

**WNCbridge.org**  
294 Overlook Road  
Asheville, NC 28803  
828.277.4815

## Our Home

I am excited to share WNC Bridge Foundation moved into our permanent office at 294 Overlook Road, Asheville, on October 1st. In addition to offices for staff, our new home will provide accessible community space for the non-profits of Western North Carolina. Our thrift stores and estate sales & services remain at their current locations.



### HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR NEW BUILDING

- **Large conference space, available to non-profits beginning in the spring of 2022**
- **Several areas for groups of various sizes to meet**
- **Outdoor event space featuring a stone fireplace**

### OUR GROWTH

Along with moving into our new building, WNC Bridge Foundation continues our work of supporting growth across the region. In this issue, I am pleased to announce the recipients of our 2021 IMPACT Grants. These organizations are

truly committed to helping our neighbors, and WNC Bridge is honored to play a role in supporting their inspiring work.

You will also learn how our AIM Grant initiative is forming a great collaboration in McDowell County and how WNC Bridge Foundation is serving non-profits in unexpected ways.

It remains an honor for WNC Bridge Foundation to have your trust and support as we continue our work to improve the health and wellness of Western North Carolina residents.

Sincerely,



**SCOTT W. BUCHANAN**  
President & CEO, WNC Bridge Foundation



# 2021 IMPACT GRANT RECIPIENTS

## Congratulations!

WNC Bridge Foundation is pleased to announce the 90 non-profits that are this year's IMPACT Grant recipients. This year's recipients will receive a total of \$3.9M in funding from WNC Bridge to support their work which aligns with the Foundation's three focus areas of Elder Care, Wellness Support, and Youth Development. For more information, visit [WNCbridge.org](http://WNCbridge.org).

## Elder Care

With a growing number of older adults in WNC, we support local non-profits that address this population's health, social and physical needs through providing services for medical purposes and social interaction. We prioritize funding non-profit partners that address the social determinants of health for older adults to increase their quality of life, well-being, and sense of community.

### PORTFOLIO GOALS

- Increasing access to essential needs such as food, shelter and utilities.
- Minimizing barriers to accessing quality healthcare services.
- Providing opportunities for older adults to be socially active in their communities.

## PISGAH LEGAL SERVICES

IMPACT Grant funding will support Pisgah Legal's Elder Law Program, which provides free legal assistance to low-income seniors. The Elder Law Program stabilizes and preserves affordable housing options for elderly clients so they can age in place by reducing threats of eviction,

## ELDER CARE GRANT RECIPIENTS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Asheville Art Museum</p> <p>Blue Ridge Literacy Council</p> <p>Brevard Music Center</p> <p>Council on Aging of Henderson County</p> <p>Haywood County Meals on Wheels</p> <p>Hinton Rural Life Center</p> <p>Meals on Wheels of Asheville &amp; Buncombe County</p> <p>Meals On Wheels Of Brevard</p> <p>MemoryCare</p> | <p>Mountain Housing Opportunities</p> <p>Mountain Projects</p> <p>Pisgah Legal Services</p> <p>The Council On Aging Of Buncombe County</p> <p>The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (MAHEC)</p> <p>United Community Development of North Carolina</p> <p>YMCA Of Western North Carolina</p> |
|--|---|



foreclosure, and other displacement issues. The program also works to improve existing housing conditions by enforcing rental housing codes and other rights.

## Wellness Support

WNC Bridge invests in programs that respond to the urgent needs of its communities and connects individuals to the care they need to improve overall health outcomes, well-being, and quality of life. Through collaboration with local non-profit partners, we provide funding for emergency assistance which allows people to thrive in their daily lives.

### WELLNESS SUPPORT GRANT RECIPIENTS

ABCCM Medical Ministry  
 All Souls Counseling Center  
 Arc Of Buncombe County  
 Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement  
 Babies Need Bottoms  
 Black Mountain Counseling Center  
 Blue Ridge Mountains Health Project—Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic  
 Bountiful Cities  
 Bounty & Soul  
 Campaign for Southern Equality  
 Casting For Hope  
 Dig In! Yancy Community Garden  
 Eblen Charities  
 Good Samaritan Clinic

Grace Place, A Community Table  
 Haywood Pathways Center  
 Haywood Street Congregation  
 Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina  
 Interfaith Assistance Ministry  
 MANNA Food Bank  
 McDowell LFAC  
 Ministry Seven—Hendersonville Rescue Mission  
 Mount Zion Community Development  
 Neighbors In Need  
 Restoration House WNC  
 Sixth Avenue Psychiatric Rehabilitation Partners—Thrive  
 Southwestern Community College

### PORTFOLIO GOALS

- Provide emergency assistance for safe housing, food, utilities, reliable transportation, medical care and equipment and clothing to improve resilience for individuals and families facing unexpected hardships.
- Invest in programs that advance an individual's opportunity to live fully.

Special Olympics North Carolina  
 Swain County Family Resource Center  
 Swannanoa Valley Christian Ministry  
 The Community Kitchen  
 The Giving Spoon  
 The Housing Assistance Corporation  
 TRACTOR Food and Farms  
 Trauma Intervention Programs  
 Vecinos Farmworker Health Program  
 Working Wheels  
 Washburn Community Outreach Center  
 Western Carolina Medical Society Foundation  
 YMI Cultural Center  
 Yokefellow Service Center  
 YWCA of Asheville and WNC



## THE GIVING SPOON

The Giving Spoon in Swain County currently provides an average of 700 meals per week to those in need. An IMPACT Grant will support the capacity of this organization.

# Youth Development

By being a catalyst for change in WNC, we support children and youth initiatives that have a long-term impact on the health of our communities. We fund non-profit organizations working to remove barriers that prevent youth from reaching their full potential. By centering our portfolio on improving outcomes for youth, we will be making a difference today and investing in a better tomorrow for all of WNC.

## PORTFOLIO GOALS

- Improve literacy for youth ages Pre-K through 8th grade by seeing a measurable increase in reading ability.
- Improve socio-emotional outcomes for youth through mentoring.
- Improve academic outcomes for youth by providing additional academic supports and enrichment programs.

## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

Asheville Writers in The Schools & Communities

Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina

Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth and Families

Blue Ridge Hope

Boys & Girls Club Of Henderson County

Boys and Girls Club of the Plateau

Buncombe Partnership for Children

Centro Unido Latino Americano

Children & Family Resource Center

Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County

Communities in Schools of North Carolina (Jackson County)

Davidson River School

Family Place Of Transylvania County

Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team—GREAT

Helpmate

Henderson County Education Foundation

Higher Academia Corporation

Horizons at Carolina Day

Key Learning Center

Literacy Together

McDowell County Schools

Mountain Alliance (Avery County)

Neighbors in Ministry—Rise & Shine

Norris Library Foundation

Open Doors of Asheville

Rock Hill Missionary Baptist Church

Smart Start of Transylvania County

The Christine Avery Learning Center

The Industrial Commons

The Mediation Center

UNC Asheville Foundation

Verner Center for Early Learning

YMCA Of Western North Carolina



## HORIZONS AT CAROLINA DAY SCHOOL

IMPACT Grant funding will support Horizon's 6-week summer enrichment program and year-round academic and social-emotional support program. The goal is to stop summer slide in learning and close the achievement and opportunity gaps for students from underserved communities in Buncombe County.

# Safe Housing in McDowell County

## AIM GRANT SPURS HOME REPAIR PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN GATEWAY WELLNESS FOUNDATION AND WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION

**A** UNIQUE urgent home repair collaborative between Gateway Wellness Foundation and WNC Bridge Foundation is underway in McDowell County. With over 3,000 homeowners in the county reporting cost-burdened housing problems such as a leaky roof or disability inaccessibility, both foundations recognize the importance of combining resources and knowledge to address this overwhelming need.

“Providing resources for safe housing is a strategic priority for our AIM Grant funding this year said Scott Buchanan, President & CEO at WNC Bridge Foundation.



At-risk homes with urgent needs for roofing repairs and accessibility for the disabled are being provided for the most vulnerable in McDowell County. PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEIL GURNEY

“We are honored to partner with Gateway and their efforts to improve the safety and livability for at-risk homes in McDowell County.” Neil Gurney, Executive Director, for Gateway Wellness Foundation notes, “The demand for this type of service is undeniable, and we look forward to working with volunteers and utilizing our existing relationships to make urgent home repairs for our most vulnerable residents.”

The pilot project will assist low-income households living with special circumstances including, senior citizens, disabled individuals, Veterans, single-parent and/or large households, and families with children who have elevated blood lead levels.

A grant of \$75,000 from the NC Housing Finance Agency has been matched by an AIM Grant

from WNC Bridge Foundation, along with additional funding from Gateway for a total of \$200,000 to repair or improve housing conditions that pose an imminent threat to the safety of household members. Gateway Foundation will supervise the urgent home repair work and will provide final inspections for all houses in the program.

It is expected that between 30 to 40 houses will receive home repairs as part of this collaborative effort. Both foundations hope to continue to leverage additional funds to meet the overwhelming need after the pilot year.

### LIVE IN MCDOWELL COUNTY?

To learn more or to apply for home repair assistance, visit [GATEWAYWELLNESSFOUNDATION.ORG](http://GATEWAYWELLNESSFOUNDATION.ORG).

# Supporting the Journey

## READ TO SUCCEED PROVIDES FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS FOR MANY



*“Thank you again for the wonderful training you provided for the YW staff and teachers. Please know that your time was truly valued and we are so grateful to learn of ways we can support children in their phonemic awareness in an effort to build literacy skills.”*

DR. AMIERIS LAVENDER,  
CHIEF PROGRAM OFFICER, YWCA

**L**IKE MANY organizations in 2020, Read to Succeed Asheville-Buncombe (R2S) quickly pivoted its services when the pandemic struck. The transition from in-person tutoring with K-3rd graders to virtual tutoring was challenging; learning new technology, developing online versions of training(s), and supporting tutors while working remotely required more resources and expertise than ever before.

A WNC Bridge IMPACT Grant awarded to R2S at the end of 2020 supported the ongoing transition to virtual tutoring, equipping R2S

with new software that allowed them to collect permission forms from families online, communicate with schools and families via text, utilize video communications platforms for tutoring sessions, and create high-quality training videos that volunteer tutors could view at home. In addition, the IMPACT Grant funded a valuable position for a communications, marketing, and technology specialist to spearhead many of these efforts.

The IMPACT Grant also supported the development of new workshops and continuing education lessons that were offered to R2S volunteers and tutors as well as the wider WNC community. In 2021, community partners and education groups participated in multiple online trainings developed and delivered virtually by R2S for the first time, including Buncombe County Libraries (Youth Services), Dogwood Health Trust, Community Action Opportunities, Buncombe Partnership for Children, Literacy Together, and more!

As this community-wide engagement exploded, so did the request for R2S to offer literacy training to the staff members, volunteers, and educators of community partners working with children in Asheville and Buncombe County.



Co-Executive Director Jaimee Stanley conducts a literacy training with staff at the Christine W. Avery Learning Center in August 2021.



Learn more about Read to Succeed at [R2SASHEVILLE.ORG](https://R2SASHEVILLE.ORG)

Since in-person opportunities opened up in June 2021, R2S has trained over 100 teens and adults from the YWCA, Christine Avery Learning Center, Children First (Communities in Schools), and Arthur R. Edington Center in phonological awareness, phonics, and how best to support the young readers their programs serve.

“We cannot overstate the ripple effect this work has on the wider

community. As more and more people learn the foundational skills they can use with children to support their reading journeys before, during, and after school, the more we will see the needle move when it comes to literacy achievement and closing the opportunity gap,” notes Jaimee Stanley, Co-Executive Director of Read to Succeed.



An elementary student practices word build during a Foundations lesson with R2S at the Arthur R. Edington Center. Photos courtesy of R2S.

## WNC Bridge Foundation

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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MEG WHITE

WHITNEY WIGGINS

## Help After the Storm

The remnants of Tropical Storm Fred and its devastating floodwaters affected hundreds in Buncombe, Haywood, and Transylvania counties. WNC Bridge Foundation provided \$55,000 in flood relief efforts to support frontline non-profits in meeting the immediate needs of those impacted by the floods.

Using funds from our WNC Greatest Needs program, we are honored to support the work of Mountain Projects, The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina, and United Way of Haywood County.

In partnership with Mountain Projects, a group of volunteers from Baptists on Mission visited Donna Presnell's home in Canton as they began disaster relief operations in the area. PHOTO COURTESY OF K. BROWN.



## Office Perks

### NON-PROFITS SHOP FOR FURNITURE

One of the perks of WNC Bridge Foundation moving to our new office space located at 294 Overlook Road, Asheville, was the opportunity to let non-profits shop for office furniture that would not be going to our new building.

Eight non-profits participated, taking more than 90 pieces of office furniture, including desks, conference tables, lateral filing cabinets, and office chairs. Organizations could take as much as they wanted and only had to pay a \$5 participation fee.

### PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- Amazing Grace Ministries, Hendersonville
- Centro Unido Latino-Americano, Marion
- Clothes to Kids of Haywood County, Clyde
- Community Kitchen, Canton
- Jewish Family Services of WNC, Asheville
- Meals on Wheels of Asheville and Buncombe County, Asheville
- New Hope of McDowell, Marion
- Working Wheels, Asheville



Centro Unido Latino-Americano (pictured at left) in McDowell County was able to secure four new desks for staff and a conference table.

*"The furniture selection was more than what we were expecting, we didn't have a conference table, and now we have one that is perfect for our office," shared Margarita Ramirez, Centro Unido's Executive Director. "We are very grateful for this opportunity from WNC Bridge to help make our office more comfortable."*



## Paddling Strong

### DRUMS & DRAGONS CELEBRATES 5TH ANNIVERSARY

It was a perfect day for WNC Bridge Foundation's 5th annual Drums & Dragons boat race fundraiser held at Lake Julian Park on Saturday, August 28, 2021.

On the day of the event, over 40 enthusiastic volunteers—including retirees, high school students, area non-profit staff members, and board members—all came out to support Drums & Dragons. Dressed in bright yellow shirts, our amazing volunteers registered racers, sold raffle tickets, ran WNC Bridge's pop-up thrift store, and more. Standout volunteer Pete Hutchins initially signed up as a paddler with Big Brothers Big Sisters of WNC. However, when Pete saw more volunteers were needed in the early morning hours of the event, he did not

hesitate to help. His can-do attitude earned Pete the *Best Individual Spirit* award.

The *Greatest Team Spirit* award went to Irene Wortham Center, who exemplified the idea by holding regular practice drills, offering assistance to other teams in need, and overall maintaining a lively, competitive yet gracious attitude throughout race day.

#### RACE DAY WINNERS

Each of the eight teams participating in the day's event raced in three total heats—the first two to determine their best time and then the final heat for top prizes and bragging rights. It was a friendly yet competitive race for all. Two attending Club Teams from Charlotte,



Anger Management and Charlotte Fury, took 1st and 2nd place, respectively. Big Brothers Big Sisters of WNC—a team new to the Drums & Dragons lineup—took home the bronze medal for third place.

Overall, the event was a tremendous success. Participating teams, donors, and sponsors helped WNC Bridge Foundation raise \$21,590 for the three benefiting non-profits: St. Gerard House, Irene Wortham Center, and to MountainCare's Adult Day and The Wheelchair Seating Clinic. Funds raised during this year's event will allow these non-profits to continue their great work in the community.

**RIGHT:** Irene Wortham Center's racers won the *Greatest Team Spirit* award.

**ABOVE RIGHT:** Thumbs-up from standout volunteer Pete Hutchins, who earned the *Best Individual Spirit* award.



## WNC Bridge Volunteer Spotlight

**KAREN WILKINSON VALUES GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY, CHERISHES EXTENDED FAMILY OF FELLOW VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF**

**In addition to over ten years of volunteering endless hours setting up estate sales and assisting customers, Karen is also an avid WNC Bridge Foundation thrift store and estate sale customer and volunteer recruiter. We asked Karen some questions.**

### WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

*I grew up in a small town in Michigan and went to college on a four-year Ford Motor Foundation Scholarship. Following that, I was among the first female MBA graduates from the University of Michigan. But, unfortunately, Ford didn't hire female MBAs, so I didn't work for them!*

### TELL US ABOUT THE 18 YEARS YOU LIVED IN HAWAII.

*We moved to Hawaii in 1990 when my husband retired from the Navy and wanted to start a new career.*

*He loved Hawaii, so we decided to make a big leap. Living in Kailua, we commuted to Honolulu, where I worked as an administrator at Kamehameha Schools, founded by the last Royal Princess of Hawaii for native Hawaiians.*

### HOW DID YOU END UP IN ASHEVILLE?

*We retired here in 2008 because it was a diverse community with art, culture, nature, the mountains, good medical facilities, and because North Carolina is the midpoint between grandkids in Maryland and Florida.*

### WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES?

*Primarily quilting. I make things for friends and family and to donate—currently, I make patriotic quilts for veterans in hospice. And I love playing with the world's best dog, my Trixie.*



### WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF VOLUNTEERING AT WNC BRIDGE?

*So many best parts! I get to do something productive that helps others—I've had lots of help from others through the years, and now I can give back by volunteering. Plus, every two weeks it's like Christmas when you see all the new treasures! And, I've found a wonderful extended family with fellow volunteers and staff. They help and support me.*

## Supporting Blue Ridge Pride

**CASTOFF THRIFT STORE ITEMS RE-PURPOSED FOR ART INSTALLATION**

This summer, WNC Bridge Foundation Thrift Stores and Estates Sales helped facilitate the Blue Ridge Pride installation, *Cup of Me*, in Pack Square Park. Working with festival director Tony Bayles, WNC Bridge staff and volunteers saved unsellable clothing and miss-matched cups needed for the installation. Though this year's pride event was canceled, the temporary installation, woven within a giant fir tree, was still able to represent the spirit and creativity of the LGBTQ community.



**FROM BLUE RIDGE PRIDE:** *As you approach the tree, you notice the colors and strips of clothing moving in the breeze. At times, bits of fabric intertwine. This is where our stories and lives intersect—a tapestry of different experiences ebbs and flows before you. Cups dangle from strips of clothing, just waiting to spill their knowledge and wisdom, to become part of the tale that continues. We must be brave enough to share our stories, and wise enough to savor the “me” of others.*

# Estate Sales & SERVICES

75 FAIRVIEW ROAD  
ASHEVILLE, NC 28803

## CONSIDERING AN ESTATE SALE?

If you are downsizing, moving, are the executor of an estate to be settled, or just want to eliminate clutter and streamline your life, WNC Bridge Estate Sales & Services is here to help. As experts at home transitions, we can relieve some of the stress.

*Setup a free in-home or contact-free consultation by calling 828.575.2509 and selecting option 2.*

## UPCOMING SALE DATES

Every two weeks our 10,000-square-foot showroom is filled with new estate items. Each sale is different and offers something for every taste and budget.

<b>NOV</b> 4-6 18-20	<b>DEC</b> 2-4 16-18	<b>JAN</b> 13-15 27-29
<b>FEB</b> 10-12 24-26	<b>MAR</b> 10-12 24-26	<b>APR</b> 7-9 21-23

*Go to [WNCBridge.org](http://WNCBridge.org) to sign up for sale notifications and photos.*

## THRIFT STORE HOURS

**75 Fairview Road in Biltmore**  
Monday-Saturday | 10am-4pm

**285 North Main Street in Weaverville**  
Tuesday-Saturday | 10am-4pm

*Accepting donations of gently-used household items and clothing during store hours.*

## WANT TO VOLUNTEER?

WNC Bridge Foundation Thrift Stores and Estate Sales are upbeat, positive places to volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering and want to know more, call 828-575-2509 or click the Volunteer link under SHOP at [WNCBridge.org](http://WNCBridge.org).

*Our need for volunteers is tremendous!*



## Refugee Shopping Days

### AFTER-HOURS SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISPLACED AFGHANS

In October, Asheville welcomed 40 new residents—refugees recently evacuated from war-torn Afghanistan. With little more than the clothes on their backs, evacuees arrived in the U.S. and were processed on Air Force bases then assigned to organizations able to relocate them. In North Carolina, the Catholic Charities Diocese of Charlotte (CCDOC) will be resettling 200 refugees in Charlotte and 40 in Asheville.

A WNC Bridge Thrift Store volunteer reached out to Catholic Charities to offer any merchandise the refugees may need. A unique arrangement was set up—instead of donating boxes of random items, WNC Bridge thrift stores offered to facilitate in-store opportunities for anyone to shop for themselves. As a result, the evacuees would choose the things they want or need, rather than having things handed to them. Thrift Store Coordinator Lyndia Stauffer worked with CCDOC Impact

Coordinator Maggie Rhinehart to set up in-person Shopping Days on various Sundays when the store is closed.

Regardless of the marked price, items in the store were sold at a nominal 50¢, covered by the charity's funding. Initially, priority needs have been clothing, shoes, and personal items such as backpacks and notebooks.

“The evacuees were all very grateful. We could feel their sense of being overwhelmed,” said WNC Bridge Thrift Store’s Lynda Stauffer. “Just our building can be a lot to take in!” She explained, “The group stayed together in the clothing area at first until they understood they could explore the entire store. It was a moving experience for us to welcome and provide for them.”

As the refugees begin settling into long-term housing, Shopping Days will provide household goods, furniture, and kitchen needs.

**There is an urgent need for affordable rental homes and apartments in the Asheville area, ranging in size from one to three bedrooms. Catholic Charities provides flexible terms and reliable lease payments. If you can help, call 800-227-7261 or email [info@ccdoc.org](mailto:info@ccdoc.org).**



# Crossings

the newsletter of **WNC Bridge Foundation** **FALL/WINTER 2021**

## ANNOUNCING OUR 2021 IMPACT GRANT RECIPIENTS

### CONTACT US

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**TO GIVE TO WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION**

**make a secure donation at**

**[WNCbridge.org](http://WNCbridge.org) or call 828.277.4815**