

WNCbridge.org

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Asheville, NC 28803

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Crossings

the newsletter of WNC Bridge Foundation

FALL/WINTER 2022



UNIQUE, BEAUTIFUL, IRREPLACEABLE

With the colder months approaching, it won't be long before the first snow falls across the mountains, we call home. And while I know we have all heard the phrase no two snowflakes are alike, I recently thought about the unique, irreplaceable elements that make up WNC Bridge Foundation:



Grant operations continue to support incredible non-profits across Western North Carolina



WNC Bridge's 5 Community Initiatives are expanding access to healthcare to vulnerable populations



Our Estate Sales and Thrift Stores provide an exceptional shopping experience with 100% proceeds supporting our 5 Community Initiatives



Amazing volunteers bring their talents to serve at Rathbun House and Retail Operations



Generous donors, board members, and staff who believe in our mission



WNC Bridge supports the 18 counties of Western North Carolina

And, of course, there is that dedicated, supportive component that is you.

I am so grateful to you, the people and organizations who supported WNC Bridge Foundation this year. I couldn't be more excited about what this growing community will make possible for Western North Carolina in 2023 and beyond. Thank you for contributing to the effort to connect our communities to a healthier future. We can't do this work without you, and we're so glad you're a part of WNC Bridge Foundation.

Sincerely,

Scott W. Buchanan
President & CEO, WNC Bridge Foundation



TOP | BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF THE PLATEAU MEMBERS IN CASHIERS ENJOY TIME WITH FRIENDS

ABOVE LEFT | BRIDGE ESTATE SALES VOLUNTEERS CHRIS BECHTOL AND JANET LEVENGOOD ARE NEIGHBORS AND VOLUNTEERS.

ABOVE RIGHT | EQUAL PLATES PROJECT USES LOCAL PRODUCE TO PROVIDE MEALS FOR FOR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS.

RIGHT | BIG IVY FOOD PANTRY OFFERS FRESH LOCAL PRODUCE TO BARNARDSVILLE RESIDENTS.



A PLACE TO FLOURISH

Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau Fosters Fun and Learning

As the only five-day per-week after-school program for students in Southern Jackson County, Boys & Girls Club of the Plateau (BGCP), located in Cashiers, NC, plays a vital role for local children and teens. The Club provides a safe, supportive environment

OVER 75% OF FAMILIES
SERVED BY BOYS & GIRLS
CLUB OF THE PLATEAU
QUALIFY FOR FREE
OR REDUCED LUNCH
AND REPORT ANNUAL
HOUSEHOLD INCOMES
BELOW \$30,000.

to connect youth with positive role models and offers a reliable, safe environment that fosters fun and development.

When the Club opened the doors to its brand new 15,000-square-foot building in April of 2022, it allowed BGCP to serve more than twice the number of students, which meant the organization saw an increase in its operating budget. Driven by the Club's need to expand programming options and maintain appropriate staff-to-student ratios, WNC Bridge Foundation awarded BGCP

continues



100% OF MEMBERS FELT
THEY HAD AN ADULT THAT
SUPPORTS THEM IN 2021-22.



A PLACE TO FLOURISH *continued*



a multi-year grant to help meet these needs. IMPACT Grant funding allows the Club to continue providing an equal opportunity to children in Jackson County for a supportive environment that places high value on character development and academic growth.

“We want to see our members form concrete ideas about continuing their education after high school, make healthy lifestyle choices, and become engaged citizens in the long-term,” explains Carmen Waite, BGCP’s CEO. “Support from WNC Bridge Foundation is allowing us to continue to grow and transform the quality of life for our participants—and ultimately our community—in a sustainable way.”

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF THE PLATEAU

92% OF MEMBERS FINISHED THE 21-22 SCHOOL YEAR WITH A GRADE OF "B" OR HIGHER.



2023 Board of Directors

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PAUL ADAMS

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SKIP WADE

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Bridgeshop Focuses on Capacity Building

Fifty non-profits throughout Western North Carolina now have the resources necessary to focus on capacity building, the backbone of effective non-profit programs, thanks to grant funding provided by WNC Bridge Foundation's 2022 IMPACT Grant initiative. These organizations will receive grant funding for three years to build internal effectiveness, have general operating support, and strengthen organizational knowledge. This trust-based philanthropy practice bolsters leadership, abilities, and overall organizational health.

IMPACT Capacity Building recipients were also invited by WNC Bridge Foundation to attend



a Bridgeshop in the fall led by WNC Nonprofit Pathways. During this free, highly interactive Bridgeshop, attendees learned about the life cycle of non-profit organizations, determined where their organization is in this cycle, shared with and learned from

Five Point Center Incorporated, located in Robbinsville, NC, received an IMPACT Capacity Grant to help bolster the organization by relieving the strain on its staff and volunteers. Five Point's Director, Reverend Michelle Shiple, attended the

“It was great to engage with other non-profits to learn and connect. Thoughtful presentation, interactive, and engaging.”

—KATRINA MCGUIRE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BLUE RIDGE LITERACY COUNCIL

consultants and other non-profits, and left with the beginning of an action plan for strengthening their organization. Attendees were also given the opportunity to participate in additional office hours with a WNC Nonprofit Pathways consultant.

Bridgeshop and noted the excellent guidance provided by WNC Nonprofit Pathways. “The session provided tools for our organization to build a firm foundation and strategies to strengthen our existing abilities.”

IMPACT GRANT RECIPIENTS
ATTENDED PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT BRIDGESHOPS
LED BY WNC NONPROFIT
PATHWAYS AND HOSTED BY
WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION
ON OCTOBER 25 & 26.



WNC BRIDGE
PROVIDED EACH
ORGANIZATION
A \$20 GAS CARD
FOR ATTENDING
AN IN-PERSON
BRIDGESHOP.

CONGRATULATIONS!



HOLA CAROLINA WILL USE GRANT FUNDS TO SUPPORT PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE LATINX COMMUNITY IN HENDERSON COUNTY.
PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLA CAROLINA

Presenting Our 2022-2024 IMPACT Grant Recipients

ELDER CARE

Anchor Baptist Church
& Ministries

East End Valley Street
Neighborhood Association

Meals on Wheels of Asheville
& Buncombe County

Meals on Wheels of Brevard

United Community Development
of North Carolina

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Blue Ridge Literacy Council

Centro Unido Latino Americano

Children First/Communities
in Schools of Buncombe County

Communities in Schools of
North Carolina (Jackson County)

Family Place
of Transylvania County

HIGHTS

Horizons at Carolina Day

Neighbors in Ministry/
Rise & Shine

Pigeon Community Multicultural
Development Center

Read To Succeed Asheville/
Buncombe

The Christine Avery
Learning Center

The Cindy Platt Boys and Girls
Club of Transylvania County

The Literacy and
Learning Center

YTL Training Programs

WELLNESS SUPPORT

Asheville Buncombe Institute
of Parity Achievement

Asheville Poverty Initiative

AWAKE Children's Advocacy
Center

Babies Need Bottoms

Beacon of Hope Services

Black Mountain Counseling Center

Burke United Christian Ministries

Community Housing Coalition
of Madison County

Feed-A-Child WNC

Five Point Center

Grahamtown Team

Hola Carolina

JMPRO TV

KARE

La Esperanza Immigrant Outreach
Ministry at The Episcopal Church
of the Holy Spirit

Mountain Child
Advocacy Center

Neighbors in Need

New Hope of McDowell

Only Hope WNC

Reconciliation House

Restoration House WNC

Rolling Start NC

Rutherford County
Habitat for Humanity

Shiloh Community
Association

Thrive

The Community Kitchen

The Community Table

The Giving Spoon

TRACTOR Food and Farms

Working Wheels

YMI Cultural Center

A RECIPE FOR ALL

Equal Plates Project Provides Vital Link

Equal Plates Project's mission is to source top-quality, fresh produce from local farms and use it to prepare scratch-made, nutritious meals for vulnerable populations in our community.

A NOW Grant from WNC Bridge Foundation allowed the organization to research and develop seasonal menus by hiring a chef consultant from AB-Tech who helped Equal Plates recipe test with local produce and cost out those recipes. Funding also allowed Equal Plates to create 100 free meals per day, often closer to 200, to donate to its partner agencies throughout the summer.

NOW Grant funding also allowed Equal Plates Project to build new

partnerships with the sharing of its meals, including Homeward Bound's AHOPE, ABCCM Mission, and Western NC Rescue Mission. "These new partnerships broadened our organization's awareness of food needs in the community and have inspired us to work on solutions to help meet those needs long-term, shares Madi Holtzman, Managing Director of the Equal Plates Project. In addition, WNC Bridge grant funding "allowed us to revamp distribution of meals to families in public housing who expressed a heightened need for food support during the summer months while children were not receiving food from school."



LOCAL ROASTED SWEET POTATOES, VEGGIE RICE PILAF, AND TANDOORI CHICKEN PROVED ONE OF THE MOST POPULAR DISHES AMONG PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS WHO RECEIVED MEALS FROM EQUAL PLATES PROJECT THIS SUMMER.

“Receiving a NOW Grant from WNC Bridge was pivotal for our organization’s development. Equal Plates Project aims to transform top-quality local food into scratch-made meals to share with vulnerable populations, and the support from WNC Bridge allowed us to engage in robust local recipe development.”

—MADI HOLTZMAN,
DIRECTOR OF EQUAL PLATES PROJECT



CHEFS AND VOLUNTEERS AT EQUAL PLATES PROJECT SOURCED FRESH FOOD FROM LOCAL FARMS TO PRODUCE HUNDREDS OF MEALS EACH WEEK TO SHARE WITH PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS AND OTHER COMMUNITY PARTNERS SERVING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS. PHOTOS COURTESY OF EQUAL PLATES PROJECT

WORKING TOGETHER

AIM Initiatives Rely on Teamwork

In describing the importance of teamwork, Henry Ford said, “Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.” WNC Bridge Foundation’s AIM Grant program is using a similar roadmap working with trusted partners to achieve healthy outcomes for the residents of Western North Carolina.

Dogwood awarded WNC Bridge Foundation \$200,000 to provide urgent home repair for WNC residents, including ADA modifications. These repairs will be accessed through our *Greatest Needs* program, which has been in operation since 2019. WNC Bridge Foundation’s *Greatest Needs Fund* provides emergency funding to

“Our partnership with WNC Bridge Foundation is vital to our ability to help create a region where everyone can live, learn, earn and thrive, without exception.”

—DR. SUSAN MIMS, CEO DOGWOOD HEALTH TRUST

In 2022, WNC Bridge’s AIM program has worked with Dogwood Health Trust, Gateway Wellness Foundation, USDA, and local non-profits to amplify the crucial programming happening in our region. WNC Bridge and Dogwood are combining their expertise and connections to work on initiatives including housing. In August 2022,

low-income individuals for specific, immediate needs so they may remain safely in their homes. “Our partnership with WNC Bridge Foundation is vital to our ability to help create a region where everyone can live, learn, earn and thrive, without exception,” said Dr. Susan Mims, CEO of Dogwood Health Trust. “We know that having safe and stable housing is a key driver of health outcomes. WNC Bridge Foundation has deep relationships in the community and are already working closely with local partners to help keep residents safely in their homes and on a path toward better health.”

Administrative support is another way WNC Bridge works with its partners to keep successful initiatives moving forward in our region. For example, Big Ivy Food Pantry and Ivy Creek Farm in



Barnardsville, NC, are working together to solve food insecurity in their community. Ivy Creek Family Farm provides Big Ivy Food Pantry clients with fresh, healthy food. Fresh fruits and vegetables are often a rarity at food pantries, and this collaboration is providing families with more nutritious options as the need continues to grow. WNC Bridge was able to assist in this initiative by providing pilot funding for the farm and community center to work on supply and distribution and assessing community members’ needs. This project experience led to WNC Bridge Foundation developing a collaborative to apply for a farm-to-food pantry redistribution grant for the region later in 2022.

LEFT AND ABOVE | WITH BACKING FROM WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION FUNDING, IVY CREEK FARMS IN BARNARDSVILLE ADDRESSES LOCAL FOOD INSECURITY BY SUPPLYING NUTRITIOUS OPTIONS LIKE FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO THE BIG IVY COMMUNITY.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF IVY CREEK FAMILY FARM



ROGAN'S WAGON

Children's Special Fund Provides Safety



ROGAN AND HIS SIBLINGS ENJOY VISITING THE ZOO IN A STROLLER WAGON PURCHASED THROUGH WNC BRIDGE FOUNDATION'S CHILDREN'S SERVICES FUND.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE EDWARDS FAMILY

With three kids ages seven and under, the Edwards family, who resides in Fletcher, NC, stays busy. Trips to the grocery store, school activities, doctors' visits, and nightly walks around the neighborhood; this is a family that values being able to spend time together.

“WNC Bridge has helped us, as a family, just do normal life things with much more ease and safety.”

And while managing three kids is no easy task for any family, the Edwards also realize the extra safety measures they must implement daily to keep 7-year-old Rogan safe and healthy.

Rogan lives with Down Syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder, and these diagnoses affect areas of the brain that play a significant role in functions, including learning, memory, emotions, and behaviors. Rogan has a history of running away, which is particularly unsafe, as he has no concept of danger. “We have struggled to manage all three of our children’s safety during outings due to Rogan’s impulsive flights and escapes,” explains Rogan’s mom, Kara. “He got away from me for the first time in his life just a few months ago at one of his doctor’s appointments, and thankfully he was found happily

jumping on a trampoline in a therapy room. It is a heart-sinking feeling knowing that he will only gain the ability to be faster and smarter about his escapes as he grows and that it will only get harder to keep him safe.”

Thanks to donors who support WNC Bridge’s Children’s Services



Fund, the Foundation was able to purchase a Stroller Wagon for Rogan, which will help his parents keep him safe. The wagon holds up to 4 passengers in removable reclining seats, includes adjustable safety

continues

SUPPORT FAMILIES LIKE ROGAN'S BY DONATING TO WNC BRIDGE'S CHILDREN'S SERVICES FUND TODAY.

EVERY CENT OF YOUR DONATION GOES TO WNC BRIDGE COMMUNITY INITIATIVES LIKE THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES FUND.



Donate today by filling out the enclosed envelope, or scan this code linked to our website.

WNCBRIDGE.ORG/GIVE/MAKE-A-GIFT

Please be sure to select the initiative you wish to support.



ROGAN'S WAGON *continued*

harnesses with magnetic buckles to keep passengers secure, and will grow with Rogan making it perfect for family outings, attending school, and walks around the neighborhood.

Since receiving this specialized equipment, the family has put the wagon to good use. "When I take Rogan to the grocery store,

I don't have to haul around two shopping carts anymore," Kara says, smiling. "We would not be able to take Rogan to practices and games without the wagon. This stroller has allowed us not to feel the constant anxiety about Rogan's whereabouts. We know he is happy in the wagon, and we can transport

all our kids and essentials in this wagon without killing my back," this grateful mom shares. "WNC Bridge has helped us, as a family, just do normal life things with much more ease and safety, and we cannot express our gratitude enough for providing our family with this generous gift."

YOUR SUPPORT EMPOWERS OUR

5 Community Initiatives

WNC Bridge Foundation both collaborates with local partners and provides direct support to individuals and organizations who share our goals.

By focusing our effort through the lens of community initiatives, we are able to expand healthcare access and equity for vulnerable populations throughout Western North Carolina.

Funding from allies like you empowers us to provide hope and help to our neighbors in overcoming health challenges.

Children's Services Fund pays for specialized equipment, medical care, or home improvements to enhance the daily lives of children with developmental or neurological disorders.

WNC Greatest Needs Fund provides emergency assistance to low-income individuals for specific, immediate needs so they may remain safely in their homes.

Health Scholarships provide 36 high school seniors throughout the 18 counties we serve in Western North Carolina \$1,500 scholarships each year to pursue health related careers.

Rathbun House offers families from outside the area a comfortable place to stay at no charge while their loved ones receive care at Asheville area healthcare facilities.

You're Special Fund helps adults remain safe and independent in their homes by funding medications, safety equipment, and other essentials that are not covered by another source.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Neighbors Inspiring Neighbors

INFLUENCERS. That is the distinction one group of WNC Bridge Estate Sales volunteers has earned. These Foundation colleagues were already neighbors and friends before finding their way to WNC Bridge. Through a daisy chain of persuasion, one ushered the next to join the Estate Sales team.

June 2013. *The chain begins when **REBECCA TODD**, a volunteer since 2008, encourages fellow church member, Jean Bailey, to try a day of volunteering at WNC Bridge Estate Sales. Jean likes it and keeps coming back.*

JEAN BAILEY is a native Floridian who, after retiring from 41 years in physical therapy, moved to



ESTATE SALE VOLUNTEERS JANET LEVENGOOD, CHRIS BECHTOL, AND JEAN BAILEY ARE INFLUENTIAL NEIGHBORS.

Asheville. Jean is an active choir member at her church and contributes to various outreach projects. She also creates hand-built pottery and plays mahjong with her neighbors. When volunteering at Bridge, Jean tags art, unpacks estate items, and runs the register on estate sale days.

March 2015. *Jean encourages her neighbor and mahjong partner, Janet, to join her in volunteering.*

JANET LEVENGOOD is a retired registered nurse from Hartford, Connecticut, who moved to Asheville ten years ago to be near her grandson. Janet chose volunteering after deciding not to continue working. Janet helps with in-home pack ups, sorting items in the showroom, and is the leading jewelry sorter and arranger.

October 2020. *Jean and Janet recruit their neighbor, Chris Bechtol, to join them as volunteers.*

CHRIS BECHTOL retired after closing her husband's 100-year-old family jewelry store in northwest Ohio. She and her husband, Skip, settled into their new neighborhood and made friends



SKIP BECHTOL EVALUATES JEWELRY FOR ESTATE SALES.

with Jean and Janet. Chris helps with in-home estate pack ups, sorts estate items in the showroom, tags inventoried items, and arranges merchandise for estate sales.

SKIP BECHTOL was quickly recruited by the neighborhood group. Skip works behind the scenes bestowing his skills as a retired jeweler to identify quality jewelry and determine fair market prices.

As part of the estate sale volunteer team, this group of neighbors has become an integral part of WNC Bridge's fundraising efforts.



CHRIS BECHTOL AND JANET LEVENGOOD ENJOY THE CHALLENGE OF SETTING UP THE ESTATE SALES SHOWROOM.

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Build-Your-Own Volunteer Adventure at WNC Bridge Estate Sales and Thrift Store

Volunteers are the backbone of WNC Bridge Retail Operations, the Foundation's primary fundraising endeavor. Truly, WNC Bridge Thrift Stores and Estate Sale Services would not exist without a core of volunteers, who in the 1980s, organized fundraising rummage sales and the spectacular annual event called the "Big Flea." And volunteer backing made it possible to open our first Thrift Store and Estate Sale showroom in 2003. (Heads up, we'll be celebrating our 20th anniversary in the coming year!)

RELIABLE AND CAPABLE.

Volunteers enable Retail Operations to function with a limited paid staff. In addition, the investment of our volunteers' talents gives us space to focus on growing the business and increasing our ability to fund our causes—our 5 Community Initiatives.

BUILD YOUR OWN VOLUNTEER ADVENTURE. We encourage our volunteers to identify what they like to do in the areas that interest them. Find your niche in furniture,

vintage clothes, linens, tools, jewelry, rugs, dishes, pottery, silverware, artwork, gadgets, lamps, etc. Some folks enjoy working with customers, running the registers and being part of the bustling excitement of estate sale days. Others prefer being away from the public—sorting, cleaning, pricing donations, and unpacking treasures for the showroom.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES. Sign up for a few hours per week, per month, or come in multiple days each week. We even have seasonal volunteers who go away for winters or summers, then return to their WNC Bridge family the rest of the year.

FIND A COMMUNITY. Close friendships often develop between volunteers and with staff. The feeling of community here is strong and supportive. We are always in need of more volunteers. Wouldn't it be fun to get one of your friends or neighbors to volunteer with you in the new year to help support WNC Bridge?



75 FAIRVIEW ROAD IN BILTMORE
Monday–Saturday | 10am–4pm



HOW TO SUPPORT OUR THRIFT STORE AND ESTATE SALES SERVICES

SHOP! Housewares, kitchenware, furniture, clothing, accessories, and more are restocked daily and bargain-priced.

DONATE! Accepting gently-used household items, clothing, and furniture at each location.

VOLUNTEER! WNC Bridge Thrift Stores and Estate Sales are upbeat, positive places to volunteer. To find out more, call 828.575.2509 or click the Volunteer link under SHOP at WNCBridge.org.



Rathbun House Seeks Outgoing, Compassionate Front Desk Volunteers

RATHBUN HOUSE provides a home-like environment for families and caregivers accompanying patients receiving medical care at an Asheville area hospital. We're looking for outgoing and compassionate volunteers to staff the front desk.

Learn more by emailing info@wncbridge.org or call 828.251.0595



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the newsletter of WNC Bridge Foundation

FALL/WINTER 2022

Mailing address
 294 Overlook Road Asheville, NC 28803

Main number
 828.277.4815

Web
WNCbridge.org

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Estate Sales & SERVICES

CONSIDERING AN ESTATE SALE?

Whether because of downsizing, moving, settling an estate, or eliminating clutter, Estate Sales & Services can make home transitions easier.

Proceeds are split 50/50 between client and WNC Bridge. Our portion supports our 5 Community Initiatives. There are no other charges for our services.

2023 ESTATE SALE CALENDAR

THURSDAY-SATURDAY | 10-4:30

JAN 5-7 19-21	FEB 9-11 23-25	MAR 9-11 23-25	APR 6-8 20-22	MAY 4-6 18-20	JUN 1-3 15-17 29-1
JUL 13-17 27-29	AUG 10-12 24-26	SEP 7-9 21-23	OCT 5-7 19-21	NOV 2-4 16-18 30-2	DEC 30-2 14-16

75 FAIRVIEW ROAD IN BILTMORE

DEC/22
 5-7
 19-21

5 Community Initiatives

throughout the 18 Counties of Western North Carolina

You're Special Fund

Rathbun House

WNC Greatest Needs Fund

Health Scholarships

Children's Services Fund



WANT TO SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY INITIATIVES?

Fill out the envelope tucked inside or scan this QR code linked to our website to make a secure donation.

Be sure to designate the community initiative you wish to support.



WNCBRIDGE.ORG/GIVE/MAKE-A-GIFT