

**Buncombe County FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants
Application Summary Sheet**

Project	STEP (Skills Training Employment Program)
Organization	A-B Tech Foundation

Amount Requested	\$50,000	Strategic Priority or Sustainability Goal	Diverse Workforce
New or Renewal Request	New	Commissioner Districts Served	All

Organization Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech) has served as the region's two-year college since its establishment in 1958 and delivers education to enhance academic, workforce, and personal development.
Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> STEP is a partnership between A-B Tech, Buncombe County HHS, USDA & the NC Community College system to connect people receiving food assistance with education, training and employment options. The goal of the STEP program is sustainable living wage employment.
People Served	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any participant between the ages of 18-59, enrolled in (or eligible to receive) food and nutrition services in Buncombe County may receive services from STEP.
Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 70% of STEP clients will complete the employability skills lab course 70% of STEP client will experience a wage increase 40% of all STEP client are getting access to positions \$12/hr and up

Budget			
Amount Funded FY2019	n/a	Increase Request	n/a
Project Budget	\$428,650	Total Organization Budget	\$2,087,740

Other Funding Sources: STEP is funded through a combination of grant funds, matching funds from the USDA, State funds allocated to the College, Buncombe County HHS, and A-B Tech Foundation funds.

Additional Information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funded through a County Department. County funding of this program is \$20,000 in FY2019 through HHS Economic Services. County department has budgeted an increase of \$55,000 for a total of \$75,000 for FY2020 (\$47,000 of which can be reimbursed by state/federal funds). 	

STEP (Skills Training Employment Program)

FY2020 Strategic Partnership Grants

A-B Tech

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Application Form

Question Group

Please complete the form below and upload the required files for your application. Organizations submitting more than one project must complete one submission form for each project. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Priority is given to nonprofit organizations with projects that contribute to Buncombe County's strategic priorities or sustainability goals.

For FY2020, no Strategic Partnership Grant applications will be considered for the strategic priorities "Affordable Housing" or "Early Childhood Education." Funding for affordable housing projects is managed through Buncombe County's Affordable Housing Services Program. Funding for early childhood projects will be managed through the newly forming Early Childhood Education and Development Fund.

Project Name*

Name of Project.

STEP (Skills Training Employment Program)

Amount Requested*

\$50,000.00

Strategic Priority*

Which of the following priorities best reflects the primary goal of your project?

Buncombe County Commissioners are dedicated to strengthening the quality of life for everyone by setting new fiscally, socially and environmentally responsible goals that will guide decisions and improve our community for future generations. The Board has committed to strategic priorities as a guide to shape partnerships and investments of resources to insure a healthy, safe, well-educated, thriving and sustainable community.

Details about the Strategic Priorities are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Diverse Community Workforce

Strategic Priority - Other Sustainability Goal

If you selected "Other Sustainability Goal" from the list of Strategic Priorities, please list it here.

Details about the Sustainability Goals are available at [THIS LINK](#).

Organization Description*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

Dedicated to student success, A-B Tech delivers quality education to enhance academic, workforce, and personal development. Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College has served as the region's premier two-year college since its establishment in 1958. An impressive one-in-three service area residents has taken a class offered by A-B Tech. The Institution's commitment to excellence is reflected in its values, culture and outcomes-based strategic plan. The College is governed by a board of trustees – and is accredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges (SACS) and numerous program-specific accrediting bodies. The College is routinely recognized for exceptional performance by the NC Community College System (NCCCS).

Project Description

What do you propose to do? What is your plan? What are your goals?

STEP is a partnership between A-B Tech, Buncombe County Health and Human Services, USDA and the North Carolina Community College System. STEP connects those receiving food assistance in Buncombe County with education, training, and employment options. The goal of the STEP program is sustainable living wage employment. Since our inception in November 2016, we have increased the average wage of participants by over three dollars per hour (from \$8.50 to \$11.65) with that number continuing to grow (we aspire to reach \$13.65 as an average wage of program participants). STEP has also taken the lead in coordinated community workforce development projects like the renovation of Lee Walker Heights. STEP advocated for and created a course at A-B Tech to train our participants in construction skills and negotiated with developer Weaver-Cooke to interview all course graduates. We have also created or supported similar projects in the healthcare, childcare, and nonprofit sector.

Key Steps*

How will the project work? What are specific activities and milestones that your project entails?

- 1SNAP recipients are identified by Case Managers, Student Services, or self-identify
- 2Clients attend an orientation and undergo an employability assessment that reviews client goals, support systems, housing and transportation concerns, criminal, employment, and education history, and a skills review
- 3Clients are paired with Education Navigators to help them focus their goals, identify barriers to meeting those goals, and brainstorm solutions
- 4Once enrolled in courses, participants are then eligible for a variety of support services including help with the cost of tuition, books, fees, program requirements, case management, and employment counseling
- 5Case Managers check in with students regularly to ensure they are persisting in their educational path
- 6The student completes degree or credential or enrolls for another year
- 7Students that complete and need help finding a job are passed to A-B Tech's Job Club Coordinator to help with job seeking, resume writing and interview skills

Area Served*

Which areas of the County will be served by this project? Which Commissioner District(s) will be served?

A Buncombe County Commissioner district map is available at [THIS LINK](#).

STEP works one on one with SNAP recipients from all over the county. Every district is served. Students have the option of taking courses at any A-B Tech Campus (Asheville, Madison, S. Asheville, Woodfin) or online, therefore removing transportation barriers and better serving our rural participants.

People Served*

Who are the members of our community this project will serve? How many people will be served? Include demographics, including age, area median income, race, neighborhood and/or school.

According to Buncombe County Health and Human Services, 8,037 adults are currently receiving food assistance, and a significant portion of that local population is underemployed or unemployed. These recipients are low to very low income, are often female heads of households, and may be unemployed or underemployed because they currently lack the skills and credentials to get ahead, but not the determination. Any participant between the ages of 18-59, enrolled in (or eligible to receive) food and nutrition services in Buncombe County may receive services from STEP. This open access allows STEP to serve a diverse client population that is reflective of the growing Buncombe County population. A demographic analysis of clients served as of July 2018 reveals:

- 52% identify as White/Caucasian
- 45% identify as Black/African American
- 3% identify as Latino
- 78.8% of STEP are female with a majority being female heads of household
- 53% are between the ages of 26-41

Partners*

Which other organizations are you working with to reach your goals? What other local organizations provide similar services or serve similar beneficiaries, and how do you work together?

We partner with organizations throughout the County on special projects and to braid resources around existing clients. STEP and Buncombe Partnership for Children partnered to support students in the Teacher Assistant Training Program. Students earn statewide child care credentials and given access to substitute teaching work earning \$13/hr. STEP provides these students with tuition and book assistance as well as case management. STEP has partnered with GO, Weaver Cooke, the Housing Authority of City of Asheville, and Mountain Housing Opportunities to provide a construction training class which leads to guaranteed interviews for work on the renovation of Lee Walker Heights. STEP has created marketing material, held meetings with service providers and recorded radio spots to advertise this project. STEP has expansive relationships with various community organizations to link participants to services that contribute to their success, like housing assistance, childcare, and other needs.

Personnel*

Who is responsible for the project? Briefly describe project leaders and the role each will play in the project. How do these leaders reflect the population or community that you serve?

The STEP team is composed of five client-facing positions. Two Education Navigators who work directly with clients in the course registration process, one Employment Coach who manages the STEP Career Resource Center and assists clients in the job search process. STEP is supervised by the coordinator of Community Engagement and Supportive Services at A-B Tech. Each member of the team has received

government assistance at some point in their life and one half of the team graduated from A-B Tech. Our team is trained in a strengths-based model of social work and team members have master's degrees in Human Services or Intercultural Studies. However, what stands out about our team isn't our credentials or shared life experience with our clients, it's the high level of care and consistency we provide to participants in our program.

Success*

How will you measure results? What will success look like? How will you document the impact of your project? Include whether there is a model that serves as basis for project design.

STEP is a part of a larger network of statewide Employment and Training programs funded by the USDA. The Buncombe County/A-B Tech partnership was the first in the state and remains the largest. A handful of other states have piloted this model. We will measure success by achieving the following outcomes:

- Outcome 1. 70 percent of STEP clients will complete the employability skills lab course
Tracking: STEP staff will use colleague to run reports of completion rates for clients
- Outcome 2. 70 percent of STEP client will experience a wage increase
Tracking: Employment data will be gathered from client reporting and county resources. Quarterly reports on employment will be produced
- Outcome 3. 40 percent of all STEP client are getting access to positions 12/hr and up
Tracking: Employment data will be gathered from client reporting and county resources, Data will be gathered from client reporting as made available. Quarterly reports on employment will be produced.

Funding*

What is your plan for finding the balance of the project budget? What is your funding timeline and what are your other sources of support?

STEP is funded through a combination of grant funds, matching funds from the USDA, state funds allocated to the College, and A-B Tech Foundation funds. Every private dollar raised by the College is matched 50% by the USDA. Our goal is to leverage this support into a sustainable funding model through the continued pursuit of grants, private donors and partnerships with employers.

Committed funds for the 19/20 fiscal year are:

- People in Need- \$15,000
- Private donations- \$4,000
- USDA/NCCS- \$66,073
- State allocated Funds- \$56,300

Pending funds include:

- USDA NCCS- \$173,550 (includes matching funds estimate)
- Sisters of Mercy - \$25,000
- BCDHHS- \$20,000
- Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant- \$50,000
- Other grants- \$38,727

Sustainability*

How will this project be maintained? Please describe funding sources and how you plan to sustain the project in future years.

A grant from the Buncombe County Sustainability Fund would greatly contribute to the sustainability of this program as it would directly leverage an additional \$25,000.

STEP has a unique funding structure and every private dollar raised by the College to support this program is reimbursed 50% by the USDA. Those reimbursements are then re-invested in the program and are eligible for further reimbursement in the following program year. Eventually, the program will be self-sufficient through these reimbursements and College and County funds.

ATTACHMENTS

Project Budget*

Download the budget form at **THIS LINK**.

Complete the budget form for this project and the overall organization.

Save it to your computer, then upload it.

strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-budget-template (2).xlsx

Financial Statements

Upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements.

All financial statements must be audited, reviewed or compiled by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.

FINAL Foundation AUDIT 2016-2017.pdf

IRS Form 990

Upload a copy of the 990 nonprofit tax reporting form that you most recently completed.

If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.

990 2016 Public Version.pdf

Board of Directors List

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors.

If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

2018 Board Mailing List.xls

Authorized Signatory

By typing in below the name of the authorized signatory and date of submittal, you acknowledge that your governing body has authorized this application, that it is true and current to your knowledge. As a condition of any grant awarded, this organization will provide all information in the manner described in the contract to be executed between the organization and Buncombe County or its designee, including program and financial reporting.

Name & Date

Shelley White, Vice President of Workforce Development 2/5/18

Other attachments or supplemental information may be submitted to Rachael Nygaard at rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- strategic-partnership-grants-FY2020-budget-template (2).xlsx
- FINAL Foundation AUDIT 2016-2017.pdf
- 990 2016 Public Version.pdf
- 2018 Board Mailing List.xls