

***Aaliyah McCollum** and **Angie Goss Roberson**,*
Head Start teachers, Sylva

MOUNTAIN PROJECTS

For 55 years, Mountain Projects has offered life-changing services to the people of the mountains.

This year's challenges have created immediate needs.

Can you contribute?

Life-Changing Services – A Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Friends,

What a year this has been for us all!

The pandemic has changed our lives. At Mountain Projects, **we're in the business of helping,** so we know first hand that people in our community are struggling – many more than we've yet discovered. Suddenly unemployed or underemployed, they're balancing the challenges of family life without enough food in the pantry, with bills piling up, and with winter's chill and holiday pressures coming.

It's clear that many more mountain neighbors will need the kinds of boosts we offer during this holiday season. So far we've seen a **huge increase in demand** for the assistance we provide, and we're afraid that's only the beginning, as moratoriums on evictions and other bills are expiring.

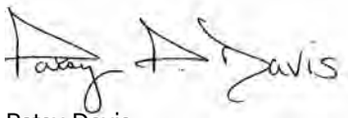
These are the times that Mountain Projects steps up. Since 1964, we've lessened suffering and increased resilience in mountain communities by helping our **clients create better lives for themselves** and their families.

Mountain Projects' impact is undeniable. Our 21 programs, from housing programs and Head Start to senior resources and public transportation, change lives for the better, embody the spirit of hope and community, and make Haywood and Jackson Counties better places to live.

We need your help to meet the need. We're reaching out to you, mountain families and friends, to contribute to the work we do to meet the basic needs of people in crisis. If you're able, please make a donation. **Now is the time to give.**

Mountain Projects is a carefully run organization with a 55-year **record of reliability**. You can trust that your donations will do good work right here in your own community.

In appreciation,



Patsy Davis
Executive Director
pdavis@mountainprojects.org

Mountain Projects serves over 15,000 people each year
Help us become a more resilient community

- Food for children, seniors and families
- Preschool for low income families
- Heat for low income families in the winter months
- Housing rehabilitation to remedy unsafe housing conditions
- Ramps that improve accessibility for seniors and the disabled
- Affordable housing for essential workforce
- Substance abuse prevention services
- Access to affordable healthcare options
- Transportation for veterans, seniors, students and the disabled

Your donations help create stabilizing solutions for the most vulnerable in Haywood and Jackson Counties

We, Mountain Projects, a community action agency

Client: Cayson Tiedge
Employee: Angie Goss Roberson
Program: Head Start

Cayson Tiedge recently won high academic honors at Sylva's Smoky Mountain High School, including National Honors Society, New Century Scholars and 4-H Youth Leadership Council. Now he attends the University of North Carolina on **full scholarship** and plans to pursue a PhD in the field of Psychology.

His academic path, though, started many years ago in Angie Goss Roberson's **Head Start class** behind the high school on Fairview Road, where Cayson, then quiet and shy, was one of his teacher's **favorite children**.

Angie, one of many longtime Head Start teachers in Haywood and Jackson Counties is proud of the many relationships she's built.

Mountain Projects coordinates Head Start preschools in Haywood and Jackson Counties



"I know what it feels like to be a single parent ... I know how much it means to receive help when you need it; it's priceless."

Angie Goss Roberson

Client: Dayton Hensley
Employees: Vivian Bumgarner and Vicky Ferguson
Program: Home Rehabilitation and Winterization

Last year Dayton Hensley, 59, of Waynesville, was in the midst of remodeling his trailer home when he **fell from a high ladder** and suffered serious injuries. With winter setting in, **his home was unliveable.** Hensley, who has a learning disability, was in a fix.

Vivian Bumgarner, Mountain Projects' Manager of Housing Rehab, heard of Dayton's plight. She and co-worker Vicky Ferguson quickly realized that rehabbing Dayton's existing home was impractical, so they **raised funds, found donors, marshalled volunteers** and removed and **replaced Dayton's trailer.**

Now the home, situated on pretty family land on a knoll along Hyatt Creek, is warm and tidy.

Mountain Projects helps with home winterization and rehabilitation



"In my old trailer nothing worked; why, I had to go outside to wash the dishes. But they all fell in together and fixed me right up. Mountain Projects is super."

Dayton Hensley

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President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" legislation, signed into law in 1964, led to Mountain Projects' creation in 1965. As a community action agency, our mission is to advocate for the well-being of our clients, who include the disabled, elderly and families in need.

Our 21 programs, from Head Start and housing to senior resources and public transportation, change lives for the better, embody the spirit of hope and community, and make Haywood and Jackson Counties better places to live.

Employee: Cynthia Solesbee
Client: Haywood Co. Farmer
Challenge: Health care insurance navigation

Cynthia Solesbee's client, a Haywood County farmer, suffered catastrophic injuries in an ATV accident a few years ago. After helicopter rides, brain surgeries and rehabilitation, the farmer's family was presented with a bill that exceeded one million dollars.

Her family was distraught. **"We'll have to sell our farm to pay for this!"** her husband said.

Fortunately, Cynthia, in her role as a Certified Application Counselor for health care insurance at Mountain Projects, had convinced her client to enroll for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act not long before, and had guided the process. **Total payout** for the family **was less than $1,000.**

Mountain Projects provides health insurance application counseling



"What I most enjoy is helping people. This work allows me to make a positive change in people lives, and I feel truly blessed."

Cynthia Solesbee

Employee: James Reynolds
Client: Veterans, seniors, students and the disabled
Challenge: Transportation

When COVID-19 arrived, Haywood Transit employees were upended. From their bustling routine of transporting seniors, the disabled, commuters and those in need, the staff suddenly had to pivot.

At first, buses delivered senior center dinners to distribution points. Soon, dispatchers compiled lists for drivers to phone regular passengers to check on their food needs. Food boxes from Haywood Christian Ministries were then delivered along the routes.

It's more normal now, with distanced riders and lots of sanitization, but **drivers and staff** continue to **provide a vital need:** transportation to work, doctor's appointments, school and much more.

Mountain Projects provides public transportation



"I've really come to enjoy my passengers alot. We've become really close. This is the first job I've had that I didn't dread a Monday!"

James Reynolds

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Do you or someone you know need Mountain Projects' services?

Meet with one of Mountain Projects intake counselors to access services for yourself or members of your family. An intake specialist is available in both Haywood County and Jackson County offices.

Call for an appointment:

Haywood County	**828.452.1447**	**ext 112**
Jackson County	**828.586.2345**	**ext 1**

Heather Boyd takes the reins at Smoky Mountain Housing Partnership



Heather Boyd was recently hired as Executive Director of the Smoky Mountain Housing Partnership (SMHP), a division of Mountain Projects added in 2019, which is making strides to create **affordable essential workforce housing in Haywood and Jackson Counties.** SMHP is providing pre-purchase home ownership counseling to young people starting their careers in fields like healthcare, teaching, firefighting and law enforcement. Boyd, of Pisgah Forest, is the first Executive Director of SMHP.

Members of the essential workforce starting down the path to home ownership can call Heather, (828-452-1447) for a broad range of counseling, and to learn about upcoming affordably priced neighborhoods in Haywood and Jackson Counties

Life-changing services

Mountain Projects invests your dollars in programs and activities that help members of our community meet their basic needs and supports their efforts to help themselves out of poverty

- Food for children, seniors and families
- Preschool for low income families
- Heat and weatherization for needy families
- Housing rehabs that remedy unsafe housing
- Accessibility for seniors and the disabled
- Affordable housing for essential workforce
- Substance abuse prevention services
- Access to affordable healthcare options
- Transportation for veterans, seniors, students and the disabled

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Your generosity supports critical needs in our community, exactly when our friends and neighbors need it most

Donors who give $1,000 or more will be recognized on Mountain Projects' digital platforms unless you prefer to remain anonymous

Help us meet the Matching Gift Challenge!



Up to $2,500 of electronic donations to Mountain Projects will be matched by the Nantahala Health Foundation, 31 Days of Giving Campaign

SMHP

Up to $25,000 of donations to the Smoky Mountain Housing Partnership (a division of Mountain Projects) will be matched by legacy donors, Geri & Don McGowan

To donate by MAIL, follow these instructions

1. **Fill out the contribution coupon included with this mailing indicating your donation amount**
2. **Place the completed coupon and your check in the return envelope**
3. **Add a first class stamp (thank you!) and drop the envelope in the mail!**

To donate ELECTRONICALLY, follow these instructions

1. **Visit our website, MountainProjects.org/donate**
2. **Fill out the contribution form, including your credit card information; or:**
3. **Visit Mountain Projects on Facebook, and click on the donate button there and help us meet the match offered by the Nantahala Health Foundation**

MOUNTAIN PROJECTS

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mountainprojects.org

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.