

CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

GA-DU-GI
2024



HONORING OUR CORE VALUES





SEVEN CLANS MASKS ARTIST: BILL WELCH



In Honor of Ray Kinsland: To create a generation of selfless leaders deeply rooted in Cherokee culture



In November of 2019, the Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute (RKLI) celebrated the opening of their organization in the Noah Powell Education Center on the Cherokee Boys Club campus. Renovated with Cherokee core values in mind and heart, the Center is the permanent home of Cherokee leadership development activities, where participants come together to learn about Cherokee history and culture, and to culturally-based leadership programs: the Cherokee Youth Council, Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program, and Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program.

During these programs, presenters delve into tribal values. "We emphasize our seven core values and ensure they are integrated into every meeting," says Tonya Carroll, Department Manager of the Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute. "Topics include traditional

"As leaders, your role is to support others, sharing your time and knowledge without expecting anything in return,"



Program highlights include field trips to sacred and historical sites with community experts, lessons on traditional gender roles, and insights into the seven clans.

governance, tribal sovereignty, Cherokee language, food sovereignty, environmental sustainability, repatriation, and global indigenous issues."

The programs feature presenters based on their deep tribal knowledge and community roles. Presenters illustrate

In honor of Ray Kinsland (cont'd)

how Cherokee core values manifest in daily life. Program highlights include field trips to sacred and historical sites with community experts, lessons on traditional gender roles, and insights into the seven clans. Each presenter embodies the spirit of Ga-du-gi. "As leaders, your role is to support others, sharing your time and knowledge without expecting anything in return," notes Tonya.

The program aims for graduates to spread the spirit of Ga-du-gi throughout their communities. "Participants come together, learn about our history and culture, and forge connections that last a lifetime," says Tonya. "They build lasting relationships and a leadership network that helps them make a positive impact in the community."



This game is FISH, a derivative of stickball that girls can play.



“A recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, he was made an Honorary Member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in 1968. Ray was given the name of ‘Di-sde-li-sgi-ni-wi-ni’ which means ‘Helper of Young Men’.”

Ray Kinsland: Helper of Young Men

In 1958, Ray Kinsland graduated from North Carolina State University and returned to Cherokee to serve as a vocational teacher for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Cherokee Schools. It was the first step on a lifetime journey spent working within the community.

His life was filled with acts of service that benefitted generations of youth. He was pivotal in the founding of the Cherokee Boys Club, Inc., and served as the General Manager for 53 years before retiring in 2011. Ray’s accomplishments included helping the club to become a non-profit, self-supporting tribal enterprise.

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Outside of his role at the Cherokee Boys Club, Inc., Ray also volunteered with the athletic and school programs of Cherokee Central School. Ray Kinsland passed away on June 13, 2019. The Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute bears his name as a way to honor his legacy within the community he served and loved.

2024 RKLI Right Path Graduation & 2025 Duyugodv'i Adult Leadership Introduced

The Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute held a completion ceremony on Aug. 22 at the Yellowhill Activity Center for two advanced adult leadership programs: Dinedi Eginelv (To Give What Was Given to Us) and Anigiduwagi Iyunadvnedi (Kituwah Ways). Both programs are part of the Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program, with Dinedi Eginelv being the most advanced.

Dinedi Eginelv is a year-long mentorship program. Participants choose a Cherokee cultural topic and work with community experts for 16 hours a month. Starting in October 2023, participants

"The goal is for participants to come together, learn about our history and culture, and then have this connection for the rest of their lives."



ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: TARA MCCOY



included Melissa Smith and Mike Thompson (mentors: Marie Junaluska, Tohisgi Climbingbear, and Chi Shipman), who focused on Cherokee language; Windall Toineeta, who studied carving (mentors: Butch Goings, Nancy Pheasant, Waylon Long, Bill Welch, and Charlie Welch); and Dr. Blythe Winchester, who focused on pottery (mentors: Matthew West, Louise Derouille, Dean Reed, Dorine George, Dr. Barbara Duncan, Mary Thompson, Jane Osti, Lisa Rutherford, Tama Roberts, and Carrie Lind). Anita Finger-Smith and Robin Swayney also assisted participants with genealogy research.

The Kituwah Ways program, the second level of Right Path, is also a year-long commitment. Participants meet monthly to deepen their cultural knowledge and leadership skills, culminating in a community project. This year's graduates are

Toshina Lossiah, Jennifer Martens, Chi Shipman, Robert Martens, Jerico French, Keyonna Hornbuckle, and Amy Postoak.

Additionally, the 2025 Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program Cohort was introduced. Members include Malia Skulski, Madison Leatherwood, Tyra Maney, Sheena West, Lynn Catt, Nicole Efrid, Samantha Bradley, Faith Long-Presley, Kevin Tafoya, and Ashford Smith. This nomination-based program meets twice a month to explore Cherokee culture and leadership through community expert teachings.

The Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute is part of the Cherokee Boys Club and is funded by the Cherokee Preservation Foundation.

To learn more about RKL I Leadership Institute initiatives, visit rkli.org.

CULTURAL PRESERVATION



Cherokee Language is in my DNA: KPEP Continues to Preserve and Revitalize

The Kituwah Preservation and Education Program (KPEP), founded in 2004, is a language preservation initiative that works to preserve and revitalize the Cherokee language through their broad range of programming. Now entering their twentieth year, KPEP has increased fluency on all levels.

We are a hub—we create books for classrooms and libraries; we provide translation services and train teachers who teach the language through other educational partners; we provide community classes, and develop language resources for mothers and their babies. For 15 years, we’ve had an active Cherokee speakers consortium,” says Renissa McLaughlin, Director of Youth and Adult Education at KPEP.

KPEP continues to develop and expand language materials, translate texts, digitize resources, and provide innovative learning opportunities that engage the community. As the largest conservator and developer of Cherokee language materials, KPEP works to make language revitalization a way of life and a vibrant experience.

Renissa McLaughlin adds, “We started out with a single classroom. Now we are training the community from early childhood through adulthood and we appreciate Cherokee Preservation Foundation being that bridge that helps our language to grow and makes our community stronger.”

The KPEP organization is EBCI’s leading language partner. The Cherokee Preservation Foundation provides ongoing support to KPEP through investment in CLMAP, the Cherokee Language Master Apprentice Program and have recently focused on support for contract translators, transcribers, archivists and teachers to diversify its teachings and resources.

To get involved in language preservation and revitalization efforts, visit ebcikpep.com.

*We started out with a single classroom.
Now we are training the community from
early childhood through adulthood and
we appreciate CPF being that bridge.*



Honoring Our Ancestors by Bringing New Life to Traditional Stories

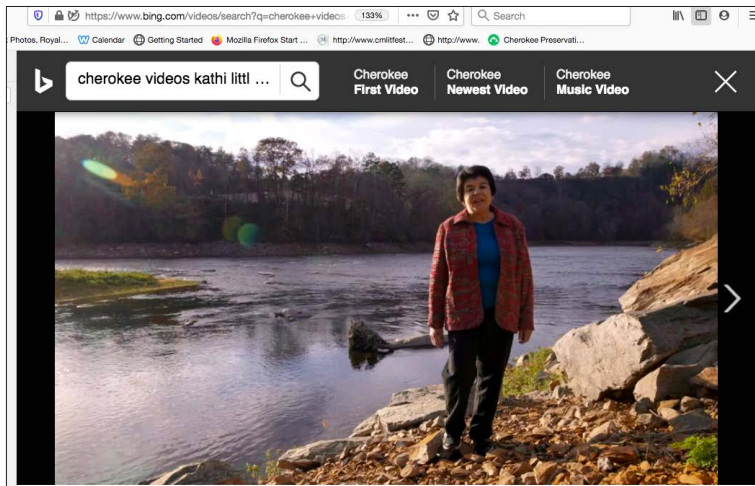


Jeannie Littlejohn and niece Katy Panther at Cherokee village site Hiwassee town, Hayesville, NC

Storyteller Kathi Littlejohn made it her mission to bring history to life through a collection of YouTube videos titled “Cherokee History and Stories: What Happened Here?” The ten online videos were created as a way to share stories in a user-friendly way for people with interest, but little time to attend classes. The backdrop of each history lesson is local geography, mostly unmarked places, but with breathtaking historical

significance. Each story is well-researched and provides insight on times leading up to the involuntary removal of Cherokee people from their original homelands.

The idea came to Littlejohn after she missed a local history program that was open to the public. “I realized if I can’t attend a class, how can those who work full-time with kids attend?” said Kathi. “I asked why can’t the class come to them? What if people



PHOTOGRAPH: KATHI LITTLEJOHN

Kathi Littlejohn's YouTube channel, Cherokee History, segment about Leech Place, where thousands of Cherokee were ferried across to start the forced removal known as the Trail of Tears.



can watch on their phones, and get a five-minute history lesson with a story?"

Thanks to a grant from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Kathi began work on videos that focused on places throughout western North Carolina that have lost their historical context to the passage of time—to honor Cherokee ancestry, history and culture by sharing it with a generation that has become increasingly digital.

Kathi used the *Cherokee Heritage Trails Guidebook* by Barbara R. Duncan and Brett H. Riggs to create an itinerary for the videos and identify key areas of interest. However, once she began scouting filming locations, the project took on a life of its own. People began to share their stories and knowledge of specific areas, which allowed Kathi to collect and share new details in the videos.

Kathi's hope is that the videos inspire families to explore the

community and learn more about tribal history. "Stories teach us so much. They allow us a glimpse of how ancestors used stories as teaching and social tools," said Kathi.

Kathi hopes sharing these stories brings new life to the oral traditions. "My biggest hope is that people will take their families to the locations in the videos," says Kathi. "I hope they tell the stories associated with the places as a means to keep both the locations and Cherokee stories alive."

"Cherokee History and Stories—What Happened Here," focuses on ten sites from Cullowhee to Murphy, "There are so many sites that I was astonished. I realized that I had gone to softball games that were 100 yards away from a historical mound." The first ten sites of this series are in the Cherokee Valley and surrounding regional geography.

All stories are available on YouTube.

“The Greater Cherokee Tourism Council presents a coordinated marketing message to the public, and cultural organizations have a greater impact and a broader reach when working together.”

Strategic Collaboration Enhances Cherokee Tourism: Marketing Grant Amplifies Impact



The Cherokee Cooperative Marketing Grant enhances efforts for the Greater Cherokee Tourism Council (GCTC) to increase overnight visitation in Cherokee by diversifying attractions and amenities.

CPF Program Director, Tinker Jenks explains, “The Greater Cherokee Tourism Council presents a coordinated marketing message to the public, and cultural organizations have a greater impact and a broader reach when working together.”

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPF) has collaborated with the cultural partners, Tribal departments, and community members to determine and identify essential projects for economic development, leading to the creation of a Master Plan that includes finished and unfinished but community-approved initiatives.

“It’s all in the collaboration,” says Pam Sneed, Interim Director of Enterprise Development. “Our department hosts conversations with cultural partners about what we all want to accomplish as a destination rather than a pass-through town.”

Destination Marketing, a division of the EBCI Department of Commerce plays a key role in facilitating





HOW CAN
HISTORY,
NOW
CENTURIES
OLD,



FEEL
SO
NEW,
SO ALIVE--



AS IF IT
WERE
HAPPENING
TODAY?



EXPLORE
THE MUSEUM
OF THE
CHEROKEE
INDIAN.



partners, and coordinating ad creation, media buys, and digital marketing initiatives with the marketing agency of record. Partners meet and discuss projects and their marketing is interwoven through digital media, social media, email marketing, billboards and more.

Tourism partners include the Cherokee Historical Association, Museum of the Cherokee People, Qualla Arts & Crafts, EBCI Fish & Wildlife Management, EBCI Transit, Sequoyah National Golf Club and EBCI Destination Marketing.

"We recently invested in a website overhaul," says Sneed. "VisitCherokeeNC.com sells our tickets and now we have a very robust facebook following. We have also tackled billboards this year. New billboards are in place and they are doing their jobs," says Sneed.

Find more information online at VisitCherokee.com.

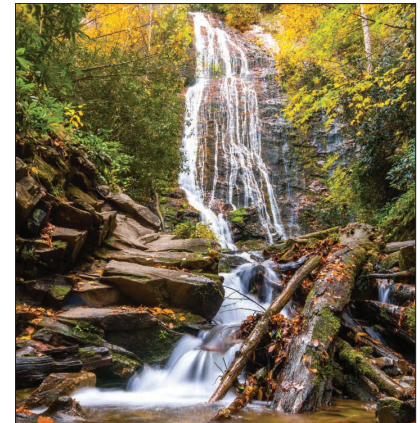


**WHERE
EAGLES
DANCE.**



The Eagle Dance was often demonstrated during peace negotiations even as it helped Cherokee prepare for battle. And seeing it live feels like flying. It's just one small part of the Cherokee story, "Unto These Hills," performed under the stars nightly, except Sundays. Open now through August 17.

VisitCherokeeNC.com | 800.438.1601



**AS THE WATER
FALLS,
YOUR SPIRITS
LIFT.**



The Cherokees believe their waterfalls, such as Mingo and Soco, possess a spiritual power. Tap into it, along with all of Cherokee's fall leaf adventures, during your overnight stay.

VisitCherokeeNC.com | 800.438.1601

Transit Stops Benefit Cherokee Residents and Visitors

With millions of visitors passing through Cherokee each year, improving the EBCI public transit system became a top priority. In 2010, the Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPF) awarded a grant of \$51,000 to add more transit stops within the Qualla Boundary.

Before the grant, the public transit system had only 14 stops downtown and within the business district. Thanks to the grant, EBCI Public Transit was able to add 10 additional stops in high-traffic areas along Highway 19 in Cherokee.

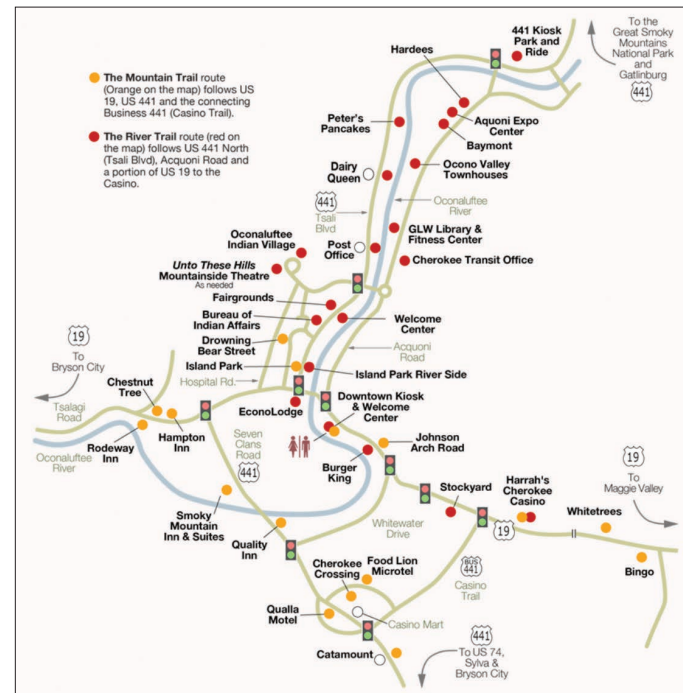
"Prior to the addition of these new transit stops, the stops around Cherokee were few and far between," says Bear Allison, Program Associate at the Cherokee Preservation Foundation. "The first transit stops were just benches placed in scattered locations. You had to know where they were; otherwise, it looked like a bench with no purpose. The new stops were designed to update the transit system and instill more pride in the local community."

To serve the community and visitors efficiently, the new transit stops were strategically added in the business district along Highway 19, based on studies and customer surveys. In keeping with the area's natural aesthetics, they were constructed using local stone and timber.

Funding these new transit stops reflects CPF's commitment to being good stewards of the land and connecting the land with tribal identity. "The stops embody the Cherokee vision of harmony with nature and appreciation for the environment's daily gifts," says Bear Allison. "By making the transit system more eco-friendly, we help the tribe reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality."



PHOTOGRAPHY: JENEA TAYLOR



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.

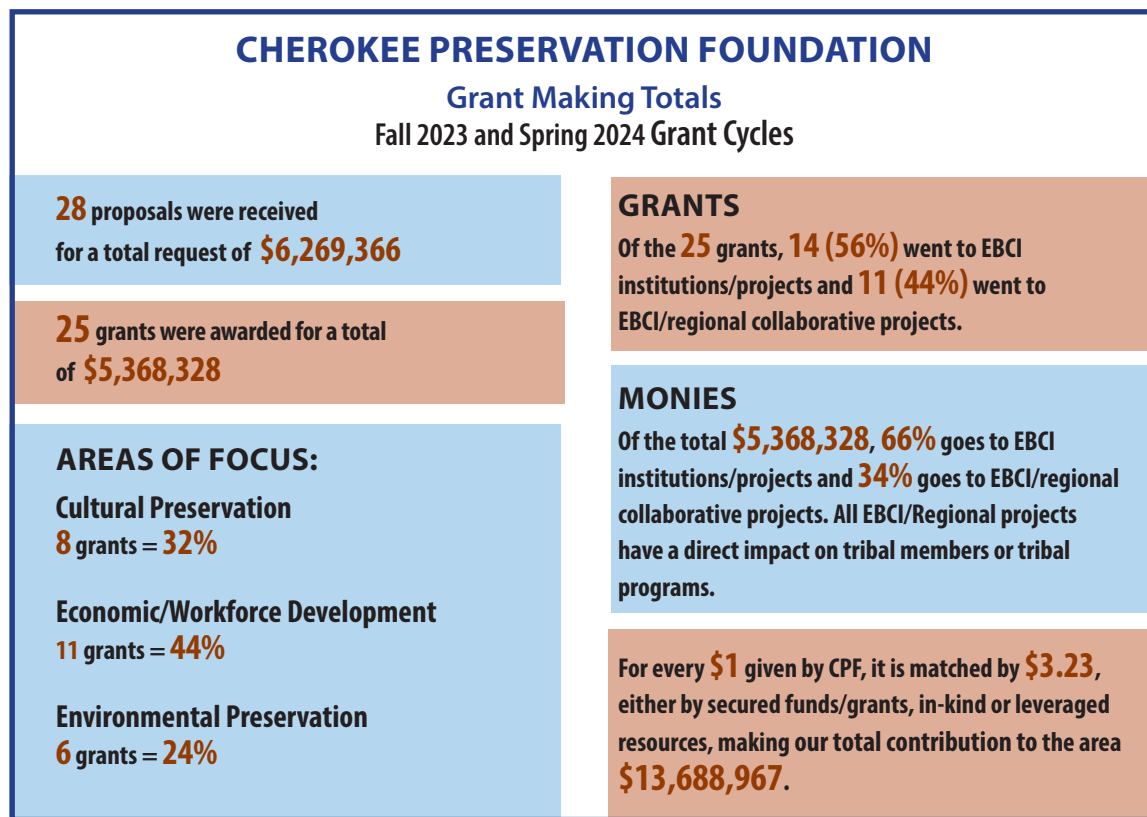
Each story in this annual report reflects one or more of these Cherokee values.



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

CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION AWARDS GRANTS

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation awarded 25 grants in their Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 grant cycle, awarding over \$5 million dollars and continuing its mission to improve the quality of life for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) and the surrounding region.



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



CHEROKEE PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

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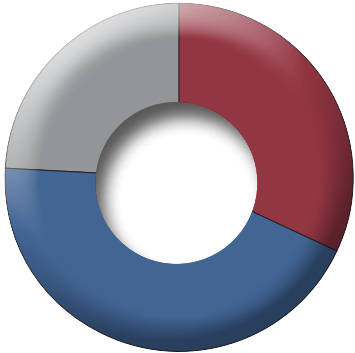
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FALL 2023 GRANT CYCLE

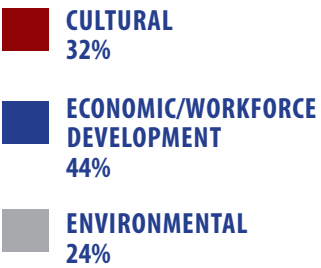
Cherokee Youth Council	\$270,050
Right Path Leadership Program	\$289,520
Conserving Carolina	\$49,500
EBCI Division of Commerce.....	\$947,560
Western Carolina University Cherokee Studies Program	\$249,948
Swain County Public Schools	\$9,000
Mainspring Conservation Trust	\$18,830
WNC Nonprofit Pathways	\$114,500
Uwena	\$9,900
Chattooga Conservancy	\$6,500
NC State University	\$19,786
American Indian Science and Engineering Society	\$86,463
Western Region Educational Service Alliance (WRESA)	\$152,537
TOTAL	\$2,216,094

SPRING 2024 GRANT CYCLE

Jones Bowman Leadership Program	\$153,000
Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute	\$384,500
The Museum of The Cherokee People	\$385,000
EBCI Kitawah Preservation and Education Program.....	\$374,050
Cherokee Central Schools.....	\$242,835
The Sequoyah Fund, Inc.	\$743,411
EBCI Division of Commerce.....	\$20,000
Cherokee Historical Association	\$702,000
Snowbird Cherokee Traditions	\$86,268
Mainspring Conservation Trust	\$17,860
EBCI Division of Commerce.....	\$38,000
YMCA of Western North Carolina	\$5,310
TOTAL	\$3,152,234



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