

Capacity and Accessibility Enhancement

FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants

Bennett

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants program, Buncombe County requests proposals for community-based projects working toward outcomes in alignment with Strategic Plan focus areas.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Strategic Partnership Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION – Before completing the application, please tell us a little about the request.

Project Name*

Capacity and Accessibility Enhancement

Strategy*

Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

- Environmental Stewardship - High quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations
- Educated & Capable Community - A county where all people thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives
- Vibrant Economy - A robust and sustainable economy that builds on homegrown industries/talent and provides economic mobility for all
- Resident Well-Being - A county where residents are safe, healthy, and engaged in their community

Educated & Capable Community

Funding Request*

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$53,950.00

Grant Guidelines*

Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines Strategic Partnership Grants?

Click here for the Grant Guidelines.

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes

Nonprofit Status*

Upload proof of nonprofit status, such as IRS Determination Letter or documentation from the North Carolina Secretary of State. If this documentation is not available, briefly state the reason.

Gladiator Sports 501(c)3.pdf

Board of Directors*

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.

Gladiator Sports board of directors_BCSP Grant.pdf

APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*

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

Gladiator Sports Academy (GSA) was established in 2012 as an independent sports program with a vision to encourage, empower, inspire and equip young men to reach their highest potential through athletics. We target young men considered at-risk who are interested in sports but are unable to play in traditional high school settings for various reasons, often due to academic, emotional or behavioral concerns. We presently offer three sports programs: basketball, football, and lacrosse. Our mission statement is "Challenging young men through athletics to engage the world with strength of character and faith." We strive to provide a place where passion for athletics can be properly guided in an environment that promotes character qualities essential to effective leadership. We are committed to mentoring, equipping and ultimately, engaging our athletes into society (placement into college, trade school, military, workforce, or ministry). We have established strong connections with community resources that help our young athletes achieve educational

milestones, such as acquiring a high school diploma or GED, and provide mentoring and accountability. Participants also have access to counseling for career assessment, family/social issues, and substance use. We have forged relationships with our local Juvenile Justice Office and the Buncombe County Schools Graduation Initiative as well as with coaches and administrators in the Buncombe County Schools System, to aid in the recruitment of young men that need to be intercepted and guided toward a brighter future. We most recently launched a weekly mentoring program at T.C. Roberson High School. Since 2012, we have served approximately 618 participants from seven counties in WNC. Three of our athletes have received college scholarships, nine have achieved rank as Eagle Scouts, and many have earned their GED or HSE. Others have entered into college and the military, including one young man serving currently as a Green Beret.

Need for the Project*

What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

The main issue this project is established to address is to increase our program capacity and accessibility to the community. Our increased participation over the years (growing from 95 participants per year to approximately 150 per year between 2016-2019) means we have a growing need for full-time staff but lack funding to provide them. GSA's only paid staff presently is the Director. Although he is working full-time hours providing organizational oversight and development, donor development, fundraising, coaching, volunteer training, administrative duties, and more, his salary does not reflect his full-time commitment. We recognize that the Director's position is essential to program delivery and to fulfill project goals. If the Director does not get paid, the program cannot exist. We are in need of capacity building dollars for the purpose of supporting the Director's position so that young men can continue to benefit from GSA's programs. If these dollars are secured, other funds could potentially be used to hire mentors (coaches) which would aid in more year to year consistency among our coaches. Because many of our participants experience instability in their homes, a significant part of our vision is to foster an atmosphere of family, support, and connection - a type of "home away from home". An estimated 60% of our participants lack security and consistency in one or more components of their lives. We recognize the tremendous need for consistency in the nature of our work. We are grateful to those that have allowed us to use their fields/courts for practices and games (in-kind donations), however, we have been at their mercy when it comes to scheduling, which has resulted in more inconsistencies than we would like. By increasing our capacity to pay for field/court rentals, our scheduling needs will be prioritized, and our players will benefit from a more dependable practice schedule and consistent location, allowing for greater ease of accessibility.

Project*

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

The Capacity and Accessibility Enhancement Project is designed to increase our ability to execute our mission to the young men in our community by securing funds for some of the most important aspects of GSA. This specific project hones in on the following four areas: 1) funds to pay a portion of the Director's salary, 2) funds to secure field and court rentals, 3) funds to cover travel expenses, and 4) funds to perform end-of-season banquets for each of the sports programs. At GSA's inception, the Director chose not to take a salary so as to build the organization's financial foundation and program development. Once GSA reached greater financial capacity, the Director began taking an annual salary of \$9,600.00 in 2017. For 2020, the Director is taking an \$1,800/month income, which translates to an annual salary of \$21,600.00. The goal is to reach a minimum of \$45,000 for the Director's annual salary by securing funds for 50% of the Director's salary in 2020. In regard to field and court rental, our aim in this project is to secure field and court rentals for each of our three sports programs for one year at a centrally located area, ideally, Asheville Middle School or Asheville City's Memorial Field. In addition to securing field/court rentals for practices and games, this

project aims to secure funds for transportation for GSA activities, as many of our conference games are played in surrounding areas, some as far as three hours away. This would enable us to rent a passenger van, pay a driver if needed, and pay for fuel, ensuring reliable transportation is secured in accordance with the team schedule. This project also includes acquiring funds to host end-of-season banquets for our sports programs. Equipping players for life on and off the field means there must be an opportunity to celebrate and reward the milestones, the perseverance, and the hard work, which is essential to instilling self-confidence and increasing motivation toward other achievements.

People Served*

How many people will be served by this project? Describe the people served, including demographics such as geography, income, race & ethnicity, age, etc.

Based on our approximate rate of participation growth annually of 15%, we expect to serve 170 participants through GSA's programs in 2020. Our participants reflect the diversity of cultures and communities found in our region from urban to rural, from economically stable to severely disadvantaged. GSA has recruited participants from seven counties in Western North Carolina since its establishment, with the majority of our participants coming from Buncombe County. Participants are young men ranging in age from 14-19. Our participant pool is constituted of approximately 70% African Americans, 20% Caucasians, and 10% Latinos.

Results*

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with Commissioner focus areas.

It is our belief at GSA that in order to assist in the growth of the young men we serve, we must take a holistic approach. This means that we must work to address the whole person. By providing an environment that fosters a supportive culture that values all participants, our players learn the importance of teamwork, problem-solving, respect for those who might be different from them, as well as how to win or lose with grace and dignity, and so much more. These skills are essential to successfully navigating the challenges of adulthood and life in general. We want each of our participants to establish a healthy self-confidence and see themselves as capable of leading, influencing others positively, and giving back to their communities. It is our goal that as these young men develop the fundamentals of the sports that they love, that they also grow intellectually. We work hard to improve academic performance, increase graduation rates, improve conflict resolution skills, and develop goal-setting skills among our participants. Also, we strive to decrease truancy, the risk of gang involvement and violence, as well as other inappropriate behaviors. All of these goals directly benefit the community by promoting mental, emotional, and physical health, by contributing to crime prevention and public safety, and increasing eligibility for post-high school educational opportunities, which historically leads to higher earnings and stability in the workforce. This project, which focuses on securing funds for vital parts of our program operation, will not only help our programs thrive, but will help our participants thrive. Athletes rarely remain just athletes – they become spouses, parents, employees, neighbors, and so on. We believe the investment made in learning and applying basic life skills through the team sports programs we offer will serve our athletes for a long time in the future, contributing to a more educated and capable community.

Evaluation*

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

Project evaluation will be executed by GSA's Director, Reid Bennett. Evaluating the success of our project will involve some subjective methods. We will know we have succeeded when we are able to provide a consistent schedule and access to a safe field/court designed for the sport of choice to our participants. We will know we have succeeded when participants no longer have to ask, "When's practice this week, Coach?" Rather, we will be able to provide concrete schedules for practice dates, times, and locations for each sport. Financial reports will be used to evaluate the project's success as well. We will know we have succeeded when our financial reports (operating budget) show designated funds for the focus areas of this project (portion of Director salary, travel expenses for games, field/court rental fees, and end-of-season banquets). By securing these items of need for a one-year period, there's less guesswork involved as to how those expenses will be covered, allowing other donor dollars to strengthen the financial capacity of our organization. Participation will also be tracked (weekly during each sport season), as we expect to observe more consistent practice attendance after implementing a consistent practice schedule and location.

It is our standard practice also, after each season, to meet one on one with coaches and get feedback from three questions: 1) What did you like about this year and the program? 2) What challenges did you experience this year? 3) What would you change about the program if you could? We also give players an opportunity to give us feedback on their experience in the program.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

Our supportive partners include:

- Juvenile Justice Office
- Buncombe County Schools Graduation Initiative
- TC Roberson High School (formal partnership with weekly mentoring program; work directly with Melissa Frizzel, Assistant Principal)
- Erwin High School (Ami Greene, social worker)
- Asheville City Schools and Buncombe County Schools coaches and administrators

Kaye Lamb, the Director of the Buncombe County Schools Graduation Initiative, has supported our work financially. Scott Rogers of ABCCM, Michael Woods of Western Carolina Rescue Ministries, and Sheriff Miller are some other community leaders who are well acquainted with our mission.

Many of our partners help strengthen GSA's program through participant referrals. They also assist us in networking with people that may help fulfill an area of need at GSA or offer a service we do not provide. Our partners help build community awareness which aids in the interception of vulnerable youth to develop their leadership potential to be responsible, contributing citizens in their communities and beyond. That is the heartbeat behind Gladiator Sports! The building of community awareness also lends to building our donor base.

Budget*

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

Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form 021420.xlsx

If awarded grant funds through Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships, funds would cover the following expenses: Staff salary, field and court rentals, travel expenses, and meals and entertainment. Operational funds for GSA are acquired almost exclusively through individual and business donors (currently by approximately 67 donors).

Other County Funding*

List all other Buncombe County funding that is provided to your organization. For each item, list the project being funded, amount of funding, source (grant, departmental contract, etc.) and whether funding is to be renewed for FY2021.

Uniform purchases and helmet reconditioning, \$4,964.20, Buncombe County Recreation Grant. It is uncertain as to whether the funding is to be renewed for FY2021. Funds were first awarded in November 2019 and are still being distributed for the purchase of uniforms.

Sustainability*

How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

We have a special event, Gladiator Que and Clays, that has generated operating funds for GSA for several years, with last year's event producing \$3,500. We plan to allocate those funds toward the Capacity and Accessibility Enhancement Project. We will also be introducing the Gladiator Gauntlet (a competitive 5K, 1K, and kids challenge course event) in the summer, following a model introduced to us by Kimberly James of Burke Recovery, who has successfully raised funds with this event model, now generating upwards of \$40,000 each year for her organization. We have a February Fundraiser presently in motion that is aimed to raise \$5,000 and we have a generous donor that has agreed to match \$5,000, for a total expected revenue of \$10,000.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.

Partial Funding

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

If the project were to be granted partial funding, it would be most impactful to invest in the areas of staff salary and field/court rental. Having greater consistency in both of these areas would significantly bolster our efforts at GSA.

Resource Support

Beyond this grant request, how can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work?

It is our dream and goal to establish a permanent "home base" for Gladiator Sports. Because many of our participants experience instability in their homes, a significant part of our vision is to foster an atmosphere of family, support, and connection. We would like to secure a permanent location for our players to call "home" but do not have any present leads on available space that is centrally located. If the county has any building space for rent and/or purchase, or any leads to consider, we would be grateful. We are looking for a space that could be renovated for GSA's purposes. We envision designated space for administrative offices, board meetings, tutoring and mentoring, as well as a workout facility within our space so that players can condition themselves both during the season, as well as the offseason. This would encourage consistent connection between players and coaches and foster the feeling of having a place to belong. It is also our conviction that fundraising efforts for this particular purpose would be more viable to donors if there was a specific location that was being actively pursued. It would mean the difference between a concept and something tangible for our donors.

Other

Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

GLADIATOR SPORTS ACADEMY- Advocate Letter to Schools.pdf

As the founding director, I am always eager to share the success stories of some of the young men who have pressed through hardship and have changed the course of their life for the better. One such story is about Francisco, a bright young man of Puerto Rican descent. He had quit school, and after some encouragement through GSA, decided to try taking the GED test after being in classes for a short time. Not only did he pass, but he decided to pursue real estate classes through AB-Tech and is now preparing to take the state exam for licensure! JQ was a high school drop-out that joined Gladiator football. He came extremely close to quitting but didn't. His perseverance resulted in not only graduating from Davidson River High School but also receiving a Transylvania County leadership award! Another participant, Gavin, came from a broken home - a mom with an addiction and a dad in prison. After graduating high school, he was just bumming around with no sense of purpose. He expressed interest in joining the Navy but wasn't sure if he could do it, and was being told by family that he wasn't capable of such an endeavor. After meeting with him and speaking about his potential, he decided to pursue his dream. He recently called to tell me that out of 900 sailors, he graduated from basic training in the top 7%! These are just a few of the numerous success stories I have witnessed personally since starting my work at GSA, and I know that the number of kids coming through GSA is just the tip of the iceberg of those with similar needs and similar stories. It is my ambition to reach as many as possible.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Gladiator Sports 501(c)3.pdf
- Gladiator Sports board of directors_BCSP Grant.pdf
- FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form 021420.xlsx
- GLADIATOR SPORTS ACADEMY- Advocate Letter to Schools.pdf

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **JUN 08 2013**

CAROLINA GLADIATORS
582 HILL MERRILL ROAD
MARSHALL, NC 28753

Employer Identification Number:
46-2335653
DLN:
17053092364033
Contact Person:
JEFFREY GAUNCE ID# 31614
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
October 26, 2012
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

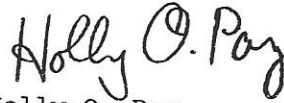
Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

CAROLINA GLADIATORS

We have sent a copy of this letter to your representative as indicated in your power of attorney.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Holly O. Paz".

Holly O. Paz
Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Enclosure: Publication 4221-PC



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mike Crawford, *Business/accounting advisor*

Richard Haake, *Director accountability*

Mark Oerther, *Organizational development advisor*

Bobby Poss, *Coaching, leadership and motivational advisor*

Mike Tinsley, *Marketing and sales advisor*

Brian Thibodeau, *Leadership and mentorship advisor*

Strategic Partnership Grants Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

Organization Name:	Gladiator Sports Academy
Project Name:	Capacity and Accessibility Enhancement
Grant Amount Requested:	53,950.00

FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue	Amount	Committed or Pending?
Proposed Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships Grant	\$ 53,950	pending
List other sources: Gladiator Que and Clays Fundraiser	\$ 5,000	pending
List other sources: Gladiator Gauntlet	\$ 2,500	pending
List other sources: February Fundraiser	\$ 10,000	pending (\$5,000 matching commitment from a donor)
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
Total	\$ 71,450	

FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Grant	Other Funds	Total	Notes
Personnel	\$ 25,000		\$ 25,000	
Training			\$ -	
Travel	\$ 4,400		\$ 4,400	
Supplies / Materials			\$ -	
Meetings (Food, Interpreting, Child Care, etc.)			\$ -	
Equipment / Furniture			\$ -	
Printing / Marketing			\$ -	
Licensing / Memberships / Dues / Subscriptions			\$ -	
Client Support			\$ -	
Contracts			\$ -	
Professional Services (Legal, Accounting, etc.)			\$ -	
Insurance and Bonds			\$ -	
Building Maintenance (Rent, Utilities, Repairs, etc.)	\$ -		\$ -	
List other costs: End of year banquets	\$ 2,850		\$ 2,850	3 sports programs
List other costs: Field and Court rental	\$ 21,700		\$ 21,700	In order to have a consistent place to practice and have games
List other costs:			\$ -	
List other costs:			\$ -	
Total			\$ 53,950	

Overall Organization Budget	Amount	Notes
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 66,966	
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 68,126	We have a small credit card balance for expenses from the year
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ 214,158	This amount reflects our proposed budget that includes variables that may not be met such as other salaried staff.
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ 224,900	

GLADIATOR SPORTS ACADEMY



PATHWAY TO PARTNERSHIP

Gladiator Sports Academy (GSA) works to develop relationships with local school systems in guiding our youth to be caring citizens and leaders in their communities. As an advocate for public schools, our work together provides opportunities for adolescents to develop life skills which will contribute to their personal success both now and in their futures. **The GSA program provides youth an environment that promotes and teaches fundamental sport skills as its work.** Within that framework, our primary focus concerns:

- Personal goals
- Building self-confidence and positive attitudes
- Experiencing the rewards of hard work and perseverance.

Win - loss records on the playing field or court are secondary to character development in the GSA program. We believe building lasting relationships with local school systems like yours is key to accomplishing the vision we have for young people in our Western North Carolina community.

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **Ages 14 – 19**
 - Cannot be 19 before July 1st of the current year
- **Not eligible to participate in school athletics for any of the following reasons:**
 - Academic performance
 - Discipline concerns
 - Recent transfer
 - Post-grad, but age eligible (only 5 slots for post-grads)
- **Diamond in the rough**
 - Lacks skill, size, or confidence to play at current school
 - Needs work on fundamentals

WANT TO REFER A PARTICIPANT OR LEARN MORE ABOUT PARTNERSHIP WITH GSA? CONTACT COACH REID BENNETT:

gladiatorsports1@gmail.com
828.779.4679

GladiatorSportsAcademy.org

SPORTS

Football

Basketball

Lacrosse

WHAT ARE PLAYERS SAYING?

"I'm never gonna forget everything you've done for me. Thank you for never giving up on me!!"

"Thank you coach for being there for me in my worst times and teaching me how to be a man and for always having a smile and positive words to say. It means a lot."

FROM A GLADIATOR PARENT:

"We can see the validation that this gives him, and the renewed sense that maybe he can just start participating and trying again at sports, school, life, and anything else he desires to accomplish...we are very proud of his renewed sense of self and work effort."

PRESS ON!