

Recession Response Grants Announced

\$297,448 in Grants to Help People Across Western North Carolina

(April 30, 2009) — Fifty-two grants totaling \$297,448 were announced to nonprofits across Western North Carolina to address needs exacerbated by the recession. Included is a \$50,000 grant to Mountain BizWorks for the Small Business Recession Recovery Project funded in partnership with philanthropist Diana Wortham. Funds from The Community Foundation of Western North Carolina's (CFWNC) Recession Response Fund, the Foundation's nine affiliate funds and the Cherokee Preservation Foundation made the other grants possible.

“Our goal with the Recession Response Fund has been to encourage collaboration and partnership among our donors and other funders,” said CFWNC President Pat Smith. “The problems our mountain communities face are daunting but working together we are able to make a real difference. We are grateful to Diana Wortham for funding a grant to Mountain BizWorks that targets jobs, small businesses and underserved populations. Providing resources for these efforts helps our region now and will benefit us all in the future.”

The economy has created distinct challenges for Mountain BizWorks, but with additional resources the organization will continue to build economic opportunities in 12 western counties through business development and loans. “These funds will allow our counselors to invest time in helping small businesses survive this recession,” said Greg Walker-Wilson, Mountain BizWorks CEO. “During past economic downturns, it has been the small businesses that have created jobs to get the economy out of a recession, and once again, we expect our diverse and vibrant small businesses to lead the recovery.”

Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPFdn), a long-time collaborator with CFWNC, provided \$50,000 of the funds distributed in this round of grants. CPFdn staff reviewed and selected for funding projects that will serve Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain counties. “We were able to draw on our knowledge and expertise of the issues in our region and the nonprofits best positioned to have an immediate impact,” said Susan Jenkins, executive director of the Cherokee Preservation Foundation. “Working closely with other funders, like The Community Foundation, allows us to deliver resources strategically, and that means we can help more nonprofits deliver services to people in crisis.”

In February, CFWNC launched the “Give *from the Heart*” campaign to raise \$1 million for the Recession Response. The total secured to date is \$645,067, contributed by hundreds of donors through gifts large and small to help our neighbors in need. One hundred percent of the funds are available for grants as no administrative fees are charged by the Foundation for this endeavor.

During the recession, CFWNC has expanded grant making for urgent needs and is also funding grants for nonprofit operating support, enabling organizations to focus on service delivery. To assess programs and respond quickly, this grant cycle was conducted on an expedited schedule and drew on regional expertise in the affiliate and partner communities for strategic decision-making.

The next deadline for Recession Response Fund applications is May 15. Local nonprofits, churches and governmental agencies are invited to apply for grants to support emergency relief services, including food, shelter/housing, utility assistance, medical/mental health and employment issues exacerbated by the recession. Guidelines and downloadable application documents can be accessed at www.cfwnc.org.

The Recession Response program is a region-wide effort and needs far exceed resources to meet them. Anyone wishing to help can make a tax-deductible contribution at www.cfwnc.org or by mailing a check to CFWNC, P.O. Box 1888, Asheville, NC 28802. Contributions of any size are welcome and make an immediate difference.

Since 1978, Western North Carolinians have relied on The Community Foundation to help them turn their charitable passions into meaningful and effective philanthropy. In partnership with area donors, CFWNC

has awarded more than \$100 million in scholarships and grants to nonprofit organizations and public institutions across our 18-county mountain region and beyond.

For more information about the Recession Response Fund or CFWNC, visit www.cfwnc.org or call (828) 254-4960.

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