

BREVARD COLLEGE

BREVARD, NORTH CAROLINA

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Brevard College, NPS, TCS Students Collaborate to Save Peregrine Falcons

BREVARD – Brevard College collaborated with the National Park Service (NPS) and Transylvania County Schools (TCS) this past year on a special project to help save peregrine falcons.

Student teachers from the Brevard College Teacher Education program guided elementary and middle school students in Transylvania County to design a series of educational signs that will be used on the Devil's Courthouse trail, social media and other educational materials. NPS staff completed a proposal and outline of the project and have provided all funding.

Kat Kramer '24 and Bailey Lance '24 designed grade level-specific lesson plans related to the project and connected to the science standards for North Carolina. After engaging in the learning activities presented by the teacher candidates, artwork from 13 students were submitted for publication.

"It has been such a unique learning experience for our teachers and their students," said Courtney Morgan, Childhood Education Program Coordinator at Brevard College. "I'm so glad that we could partner with NPS and TCS to make this happen. It will be wonderful to see the students' work come to life and hopefully have an impact."

"It was a wonderful collaborative opportunity for our students to see their creative works come to life," commented Tessa Brown for Transylvania County Schools. "Pair that with being able to help this rare falcon and it turned into a wonderful educational experience that they can carry with them and build upon for the rest of their lives."

According to information from NPS, peregrine falcons nest in the cliffs at the popular Devil's Courthouse overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway, one of the most visited national parks. Unfortunately, they continue to be scared off by hikers and sightseers. Loud voices, flying drones, and crossing the established barrier wall spook the birds, who are not able to successfully nest with such disturbances.

While there were already signs posted along the trail to build awareness, everyone hopes that the new signs will be more eye-catching and inspire visitors to better adhere to the rules of the trail.

All of the selected artwork will be used in one way or another for promotion of the project. Look for this local student artwork and information about how to protect peregrine falcons on NPS social media and at Devil's Courthouse this summer.

Brevard College is committed to an experiential liberal arts education that encourages personal growth and inspires artistic, intellectual, and social action.

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