

FY2021 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	Mountain BizWorks (for Asheville Grown Business Alliance)	
Project Name:	Growing the Local Movement to Build a Sustainable and Equitable Regional Economy	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 1 (July 1, 2020 - September 30, 2020)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 3 (January 1, 2021 - March 31, 2021)
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Overall project updates:	This quarter has been transformational for our organization. Franz Charen, our founder and director of nearly 12 years has decided to step down. We've spent the first month of this quarter conducting a search for new leadership. Luckily, the ideal candidate was right under our nose. Sherree Lucas, a volunteer on our steering committee for two years and a passionate community leader expressed interest in taking over. As a key member of the committee, she has been working closely with us for the past two years and is intimately involved in our operations. Our focus for May and June was to show her the ropes and get her up to speed. She has spent her career as a professional marketer and comes with a tremendous amount of experience and ideas for improvement. At the same time, she loves the organization and will fundamentally keep it the same and retain our current team. We are confident in her ability and passion to take the Go Local movement to new heights and increase our impact on the local business economy throughout Buncombe County.
COVID-19 impacts:	We've continued to chair the Local Living Economy Working Group with representatives from AIR, Asheville Downtown Assoc., Explore Asheville and the City of Asheville and we all have seen a marked improvement in traffic to and support of our local business this quarter. Card sales have picked up and by the end of June we were able to give over \$11,000 to our public schools. Businesses continue to sign up as members and we currently have 564.
Activities related to increasing equity, diversity and inclusion:	The Dogwood Health Trust has approved a grant of \$260,000.00 to assist in funding the Community Equity Fund, a tremendous testament to the work of the team in putting this fund together. The team has expanded significantly and we've added key community leaders of color to the steering committee. We also have identified initial Black-owned businesses to be pilot recipients of the equity investment funds. We also hosted the Executive Director from the North Carolina Employee Ownership Center and introduced them to a couple of organizations in our community who they may partner with to increase technical assistance for businesses to become worker or employee-owned in our region.
Activities related to increasing operational excellence:	Our social media presence continues to stay strong and grow with over a 4% increase in followers on Instagram since last quarter. This year, since hiring Renee in-house, we've increased our monthly engagement to over 5,500 people on Facebook and 2,000 on Instagram. We published (2) newsletters this quarter, one business profile and one introducing our new Executive Director, Sherree. In June we put on our first Local Social public event since Covid-19 outside at the Smoky Park Supper Club boathouse. An estimated 75 people came out to enjoy the festivities, and for many, being together, safely, in person for the first time.

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Progress toward annual goals

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data) Please only include new data for the specific quarter				Progress toward Annual Goal
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
# of Go Local member businesses	550	53	477	20	14	564
# of Go Local cardholders	3,600	0	1,100	1,035	1,289	3,424
# of copies of the Go Local guide distributed	55,000	0	22,500	5,500	3,500	31,500

Comments:

We had 55,000 copies of the guide printed last November, but due to drastically decreased circulation of the Mountain Xpress and the slowing down / closure of businesses, fewer than anticipated directories were distributed this year. We'll also be printing fewer, as the Mountain Xpress has slowed their operations considerably.

The numbers in column D reflect end of year numbers for the 2020 card / membership and directory. If I need to put in 2021 numers they would be 53 member businesses, 0 cardholders, 0 copies of the guide distributed.

as of 2/14 I actually changed the numbers from the 2020 numbers (597 businesses, 3050 cards, 40,000+ directories) to the 2021 numbers as I think it makes more sense in tracking this year's progress. Hope that is ok.

The copies of the guide goal needs to be lowered to 35,000, as the Mountain Xpress printed a reduced number due to their reduction in distribution.

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting Budget	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount Remaining
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 6,400	\$ 2,280	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,260	\$ 1,360	\$ -
Travel/Training						\$ -
Supplies/Materials						\$ -
Meetings						\$ -
Equipment/Furniture						\$ -
Printing/Marketing						\$ -
Licensing/Memberships/Dues/Subscriptions						\$ -
Client Support						\$ -
Contracts	\$ 8,600	\$ 1,750	\$ 3,250	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800	\$ -
Professional Services						\$ -
Insurance and Bonds						\$ -
Building Maintenance						\$ -
Contribution to Public Schools (ACS)						\$ -
Cost of Goods Sold						\$ -
Website/Events						\$ -
Total	\$ 15,000	\$ 4,030	\$ 4,750	\$ 3,060	\$ 3,160	\$ -

Comments:

We hired Renee (contract) to handle social media and she is doing a phenomenal job and able to save us some money on personnel costs. So we moved some of the funding we receive from this grant from personnel to contract work.