



HONORING
OUR CORE VALUES

EMBRACING CHEROKEE VALUES

“We were taught to love and to take care of each other.”

Walker Calhoun, EBCI tribal elder

Cherokee Preservation Foundation’s (CPF) strategies were shaped by the cultural values endorsed by members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in the Vision Qualla initiative of 2004. These values are being utilized within CPF’s strategic plan and program efforts. By practicing the core values, the Cherokee people can surmount many crises, while continuing to prosper as a community. The Cherokee values are:

Spirituality; is a Cherokee lifeway, creates a bond among Cherokee people in good times and bad, and is a source of hope.

Group Harmony in community and kin relationships; freely giving time, talent and treasures.

Strong Individual Character; to act selflessly with integrity, honesty, perseverance, courage, respect, trust, honor and humility.

Sense of Place; acting as good stewards of the land, making a connection between the land & tribal identity.

Honoring the Past by honoring Cherokee ancestors and elders, learning from past tribal decisions, and embracing tribal identity.

Educating the Children by providing values-oriented education and recreation, and by being strong role models.

Sense of Humor lightens pressure in serious situations, which helps people make good decisions when addressing adversity.

Each story in this annual report reflects one or more of these Cherokee values.



CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION
71 John Crowe Hill Road, Cherokee, NC 28719
828/497-5550

T



Robert Mathews of the Tow Spring community received help in this year's event. More than 30 volunteers swarmed around his home, replacing porch posts, pressure washing the home, cleaning flower beds, cutting down a tree, pulling up poison oak, and doing overall clean up.

"I'm a native; my people go back to the 1800s on this land, and we've always helped each other. That's how we were raised," said Robert. "To see all these folks, from a judge to a pre-teen, working together with such a great attitude is wonderful. This brings us more together, because we all have a stake in all our communities."

DAY OF CARING EMBODIES GA-DU-GI SPIRIT

The Cherokee term Ga-Du-Gi or "Free Labor" refers to traditional groups which help community members in need without being asked. This tradition is intrinsic to Cherokee culture and continues to reflect all positive aspects of tribal identity.

By emulating this powerful cultural model in our programming, the Foundation strives to support this community based time-honored tradition. The Cherokee Day of Caring was established in 2005 as a partnership between the Cherokee Preservation Foundation (the Foundation) and Harrah's Cherokee Ca-

sino. The Day of Caring has helped scores of tribal members improve their homes, yards, gardens, and out buildings. More importantly, it brings people together, neighbors helping neighbors, for a fun day of hard work and comradery that builds community. It is the living, breathing embodiment of Ga-Du-Gi.

Marie Junaluska, tribal council member and elder, notes that Ga-Du-Gi has been around for as long as she can remember. "Part of Ga-Du-Gi is a volunteer group that does free labor—when I was young, people came together and helped whoever had a need, and different fami-

lies had different needs. We might tend a field or garden or rebuild something that needed it. The point is we all helped each other. Day of Caring helps us continue that tradition today."

Day of Caring planning takes place year around and involves many organizations. A committee plans the annual event which includes the EBCCI, the Cherokee Boy's Club (CBC), the CPF, Harrah's, and Qualla Housing (QH). Families in need of assistance are nominated by the each of the ten Cherokee Community Clubs. Once the nominations are received committee members





select projects that can be completed within a six-hour window and meet guidelines specifications.

“The first year we did this was tough, we didn’t have any home improvement skills, but we lived and learned,” said Janna Hyatt, Regional Community Relations Specialist at Harrah’s and event co-founder. “Now we have volunteer members that match our needs, and these skilled people do the assessments and tell us what we can and cannot do.”

The committee must create project needs assessments that include materials, volunteers, timeline, travel & meals, and orchestrate completion for all ten projects. Skilled project leaders are

provided for each project by the Tribe, CBC, and QH. Harrah’s provides lunch for 250-300 volunteers, and CPF purchases all materials needed for each project.

Deb Owle, Program Operations Manager for the CPF and co-founder of Day of Caring, spends countless hours throughout the year to assure its success. “It’s an awesome, feel-good day and the whole process is great. I love it because it lets me give back to my community, my people. This is what Ga-Du-Gi is all about, helping fellow neighbors,” said Deb.

This year’s projects included painting, replacing porch supports, general cleanup, and providing landscaping. Previous

years accomplishments range from building porches and handicap ramps to repairing kitchens, building wood sheds, and other minor repairs.

Part of the Day of Caring includes celebrating “Quiet Heroes”; these are people recommended by each community for their selfless leadership. A dinner that night recognizes these ten people to thank them for their service. During this evening, a “Good Neighbor” is also selected based on recommendations from the communities. This is one person who is not a tribal member, but someone who lives on the boundary and gives back to the community.

Each year Day of Caring grows a little more.

Community support is broader now, and the volunteer base has expanded, with volunteers coming from outside the boundary, some as far away as Florida. Communication with the home owners is more streamlined, and home project assessments now take less than an hour. And the home improvements are sustainable, which means that people can stay in their homes longer.

“It’s such a rewarding day, talking to the home owners, discovering we can make a difference and help one another; that’s the spirit of the day,” said Janna. “But really, the work is the bonus because the whole day is about good fellowship and neighbors.”

“As a people, we’ve always helped each other. That’s how we were raised.”



ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION ENHANCES CHEROKEE'S



SENSE OF PLACE

Sense of Place is one of the Cherokee cultural core values, which is intrinsic to preserving and protecting the environment. Also, environmental preservation is a funding area that CPF addresses on several fronts. Using best environmental management practices, CPF supports land and resource utilization in ways to assure environmental sustainability including energy efficiency, emphasizing alternative energy sources, and recycling efforts. Furthermore, CPF encourages energy efficiency projects that could lead to the creation of jobs and revenues on the Qualla Boundary, while also working with partners to improve water and air quality.

Additionally, the Foundation seeks to fund projects that preserve and propagate usable artisan materials in a sustainable manner, which is part of CPF's environmental mission. Cherokee artisans utilize raw materials such as rivercane for basket making, but the required natural resources to support this tradition are becoming rare. Therefore, the CPF supports projects like the Greenway next to Robbinsville High School, which is a good example of a grant that preserves and propagates rivercane culms needed to support the basket-making tradition.

Implementing a project such as this on a school campus ensures that the youth and region understand the importance of environmental preservation and how it relates to the Cherokee sense of place core value and lifeways.

BIRD MONITORING STUDY HELPS SUSTAIN HABITAT, INVITES



PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND APPRECIATION

Working spring and summer outdoors in the mountains with flowers and birds is a job many

of us would adore. Mark Hopey, director of Southern Appalachian Raptor Research (SARR), gets to do that as part of his job, and he loves it. However, conducting a bird band-

ing study is about a whole lot more than just spending time in nature.

Mark is conducting research in collaboration with a national study called MAPS (Monitoring

Avian Productivity and Survivorship) to create a detailed view of migratory birds, their habitats, and challenges to survival during their breeding season. Bird monitoring not only tells us about the health of bird populations, it also tells us about the health of the overall ecosystem. Mainspring Conservation Trust contracts with SARR to get the work done; CPF funds this important work through a grant to Mainspring.

Volunteers work with Mark to trap birds in mist nets, measure, weigh, note condition, band them, and collect other data. It's a race against the clock; the birds must be handled oh so gently





Indigo bunting
alitsanosga
DPGZΩS



Yellow-breasted chat
huhu
TT

and released quickly. It's a rare opportunity for people to see and touch these beautiful, colorful birds and develop more appreciation for them.

Mark welcomes volunteers of all ages. He's conducted many classroom presentations, and students volunteer at the bird banding sites each summer. There's a schedule for site visits on bigbaldbanding.com, and the program is open to the public.

"The people who come and help us learn to appreciate the natural world, and the more people who help with bird banding, the more people will value wildlife and their habitat," explained Mark.

"When people come

out and volunteer, they see things they didn't know existed, and they understand and put more value on our environment," said Dennis Desmond, grant manager for Mainspring Conservation Trust. "It's education you can't get in a classroom, and we can't do it alone. That's why we appreciate the Foundation's funding."

Another part of the study includes partnerships with Cherokee language speakers. *The Birds of Cowee Town*, a book written in Cherokee, is one result of the CPF grant. The book is filled with gorgeous photos of birds that live here or migrate through the area. The book helps enhance the connection between

the Cherokee language and the natural world.

This is the seventh year of the collaboration among Mainspring Conservation Trust, SARR, and EBCI Natural Resources with funding from the Foundation. Three Cherokee historic sites are included—Mainspring's Tennesse Bottomland Preserve in southern Macon County, EBCI's Cowee Mound in northern Macon County, and Mainspring's John Welch Farm near Andrews in Cherokee County. This year, SARR is also training EBCI Natural Resources biologists to conduct bird banding at EBCI's Kituwah Mound in Swain County.



ROBBINSVILLE GREENWAY INCLUDES RIVER CANE ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROJECT



Funding assures that river cane will continue to be harvested appropriately by Cherokee artists

A project to create a “living laboratory” along the Sweetwater Creek Greenway on the Robbinsville High School campus is thriving with the help of continued funding from CPF. Graham County’s largest known patch of river cane is located on this greenway.

The latest grant continues to protect river cane that’s already being harvested by Cherokee basket-makers. Current funds address issues such as competition from non-native invasive plants, stream bank stabilization, and controlling cane

roots that crack the fitness trail asphalt.

The CPF is partnering with Mainspring Conservation Trust, grantee Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team (GREAT), and science and biology teachers and students from the high school to assure the preservation of this precious resource.

“The project lets high school students get involved removing invasive plants and monitoring riparian habitat,” said David Cozzo, Ph.D. and head of Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee

Artisan Resources, a partnership of EBCI Cooperative Extension, NC State University, and CPF.

“Students are using a Cherokee-themed outdoor classroom to get hands-on experience in biology, stream health, and other skills.”

Previous Foundation grants secured the cane’s safety and funded educational displays on river cane, while another grant covered supplies for students to build an outdoor classroom.

“Environmental restoration projects take some time; the cane grows and



The Greenway is a public walking path that goes all the way around the campus, so the project serves as a great educational resource. The river cane is beautiful, high-quality basket cane, and providing people with access to visually experience it helps emphasize the importance of this cultural resource.

thrives on its own schedule, which is why these types of projects usually require several phases,” said David.



PRESERVING OUR PAST PRESERVES OUR FUTURE



Cultural preservation is one of the CPF's funding areas with a focus on supporting the Cherokee language and cultural leadership development to reinforce tribal identity. The Foundation focuses in three areas to achieve this goal—expand the learning of the Cherokee language, support the develop of leaders who are grounded in the Cherokee core values, and encourage cultural-based youth leadership development through youth empowerment.

The Cherokee language is central to shaping the Cherokee worldview and provides context for the speaker to fully grasp the Cherokee cultural identity. Consequently, CPF provides funding for several programs teaching Cherokee language strategically focused at Kituwah Preservation and Education Program, and Cherokee Central Schools.

Marie Junaluska, a Cherokee elder and community leader, is dedicated to helping revitalize the Cherokee language. She attends a Cherokee language consortium quarterly with western Cherokee members and UKB (United Keetoowah Band). Now in its 10th year, the consortium continues to be supported by the Foundation. Marie notes that parts of the quarterly meetings are spent creating new Cherokee words, especially to cover modern technologies which are so much a part of the current culture.

"It's important to preserve and revitalize our language because it is what identifies us," she said. "The language and culture are so intertwined if you don't know the language, you don't know the culture at that deep level."

EMPOWERING GENERATIONS OF NEW LEADERS



The new Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute was launched this year with funds from the Foundation. The Institute is now the umbrella organization for the Cherokee Youth Council, Jones-Bowman Leadership Award program, and the Right Path Adult Leadership programs. The institute provides lifelong culturally based leadership development opportunities for the Cherokee community.

With the emergence of the Tribally owned casino, persons with leadership skills transitioned to the native enterprise. Developing new EBCI leaders for tribal leadership positions

became an important priority for the community, which led to the programs mentioned above being initiated with grants from the Foundation. Searching for the right fit for the programs—a place where they could all be housed together—lead the Foundation to collaborate with the Cherokee Boys Club, which has its own history of leadership.

The Institute is named for Ray Kinsland, who was general manager of the Cherokee Boys Club for more than 50 years and is one of the few non-Cherokee men to be adopted by the tribe. Bringing all the community leadership programs together under the Ray Kinsland Institute creates a continuum of culturally based leadership programs that span a life-



time. A foster parent for many young people over the years, Mr. Kinsland demonstrates the qualities of a selfless leader with his humility, strong individual character, sense of humor, and mentoring that has produced many community leaders.

"Ray is an integral part of this community and a selfless leader," said Carmaleta Monteith, a Cherokee member and Jones-Bowman Leadership program founding and ad-

visory board member. "He is exactly what we want to instill in our leaders."

Cost savings, cross training, and a strategic plan that benefits all the programs are already happening. Staff members are attending retreats, serving as mentors, and serving as chaperones for youth council trips. By working across all the programs, staff members are better able to help each other and the young people they serve.

RESPECTING THE POWER AND CREATIVITY OF YOUTH



“I have seen how young people that came through this program have changed their lives, developing leadership skills that they continue to use.”

Established a decade ago through a grant from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, the **Cherokee Youth Council (CYC)** honors the valued voice of youth, as was the tradition in the days of the Cherokee Grand Council. CYC nurtures youth empowerment by providing opportunities for middle-school and high-school students to improve leadership skills through a Cherokee culture-based program.

Through the program, young people are seen and heard, voicing their perspectives on EBCI community issues. Issues are addressed and projects selected by the council

who then implement strategies addressing the issues and report on project outcomes.

Ethan Clapsaddle, Cherokee Youth Council Leadership Specialist, recently joined the organization. “I have seen how young people that came through this program have changed their lives, developing leadership skills that they continue to use.”

The Youth Council is based on Cherokee’s Grand Council; there are no officers, everyone is equal. Consensus is needed to make something happen—which takes longer—but the

process helps the youth figure out what really matters to them.

CYC members volunteer countless hours to the community. Members also participate in the recruitment process, screening candidates, listening to oral interviews by candidates, and voting on new members.

Approximately 15-20 students are currently CYC members; the time commitment includes two monthly meetings plus additional volunteer hours.

The CYC has implemented several projects during the past decade, which includes a youth

impact project on teen pregnancy, suicide prevention, and drug addiction. Many of their projects are not funded by the CPF with CYC’s members raising the necessary program funds, which encourages program sustainability.

CYC members plan, implement, and evaluate the impact of their programming efforts on each project. The empowerment component in this program is a vital part of leadership development, and assists CYC members in their endeavors to become successful leaders that possess the skills necessary to solve contemporary issues facing the tribe.

Nate Crowe, 16, is a CYC member who attends Smoky Mountain High School. His experience with the Council has helped him gain confidence and realize the importance of giving back to the community. “Speaking in public really makes me nervous but I’ve done it, and it’s helped me break out of my shell. I also enjoy volunteering at many different events and serving as a voice for the community.”



Cultural exchange trip to Seattle, Washington



Above: Ethan Clapsaddle introduces Youth Council members to the Museum's ancient Cherokee artifacts and archives. Right: CYC UNITY trip.



Nate recently attended a cultural exchange trip to Seattle, WA with other youth council members. He led several Cherokee dances and sang the songs during another native tribe's annual water festival. He also explained the history of the dances and stories.

"These programs really open up the minds of our youth," said Ethan. "When they see their peers doing the same

activities, dealing with the same family dynamics of trying to keep their culture in a modern world, it comforts them and builds confidence."

The CYC represented the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians at the United National Indian Tribal Youth (UNITY) conference in July. More

than 2,000 native youth attended the conference. More cultural exchange programs are coming this fall.

"Speaking in public really makes me nervous but I've done it, and it's helped me break out of my shell. I also enjoy volunteering at many different events and serving as a voice for the community."

HAPPY 10TH BIRTHDAY JONES-BOWMAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Established in 2007 by the Foundation, the Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program continues to help develop leaders who are making a significant difference. Jones-Bowman Fellowships are awarded to undergraduate college and university students who are enrolled EBCI members.

Jones-Bowman is named for Principal Chief Leon Jones and Mr. Jim Bowman—found-

PROGRAM

ing members of the Board of Directors of the Foundation. Program participants—called Fellows—are selected for their leadership potential and desire to serve the community. Each Fellow receives funding of \$4,000 annually for up to four years. It's expected that Fellows will complete a four-year degree, while maintaining a 3.0 GPA after the first year.

Kevin Jackson was a member of the first Jones-Bowman group. After eight years in the military, including serving in Afghanistan, he

was working at the local hospital but understood the difficulties of the local job market. He knew going back to school was his best option.

After he was accepted, he completed his degree in business management at Montreat and then a Masters in Environmental Science from the University of Alabama.

“When I was in the military, people wanted to know about my people and I didn't know—I was embarrassed,” said Kevin. “The lessons I learned by being a Jones-Bowman Fellow gave me the

cultural background to embrace and acknowledge who I am.”

Alicia Jacobs is the leadership specialist over the Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program. Since its inception, one third of the 45 students enrolled have graduated from the program, and some 60 percent have returned to Cherokee and actively serve the community. About a quarter of the students have returned as mentors, and many have received Masters degrees, with a couple pursuing doctorate programs.

“As I look back at the list of people who've come through I see how passionate they are about being selfless and giving back. We need to continue the generational impact, and keep stepping up to leadership positions. I want our Fellows to represent us at a national level, then come back to the Qualla Boundary to fill leadership positions in our workforce, generating an economic impact that will bring us full circle,” said Alicia.

Kelsey Standingdeer-Owle is a Jones-Bowman alumna and a current mentor; she is a great example of what the



2017-2018 Fellows. Back row left to right: Faith Long, Brantly Junaluska, Michael Thompson, Zane Wachacha, Cruz Galavez. Front row left to right: Taran Swimmer, Rebecca Teesateskie, Chloe Blythe, Kayla Johnson, Shana Lambert

“The whole idea of leadership doesn’t mean you come from the front, the stem of the Cherokee word means carrying something through. We need to carry one another. It makes me feel good that some consider me a leader, but I have to remain humble and have a sense of integrity.”

Kevin Jackson, member of the first group of Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program recipients

program hopes to accomplish. Her experience in the program opened her world to travel, changed her perspective, and allowed her to develop her own leadership skills. She’s now a Cherokee Central School middle school counselor.

“The students I am mentoring now are teaching me patience and how to be a better person,” said Kelsey. “I want to give them the tools to be the best person they can be—they are our future.”

Chloe Blythe, a current Fellow attending Queens University in Charlotte, is majoring in marketing and hopes to go into sports marketing after college.

“I’ve been so encouraged to get involved with other organizations in a



Program Mentors. Left to right: Kayla Smith, Tonya Carroll, Alicia Jacobs, Ethan Clapsaddle, Savannah Hicks

leadership role. Now I’m on the executive board of my sorority in charge of memberships, and I’ve learned so much about how to hold people accountable without being a dictator,” she explained.

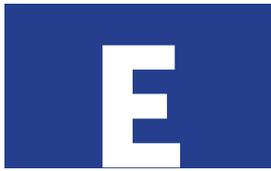
Chloe advises EBCI students to apply to the program even if they don’t fully understand it. “Once you get involved you realize how many people are there to help. Our mentors help keep

us grounded. Also having so many mentors who are younger and older who know what we’re going through is really important.”



JONES-BOWMAN BY THE NUMBERS

- 45** Fellows have participated in program
- 60%** returned and serve the community
- 22%** returned to be a mentor
- 18%** received a Masters degree after Jones-Bowman



FUNDING PROJECTS THAT BRING BUSINESS AND PEOPLE

Economic development is one of CPF's funding areas with several different projects being supported. These projects are creating jobs and attracting new business to the Qualla Boudary, while also increasing visitation to Cherokee and the region.

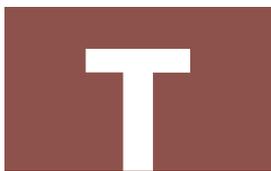
The Blue Ridge Heritage Trail project and Greater Cherokee Tourism Council funding are two fine examples of grantees that are helping develop our economy.

Supporting a comprehensive economic development strategy in partnership with the Tribe assures CPF funded projects are on the right path with a thorough plan. Several of the projects proposed in this plan were completed, and many others are underway. It's important that the town of Cherokee continues to develop high-quality attractions that enhance our reputation as a vibrant cultural tourism destination.

The CPF also funds programs that help Cherokee Central Schools students prepare for high-tech jobs. Supporting Sequoyah Fund's Authentically Cherokee initiative is providing many young artists with a hand up—helping them market their art and learn critical business skills. A grant to Cherokee Central Schools that funded a STEM-E Coordinator means that more teachers are better prepared to teach our youth science, technology and other skills.

The goal of all these workforce and economic development programs is to create 21st century jobs that keep our people here and bring them back.

BLUE RIDGE HERITAGE TRAIL INCLUDES CHEROKEE SITES THAT STIMULATE VISITATION



The creation of the Blue Ridge Heritage trail is a remarkable story of perseverance, collaboration, and patience. Ten years in the making, the Foundation provided funding and collaborated with the Blue Ridge National Heritage Area (BRNHA) nonprofit organization. The 69 interpretive signs that dot 25 western North Carolina counties are stimulating heritage tourism with a comprehensive trail program that includes scenic byways, historic trails and sites,

and state parks.

There are six Cherokee-themed sites, and visitation is up since the signs were installed in late 2015. Visitation has also increased to the other 17 far western North Carolina sites, bringing more tourists closer to the Qualla Boundary.

Handsome interpretive signs now point people to the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Oconaluftee Indian Village, Qualla Arts & Crafts, and Unto These Hills cultural attractions. Two other interpretive signs tell the story of Cherokee communities that thrived before the

“We thank the Foundation for supporting our efforts to keep heritage alive for future generations.”



BLUE RIDGE HERITAGE TRAIL (CONT'D)



1838 Cherokee removal, and today, still remains home for many EBCI members.

An interpretive sign is placed on Konehete, the Long Valley Place, that Europeans shortened to Valleytown, that was the first name of Andrews, NC. It was home to many Cherokee communities for centuries. Another sign teaches travelers about Cheoah, “Otter Town” in Graham County that was the heart of the old Cherokee Nation, and more than 500 Cherokees still live in this area.

“We worked closely with the EBCI and the Foundation to include the Cherokee sites,” said Angie Chandler, Executive Director, Blue Ridge National Heritage Area. “We asked for and appreciated their help with

selecting locations and language.”

The Foundation grant helped cover a comprehensive tourism research study and heritage forums attended by the 25 western North Carolina Heritage Councils. It also helped BRNHA get the signs created, and helped build the website and print materials.

“We began this project to help tie the region together focusing on natural and cultural heritage. We also wanted to develop a brand in our 25-county region to tie these off-the-beaten-path locations and stories together,” said Angie. “This has brought additional visitors to locations that couldn’t afford to advertise on their own. The signs all have QR codes that direct them to the Heritage Trail website

(blueridgeheritagetrail.com).”

In the second year of the grant, mobile friendly technology exploded. BRNHA realized the signs, kiosks, and website all had to work together, so they rethought the entire project. The 2008 recession also impacted the timing, but the results were well worth the wait.

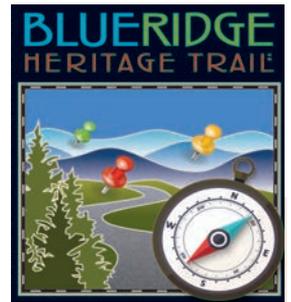
“We were praised by the Federal Highway Administration for developing such a high-quality product,” said Angie. “And the use of newer technology allows us to better track results using Google and Facebook analytics.”

Angie noted that Facebook posts focused on the Cherokee-themed sites receive some of the highest click through rates from all the sites. Feedback from all the Cherokee sites is positive, and visitor centers in the area frequently request more brochures.

Collaboration with BRNHA also includes a project with Blue Ridge music trails—the organization hosted a concert at the Unto These Hills Theater that included Cherokee storytellers and

musicians. And BRNHA has also provided a grant to the Museum of the Cherokee Indian to develop a docent training program.

“Cherokee heritage is a very important part of western North Carolina, and we value that. We thank the Foundation for supporting our efforts to keep heritage alive for future generations,” said Angie.



BLUERIDGE HERITAGE TRAIL

There are many lesser known, magical places throughout the North Carolina mountains and foothills. The Blue Ridge Heritage Trail takes you on an historic journey that embodies the culture of the region, including the stories of the people and places that shaped its heritage. Learn more at blueridgeheritagetrail.com.

“We worked closely with the EBCI and the Foundation to include the Cherokee sites.”

FUNDING POSITION BOLSTERS STEM/CTE PROGRAM AT CHEROKEE CENTRAL SCHOOLS



The Cherokee community continues to embrace innovation through collaboration which is intrinsic to Cherokee culture. Nearly a decade ago, the CPF worked with a diverse group of partners both in Cherokee and the western North Carolina region to develop a broadband internet network. CPF intended to provide the necessary tools to prepare the Cherokee workforce for modern 21st century

jobs. However, most of the teachers struggled with fully utilizing broadband and accompanying technology in their lesson plans.

Consequently, CPF funds were approved to adequately train the teachers with a focus on Cherokee Central Schools (CCS). Through the years, CPF has partnered with WRESA (Western Regional Education Service Alliance) to continue helping teachers stay abreast of technology and focus on STEM (Science, Technology,

Engineering, and Math) programs to help Cherokee youth be better prepared for college and their entry into the workforce. A recent grant from the Foundation to WRESA bolstered the STEM/CTE (Career Technical Education) program in Cherokee Central Schools by funding a coordinator position to help focus and provide alignment and continuity in the schools.

“We just needed a person to focus on and manage the big picture for CTE and STEM, to work on professional development and follow through,” said Dr. Beverly Payne, Assistant Superintendent at CCS. “Cance Carnes, former middle school principal, took on this critical position last year.”

“Cance worked with teachers to find out what they needed to roll out

“With these conversations among teachers at three different schools, we discovered where the gaps are.”



Science camp Medical Mania group doing medical training with Nurse Frances Hess.

“Our goal with all the STEM and similar programs is to prepare our CCS graduates for what’s next, whether that’s college, the military, joining the work force as an employee or becoming an entrepreneur.”

STEM, conducting needs assessments, and looking at data to determine students’ needs, especially at the elementary level,” she explained. “He really helped us promote more authentic project-based learning.”

Funding the coordinator position is leading to CCS and community collaboration for the first time in many years. This partnership helped to form the Qualla Education Collaborative (QEC), which includes a diverse group of key stakeholders working together to implement Personalized Education through blended learning and STEM-E (Entrepreneurial-based STEM) to further develop a strategic plan.

“Our goal with all the STEM and similar programs is to prepare our CCS graduates for what’s next, whether that’s college, the military, joining the workforce as an employee or becoming an entrepreneur. We want to support and promote the varied kinds of workforce our communities need,” said Emily Darling, WRESA grant coordinator.

CPF funding continues to provide professional development

opportunities for teachers, and the science based training is generating excitement and program momentum. Furthermore, CCS students are excited to participate in programs like the Science Olympiad competition. They also partook in a Robotics competition last year, and hosted STEM-E club student conferences in 2017.

CPF will continue to work with various partners to stay abreast of innovative technological improvements and support teachers in their endeavors to develop modern technology based curriculum for CSS students. By embracing the Cherokee tradition of innovation,

CPF seeks to continue working with key stakeholders to prepare CCS students for the modern 21st century workforce,

which will be essential to achieve future economic prosperity for Cherokee and the region.





ED STRATEGY PROVIDES ROADMAP FOR SMART ECONOMIC GROWTH

Forward-thinking Cherokee leaders have always demonstrated an aptitude for strategic planning. The cliché about plan-

ning stays current for a reason—it’s a true statement. That’s why the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is supported

by the Foundation. The Foundation funding for CEDS helps pay for the document development process and not for implementation of the

projects themselves.

“CEDS is the roadmap the Tribal Planning Office uses to focus its efforts,” said Doug Cole, EBCI Strategic Planner.



“We prepare it for many reasons, but the most important one is that we must have a plan that all our stakeholders agree with, so we avoid one-off situations and move forward together.”

CEDS is required by Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to receive partnership planning grants. The current CEDS is the third set of documents developed. CEDS begins with a SWOT—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—analysis.

Harrah’s Cherokee Casino is a major economic driver, but the Cherokee culture, the beautiful natural resources, broadband technology, and Tribal Sovereignty are also strengths. To help focus efforts, the CEDS committee formed subcommittees devoted to key elements of the economy. These include destination tourism, commercial and retail development, revenue diversification, and small business and entrepreneurship.

Many projects have



already been completed. Two highly visible examples are the Skate and BMX Park creation—a

popular venue for young people and the largest skate park in North Carolina—and the

expansion of the Cherokee Phoenix Theatre to add four new screens.

Harrah’s Cherokee Casino is a major economic driver, but the Cherokee culture, the beautiful natural resources, broadband technology, and Tribal Sovereignty are also strengths.

AUTHENTICALLY CHEROKEE PROVIDES BROAD EXPOSURE AND SUPPORT FOR EBCI ARTISTS



CPF endeavors to protect the integrity and authenticity of Cherokee craftsmanship which is a Cherokee life-way that sustains many enrolled artisans and entrepreneurs. Additionally, CPF seeks to increase the business capacity and entrepreneurship allowing the artists to prosper while living through this lifestyle. However, CPF cannot give resources to individuals and organizations that are seeking to make a profit. CPF recognized that supporting the Cherokee business community is vital to the Cherokee economy. This challenge was realized by the Cherokee community during a six-month economic development community convening known as Vision Qualla in 2004, which resulted in the formation of the Sequoyah Fund, a separate nonprofit.

Consequently, Sequoyah Fund and the Foundation have enjoyed a productive partnership since 2001. Over

those 16 years, hundreds of Tribal members have received loans to start or sustain businesses. Others received critical business coaching that helped them be more successful.

A recent grant by the Foundation is helping to grow a program called Authentically Cherokee. The mission of Authentically Cherokee celebrates artists of the Qualla Boundary in North Caro-

lina who work to preserve Cherokee culture in a contemporary way.

This program, also supported by ONABEN, a nonprofit organization that works to increase opportunities for sustainable economic growth in Native American communities, creates an environment that nurtures Cherokee artists and helps them thrive. Some of the components of this

program include access to lending products, and capacity building activities that help support native artists as they learn to market their art. An important aspect supported by the Foundation is the development of marketing platforms under a consistent brand.

Hope Huskey, Sequoyah Fund Associate Director, explained that in 2013 the organization held their basic business training; the predominant attendees were artists looking for business advice.

“We saw the needs that our artists had and wanted to help them. They carry our culture with them, their art reflects who we are as a people and that’s an important role,” she said. “They are trying to make a living doing what they love.”

Hope has spent many hours developing this program and is totally committed. “When we developed the brand, we wanted to be sure it was authentic,” she said. “Everything under the ‘Authentically Cherokee’ label is made by an enrolled member.”



“We saw the needs that our artists had and wanted to help them. They carry our culture with them, their art reflects who are as a people and that’s an important role,” Hope said. “They are trying to make a living doing what they love.”

SEQUOYAH FUND AND AUTHENTICALLY CHEROKEE (CONT'D)

Another creative aspect of the program is collaboration with Harrah's Cherokee Resort. Authentically Cherokee merchandise is now in the Gilded Basket, a casino retail shop. The line includes a mixture of traditional and contemporary handmade items, as well as artist-created shirts, mugs, and other items popular with travelers.

Hope explained that an important element of the program was developing the website, authenticallycherokee.com. Grant

funds from ONABEN allowed the organization to build out the basic structure, and Foundation funds helped refine it.

"Thanks to our Foundation grant, we built out the website, hired photographers, put on classes and conducted staff training. Our staff learned about lighting, basic Photoshop editing, writing bios, and product descriptions. We also worked with our artists who wrote some of the content. We are teaching

them to do it themselves, and one day they will do it all, but for now we wanted to take that off their plates so they could focus on doing art."

Last year the website added an online store so shoppers around the world can purchase these unique artworks. The collaborative now features nine artists who create pottery, traditional woven baskets, jewelry, prints, and sculpture.

One of the artists is Katie Jacobs, 18, who

is an enrolled EBCI member raised in the Painttown community. She currently attends Arizona State University. Katie creates colorful canvas prints; she says she's inspired by nature and paints flowers and landscapes. She enjoys expressing her feminine side in her artwork. As a member of the National Arts Honors Society, she's earned first-place and second-place ribbons at the Cherokee Indian Fair for two years.

"Being a part of Authentically Cherokee has given me more confidence in my art; I've realized I'm good at it! And I never thought about selling my art, so having a presence on the website and online store is helping me."

Katie Jacobs



FOUNDATION PLAYS CRITICAL ROLE IN MARKETING



The health of Cherokee cultural attractions and the local economy depend on effective marketing strategies. Creating a uniform marketing collaborative was a logical step in the formation of the Greater Cherokee Tourism Council (GCTC), the body responsible for driving visitors to Cherokee attractions.

“Foundation grants

CHEROKEE IN THE REGION

are crucial to the GCTC efforts,” said Robert Jumper, EBCI Interim Marketing Manager, and head of the GCTC. “If we didn’t have these funds, it would drastically impact the visibility of Cherokee and our partners.”

The GCTC includes Cherokee Historical Association, Museum of the Cherokee Indian, Qualla Arts & Crafts, EBCI Fish & Wildlife Management, EBCI Transit, Sequoyah National Golf Club, and EBCI Travel & Tour-

ism. The strength of this project ensues from the diversity of individual participating organizations which help to generate comprehensive annual marketing strategies. The partners assist in the creation of advertising copy, media purchases, website and social media enhancements, and online advertising.

“The overall goal of our marketing campaign is to drive overnight visitation,” explained Robert. “We are advertising dur-

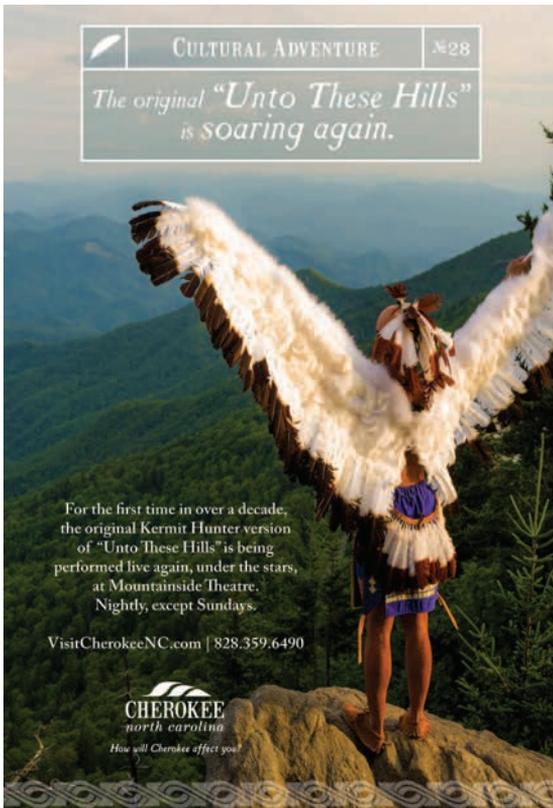
ing specific times of the year, and we are increasing the use of digital advertising, and using video to capture attention.”

CPF grant funds allow GCTC to conduct exhaustive research that provides detailed demographic analytics on Cherokee tourism. Thereby affording the GCTC with tools to evaluate and assess the visitor’s length of stay and their reasons for visiting Cherokee. They also work with Element Advertising

“These funds help our destination marketing efforts and impact our local businesses. If we didn’t have these funds, it would drastically impact the visibility of Cherokee and our partners.”



The screenshot shows the Cherokee North Carolina website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Cherokee logo and a search bar. Below the navigation bar are five main menu items: PLAY, STAY, EVENTS, BUY TODAY, and BLOG. The main content area features a large image of a total solar eclipse. Overlaid on the image is a text box that reads: "A once in a lifetime event. (Oh, and a total eclipse, too.)" Below this text box is a smaller box that says "CHEROKEE'S CULTURAL ECLIPSE CELEBRATION AUGUST 20-21". At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with several links: ECLIPSE CELEBRATION, CHIEF'S PASS PACKAGE, FIRE MOUNTAIN TRAILS, @CONALUFTEE INDIAN VILLAGE, and "UNTO THESE HILLS".



as a lead expert marketing contractor, which refines the research data, prepares the media plan, and executes the advertising purchases based on GCTC's feedback.

For example, the research study categor-

izes the prime reasons people visit Cherokee. Consequently, identifying the Cherokee visitor's originating location and visitation canons assist the GCTC in the development of target advertising tools.

Some recent significant research findings—past visitors rate their level of satisfaction with a Cherokee visit at 4.26 on a scale of 1-5. And 42 percent of those familiar with Cherokee in the region say they will probably visit Cherokee within the next year.

“The detail of the raw data and the research we conduct continuously makes this whole process really a science,” said Robert. “We know we are properly targeting the dollars the Foundation provides, and our results prove that with detailed analytics for both print and online advertising.”

Millennials and baby boomers are prime target markets, and GCTC is presently attempting to influence their travel plans to include Cherokee through sophisticated online advertising purchases and strategies.

For several years the Foundation has awarded GCTC grants to sup-

Major Greater Cherokee Tourism Council (GCTC) Supporter

The Foundation provides half of the GCTC's marketing budget **(\$750,000 in 2016)**

Those funds help conduct research, create ads, buy media, and support PR efforts

ROI for this support includes:

- **123.5%** increase in website page views from 2014 to 2015, and another **14%** increase 2015 to 2016
- New website visitors up nearly **26%** in 2016

port annual marketing campaigns; in 2016 the organization received \$750,000, half of its entire marketing budget.

CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANTS

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation awarded 37 grants in their Spring, 2016, and Fall, 2016, grant cycle, awarding over \$4.7 million dollars and continuing its mission to improve the quality of life for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) and the surrounding region.

CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

Grant Making Totals

Fall 2002 through Fall 2016 Grant Cycles



1,226 proposals were received for a total request of \$116,532,938



946 grants were awarded for a total of \$78,874,330

AREAS OF FOCUS:



Cultural Preservation — 482 grants = 51%



Economic Development/Employment Opportunities — 275 grants = 29%



Environmental Preservation — 189 grants = 20%



GRANTS

Of the 946 grants, 537 (56%) went to EBCI institutions/projects and 409 (44%) went to EBCI/regional collaborative projects.

MONIES

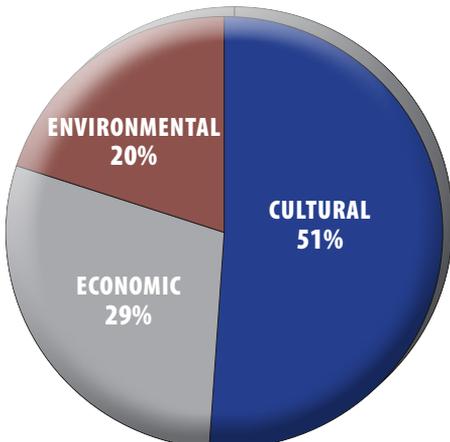


Of the total \$78,874,330, 75% went to EBCI institutions/projects and 25% went to EBCI/regional collaborative projects. All EBCI/regional projects have direct impact on tribal members or tribal programs.



Every \$1 given by CPF has been matched by \$1.46, either by secured funds/grants, in-kind or leveraged resources, making our total contribution to the area \$192,453,903.

GRANTS BY FOCUS AREA



For further information on grant details, visit www.cherokeepreservation.org



CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION
71 John Crowe Hill Road, Cherokee, NC 28719
828/497-5550

SPRING 2016 GRANT CYCLE

EBCI Kituwah Preservation and Education Program.....	\$330,370.00
Nantahala Racing Club Inc.....	\$16,418.00
EBCI Graham County Indian Education.....	\$32,714.00
Sequoyah Birthplace Museum	\$525,000.00
Cherokee Historical Association.....	\$220,500.00
Museum of The Cherokee Indian	\$349,096.00
Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.....	\$102,500.00
Western North Carolina Regional Education Fdn.	\$63,800.00
Mainspring Conservation Trust	\$262,900.00
Asheville Art Museum Association, Inc.	\$19,980.00
The North Carolina International Folk Festival, Inc.....	\$90,000.00
Snowbird Cherokee Traditions	\$46,151.00
The Sequoyah Fund.....	\$570,000.00
Western Carolina University	\$203,995.00
Hope Center-Cherokee.....	\$19,996.00
Mainspring Conservation Trust	\$15,000.00
Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team	\$9,900.00
Cherokee Cooperative Extension	\$14,548.00
The Bascom Corporation.....	\$6,360.00
TOTAL.....	\$2,948,775.00

FALL 2016 GRANT CYCLE

EBCI Division of Commerce.....	\$800,000.00
Cherokee Youth Council	\$125,675.00
EBCI Economic Development	\$70,000.00
Southwestern Commission	\$15,000.00
Southwestern Commission	\$341,620.00
Western Regional Service Alliance	\$19,998.00
Cherokee Central Schools.....	\$20,000.00
Community Foundation of Western North Carolina	\$80,450.00
Mainspring Conservation Trust.....	\$36,000.00
Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources	\$97,979.00
EBCI Natural Resources.....	\$31,500.00
Western Carolina University.....	\$16,000.00
Frostburg State University.....	\$18,936.00
Blue Ridge National Heritage Area	\$20,000.00
North Carolina Symphony, Inc.	\$56,260.00
Chattooga Conservancy	\$8,000.00
Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation & Development.....	\$7,150.00
Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River	\$11,462.00
TOTAL.....	\$1,770,030.00