 2016

The deadline is approaching for this year's award nominations. Take the time and nominate a deserving volunteer in your PTA as well as a teacher, service personnel, principal, and business partner! There are cash prizes for many of the award recipients so show them how much they are appreciated and nominate them today!

Nominations can be completed on the West Virginia PTA website, emailed to <a href="mailed-emai

Check out this year's awards!

- COUNTY COUNCIL AWARD
- LOCAL UNIT AWARD
- STAR VOLUNTEER AWARD
- OUTSTANDING BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR AWARD
- Unit Standards Achievement Award (NEW!)
- OUTSTANDING TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD (\$100)
- OUTSTANDING PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR AWARD (\$100)
- OUTSTANDING SERVICE PERSONNEL OF THE YEAR AWARD (\$100)
- LOCAL UNIT GREAT MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN IDEA AWARD (\$100)
- LOCAL UNIT GREAT PROGRAM IDEA AWARD (\$50)
- STUDENT'S GOOD JOB AWARD (\$25)
- SCRAPBOOK AWARD (\$25)
- DON'T FORGET Membership Awards (extended deadline of march 15 for membership awards)

2015-2016 Membership Challenge and Incentive Program

One PTA in each region will be honored with a \$100 cash prize for having the highest membership increase based on percentage!

The largest PTA in West Virginia will be recognized with a \$200 cash prize and the WV PTA Traveling Trophy!

Get your memberships in by March 15th!





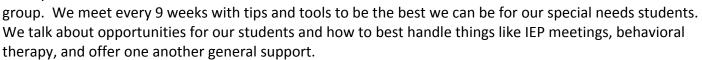
Eagle School Intermediate PTA

Eastern Region

The Eagle School Intermediate PTA has a big goal this year. We want to raise money for new playground equipment that our special needs students can utilize but more importantly, our goal is to create a community within our school. We want to bridge the gap between the students, parents, and staff. In order to meet these goals, the officers have planned events and activities for the Eagle School community. We want to be able to provide every student with a voice. We want to show each of our 810 students that they matter and we are there to help them succeed.

Each year, our school has a theme. This year, the theme is WONDER. The entire school is reading this book together. It teaches the students to be kind. Kindness is all around us and we celebrate it every chance we have. We celebrated kindness with a very special event. The students each wrote a kind wish for a stranger, placed it in a biodegradable balloon, and after an amazing outdoor concert, the students launched the balloons. It was an amazing moment. The PTA and the librarian worked together to pull off this epic moment.

Our focus is also on providing parents and teachers with the tools they need to be successful. Our school is a hub for the autism students in our county. We started the "Parents and Teachers of Students with Autism"





To offer our students the opportunity to be a member of a team and to be healthy and active, we started a Cross Country Team. Over 40 students were members of the first Eagle School Intermediate Cross Country Team. We practiced twice a week and ended our season with a 5k.

This experience taught the students to pace themselves, support each other, and always FINISH STRONG! It was so popular, we are bringing our program to the other intermediate schools in Berkeley County.

From our Fall Carnival, amazing Daddy Daughter Dance, to our spirit nights, Paint Night, Santa Shop, quarterly service projects, and all our other events, we are excited to see our goals come to fruition. To spread kindness while giving.... every child, one voice.



Kathy Parker 2015-2017 President-Elect

Legislative Report, Submitted by Kathy Parker

On January 12, 2016, I participated in my first State President/State President-Elect Conference Call! It was very informative. We received updates from a variety of National PTA leaders: Wayne Bauman, Secretary/Treasurer, talked about the fall state treasurers call, refinancing the mortgage of the National PTA office, and the upcoming budget and audit. Shannon Sevier gave an update from the legislative committee, and I'll give those details in my notes from my Federal Legislative Chair (FLC) Conference call later. Roxanne Rhinehart-Starks gave us some details on the National PTA Convention coming up June 30-July 3, 2016 in Orlando, FL at the Dolphin Hotel. The theme is: Think Big – Think PTA.

I participated in the second FLC (Federal Legislative Chair) Conference call. The NPTA Legislative Committee gave an update from the latest board meeting where position statements on Testing/Assessments and Positive School Discipline were introduced. All NPTA Position Statements are available on their website. Go to http://www.pta.org/advocacy and look for Position Statements. Next we got an update on the ESEA/NCLB (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) which was finally passed (!) and signed by President Obama on 12/10/2015. Now the NPTA Legislative Committee is working on recommendations for implementation. Funding for US Department of Education increased by \$1.2 billion, so now the various components of the government are working on next year's budget and appropriations.

There are SO MANY resources available on the National PTA web-site. Here are just a few:

Standards: http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3552

Assessments: http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=4311&navItemNumber=4610

Assessment Toolkit: http://www.pta.org/AssessmentEventKit

Be A Learning Hero: http://www.bealearninghero.org/

Great! Kids Milestones: http://www.greatkids.org/milestones

Council of the Great City Schools' Parent Roadmaps & Video: http://www.cgcs.org/Page/244

Parent Toolkit: http://www.ParentToolkit.com/parenttoolkit.com

Kahn Academy: https://www.khanacademy.org

Homework Help Desk: http://homeworkhelpdesk.org/

I will be also attending the 2016 National PTA Legislative Conference on March 8-10, 2016 in Arlington, Virginia, along with West Virginia PTA President Janelle Sperry and Northcentral Regional Director Rose Rossana and will report about our legislative visit in the next bulletin.



How can you get involved? Join PTA's Take Action Network

If you don't know how to advocate for your child, here are some easy things you can do.

National PTA has lots of resources as well!

- ✓ Join the PTA Takes Action Network to receive action alerts to contact your members of Congress on public policy issues important to PTA and you!
- ✓ Sign up to receive Takes Action E-Newsletters:

PTA Takes Action (monthly)

Leadership Briefing (monthly)

Local Leader News (monthly)

PTA Parent (bi-monthly)

Member Benefits Provider (bi-monthly)

✓ Go to: <u>www.pta.org</u>; under Advocacy – PTA Takes Action Network





2016 National PTA Legislative Conference

March 8-10, 2016

The 2016 National PTA Legislative Conference (LegCon) will feature new content and trainings to provide PTA advocates with the latest skills to shape public policy. Attendees at LegCon will get the opportunity to network with fellow advocates, share best practices, honor grassroots champions and policy leaders and learn how to:

- Advocate for children and families at all levels of government
- Build lasting relationships with policy makers
- Conduct effective meetings with legislators

This year's LegCon will feature award-winning NBC education correspondent, **Rehema Ellis**. West Virginia PTA President Janelle Sperry, President-Elect Kathy Parker, and Northcentral Director Rose Rossana will attend on behalf of West Virginia PTA.

Getting to Know Your WV PTA Leaders

Amy Arnold is a resident of Parkersburg, West Virginia. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration specializing in Accounting from West Virginia University – Parkersburg. Amy has been a corporate paralegal for the last 20 years and works at Camden Clark Medical Center in Parkersburg, West Virginia as their Corporate Paralegal. Amy is married, has two sons, ages 8 and 6, and four grandsons, ages 10, 8 and twins 2 years old. She is currently Treasurer at the Blennerhassett Elementary School PTA and is actively involved with all school functions. Amy has been on the Board of Managers of the West Virginia PTA for the last 3 years. She is Board President at the Good Samaritan Clinic in Parkersburg. Amy likes to spend her time going to the beach, spending time on the river with her family and gardening.



Amy Arnold
Resource Development

The Kids Cook Monday

The Kids Cook Monday program encourages families to set aside the first night of every week for cooking and eating together as a family. It provides examples of family friendly recipes and video demonstrations along with a free starter family dinner toolkit- making it easy for families to cook and eat together every Monday.



Please visit the West Virginia PTA website and look for this logo and see how easy the program is and enjoy dinner at home with your family every Monday night! This is a great family engagement activity!

Would you like to serve on the West Virginia PTA?

There are currently three (3) open positions on the West Virginia PTA Board of Managers. If you are interested in a Regional Director position in the South/Southwest Region or Western Region, <u>or</u> live in the Parkersburg area and would like to help volunteer in the office, please email Janelle Sperry at <u>president@westvirginiapta.org</u>. Thank you!



President Obama's 2017 Budget Proposal

ALEXANDRIA, Va., (Feb. 10, 2016) — Yesterday, President Barack Obama presented to Congress his proposal for the Fiscal Year 2017 budget.

"President Obama's proposed increase of 2% over the Fiscal Year 2016 appropriation for education is positive, and there are key investments in programs that support students and schools," said Laura Bay, president of National PTA. "However, National PTA is disappointed that funding for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program was not included in the president's proposal."

The Statewide Family Engagement Centers program is included in the Every Student Succeeds Act—the new law governing the federal role in K-12 education. The program would provide states and districts with the capacity to support effective implementation and enhancement of family engagement policies and initiatives that are proven to make a difference for children, schools and communities.

"For years, PTA members and families nationwide have been advocating for the prioritization of family engagement as it is critical to student success and school improvement efforts," added Nathan R. Monell, CAE, National PTA executive director. "National PTA remains committed to working to ensure the administration and Congress adequately invest in the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program to give families the tools to support their children's achievement and give districts the resources to build meaningful family-school partnerships."

In addition to the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program, National PTA also is disappointed that considerable increases for special education were not proposed. Greater financial support is essential for schools to be able to provide a quality education to children with disabilities.

National PTA is pleased, however, to see President Obama emphasize the importance of early learning and designate more resources for disadvantaged students. The association commends President Obama for proposing an increase of \$450 million for Title I—which provides assistance to schools with high percentages of children from low-income families—and an increase of \$100 million for Preschool Development Grants, which fund state efforts to expand and strengthen pre-K programs.

"One of the best investments our nation can make in a child's life is in high-quality early education," said Bay. "National PTA applauds President Obama's continued commitment to improve access to early learning programs for all children to better prepare them for long-term success."

National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education.



We are excited to announce an exclusive benefit for West Virginia PTAs - a special partnership with <u>SimplyCircle</u>, the leading online member management and communication platform for PTAs and other parent communities.

SimplyCircle is an all-in-one, easy-to-use platform that helps you:

Inform and engage PTA members and the broader school community with updates, announcements and newsletters; save time with automated reminders for upcoming events, deadlines and volunteer signups; easily track membership status and print PTA membership cards.

You can access the service anytime, from any device or platform. All you need is an Internet connection, and an email address. SimplyCircle also offers free mobile apps for both <u>iOS</u> and <u>Android</u>. They also offer a variety of <u>free and paid plans</u> for PTA leaders. (The service is always free for your group members).

West Virginia State PTA negotiated an exclusive member discount for all Local, Council and Regional units in West Virginia: 60% off Pro Gold plan.

- This plan usually costs \$19.99 / month (or \$150 / year)
- West Virginia PTA units get Pro Gold plan for just \$7.99 / month (or \$60 / year).
- This exclusive discount is valid until the end of the school year: July 1, 2016.

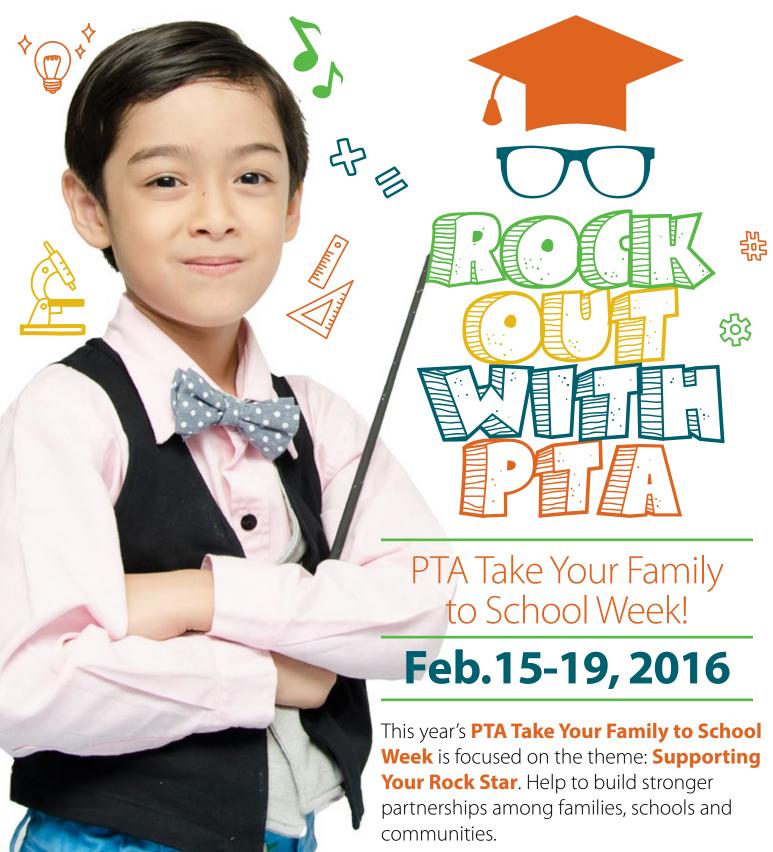
Start your FREE 30-day Pro Gold trial today



Save up to 35% on Your Orlando Vacation!
Orlando Employee Discounts offers Exclusive
Pricing on Hotels & Vacation Homes in or
nearby Disney World and Universal Studios
Orlando as well as Discounts on Tickets for All
Orlando Area Theme Parks and Attractions.

Visit the West Virginia PTA website under the Sponsors tab for more details.

SUPPORT YOUR ROCK STAR









Enter The Smart Talk Giveaway Deadline is Tuesday, February 16th!

West Virginia PTA wants to encourage families to sign up for The Smart Talk - a resource that will help parents and kids have an open dialogue and set smart ground rules for using digital devices safely.

To incentivize families to use this tool, National PTA is promoting "The Smart Talk Giveaway". Families can share their best digital safety rules at TheSmartTalk.org/Giveaway for a chance to win a vacation to Disney World and be featured at the 2016 National PTA Convention. It just takes a few minutes and you can win a trip to Disney and help West Virginia PTA as well!

Click here for more details!

2016 Annual National PTA Convention & Expo Think Big, Think PTA

Join us for **Think Big, Think PTA—June 30 to July 3, 2016—**to connect with over 1,500 of the nation's most influential leaders in education, as well as other parents and educators in **Orlando, Fla**.

Don't miss the opportunity to:

- Get Big Ideas to use at School and at Home
- Be Inspired by Big Thinkers
- Learn new ways to make your PTA Bigger, Bolder and Better

National PTA is the organization that solves the toughest problems and creates valuable tools for schools, families and students. Join the excitement and be a part of our biggest convention yet!





West Virginia PTA Membership Campaign for Special Needs

It's an exciting time for West Virginia PTA! We have been embarking on a campaign to include parents of Special Needs children as members.



By adopting a proposal to pay state and national dues for two memberships per school for Special Needs parents, we are hoping the local unit will waive their dues so we can begin a journey of being more inclusive. Locals may decide how to choose the members. Please support the inclusion of Special Needs parents in your PTA. If you would like more information or help in this process, you may contact Ginnie Molnar, Diversity Chair at diversity@westvirginiapta.org.

Getting to Know Your WV PTA Leaders

Chris Wuest holds the position of Treasurer. She is available to all units to answer questions regarding recordkeeping, banking, audit, and helps keep our units in compliance with state PTA and IRS requirements. She held the position of Eastern Regional Director on the Board during the last term. Chris has been involved in PTA since moving to Martinsburg in 2009. Joining Orchard View Intermediate when her daughter began 5th grade, Chris assisted the president and learned about PTA from a seasoned member, receiving a Star Volunteer Award for Berkeley County along with the West Virginia Honorary Life Membership that year. She was president of the PTSA for 3 years while her daughter attended Martinsburg South Middle. She has also served as president of the Berkeley County Council PTA for two years and is currently the Treasurer. PTA is a family affair in her house. Everyone has been a member and helped with preparations and events, even working on the Board of Managers with her son, Michael, as Youth Member last term.



Chris Wuest WV PTA Treasurer

Her favorite PTA event is the Reflections Program. As president of BCC PTA, she announced the names of the students whose entries were judged at the county level. This is her favorite event because she loved to see the smiles on the children's faces as they walk up front to receive their certificate and trophy. She always says that PTA is all about and for the children and keeps that the focus of her involvement.

Chris holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. She has been in the accounting profession for 37 years. She has taken time off since moving to West Virginia to take care of her children while staying current with taxes, preparing client returns from home. The year 2016 marks her 36th tax season. She works as her church's secretary and is a bus aide for RESA 8, transporting special needs Pre-K children. She enjoys cooking and family time with her husband, Chris, and their two children. Michael is a freshman at Binghamton University in New York studying history, pre-law and economics. Caitlin is a junior at Martinsburg High. She likes to travel back to New York State as often as possible to visit family and friends. She is grateful to her family for supporting her through all her PTA endeavors.



National PTA Board of Directors Adopts Position Statement on Positive School Discipline

ALEXANDRIA, Va., (Jan. 21, 2016) — National PTA's board of directors adopted a new position statement on positive school discipline during its January board meeting last week. This is in response to recent events and research findings that overly punitive discipline policies are not effective in addressing or improving student behavior.

The statement supports positive school discipline policies that keep children in school and learning over exclusionary discipline policies (suspension and expulsion) that tends to exacerbate a child's behavior problems by pushing students out of the place (school) created to support them and keep them safe. National PTA believes that exclusionary discipline practices should only be used in schools as a last resort effort to preserve the safety of students and staff.

"Research clearly shows that disciplinary strategies like zero-tolerance policies and automatic expulsions can lead to negative and even dangerous behaviors among students," said James L. Accomando, president-elect of National PTA. "So it's imperative that school discipline policies and practices address the cause of a student's misbehavior, and improve positive behavior skills and overall student and school success." As outlined in the position statement, National PTA and its constituents are committed to promoting policies and procedures that:

- Replace exclusionary discipline whenever possible with evidence-based, multi-tiered behavioral frameworks, such as positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) that improve school climate and safety.
- Regularly examine school district discipline policies and procedures, and their impact on all groups of students.
- Provide students and their parents' information about the school's disciplinary policies and allow their voices to be heard throughout the disciplinary process.
- Require school districts to provide adequate training for all teachers, principals and school personnel on
 prevention and school-based interventions and alternatives to exclusionary discipline, including PBIS
 and Response to Intervention (RTI).
- Ensure adequate access to and retention of school counselors, school social workers and school
 psychologists to implement school-based interventions that promote positive school discipline.

An issue of increasing scrutiny and focus is the interaction between law enforcement officials in schools—typically referred to as School Resource Officers (SROs)—and students. National PTA believes if school officials determine there is a need for an SRO within a school building, there must be a clearly defined memorandum of understanding between the law enforcement agency and the school on the SRO's role and responsibilities.

National PTA is committed to continuing to support effective policies and practices that ensure families, principals, teachers and other school personnel promote positive school discipline policies for all students.

"Every student deserves a safe and supportive classroom where they can learn," said Shannon Sevier, National PTA vice president for advocacy. "Ensuring principals, teachers and other school officials have the ability and support to address behavioral issues on an individual basis will ensure that all students are getting the best education."

Sports Physical Tips

From preseason to play-offs, MedExpress is here to help keep your athletes in the game.

Get a Sports Physical today at MedExpress.

A sports physical has two main parts:

Medical History questions about:

- serious illness among other family members
- past illness, injuries, hospitalizations and surgeries
- whether you've passed out, felt dizzy, had chest pain, or strained breathing during exercise
- any medications you are on

Physical Examination of:

- height, weight, blood pressure and pulse
- vision
- heart, lungs, abdomen, ears, nose and throat
- posture, joints, strength and flexibility



MedExpress offers Sports Physicals 7 days a week.

(Physicals requiring X-rays, labs or other ancillary requirements may result in additional charges.)

medexpress.com **f**









JUST WALK IN





Executive Committee

President Janelle Sperry Email: president@westvirginiapta.org President-Elect Kathy Parker Email: presidentelect@westvirginiapta.org 1st Vice President Email: bylaws@westvirginiapta.org Missy Jones 2nd Vice President Ponnie Sampson Email: membership@westvirginiapta.org Secretary Dani Hancock Email: secretary@westvirginiapta.org Chris Wuest Email: treasurer@westvirginiapta.org Treasurer Karen Sherman Email: atlargemember@westvirginiapta.org At Large Member

Regional Directors

Central Email: bylaws@westvirginiapta.org Missy Jones (acting) Email: easterndirector@westvirginiapta.org Eastern Bryan Anderson North Central Email: northcentraldirector@westvirginiapta.org Rose Rossana Email: northerndirector@westvirginiapta.org Northern Diane Klinger Southern/Southwestern Vacant Email: southerndirector@westvirginiapta.org Western Vacant Email: westerndirector@westvirginiapta.org

Committee Chairpersons

Marketing Beth Anderson Email: marketing@westvirginiapta.org Diversity Ginnie Molnar Email: diversity@westvirginiapta.org Health & Safety Ieana Parr Email: healthandsafety@westvirginiapta.org Office Coordinator Vacant Email: office@westvirginiapta.org Craig Arnold Email:parentandfamily@westvirginiapta.org Parent/Family Engagement Parliamentarian Judy Snider Email: parliamentarian@westvirginiapta.org Linda Abercrombie Scholarship Email: scholarship@westvirginiapta.org Resource Development Amy Arnold Email: resourcedevelopment@westvirginiapta.org Reflections Billie Jo Bagnell Email: reflections@westvirginiapta.org Youth Member Gabi Hancock Email:youthmember@westvirginiapta.org

Office

West Virginia PTA

P.O. Box 3557, Parkersburg, WV 26103-3557 Phone: 304-420-9576 Fax:304-420-9577

Email: office@westvirginiapta.org or info@westvirginiapta.org



West Virginia Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc. P.O. Box 3557
Parkersburg, WV 26103-3557

Nonprofit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Permit #320 Parkersburg, WV