MOUNTAIN PROJECTS
Life-Changing Services

Spring Newsletter, 2021

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Staff members Vicki Ferguson (l) and Vivian Bumgarner make a new friend during a home visit with a client >



Your Holiday Donations Eased the Pain of the Pandemic

Dear Friends of Mountain Projects,

Our intent with this newsletter is to **express our appreciation** and reflect the impact that your December donations have made in the midst of the pandemic.

We saw a lot of suffering as the effects of Covid unfolded in our community, and we've been anxious to see what the winter quarter would bring. As springtime arrives we're getting a clearer picture of what's ahead, and please know that we, along with our clients, are **immensely grateful for every contribution** we received.

We've extended quite a few **helping hands** through the generosity of our contributors.

I want to share a note from one of our clients, to help you understand the value of your donations:

Thank you! We had nowhere else to turn. If it weren't for Mountain Projects, my family would be living without power in our home, or even worse, evicted by the end of the month. Please thank your staff and the people who support your nonprofit. We never thought we would be in this situation and you all came through in the nick of time. From our hearts, thank you.

At Mountain Projects, we know this story all too well. As a community action agency serving Haywood and Jackson counties, **it's our mission to provide stabilizing solutions for people with serious unmet needs**: food, shelter, early childhood education, healthcare, substance misuse prevention and transportation – **the basic building blocks that make a stable life.**

People often ask me who we serve and I always tell them this: our clients are just like you and me or our elderly parents or family members. We serve regular folks who are experiencing rough times. **The truth is, everyone needs situational help at some time in their lives, and because Mountain Projects offers a diversity of services, we can step up when others can't.** A second truth is that we couldn't do it without you.

Your generosity supports critical needs in our communities, just when our friends, family members and neighbors need it most.

With gratitude,

Patsy A. Davis

Patsy Davis
Executive Director
pdavis@mountainprojects.org

Mountain Projects, a Mountain Community Action Agency since 1964

Becoming a more resilient community: We serve over 15,000 people each year

Mountain Projects operates 19 programs in Haywood and Jackson Counties and three programs in the seven western counties, employing 145 of your friends and neighbors and serving many thousands more.

We're funded by grants and your donations.



A few portraits of Mountain Projects staff. Our programs employ 145 people!

Thank you for supporting this important work!

Our Programs Provide Life-Changing Services

Central Intake
Intake specialists provide needs assessments that lead to referrals within our agency or elsewhere in the community.

Certified Application Counselors | GetCoveredWNC
Counseling to help people navigate the healthcare insurance application process.

Circles of Hope
Building systems of support to help individuals achieve economic stability in the Cashiers/Glenville community.

Congregate Nutrition and Senior Center
Promoting the nutritional health of older adults.

Family Self-Sufficiency
Economic self-sufficiency training and support for qualified families.

Food Services
Meeting the nutritional needs of the elderly and children.

Foster Grandparents
Volunteers provide unconditional love and encouragement to children who have special needs.

Haywood County Senior Resource Center
Equipping and empowering older adults in Haywood County to live in their own homes as long as they wish.

Haywood-Jackson Volunteer Center
Recruits and places volunteers for non-profit agencies across Haywood and Jackson Counties.

Haywood Public Transit
Transportation services to the public and other local agencies, including specialized handicapped services.

Head Start Children's Services
Since 1965, comprehensive child development for three and four year olds in Haywood and Jackson Counties.

Housing Development (Rehabilitation and Weatherization)
Helps provide safe and affordable housing for low income residents. Home rehab and energy efficiency measures.

In-Home Management Services
Helping older adults maintain self-sufficiency and quality of life through basic home management tasks.

Kneedler Child Development
Child care for children ages 1-5 at Western Carolina University.

Mountain Strong (Substance Misuse Prevention)
Working to increase resilience and reduce substance misuse.

Rental Assistance
Section 8 Voucher program provides rental assistance to economically disadvantaged families.

Self-Help Housing
Blend of financial planning, subsidized and sweat equity helps disadvantaged families become homeowners.

Senior Companion Services
Stipended service opportunities for low income persons 60 and over to provide support services to special needs adults.

Smoky Mountain Housing Partnership
Advocating for and creating workforce housing opportunities.

"I was very humbled by the help I received from Mountain Projects."

A client's baby was in neonatal intensive care and he was on leave of absence from work. The baby was discharged on the same day the family received an electric disconnect notice. Mountain Projects paid to have the family's power restored.

Every Dollar Makes a Difference

With your support, Mountain Projects helped 190 client households with emergency needs in early 2021.

Your contributions helped when:

- Dozens of families with overdue utility bills and shutoff notices were threatened with loss of power to their homes
- Children needed weather-appropriate clothing
- Head Start children and siblings needed weekend meals
- Elderly clients without transportation needed food
- Households in life-threatening conditions needed home repairs
- Homeless families, some with disabilities, lacked basic supplies and shelter
- Many dozens evictions loomed, due to late mortgages and rents
- Elderly clients and families experienced medical emergencies and faced overdue bills
- Families with small children lacked diapers, baby food and basic food supplies
- Funeral costs overwhelmed bereaved families



Haywood Transit Director Si Simmons (left) joins volunteers loading and distributing food boxes to those in need across three counties. We partnered in this project with Haywood Community College and the USDA.

Mountain Strong Launches Alcohol Campaign



Mountain Projects' "Mountain Strong" program works to increase resilience and reduce substance misuse in mountain counties. Last month we launched a targeted billboard campaign to help adults deter underage drinking. The initiative, which features young people in a variety of protective activites including hunting, sports and marching band, is intended to build awareness of Mountain Strong in advance of a broader-reaching educational program.

Learn more:
Visit MountainStrongWNC.org | Call 828-452-1447
Email Manager Patti Tiberi: ptiberi@mountainprojects.org

Health Insurance Counseling Service Ramps Up



The Health Insurance Marketplace special enrollment period has been extended until August 15. New subsidy changes mean that by updating their policies, 80% of consumers can pay $10 or less for their monthly premium, and half of those people can pay $0. Action is required! Contact the Mountain Projects Certified Application Counseling team at the number/website below. Our Counselors offer local, free, in-person or telephone help for current enrollees and for people still shopping for insurance.

Learn more:
GetCoveredWNC.org | Call 828-452-1447
Email Manager Jan Plummer: jplummer@mountainprojects.org

"I didn't want to ask for help, but I had no other choice if I wanted to stay housed. I am thankful to Mountain Projects and its supporters."

A client on partial disability and social security had surgery on her foot that kept her away from work. She wasn't able to make ends meet and needed help paying her rent. Mountain Projects helped.

Share your stories of our community's resilience!

Visit MountainProjects.org to learn how

Strengthening the Fabric of our Community



Second Ave., Sylva, site of our new self-help project

Approved by HUD, SMHP Moves Forward as a Counseling Agency

April's been a big month for Smoky Mountain Housing Partnership! We were recognized as a HUD-approved housing counseling agency, and we're expanding our services and adding employees. Our counseling services now include:

Financial Management/Budget Counseling ▪ Financial, Budgeting, and Credit Workshops ▪ Home Improvement and Rehabilitation Counseling ▪ Mortgage Delinquency and Default Resolution Counseling ▪ Non-Delinquency Post Purchase Workshops ▪ Pre-purchase Homebuyer Education Workshops ▪ Rental Housing Counseling ▪ Rental Housing Workshops

These improvements mean more affordable housing for the people of the mountains!

Learn more:
Visit SmokyMountainHousing.org | Call 828-452-1447
Email Director Heather Boyd: hboyd@mountainprojects.org

Planned Giving Initiative Underway at Mountain Projects

How do you want to make our community a better place? Please join Mountain Projects in our mission to create stabilizing solutions for vulnerable people in North Carolina mountain communities through charitable planned giving.

Planned giving is a great way to leave a legacy and includes bequests, trusts, pooled income funds and annuities arranged with the assistance of a financial advisor. Personal property, retirement funds, insurance policies and more are the tools of charitable gift planning. These gifts allow you to express your values and beliefs while also providing valuable tax benefits and an additional source of income for life.

Learn more:
To discuss a Planned Gift, contact Patsy Davis: pdavis@mountainprojects.org
828-452-1447



Please consider a contribution.
Your support strengthens our community

Thank You

To donate ELECTRONICALLY:

1. **Visit our website, MountainProjects.org/donate**
2. **Fill out the online contribution form**

To donate by MAIL:

1. **Fill out the enclosed contribution coupon, note amount**
2. **Place coupon with credit card info OR check in return envelope**
3. **Add a first class stamp (thank you!) and drop in mail**

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MOUNTAIN PROJECTS

Let's keep in touch!
Sign up for the Mountain Projects mailing list and receive notices about important projects and community work throughout the year. Visit Mountainprojects.org/news to sign up for our newsletter.

Mountain Projects is a 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization. Donations to Mountain Projects are tax deductible. Our EIN number is 56-0849092.