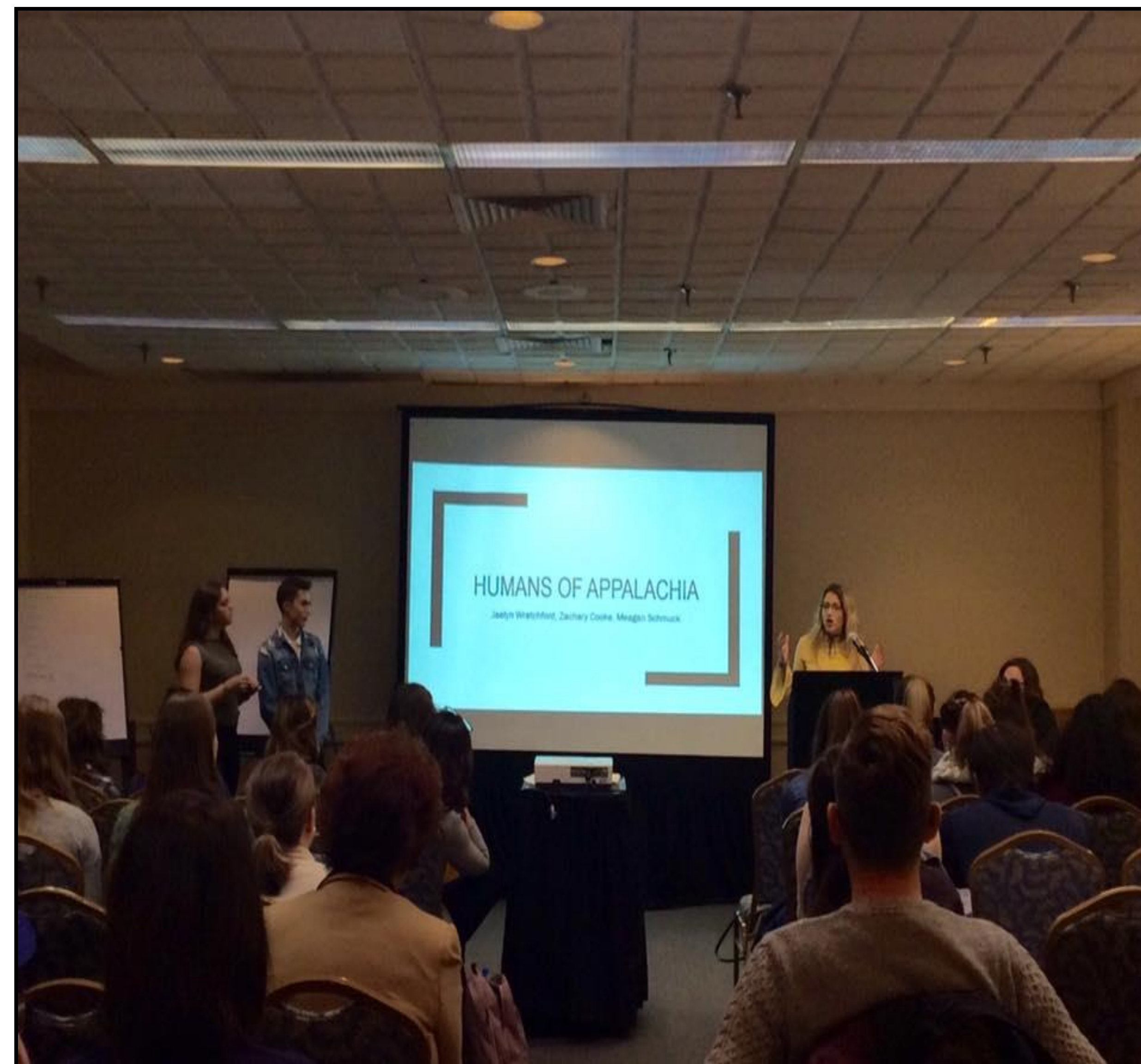


Engaging the next generation in Appalachian studies: building community and expanding outreach through technology and diversity of programming

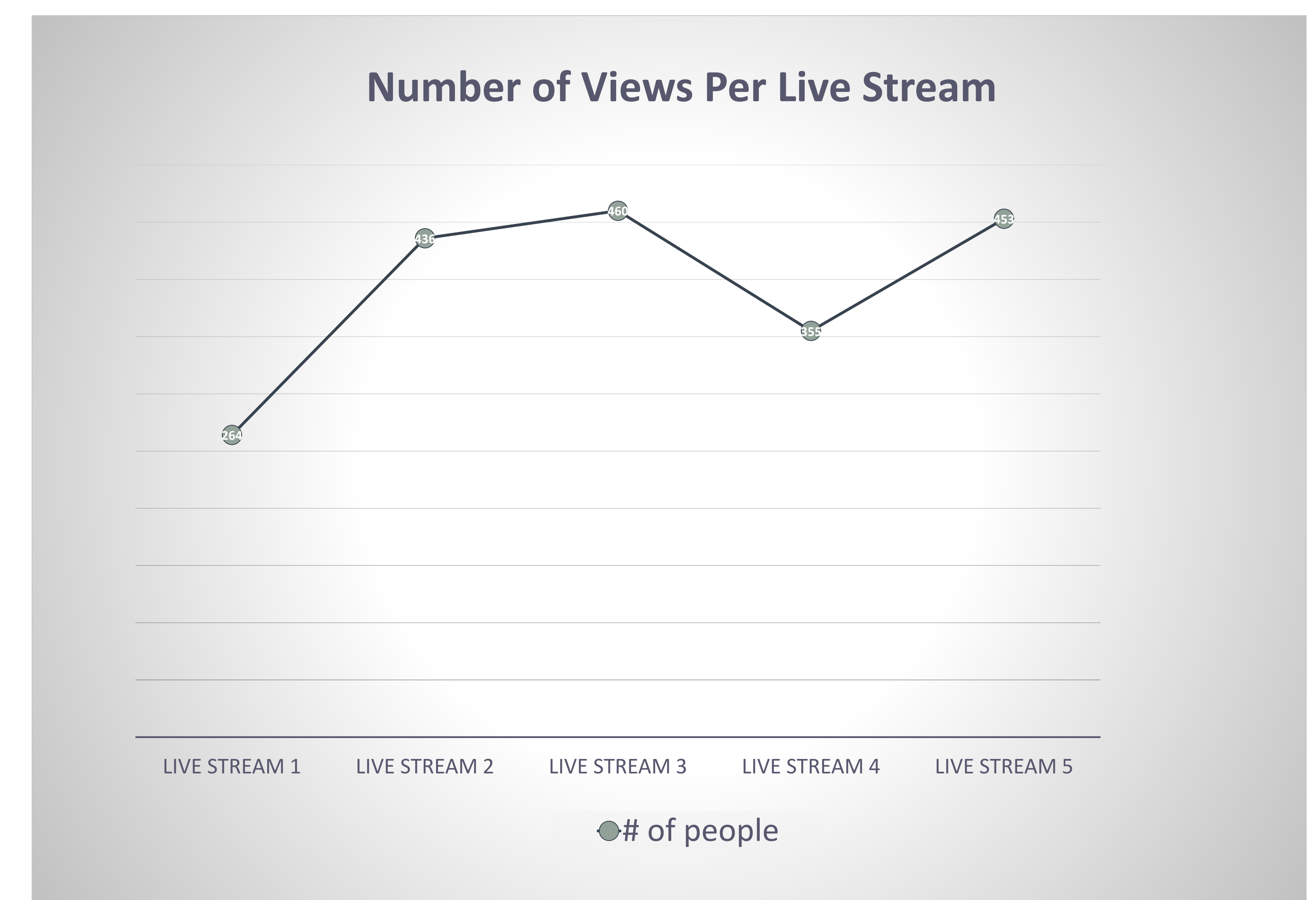
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- **Goals:** Social media is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to market an event to a targeted audience and engage people. The goal of this project was to build interest and generate excitement among those planning to attend the Appalachian Studies Association conference, both before and during the event, through the use of technology. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook were employed to promote the conference, connect with people in attendance, and share some of the experiences with those unable to be there.



- **Evaluation:** The response received from including a live-stream as part of the conference social media efforts was overwhelmingly positive. Over four hundred people were able to watch the keynote plenary and stay involved with the conference, regardless of where they were. Due to social media capabilities, it was possible to not only see how many people the posts were reaching, but also determine if specific goals were being met or surpassed. Tracking the number of people that were viewing posts was incredibly helpful in assessing our efforts and identifying the interests of followers.



- **Methods:** The first step was to use multiple platforms to highlight first time presenters and sessions that would appeal to a wide audience with the intention of encouraging more people to join.
- Throughout the conference photos and videos featuring various sessions and presenters were posted.
- The keynote plenary (organized and performed by the students of High Rocks Academy and Spring Mills High School) was live-streamed via the ASA Facebook account and reached hundreds of people who could not attend, including many families and friends of the students presenting.

- **Recommendations:** The ASA Conference should make an effort to further their social media presence. With the ASA Conference being a great opportunity for many undergrads and youth to participate in, perhaps in the future there should be the consideration of hiring an intern that has majored in Convergent Social Media. With the ASA Conference being a continually changing and expanding stage to present Appalachian roots it is important to encourage first time presenters. By engaging them, and acknowledging them in social media posts the ASA is helping to ensure their continued participation at the conference in the future.

