

Camp for All, Friends for All

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Christmount Christian Assembly

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Application Form

Question Group

Buncombe County requests proposals for projects to help the community recover from and respond to COVID-19 and its negative economic impacts.

Buncombe County has been awarded \$50,733,290 in Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (Recovery Funding), as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. This infusion of federal resources is intended to help turn the tide on the pandemic, address its economic fallout, and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

Buncombe County is committed to investing these funds in projects that:

- Align to county strategic plan and community priorities
- Support equitable outcomes for most impacted populations
- Leverage and align with other governmental funding sources
- Make best use of this one-time infusion of resources
- Have a lasting impact

Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto.

[Click here for the full terms and conditions of the RFP](#)

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds*

Name of Project.

Camp for All, Friends for All

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$250,000.00

Recovery Fund Eligible Category*

Please select one:

Small business and non-profit support

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

Since 1998, Christmount Conference Center has served as the host site for the Christmount Adapted Programs for individuals ranging in ages 4 years through around 65 years of age. Christmount Adapted Programs has sought to offer an adapted version of camp activities for campers with autism and / or developmental disabilities. In 2018, we expanded the vision from summer camping programs to include

opportunities for local (Buncombe County) residents to participate in monthly "Friends Group" meetings. The importance of these gatherings was driven home during the pandemic when we had to pause our Friends Group meetings and our summer camping programs. The isolation felt by our participants was real, with one of our most active (and most isolated) members taking his own life. "Camp for All, Friends for All" would provide year-round outlets and opportunities for those with autism / developmental disabilities to discover community, acceptance, and purpose.

Project Plan*

Explain how the project will be structured and implemented, including timeframe.

The project will be structured on a year-round basis with programming offered during each month of the year. In addition to the summer camping programs currently offered - Camp Lakey Gap for individuals with autism, and Camp Sunshine for individuals with developmental disabilities - we will offer programs for populations often marginalized and / or discouraged from participating in social group settings like summer camp. These groups could include, but not be limited to: 1) physically disabled, 2) hearing impaired, 3) visually impaired, 4) multiple sclerosis, 5) adoption, 6) cancer, 7) learning disorders, and more.

The primary focus will include week-long camping programs, which could occur during almost any time of the calendar year. Given adequate staff, volunteers, and resources, camps and retreats could operate on a year-round basis. The heart of this project is community partnerships. Through identification of key community partners, agencies, and professionals, Christmount would serve as the primary host-site for these partners to offer this incredible service to their clients. Christmount provides the facilities - lodging, recreation, dining; the support staff - office, medical, consultants, food service; and the programming staff - camp directors, camp counselors, and activity directors, and overnight staff. The partner organizations provide additional support through volunteers.

Statement of Need*

Describe the need that this project will address. Include data to demonstrate the need, and cite the source of the data.

Oftentimes, children and adults with terminal illness, special needs, or developmental disabilities tend towards feelings of isolation, loneliness, low self-esteem, and depression. This project will begin to take seriously the need for these individuals to feel connected, supported, and engaged in their communities in ways that are mutually beneficial for the individuals attending camp as well as for the overall health of the entire community.

Drs. Clifton E. Watts, Ann M. Gillard, and Peter A. Witt from the Texas A&M University Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, conducted a multiple-year study on Camp For All, a camp for children and adults with challenging illnesses or special needs, located in Texas. This study was published in 2009 and can be accessed at https://campforall.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Eval_Camp_For_All_Final_Report_081211.pdf.

Some of the findings in this study included an "observation of cultures of acceptance and openness. These types of behaviors explained why some campers experienced positive change in hopelessness, competence, and feeling normal. The activities specific to this camp allowed for expression, education, and connection to others that

rarely exists in the everyday lives of these youth. Camp was identified as a chance to experience a reprieve from being ill, and an opportunity to become engaged." Further, the study stated that "camp works because it's out of the ordinary." Rather than categorize these individuals as clients to be removed from mainstream society, these camp experiences can provide our communities opportunities to more deeply engage these individuals, seeing them as compassionate, capable human beings who long for interconnection, meaning, and purpose within society.

Link to COVID-19*

Identify a health or economic harm resulting from or exacerbated by the public health emergency, describe the nature and extent of that harm, and explain how the use of this funding would address such harm.

One very important health concern that has been grossly exacerbated by the pandemic is the magnification of isolation for many individuals with chronic illnesses or disabilities. "Preacher Jimmy" was a man with developmental disabilities who attended Camp Sunshine at Christmount for many years. Although he attended camp as a participant, he came to be seen as a true helper, playing guitar and singing in his slow, country drawl with the other campers. When the pandemic shut down much of the country, Jimmy felt more and more isolated, unable to attend church, unable to attend Camp Sunshine, and unable to attend the Friends Groups that Christmount also hosted. In an act of desperation born from extreme isolation, hopelessness, and loneliness, Jimmy took his own life during the summer of 2020. We believe that had greater networks of support been in place for Jimmy, circumstances would be dramatically different resulting in Jimmy still being with us today.

A key finding in the study listed above stated that "campers with disabilities and chronic illnesses have similar life experiences, but often feel "left out" or different. A strength of providing this type of camp is that many campers realize that they are not alone. Supportive peers in camps were linked to campers who experienced positive change in feeling normal, and decreases in loneliness..." The funding from this grant would be a key building block in establishing a cohesive system within our county bringing together nonprofit agencies, medical organizations, mental health professionals, and volunteers.

Population Served*

Define the population to be served by this project, including volume and demographic characteristics of those served.

The population to be served by this project is limited in scope only by our imagination, creativity, and ability to work together as a community. According to the US Census Bureau (2019), over 13% of the population in Buncombe County have disabilities. Currently, Buncombe County Schools offer these specialized services for students: Audiological Services, Autism, Hearing Impaired, Occupational Therapy Services, Physical Therapy, Speech / Language Services, Visually Impaired, and more (source: <https://buncombeschools.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=92531&pageId=248030> / accessed 7/13/21). I could be wrong, but I would imagine that a community resource that provides supplemental services for the Buncombe County students throughout the summer time would be a welcome component in the school system's endeavor to adequately serve our children. Buncombe County schools serve over 24,000 students (source: https://www.buncombeschools.org/about/our_schools / accessed 7/13/21). Beyond the school systems, the services provided by this proposed project would lend incredible support to other community organizations involved in addressing the social, emotional, and mental well-being of children, youth, and adults in our communities. Community partners might include hospitals, Special Olympics, the ARC of Buncombe County, United Way, Autism Society of WNC, Blue West, McCune Center, Howdy Homemade Ice Cream, and many others.

Results*

Describe the proposed impact of the project. List at least 3 performance measures that will be tracked and reported. If possible, include baselines and goals for each performance measure.

The proposed impact of the project will be multi-faceted, positively affecting individuals, families, and organizations. Currently we work with about 120 unique clients per year. We would like to double that figure

and track the following performance measures: 1) Camper's feelings of support and well-being, 2) positivity of attitude and performance, academically and / or socially, in camper's year-round environment, be it school, home, group-home, and / or place of employment, and 3) higher rates of employment in Buncombe County for individuals with autism, developmental disabilities, and / or chronic illnesses. Collaboration with local chapters of the Better Business Bureau, specific businesses, and pre-selected schools will help us generate before and after statistics to track the impact of the project over the next several years.

Evaluation*

Describe the data collection, analysis, and quality assurance measures you will use to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes.

In order to assure ongoing, effective tracking of contract requirements and outcomes, we will conduct pre- and post-camp surveys for all participants in the program. However, it should be noted that the evaluations will need to be tailored to the uniqueness and / or specialty of each program. There is not a "one-size-fits-all" evaluation in a scenario such as this. Each camp will be unique in its program and will carry with it goals and objectives that are specific to the population being served.

Again, referencing the "Camp For All" evaluation conducted by Drs. Clifton Watts, Ann Gillard, Peter Witt, "While it might be advantageous to seek out common practices that lead to common outcomes, the strength of the partner camp approach is that it allows staff to be responsive to the unique needs of each population. This is a strength of the Camp For All system. It is difficult to perform outcome measurement in traditional programs, and even more difficult to do this with special populations. Each partner camp in conjunction with Camp For All should outline strategies that are specific to partner camps and how these align with program outcomes. Experiential outcomes such as satisfaction, sense of hope, global competence, and camp connectedness can be linked to this new set of unique goals to form a comprehensive assessment of camp."

We anticipate data collection to be ongoing as well as comprehensive, meaning that we will continually adjust measurement strategies based on the needs specific to the focus of each camp. We will also attempt to have strategic partners in the "neuro-typical" camper categories in order to have a control group to measure our results against.

Equity Impact*

How will this effort help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery? How are the root causes and/or disproportionate impacts of inequities addressed?

Camp For All / Friends For All will help build toward a just, equitable, and sustainable COVID-19 recovery by highlighting and addressing pre-existing systemic issues within our communities. It is no secret that individuals with special needs, chronic illness, or developmental disabilities are often marginalized members of our communities. Oftentimes, through no fault of any particular organization or agency, our communities are lacking in adequate funding, staffing, and collaborative vision to adequately address the overwhelming needs of this population. Camp For All / Friends For All will bring together a myriad of agencies, organizations, and key leadership within our communities who might come together to pool resources, seek state, national, and private funding, and work to ultimately make visible those in our communities who have been mostly invisible to the general public. Perhaps Camp For All / Friends For All will find partnerships within our school districts that will prove to be mutually beneficial. Schools could provide names of students who might benefit from a summer camping program, and these schools might discover that a summer camping program like this has a dramatic effect on the attitude, self-esteem, and self-confidence of these students. Perhaps a job-training program could be established for those with challenging illnesses and / or special needs. Those who attend these camps could be recommended as prime candidates for a program such as this.

Project Partners*

Identify any subcontractors you intend to use for the proposed scope of work. For each subcontractor listed, indicate:

- 1.) What products and/or services are to be supplied by that subcontractor and;
- 2.) What percentage of the overall scope of work that subcontractor will perform.

Also, list non-funded key partners critical to project.

At these early stages, it is still unclear what, if any, subcontractors would be needed in the proposed scope of the project. We imagine that consultation with architects will be necessary in order to ensure that our facilities are accessible in all areas - sidewalks, swimming pool, lodging, etc. Christmount is embarking on a multi-million dollar capital campaign with a focus of replacing old, outdated buildings with new, ADA-accessible, year-round facilities. The costs for these improvements will come from the capital campaign, not from this project proposal. One immediate area that might be considered in this proposal would be updates to the current swimming pool - the installation of a lift, and sidewalks that are more accessible from the parking lot to the pool. Non-funded key partners critical to this project would be the selected schools, businesses, and families that would be asked to participate in deeper, more meaningful ways so that data and information might be cross-tracked. Some of these would include: 1) local school districts - those that have Exceptional Children programs, as well as those who would like to acquire such programs; 2) local businesses - both those who currently employ special-needs workers as well as those who would like to initiate this hiring practice; 3) local agencies and organizations that currently serve these populations who would welcome a wider net of support, resources, and collaboration.

Capacity*

Describe the background, experience, and capabilities of your organization or department as it relates to capacity for delivering the proposed project and managing federal funds.

Christmount has been in operation since 1948, hosting a plethora of groups and managing an annual budget of around \$1million consistently for the past several years. As an organization, we called into creation Camp Sunshine, a camp for adults with developmental disabilities. Camp Sunshine has run consecutively every summer since the late 1970's. Christmount has also served as the host site for "Mountain Adventure Camp" - a summer camping program of the Autism Society of North Carolina for children, youth, and adults diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. In the early 2000's, the Autism Society cut funding for this program, so the Board of Directors at Christmount made the decision to continue the operation of this program under the name of "Camp Lakey Gap." We have a full-time program director who is in charge of all "Christmount Adapted Programs," and we hire a team of Activity Directors, Counselors, Consultants, and Nurses to assist with this program each summer. Our summer staff undergo extensive training each year to help adequately prepare them for the challenges of working with individuals with disabilities, as well as training to equip them to offer top-quality recreational programming. In recent years, we have expanded the summer camping program to include year-round offerings such as monthly Friends groups where both Camp Sunshine campers and Camp Lakey Gap campers can gather at Christmount for activities, crafts, games, singing, and a meal. During the pandemic we offered weekly virtual summer camping activities as well as socially-distanced in-person activities at a local park in Asheville. Our staff and volunteers are committed to serving this population and would love to see the wider impact of a project like "Camp For All / Friends For All" in our communities.

Budget*

Provide a detailed project budget including all proposed project revenues and expenditures, including explanations and methodology. For all revenue sources, list the funder and denote whether funds are confirmed or pending. For project expenses, denote all capital vs. operating costs, and reflect which specific expenses are proposed to be

funded with one-time Buncombe County Recovery Funds.

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Recovery-Funds-budget.xlsx

Special Considerations*

Provide any other information that might assist the County in its selection.

Christmount Conference Center is not interested in being the best *in* the community, but simply doing what is best *for* the community. During the pandemic we took advantage of the "down time" to reevaluate our trajectory and impact and connection within our communities. We deeply believe in our mission of creating a place for ALL to find community, acceptance, and purpose. We have a heart for those on the margins of our society, specifically children and adults with challenging illnesses, disabilities, or special needs. Although "Christ" is in our name, we are not interested in proselytizing and / or pushing any particular religious ideology upon anyone. We welcome people of all backgrounds, religious (or non-religious) affiliations, faith traditions, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and sexual orientation. Whereas a project like this would be beneficial to Christmount, we see the real value in what it would bring to the greater community. In order to reverse the negative effects of the pandemic, we want our communities to come back stronger and more cohesive than we were before the pandemic.

Whether or not we receive funding from Buncombe County, we plan to move forward with this project. We believe it would be an ideal project for the county to consider funding as it would bring together many agencies and organizations for a common goal. If we can answer any questions or provide any additional information, please feel free to reach out at your convenience. Thank you again for your consideration.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Recovery-Funds-budget.xlsx

**Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
Proposed Project Budget**

Organization Name:	Christmount Christian Assembly, Inc.
Project Name:	Camp For All / Friends For All
Amount Requested:	\$250,000

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds	\$ 250,000.00	Pending	Buncombe COVID Recovery Grant
Program Income generated from Camp For All / Friends For All fees	\$ 150,000.00	Pending	Goal would be to have majority of camp costs covered by scholarship and grant funding
Scholarship Fund	\$ 100,000.00	Pending	development of robust scholarship fund for this program
Support from agencies and organizations	\$ 50,000.00	Pending	Businesses and organizational sponsorships for program
Community Fundraisers	\$ 50,000.00	Pending	develop an annual fundraiser that would support this mission associated with this program
Camp Lakey Gap summer camp revenue	\$ 130,000.00	Confirmed	
Camp Lakey Gap scholarship fund	\$ 60,000.00	Confirmed	
Camp Sunshine summer camp revenue	\$ 10,000.00	Confirmed	
Camp Sunshine Scholarship Fund	\$ 20,000.00	Confirmed	
Zippping For Autism fundraiser	\$ 15,000.00	Confirmed	Fundraiser specifically for Camp Lakey Gap
Capital Campaign to replace outdated buildings at Christmount	\$ 1,500,000.00	Pending	Capital Campaign to be launched fall of 2021. This figure is conservative estimate; will hopefully be adjusted upward after Feasibility Study is completed in August.
List other sources here			
List other sources here			
List other sources here			
List other sources here			
Total	\$ 2,335,000.00		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
Camp Lakey Gap Director (Adapted Programs)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	Operating	Salary provided by Christmount
Assistant Director - Camp Sunshine (Developmental Disabilities) - Part-time, summer position	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	Operating	Salary provided by Recovery Funds for first year; covered by operating income subsequent years
Assistant Director - Camp For All / Friends For All - Full Time, year-round position (Liason for local organizations / agencies for summer programs)	\$ 50,000.00		\$ 50,000.00	Operating	Salary provided by Recovery Funds for first year; covered by operating income subsequent years
PT Summer Volunteer Coordinator	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	Operating	In recent years we have been intentional about involving volunteers with diverse abilities, i.e., autism, Down's Syndrome, etc. A Summer Volunteer Coordinator would dramatically help facilitate these individuals, allowing us to develop a vocational training program as well.
ADA modifications to Swimming Pool	\$ 10,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	Capital	installation of a hydraulic chair lift
ADA modifications to sidewalks / walkways	\$ 25,000.00		\$ 25,000.00	Capital	accessibility to key areas around campus - pool, outdoor gathering areas, indoor meeting spaces
Additional Summer Staff	\$ 50,000.00		\$ 50,000.00	Operating	plan to add 20 summer staff to help run the activities associated with these new camping programs
Replacement of outdated (circa 1940's) Meeting Building	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 1,100,000.00	\$ 1,130,000.00	Capital	Fellowship Hall was part of Moore General Hospital, used in WWII; moved to Christmount in the 1950's. The building is inadequate to accommodate campers for daily activities.
Replacement of outdated (circa 1940's) Staff Lodging Building	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 1,430,000.00	\$ 1,460,000.00	Capital	Davis Hall was part of Moore General Hospital, used in WWII; moved to Christmount in the 1950's. The building is inadequate to accommodate summer staff and is in need of desperate replacement.
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Total			\$ 2,830,000.00		