

Human Services Awards 2025

Organization	Project	Amount Awarded	Descriptions	County(ies) Served
Asheville Creative Arts (fiscal sponsor for Swannanoa Communities Together (SCT))	Swannanoa Community Care Project	\$25,000	to fund its Community Care Project that provides housing counseling and direct financial assistance to help vulnerable community members avoid utility shut-offs and housing loss. Grounded in mutual aid and trauma-informed care, the project is led by local, bilingual staff who offer face-to-face support at an accessible community center.	Buncombe
Asheville-Buncombe Community Land Trust	Asheville-Buncombe Community Land Trust	\$25,000	to provide personalized case management supporting low- to moderate-income households—especially BIPOC families—through their Homeownership, Home Repair, and Hurricane Helene Relief programs. These services connect clients to housing solutions and community resources, helping families recover from displacement and disasters while promoting stable, affordable housing.	Buncombe
Baptist Children's Homes of NC	Homebase Support	\$10,000	to support the Homebase Program at Western Carolina University that provides essential services to college students from foster care or without family support. It offers counseling, basic necessities, and temporary housing to help these economically disadvantaged young adults succeed in college and overcome financial and emotional barriers.	WNC Region
Bounty & Soul	REACH: Redefining Equitable Access to Community Health	\$25,000	to sustain their REACH program that provides free weekly markets with fresh, local produce in underserved Buncombe County neighborhoods. The program combines food access with health education and community support through dedicated staff who connect families to resources and promote sustainable, holistic wellness.	Buncombe
Bread of Life	Bread of life - Lunch	\$21,765	to meet the rising demand for food assistance in Transylvania County, driven by inflation and increased community need. The funds will support food procurement and meal production, helping sustain kitchen operations that provide over 1,000 meals weekly and distribute more than 15,000 pounds of groceries each month.	Transylvania
Buncombe Alternatives	Human Services Grant and Education Grant Application	\$25,000	to support and expand the Teen Court Program that collaborates with schools and school resource officers and the juvenile justice system to reduce out-of-school suspensions and address minor offenses like truancy and bullying. Funding will help provide transportation, intake, and educational services while extending the program to rural middle and high schools, easing the burden on the juvenile justice system by allowing direct referrals to peer-judged court hearings.	Buncombe

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Burke United Christian Ministries	H.O.P.E. Center - Peer Support Programming	\$25,000	to support the H.O.P.E. Center that provides peer support and case management to individuals facing homelessness, housing insecurity, and substance use disorder. Funds will be used for staffing, housing assistance, transportation, basic needs supplies, and training to help chronically unhoused individuals improve their stability and health.	Burke
Calvary Episcopal Church Food Pantry	A Project to Increase Cold Storage and Food Supplies for Calvary Episcopal Church Food Pantry, Inc.	\$25,000	to purchase a large-capacity commercial refrigerator and food needed to meet the rising demand for nutritious meals among food-insecure families. This support will expand cold storage capacity and help the pantry continue providing 11 healthy meals per family member per week, supplementing donated food with essential purchases.	Henderson, Buncombe
CareNet Counseling of Marion	CareNet West Human Service Patient Subsidy	\$25,000	to expand access to behavioral healthcare by funding a patient assistance program that helps uninsured and underinsured clients in seven WNC counties afford counseling.	McDowell, Avery, Rutherford, Burke, Buncombe, Yancey,
Casting for Hope	Financial Assistance and Retreat Programming for Low Income Gynecological Cancer Patients	\$25,000	to provide financial assistance and retreat programs for low-income women in WNC diagnosed with ovarian or other gynecological cancers. Funds will help reduce housing and food insecurity, ensure access to quality medical care, and support program leadership by a survivor now directing patient services.	WNC Region
Center for Conscious Living and Dying	Outreach, Education and Free End-of-Life Care for Low-Income Elders	\$25,000	to expand end-of-life care education and support for low-income seniors in rural Western North Carolina, partnering with 25 elder housing units across six counties. The program offers workshops, resources, and personalized consultations to support seniors in advance care planning and accessing compassionate care.	Buncombe, Henderson, Haywood, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell
Center for Rural Health Innovation	MedsForKids	\$25,000	to cover medications, behavioral health, and specialty care costs for uninsured students in six counties, ensuring they can access necessary healthcare. Funding will also support increased nurse time to manage referrals and coordinate payments for essential services.	Mitchell, Avery, Burke, Madison, McDowell, Yancey
Children First/Communities In Schools of Buncombe County	The Family Resource Center at Emma	\$25,000	to fund the Family Resource Center at Emma, providing emergency assistance, basic needs, case management, and parenting classes to support families. This whole-family approach helps stabilize families, strengthen parent engagement, and narrow opportunity gaps to promote children's wellbeing and success.	Buncombe
Children's Cancer Partners of the Carolinas	Western North Carolina Childhood Cancer Transportation Fund	\$25,000	to support WNC families with children actively undergoing cancer treatment by easing travel barriers to care and ensuring they can access life-saving appointments without added hardship.	WNC Region

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Children's Home Society of North Carolina	Client Assistance Fund for Western NC Families	\$25,000	to support families across Western North Carolina by addressing urgent needs and providing intensive, in-home and post-permanency services aimed at preventing child removal and promoting family stability. This funding will help families facing poverty, housing instability, and other challenges worsened by Hurricane Helene, ensuring timely assistance.	WNC Region
Council on Aging of Buncombe County	Addressing Social Drivers of Health for Vulnerable Seniors	\$25,000	to address social determinants of health for vulnerable seniors through programs that provide transportation, food security, social connection, and home safety improvements. Serving around 7,000 seniors annually, COABC helps older adults maintain independence, combat social isolation, and safely age in place.	Buncombe
Eliada Homes	ESTA (Eliada Students Training for Advancement) Program	\$20,000	to provide food and housing services to vulnerable youth and families. This support includes an on-site food pantry, transisitional housing, rental assistance, and housing case management.	Buncombe
Erlanger Western Carolina Hospital	Transforming Rural Health Access in Cherokee, Clay, and Graham Counties.	\$25,000	to equip a new consolidated outpatient facility that will enhance healthcare access and coordination for underserved rural communities in Cherokee, Clay, and Graham counties.	Cherokee, Clay, Graham
F.I.R.S.T.	Peer Centered First - Peer to Peer Internship Program	\$25,000	to pilot Peer Centered First, an internship program in which individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) serve as peer mentors to reduce isolation and promote self-determination. Funding will support stipends, supervision, and program coordination.	WNC Region
Fines Creek Community Association	Fines Creek Community Assoc. MANNA Pantry	\$13,978	to support its expanding MANNA Pantry program and maintain the aging facility that houses it that has been strained by increased demand following Hurricane Helene. Funds will help offset rising food and electricity costs, address deferred maintenance, and improve building conditions—including lighting and temperature control—for safe and effective pantry operations.	Haywood
Five Point Center	Food Insecurity Needs	\$25,000	to support its food insecurity programs, including emergency food boxes, a Client Choice pantry, TEFAP distribution, and community meals. Funds will also help cover staffing costs for the pantry supervisor and provide hygiene items, medications, and household goods to ease financial strain on low-income community members.	Graham

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Foothills Industries of McDowell County	Vehicle Addition	\$25,000	to purchase an additional vehicle to meet the growing transportation needs of students with disabilities and adults in their day program. This vehicle will transport participants to job training, educational activities, volunteer opportunities, and community engagement, addressing a major barrier for the population it serves.	McDowell, Rutherford, Burke
Hand in Hand of the Swannanoa Valley	Support for disadvantaged students in the 6 Owen District Public Schools	\$25,000	to support medical and health services for disadvantaged students and collaborate with local businesses, banks, and volunteers to provide essential resources and support students through community meal fundraisers, school supply drives, and volunteer partnerships.	Buncombe
Haywood Christian Ministry	HCM Waynesville Pantry	\$25,000	to hire additional staff for its downtown Waynesville Food Pantry that has shifted to a client-choice model, reducing stigma and improving dignity. With food insecurity in Haywood County rising by 60% since 2021, increased staffing is needed to manage growing demand and support pantry operations that serve thousands monthly with fresh, locally sourced food.	Haywood
Haywood Community College Foundation	Supporting Emergency Student Needs Through HCC Lavender Fund	\$25,000	for an emergency aid program that provides immediate, one-time assistance to students facing crisis and at risk of dropping out. This flexible aid provides food and gas gift cards, help with child care, assist with rent and utilities and other one-time emergency needs.	Haywood
Helping at Risk Kids	Helping to achieve normalcy and independence for vulnerable children in Buncombe County	\$25,000	to continue support for at-risk children in Buncombe County, including those in foster care and experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Partnering with schools, social workers, and nonprofits, the Children's Assistance Program has already helped 1,100 children this year and aims to maintain and expand critical aid.	Buncombe
Hinton Rural Life Center	Enhancing Efficiency, Expanding Reach through Technology and Artificial Intelligence	\$25,000	to upgrade technology and to provide staff training in order to improve services to low-income people. The new technology will improve case management, track home repair needs, manage supply distribution and help ensure good resource stewardship.	Clay, Cherokee
Homegoing Farms Inc. DBA Southside Community Farm	Southside Community Grocery Program	\$25,000	to support the Southside Community Grocery Program that provides free fresh produce and staples through neighborhood refrigerators and weekly veggie box deliveries to low-income residents. The program prioritizes local, BIPOC-owned farms and businesses and addresses food access barriers in a neighborhood lacking affordable, nutritious options.	Buncombe

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Institute for Preventive Healthcare and Advocacy	WHAT {Whole Health Across Time}	\$25,000	to expand its Whole Health Across Time program that serves over 2,500 economically disadvantaged individuals in Buncombe, Henderson, and Transylvania Counties. Funds support nutritious food access, transportation, health education through Lunch and Learn sessions, and equipment to help manage chronic illnesses and improve community health.	Buncombe
Legal Aid of North Carolina	Support for Western North Carolina Residents in Need to Civil Legal Services	\$25,000	to enhance free civil legal services and outreach for low-income residents in Western North Carolina. Funding will support legal representation in eviction, foreclosure, domestic violence, and benefits cases, helping families stay housed, survivors find safety, and vulnerable populations maintain stability.	WNC Region
Macon County Care Network (CareNet)	Macon County Backpack Hunger Relief Program	\$12,000	to support the Backpack Hunger Relief Program, providing weekly weekend food packs to about 415 food-insecure school children. Funding will help purchase food, manage logistics, and ensure consistent distribution during the 2025–2026 school year.	Macon
Mediation Center	Family Visitation Program	\$25,000	to support its Family Visitation Program, providing supervised visits and safe child exchanges in cases of domestic violence and child sexual abuse to prevent further trauma. Serving around 30 families annually, the program works with local partners to ensure survivor safety and has expanded services across Henderson, Transylvania, and Polk counties.	Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania
Montmorenci United Methodist Church	Fresh Food for the Food Insecure of Hominy Valley and Neighboring Communities 2025 to 2026	\$18,000	to purchase fresh, nutrient-dense produce for weekly food distributions over one year, serving 140-170 households in Hominy Valley and nearby areas. This funding will help supplement inconsistent food bank supplies and ensure families, including many children and seniors, receive a consistent supply of quality fruits and vegetables despite increasing challenges from changes to federal food assistance programs.	Buncombe, Haywood
Mountain Housing Opportunities	Essential Home Repairs for Housing Stability and Community Resilience	\$25,000	to sustain its Essential Home Repair Program that provides critical, no-cost home repairs and accessibility modifications to very low-income homeowners in Western North Carolina. Serving primarily older adults, people with disabilities, and families in need, the program helps maintain safe, healthy housing and prevent displacement and homelessness.	Buncombe
Mountain Projects	Accessing HUD program to Help Clients Get Needed Credit Information on Line	\$25,000	to help low-income people access credit information and acquire housing support. Many clients do not receive these available services because they need support with the application process.	Haywood, Jackson
OnTrack Financial Education & Counseling	Financial Capabilities for WNC	\$25,000	to support a program that provides financial and housing counseling to low- and moderate-income households across Western North Carolina. The program provides personalized counseling and group workshops to help clients with budgeting, credit building, debt reduction, and homeownership preparedness.	WNC Region

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Partners Aligned Toward Health (PATH)	Community Resilience through CARE and Youth Wellness	\$25,000	to support their bilingual CARE Team and free youth programs in Yancey and Mitchell counties. These efforts address barriers like immigration challenges and access to affordable activities, by building community resilience through trusted resources and safe, skill-building opportunities.	Yancey, Mitchell
Pisgah Legal Services	Homelessness Prevention Program	\$25,000	to sustain its Homelessness Prevention Program that provides free legal assistance to low-income residents facing eviction, foreclosure, or unsafe housing conditions. As families continue recovering from Hurricane Helene and cope with inflation and rising housing costs, this proven program helps prevent homelessness and stabilize housing for the region's most economically vulnerable.	WNC Region
REACH of Haywood County	Domestic Violence Emergency Shelter Staff Support	\$25,000	to fund part-time shelter victim advocates for weekend and evening shifts, ensuring 24/7 support for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse. These positions are vital for providing continuous, trauma-informed care, safety, and advocacy during high-need times when resources are limited.	Haywood
Rutherford Housing Partnership	Safe Homes, Stronger Futures Initiative	\$25,000	to expand its home repair and housing stability program for low-income residents in Rutherford County by funding critical repairs, accessibility modifications, and homeowner education. The program also provides financial workshops and insurance training to improve long-term housing stability and resilience, addressing vulnerabilities exposed by Hurricane Helene.	Rutherford
Share Thy Bread	Share Thy Bread: Teaching those that want to be Taught	\$25,000	to provide free, healthy food and produce to economically disadvantaged people of Polk County .	Polk
Southern Reconciliation Ministries	Heating Assistance	\$25,000	to assist families with heating costs this winter, particularly those displaced by Hurricane Helene who are now living in campers or unstable housing. The funding will help meet increased demand for propane and support families facing additional hardship from recent federal program cuts to Medicaid and Healthy Opportunities.	Yancey, Mitchell
The Arc of Buncombe County	Enhancing Crisis Intervention Support for Arc Citizens	\$20,000	for a crisis intervention program that serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The crisis center annually supports over 600 families with rent, mortgage, utilities, transportation, home repairs, education and medical care.	Buncombe
The Haven of Transylvania County	Street to Shelter	\$25,000	to provide essential resources and compassionate support directly to individuals experiencing homelessness, meeting them where they are to address urgent needs and build trust. Through collaboration with community agencies, the project connects participants to medical care, housing, mental health services, and employment, creating pathways to stability.	Transylvania, Henderson, Polk, Rutherford

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The Hope Center of Hendersonville	Health and Wellness project for vulnerable population	\$18,761	to provide fresh food and wellness education to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The funding will support access to healthy food, proper storage equipment, and education on nutritious eating and food preparation to improve lifelong health outcomes for this vulnerable population.	Henderson, Polk
The Thirtieth Judicial District Domestic Violence - Sexual Assault Alliance	Children Exposed to Violence	\$25,000	to expand its Children Exposed to Violence program, offering trauma-informed therapy and advocacy for child survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault across seven rural western NC counties. Addressing high poverty and limited access to care, the program uses evidence-based therapies to support healing for children facing significant trauma.	Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain, Clay, Cherokee, Graham
Thermal Belt Outreach Ministry	Backpack Snacks	\$25,000	to support its long-running Backpack Snacks Program that provides weekend food packages to Polk County students facing food insecurity. Distributed every Friday at all seven schools, the packs include balanced meals and snacks to ensure children have access to food when school meals are unavailable.	Polk
Trinity United Methodist Church	Winter Peer Support & Community Health Worker Program	\$25,000	to fund its Winter Peer Support Program that provides overnight and weekend support for individuals and families experiencing homelessness during the coldest months. Based in West Asheville's Home Community Hub, certified peer support specialists offer wraparound care, connecting at least 30 guests to housing, healthcare, and other vital resources.	Buncombe, Yancey, Henderson, Haywood, Rutherford, McDowell
Vecinos Farmworker Health Program	Pharmacy Access for Low Income and Uninsured	\$25,000	to expand pharmacy services at their new Community Health Hub in Franklin, enhancing access to essential medications for low-income and uninsured adults across multiple counties. This funding will broaden pharmacy capacity, improve chronic disease management, and provide culturally responsive care to reduce emergency visits and support long-term health in the region.	Macon, Clay, Cherokee, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Swain, Transylvania
Volunteer Avery County and Community Services	Unmet Needs Post Helene	\$25,000	to continue their Elderly Assistance Program, addressing the growing needs of low-income seniors in Avery County struggling with rising utility bills and home repairs, especially post-Helene. The funding will support critical repairs and will help residents navigate complex regulations, helping maintain safe and livable homes despite limited resources and FEMA ineligibility.	Avery
Western Carolina Rescue Ministries	Abba's House Recovery for Women and Children	\$25,000	to support Abba's House, a free residential recovery program for mothers struggling with substance use and their young children across 18 WNC counties. As the only program in the region that keeps mothers and children together during treatment, it provides a safe, supportive environment to help families heal and recover.	WNC Region

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YMCA of Western North Carolina	Youth Mental Health First Aid for Spanish Communities	\$25,000	to continue expanding its Youth Mental Health First Aid training for Spanish-speaking communities by offering interpretation, translated materials, and culturally tailored sessions. The program reduces barriers to care and equips Spanish-speaking individuals with tools to support youth mental health across the region.	Buncombe, McDowell, Henderson, Swain
Yokefellow Service Center	Necessities for Neighbors	\$25,000	to provide critical support to low-income Rutherford County residents facing crisis situations. The funding will also provide direct financial assistance for rent, utilities, and essential medications, as the community experiences rising needs due to Hurricane Helene, extreme weather, and reduced access to other aid programs.	Rutherford

TOTAL: \$1,259,504