

# ga-du-gi 2006

WORKING TOGETHER TO  
IMPROVE OUR COMMUNITY

**C**herokee Preservation Foundation was established with a two-pronged purpose: to improve the quality of life among the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and to strengthen our neighboring communities. With this report, we will show you what's changing as a result of this work we are doing together.

The Foundation has distributed nearly \$25 million since we began making grants in 2002. Because we want to be a good steward of this money, we are following up with the projects that have received Foundation support. These projects each have a unique purpose – whether to expand heritage tourism to improve our local economy, or to preserve our environment and culture by planting butternut trees for dyes used in basket making. We are tracking the change that is happening in and around Cherokee by talking with those who are leading these projects and finding out what is different as a result of these efforts.

As a backdrop to our analysis, we are using the theme of basket making – a time-honored tradition among the Cherokee people. Like the making of baskets, the process of creating a vibrant community takes many distinct steps over time.



### LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

*The basket begins by planting and harvesting the natural resource such as river cane or white oak.* The main work of Cherokee Preservation Foundation in its early years has been to plant many seeds by leading and supporting planning processes that set goals for what our community will be like in the future. These plans are like maps that show

where we want to go together, and how to get there. Many local people have participated in creating plans for our community and for individual projects. It is the community's commitment and involvement that lays the groundwork for what will happen in the future.



### GRANTEE PROGRESS

*A next step in making a river cane basket is to split the cane and begin the process of producing pliable splints, ready for weaving.* Cherokee Preservation Foundation provides grants to carry out a wide range of projects in the areas of economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental preservation. Like the cane preparation process, it is

often tedious work to move from planning into implementation. Many factors affect how and whether a project moves forward. Leadership is an important component in determining the success of a project. Many projects require that numerous people work together toward a single goal, which can be challenging because it requires lots of coordination and communication. For a building project, construction plans may be delayed because of bad weather or late delivery of materials. It is difficult to make all the elements of a project happen. But well-planned projects can make a real difference – just as carefully split cane is the basis for a beautiful basket.



### INSTITUTIONALIZING CHANGE

*Artisans then use their prepared materials to weave – applying the lessons learned over generations to create a beautiful and functional basket.* The organizations that receive financial support from Cherokee Preservation Foundation first carry out their specified project. Then, the new program or capital project is woven into the life of the organization and the community.

In this way, the change that has taken place becomes lasting.



### REALIZING BENEFITS

*The finished basket reflects the culture and history of the Cherokee. As with all Cherokee crafts and art, it is a thing of beauty that helps the community connect with the natural materials and traditional processes that created it.* The goal of projects funded by Cherokee Preservation Foundation is to benefit people. The work that goes into making a basket connects the

artist with age-old Cherokee customs and also produces a useful, finished product. In a similar way, the projects supported by the Foundation can eventually have a meaningful and positive impact on people living in the community. Whether it is a new language program for children, construction of a greenway, improving our cultural attractions, or planting river cane so that artisans will have materials to make baskets – all these efforts that the Foundation supports must go through many steps in order to benefit the Cherokee people and our neighboring communities.

We have begun the process of tracking outcomes in our key focus areas of Economic Development, Environmental Preservation and Cultural Preservation. This report is not comprehensive, as it does not cover all the work that has been funded by Cherokee Preservation Foundation. Instead, it describes how projects are carried out and highlights some early results. Each year, we will report to the Cherokee community and to the Foundation board on what is changing as a result of the investments we are making. It is exciting to see this progress! It is also important to understand the many challenges we face and continue our work together to preserve and improve this treasured place that the Cherokee have inhabited for so many generations.

On behalf of Cherokee Preservation Foundation,

Susan Jenkins  
Executive Director



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## FOCUS: VISION QUALLA AND HEART OF CHEROKEE

For a new kind of community economic development to happen in Cherokee, the first step was to plant the seeds. In 2004, this was done through the Vision Qualla planning process. Vision Qualla was funded by Cherokee Preservation Foundation and brought together leaders of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, local cultural organizations, hotel operators, merchants, Harrah's, community groups, banks, artists and regional organizations. Just as a good garden must begin with quality soil, the Vision Qualla participants focused first on establishing a set of Cherokee Core Values as well as principles to guide future business and tourism.

Seven specific Action Plans were announced in November 2004. Since that time, more than \$12 million has been invested in long-term economic development projects that, if carried out successfully, can dramatically improve the quality of life for residents and improve the experience for visitors to the Qualla Boundary. Listed below is the status of key funded projects.

### CULTURAL TOURISM — \$6 million invested

◆ A large-scale, multi-year marketing initiative is underway to attract visitors to the outdoor drama, Oconaluftee Indian Village, Qualla Arts and Crafts, and the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.



◆ Cherokee Historical Association is making major changes in the outdoor drama, *Unto These Hills*, so that it will be more authentic – including a revised script, costuming and props, renovation of the theatre facilities, and using Native American actors.

◆ Originally conceived as a mural project, a public art initiative will culminate later this spring with the installation up to 25 large, colorfully painted bears around Cherokee in an effort to generate excitement during the tourist season. The bears are scheduled to go into “hibernation” in the fall and then be placed around the community again each spring.

◆ Cherokee is making a name for itself at trade shows through the Receptive Tour Coordinator who began to work in November 2005. After initial funding from the Foundation, this effort to boost visits to cultural attractions and increase the number of “heads in beds” (people staying in local hotels) is proposed for continuation under the EBCI Travel and Promotions budget beginning next year.

◆ One of the key components of successful heritage tourism is to offer the visitor culturally and historically authentic experiences and activities. With this goal, special festivals (Native American Festival and Southeastern Tribes Arts Festival)

have been added to annual local offerings. As a way to track the change that is happening, a study has been commissioned to determine the economic impact of local heritage tourism, with the hope that it will help attract business to the area.

**DOWNTOWN & RETAIL REVITALIZATION — \$2.4 million invested**  
See the adjacent section “FOCUS: A Facelift for Downtown Cherokee” for an update on this project.

### ENTREPRENEURIAL & SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT — \$1.1 million invested

Cherokee Preservation Foundation sought to assist development of Cherokee-owned businesses by providing low-interest loans. A first step was to help with the establishment of Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) to serve enrolled members of the EBCI. The Sequoyah Fund, a recently certified CDFI, has provided 17 loans totaling \$497,741 for start-up or upgrades of businesses. The majority of the loans have been for construction.



Small business loans are helping entrepreneurs such as enrolled member Natalie Smith and her partner, Leon Grodski, start and expand their businesses.

### STUDENT EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT —

#### \$3 million invested

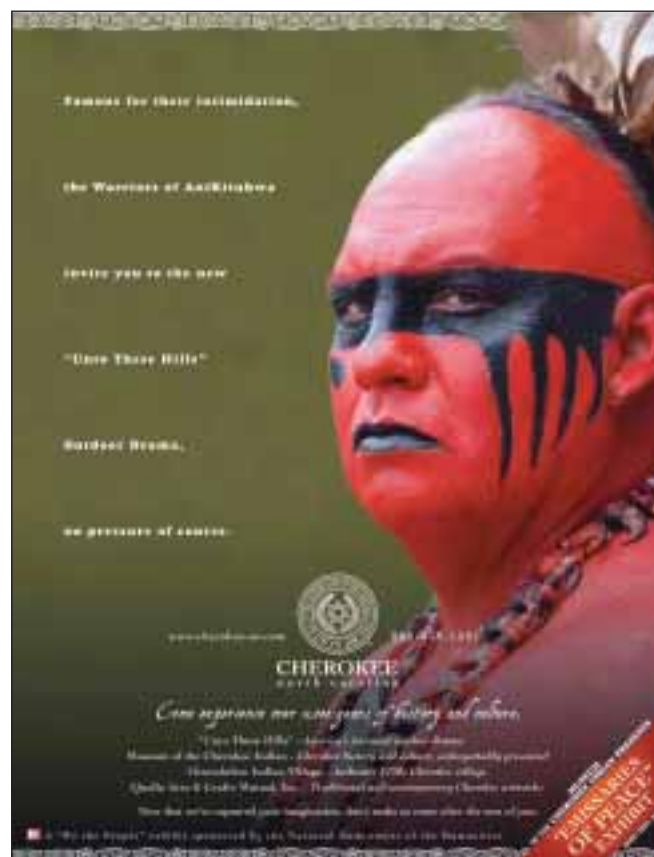
The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is continuing its support of the new Cherokee Central Schools Campus planning and design. The Foundation helped Cherokee High School be selected to participate in a new collaborative effort involving the North Carolina New Schools Project and the New Technology Foundation to create small, high-quality high schools that offer rigorous preparation for students’ futures. In addition, significant improvement in the

public schools is expected as a result of funding for development of a new curriculum for kindergarten through 12th grade students, as well as creation of WNC EdNet to provide high speed Internet access to area public schools.

### KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRY —

#### \$35,000 invested

Another potential area of economic development is the addition of broadband Internet services to the Qualla Boundary and surrounding counties, and the related business that could bring. With funding provided by Cherokee Preservation Foundation, a group of approximately 20 people representing the EBCI, area community colleges, Western Carolina University, Cherokee businesses and Cherokee Central School has been meeting since Fall 2005. This group is working to create strategies for attracting and developing knowledge industry-related businesses—such as software, and Web-based technology and services—to the area.



A multi-year advertising campaign is aimed at bringing more travelers who want authentic cultural experiences to Cherokee.

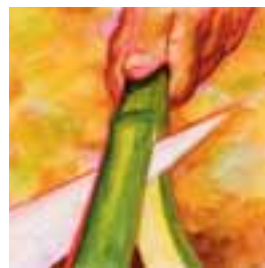


## HEART OF CHEROKEE

During 2005, the Heart of Cherokee planning process laid the groundwork for creating a Cherokee brand based on traditional values and culture. Here is an update on what has come out of those Action Plans supported by Cherokee Preservation Foundation:



- ◆ A new, colorful map has been designed for visitors to Cherokee and is slated for distribution this summer.
- ◆ A Cherokee Chamber of Commerce now has 70 members representing local businesses. They meet monthly and have a board of directors. The new Chamber organization is developing a Web site ([www.cherokeesmokies.com](http://www.cherokeesmokies.com)), is getting an 800-number for inquiries, and will publish a directory in 2007.
- ◆ An Ambassador Program is planned for the Welcome Center beginning in Summer 2006, whereby volunteers will be trained to greet visitors and give them an authentic introduction to the Cherokee community.
- ◆ The Oconaluftee River is getting a clean-up and protection, and new funding has been approved for signage along the greenway.
- ◆ Banners for the Cherokee Cultural District are ready for installation this summer, and will adorn Highway 441 and the area in the vicinity of the Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, and the ticket sales office for the drama and village.



## FOCUS: A FACELIFT FOR DOWNTOWN CHEROKEE

Since heritage tourism has been identified as a key to Cherokee's economic future, there is a major effort to renovate the downtown and retail areas so that they have a more traditional appearance and visual

appeal. For example, since tipis were never a part of Cherokee culture, they are being removed and replaced with more authentic renditions of local life. A master plan for Cherokee's downtown calls for accentuating the natural beauty of the river with a greenway and walkways for visitors. The downtown shopping area known as "the Horseshoe" for its semi-circular collection of stores and restaurants is being completely renovated – with new facades going up on storefronts and a central visitor area being added with a water feature, landscaping, seating and other amenities. Changing the look of downtown Cherokee into a more authentic village atmosphere is critically important if visitors are to have the quality of experience that is promised in the new marketing and promotion campaign.



*After J.L. Burgess renovated his Fort Tomahawk business with a new roof, a full-length porch and lighted signage, his visitor traffic and profitability have increased. Low cost loans remain available to downtown business owners for facade and roof improvements.*

### PROJECT STATUS:

Cherokee Preservation Foundation has provided funding for downtown businesses to replace their facades and roofs to bring them into line with the master plan guidelines. To date, six loans have been made from this fund for a total of \$405,000. Another \$595,000 remains available for future facade and roof improvements. The downtown revitalization project has proceeded more slowly than anticipated due to staffing

changes and less participation on the part of businesses than originally expected. Now that there is a new program director in place, however, it is hoped that additional loans will be made so that the face of downtown Cherokee will change into a more authentic look featuring traditional materials and a pedestrian-friendly environment.



## FOCUS: CHANGING CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

While gaming has brought jobs and people to Cherokee in recent years, local cultural attractions have at the same time suffered a dramatic loss of visitors and income. Local leaders point to a combination of outdated offerings, a decline in group travel including school field trips and group tours, and dying textile mill towns that had historically been the biggest source of family visitors to Cherokee.



To combat this trend, Cherokee Preservation Foundation has helped cultural attractions re-tool their organizations for the future. Listed below are some of the steps Cherokee cultural groups have taken in recent years to change the way they do business:

**CHEROKEE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION** — operates *Unto These Hills* outdoor drama and Oconaluftee Indian Village

- ◆ New Board leadership with rotating terms.
- ◆ New business plan and by-laws to guide the organization.
- ◆ Electronic ticketing (50 percent of the tickets are now sold online).
- ◆ New accounting software and cash registers to provide tighter controls and reporting.
- ◆ Added a profitable gift shop and improved the audience flow to boost concession sales.
- ◆ Downsized year-round and seasonal staff.
- ◆ Commissioned a rewrite of *Unto These Hills* by a renowned Native American playwright and producer, who is director of the American Indian Dance Theatre.

**MUSEUM OF THE CHEROKEE INDIAN**

- ◆ Expanded education programs, including the sponsorship of the Cherokee Potters Guild and the Warriors of AniKituhwah dancers, and hosting classes that provide immersion in the Cherokee language.
- ◆ Added a staff person focused on membership to build support of the museum.



- ◆ Created a business and fundraising plan to guide the future of the organization.
- ◆ Remodeled the museum store, boosting per visitor sales from \$6 to \$10, and expanded the store's Web presence to include credit card sales.
- ◆ Adding a satellite museum store in Bryson City to capture business from the booming Great Smoky Mountain Railroad's visitors.

#### QUALLA ARTS AND CRAFTS MUTUAL

- ◆ New, more active and diverse group of Board members.
- ◆ New strategic plan.
- ◆ New process for artist entry into the Mutual—with high standards and a manual for members to understand how the co-op works.
- ◆ Emphasizing recruitment of members to help replace many elderly and deceased.
- ◆ Improved communication with artists to increase quality of products.
- ◆ Expanding craft classes to grow artist base and skills.
- ◆ New point-of-sale system with bar coding to improve inventory tracking and communication with artists.
- ◆ Enhancements to retail space including new flooring and showcases.

#### NEW DIRECTIONS IN CHEROKEE CRAFTS

Participation in Craft Classes hosted by Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual

25 craft classes were hosted by Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual between 2003 and 2006, and there were 275 enrollments. The classes were able to be offered because new resources (such as river cane splits and butternut dyes) were identified, developed and harvested by conservation organizations and shared with Qualla A&C for use in the classes.

*Background image courtesy of Qualla Arts & Crafts Mutual.*

In addition to their individual efforts, the cultural organizations are working together as never before. There is the massive combined marketing campaign including a new Web site, billboards, print and television advertising that touts Cherokee as a cultural destination with multiple high quality attractions. The museum is creating new costumes for use at the village, and holding classes for village staff in Cherokee history. Qualla Arts and Crafts is helping with cultural information and props for the new drama production that will premiere in summer 2006.

There is a new sense of determination and interdependence, according to the cultural organization leaders, that may stem from the challenging times they are going through. "There must be big changes made to keep families coming to Cherokee," said Ken Blankenship, museum director. Mary Jane Ferguson of the Tribal Tourism office added: "Our belief is that a rising tide lifts all boats. If we improve the cultural attractions and have more tourists in town, then the businesses will ramp up the retail offerings and we will have what the heritage visitor is looking for."



## FOCUS: TRACKING TOURISM TRENDS

The hope, of course, is that all the work being done to strengthen and promote the cultural attractions ultimately will result in more tourists and an improved visitor experience. A positive experience may produce extended or repeat visits—the long-term goal for Cherokee as a destination.

It is too early to know the impact of Cherokee Preservation Foundation's investment in planning, promotion, and improvement of the tourism "product." But with this report we are beginning to track a few key numbers that can begin to tell us—over time—if and how cultural tourism is faring here.

#### TRENDS AT CHEROKEE CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

	Annual Visitation		
	2003	2004	2005
<b>Cherokee Historical Association</b>			
<i>Unto These Hills</i> outdoor drama	53,072	43,947	54,344
Oconaluftee Indian Village	92,461	72,665	72,799
<b>Museum of the Cherokee Indian</b>	102,874	85,146	79,223

## ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION



### FOCUS: GROWING RESOURCES FOR ARTISANS

As one of its early goals, Cherokee Preservation Foundation sought to support and expand the Cherokee craft industry. Just a short time ago, only a handful of people knew how to make a double weave basket and there was a fear that the special skill and tradition would be lost. The Foundation provided funding for traditional craft classes and there was a strong response. But the new interest in craft making raised another critical issue – the materials used to make traditional Cherokee art were in very short supply. River cane and white oak needed for basket making were scarce and the bloodroot and butternut used for the beautiful orange and brown dyes were not readily available due to land use changes and development pressures.

In an effort to address the double threat to Cherokee culture and natural resources, the Foundation started the Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources (RTCAR) initiative. RTCAR is unique because it crosses boundaries of agriculture and art, and seeks to rebuild the Cherokees' balance between culture and environment.

RTCAR was established as a grants program to identify partners who would help re-establish the natural resources needed for traditional crafts. Western Carolina University has been a key partner through its Cherokee Studies program. Since the first RTCAR grants were made in Spring 2005, more than \$670,000 have been invested in projects being carried out by 16 organizations. A group of regional cultural and environmental experts serves as advisors to the RTCAR project: Roseanna Belt (Western Carolina University, Cherokee Center); Tom Hatley (Western Carolina University, Sequoyah Professor); Rob Hawk (North Carolina Cooperative Extension); T.J. Holland (EBCI Kituwah Preservation and

*Continued on page 5*



Continued from page 4

Education Program); David Lambert (Bureau of Indian Affairs Forestry); Sarah McClellan-Welsh (Cherokee Reservation Cooperative Extension); Carmen McIntyre (EBCI Environmental Preservation Director); Paula Nelson (Cherokee Cooperative Extension/Community Club Liaison); and Russ Townsend (EBCI Tribal Historic Preservation Officer).

This group has developed a strategic plan for RTCAR to pursue these three goals:

- ◆ Ample natural resources are available for Cherokee artisans.
- ◆ Traditional knowledge is preserved and used.
- ◆ RTCAR is sustained and supported as a long-term program.

The three projects that follow are building blocks for reaching these goals – and are made possible due to RTCAR being put into place and providing funding support in collaboration with Cherokee Preservation Foundation.



## FOCUS: A TEACHING GARDEN

The garden at Oconaluftee Village was originally designed to include indigenous plantings native to the area and significant to the Cherokee people. But the garden plan was never completed and today the area is planted with exotic species imported from elsewhere.

**PROJECT STATUS:** Master plan construction documents are being developed that will provide for removal of exotic species and installation of a new Cherokee Botanical Garden featuring native plants of cultural significance to the Cherokee people. The project at Oconaluftee Village will include a children’s area, a birding area, and an art resources area. The garden will be used as an educational tool for the Cherokee school system and local community. It also can be marketed by the Cherokee Historical Association as a new attraction for visitors.



Butch Goings, Becky Watty, Vicki Ledford and Lucille Lossiah harvested river cane during a recent Qualla Arts & Crafts expedition. (Courtesy of the Land Trust for the Little Tennessee).



## FOCUS: REVIVING RIVER CANE

Dense canebrakes once thrived along most western North Carolina rivers and stream banks, a seemingly endless source for Cherokee basket makers. But artisans have had an increasingly tough time finding

raw materials. So they are welcoming the work being done at Western Carolina University to create a River Cane Research Station with the goal of increasing cane production and quality.

**PROJECT STATUS:** To date, the project has successfully assembled 20 scientists and Cherokee artisans who are working together. The first step has been to inventory existing river cane stands in western North Carolina. More than 50 canebrakes ranging from two to 30 acres each have been mapped and their location, land ownership, and size are being recorded in a database. The result of the analysis will be the identification of the optimal physical conditions for growing cane – so that more high quality cane can be produced for use by artisans in the future.



## FOCUS: BRINGING BUTTERNUT TO BASKET MAKERS

The deep brownish-black hue of butternut dye gives Cherokee baskets a special quality. But Davy Arch and other artisans have not been able to use much of this favored resource due to its decline in availability as butternut trees have suffered from blight, pests and changing land uses.

**PROJECT STATUS:** During the past year, a University of Tennessee at Knoxville team has planted more than 500 butternut seedlings on or near the Qualla Boundary, more than 90 percent of which have survived and thrived. The year-old trees now range in size from one-and-one-half to six feet tall. The new link between UT-Knoxville and RTCAR has been fruitful for Cherokee artisans, resulting in 340 pounds of butternut roots being delivered to Qualla Arts and Crafts for use in basket making classes. (To give a perspective, it takes 50 pounds of roots to dye 600 splints for baskets.) Another delivery brought by the UT-Knoxville preservation team was a pickup truck full of dehusked butternuts, which also produced a large quantity useful dye. The goal of the Butternut Restoration Project is to apply what is learned to increase the strength of the butternut and other tree species such as white oak, which is also a valued and increasingly rare artisan resource.

## CULTURAL PRESERVATION



## FOCUS: CHEROKEE LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

The Cherokee language is in danger of dying out in the near future due to the loss of elders who speak it and the few in younger generations who are fluent speakers. In an effort to reverse this trend, Cherokee Preservation Foundation is investing in language preservation programs that teach toddlers to adults how to read the syllabary and speak their native tongue.

**PROJECT STATUS:** As a first step to plan long-term language revitalization work, Cherokee Preservation Foundation helped fund a community survey to assess the community’s knowledge and use of the Cherokee language. The Cherokee Language Comprehensive Study was conducted by the Kituwah Preservation and Education Program (KPEP) on behalf of the EBCI. The study released in February 2006 provides solid information that will guide future efforts. Language experts have commented that results of this survey—and the status of language



Continued from page 5

knowledge—mirrors that of the Cherokee Nation when they began their language revitalization initiative about three years ago.

Here are some highlights of the new study:

- ◆ The randomly selected sample (with 367 respondents) was representative of the 6,188 enrolled members residing on the Qualla Boundary, including members in Snowbird and Cherokee County.
- ◆ There are eight stages of language loss (according to researcher Joshua Fishman) and the new study concludes that the Cherokee language is between Stage Seven “only adults beyond child bearing age speak the language” and Stage Six “some intergenerational use of the language.” On this scale, Stage Eight is the closest to extinction and Stage One is the closest to dynamic survival.
- ◆ 6.9% of the survey participants are “highly fluent or able to speak Cherokee well.”
- ◆ It is estimated that 460 speakers reside in Cherokee communities.
- ◆ 72% of fluent speakers are over the age of 50.
- ◆ The majority of survey respondents (70%) said that maintaining and revitalizing the language is very important because it is such a central aspect of tribal identity and cultural heritage.
- ◆ 85% said they would be interested in participating in a language



*Ann Arneach teaches her little students the Cherokee language during language immersion classes.*

revitalization program; 68% indicated they would participate as a student.

- ◆ In order of importance, the home, the schools and community classes were identified as the three most important places for Cherokee language to be taught.
- ◆ Infants, preschool children, and elementary school children were identified as the most important groups who should learn the language—due to the role of early language acquisition in learning and retention.
- ◆ The study concluded: “As the evidence shows, our language is in a perilous state and requires affirmative action now.”



The Kituwah Preservation and Education Program is now working with Western Carolina University to develop a 10-year strategic plan to revitalize Cherokee language based on the survey results. New funding has been provided by Cherokee Preservation Foundation for a Kituwah Immersion Academy that will help provide intensive instruction for pre-kindergarten through fifth grade students. At the same time, Western Carolina University received Foundation funding to work on development of degree programs for language speakers, certification for language teachers, a fellowship for Cherokee speakers, and to coordinate language efforts between KPEP and WCU.

In these ways—with the survey that provides a benchmark and with new teaching initiatives in the Cherokee community and at WCU—the groundwork is being laid to bring the Tribe’s native language with its unique identity and rich heritage back into the daily lives of local people.

**For more information about Cherokee Preservation Foundation, visit us on the Web at [www.cpdfn.org](http://www.cpdfn.org), or call (828) 497-5550. The Foundation is located at 71 John Crowe Hill Road, P.O. Box 504, Cherokee, NC 28719.**

## BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR IN THE SEVEN-COUNTY REGION

Part of Cherokee Preservation Foundation’s mission is to strengthen the western North Carolina region. Over a third of the Foundation’s grants have been awarded to regional collaborations that have a direct impact on tribal members and benefit others in the region as well.

For example, Cherokee Preservation Foundation brought together Southwestern Community College, Haywood Community College and Tri-County Community College and helped them form the Western Carolina Partnership to increase access to education and develop the regional economy. The Western Carolina Partnership’s first program is Qualla-T, a customer service program for the Qualla Boundary’s hospitality industry that is based on Cherokee cultural values. Now the Western Carolina Partnership is adjusting the Qualla-T customer service curriculum to fit the needs of the broader regional hospitality industry and making it available to hospitality employees in the seven-county region.

Similarly, the Qualla Financial Freedom financial literacy program funded by Cherokee Preservation Foundation to teach important skills to EBCI members of all ages will soon be available to all residents in several counties through participating North Carolina Cooperative Extension offices. Cherokee Preservation Foundation brought Western Carolina University’s Cherokee Center, the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and Consumer



*Dime-a-saurus helps children develop financial management skills during a Qualla Financial Freedom program.*

Credit Counseling Service of Western North Carolina together to create the program.

A \$1 million grant to WNC EdNet will benefit children attending tribal schools and public schools in Jackson, Swain, Macon, Clay, Graham and Cherokee counties. WNC Ed Net will deliver broadband access to the Internet that will connect regional education entities with each other and with the outside world.

Cherokee Preservation Foundation supports several regional economic development initiatives. Its financial support of a new Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Exhibition at the Grove Arcade

in Asheville that is designed to draw more visitors to the western part of the state is one example. Another initiative is benefiting entrepreneurs on the Qualla Boundary and six regional counties—a collaborative network of business development service providers ([www.wncbap.org](http://www.wncbap.org)) established by Mountain Microenterprise Fund with the Foundation’s financial support is enabling people who are starting or growing businesses to know about available services and capital.

Cherokee Preservation Foundation encourages prospective partners throughout the region to collaborate with EBCI groups so we can work together to accomplish common goals.