The Smoky Mountains STEM Collaborative (SMSC) funded under SMD’s STEM Science Activation Program is designed to help students in rural areas make use of community college as a stepping stone in pursuing STEM-related careers.

• In June 2016, James Howe attended a summer research experience at Appalachian State University that produced a research paper that won in February 2017, the honor of “Best Undergrad Student Paper” from the North Carolina Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers (NCS-AAPT) https://www.southwesterncc.edu/news/student-wins-award-research-paper

• In January 2017, Jesse Moore was awarded a $2,500 scholarship from NASA/NC Space Grant https://www.southwesterncc.edu/news/student-receives-scholarship

• Both students are active members of Southwestern Community College’s STEM Club and High Altitude Ballooning Team and are participating in the 2017 Total Solar Eclipse Ballooning Project.