



Appalachian
Regional
Commission

READY Nonprofits

Award Summaries by State

August 2023

READY Nonprofits is one of four learning tracks offered by **READY Appalachia**, an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) community capacity-building initiative. Selected nonprofits participated in 10 intensive weeks of courses covering board development, financial management, fundraising, employee recruitment and retention, marketing communications, and programs and operations.

After course completion, they were then eligible to receive up to \$25,000 in match-free funding to be used to build internal operating capacity and better fulfill their missions across Appalachia. In August 2023, ARC awarded **\$623,996 to 25 Appalachian nonprofits** across nine states. Award recipients represent a portion of the Fall 2022 *Ready Nonprofits* learning cohort, with remaining awards expected to be announced in the fall of 2023.

GEORGIA (1 award)

Project Title: *Organizational Capacity Building*

Grantee: ConnectAbility, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to ConnectAbility, Inc. in Dahlonega, Georgia for the *Organizational Capacity Building* project. ConnectAbility, Inc. will expand capacity by hiring an additional staff member. This individual would manage the day-to-day and administrative tasks at the organization, as well as provide support for development and fundraising activities, operations and programs, and intern and volunteer management. This position will relieve the Executive team from some administrative duties and allow them to focus on, and improve, operations and programs.

KENTUCKY (1 award)

Project Title: *Kentucky Heartwood Re-Brand and Marketing Strategy*

Grantee: Kentucky Heartwood, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Kentucky Heartwood, Inc. in Berea, Kentucky for the *Kentucky Heartwood Re-Brand and Marketing Strategy* project. The project will expand a current employee's role into a Marketing Manager, and create a 3-month internship

position, to support the development and release of a new brand for the organization. Final deliverables will include templates for newsletters, donor letters, and presentations, as well as a photo archive that will be utilized in marketing.

NEW YORK (3 awards)

Project Title: *Employer Resource Network*

Grantee: Capabilities, Inc.

Award Amount: \$24,585

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$24,585 to Capabilities, Inc. for the *Employer Resource Network* project. Capabilities, Inc. in Elmira, New York will launch an Employer Resource Network (ERN), a private-public association of businesses aiming to improve workforce retention through employee support and training. This project will focus on education and recruitment of key partners – including representatives of the public workforce system, community colleges, and local and regional foundations – to establish an initial local network of participants.

Project Title: *Professional Consulting for Dental Clinic*

Grantee: Able2 Enhancing Potential

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Able2 Enhancing Potential in Elmira, New York for the *Professional Consulting for Dental Clinic* project. Able2 Enhancing Potential staff, in partnership with a procured consultant, will assess and evaluate their current Article 28 Dental Clinic, which provides dental and therapy services specifically for individuals with developmental disabilities. Dental consulting will occur in three phases, to include evaluation of practice profitability, insurance processing and evaluation, and evaluation of current scheduling processes. Findings presented to staff upon completion of each phase will be implemented by staff to maximize revenue generation and operational efficiency.

Project Title: *Fundraising for Capacity Building*

Grantee: Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County, Inc.

Award Amount: \$24,991

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$24,991 to Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County, Inc. in Fredonia, New York for the *Fundraising for Capacity Building* project. Literacy Volunteers of Chautauqua County (LVCC) will implement a fundraising plan to ultimately fund additional hours for their part-time Executive Director (ED) and Office Manager. This will allow the ED and Office Manager to work an additional 10 and 5 hours per week, respectively, expanding their capacity to implement a new fundraising plan through increased events and grant writing.

NORTH CAROLINA (3 awards)

Project Title: *Developing Operational Tools for Increased Administrative Efficiency*

Grantee: Dig In! Yancey Community Garden

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Dig In! Yancey Community Garden (Dig In!) in Burnsville, North Carolina for the *Developing Operational Tools for Increased Administrative Efficiency* project. Dig In! will build organizational capacity by providing salary and professional development training for an Executive Director, developing an updated strategic plan, and creating and implementing an employee handbook. Investing in an Executive Director's salary and training will ensure the organization has a leader equipped for success, while the implementation of a new strategic plan and employee handbook will guide the organization over three to five years, ultimately increase funding opportunities and employee satisfaction.

Project Title: *Take Me To The River: Science and Equity Education After School in WNC*

Grantee: RiverLink, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to RiverLink, Inc. in Asheville, North Carolina for the *Take Me To The River: Science and Equity Education After School in WNC* project. RiverLink, Inc. will increase staff capacity by hiring an additional full-time employee to implement a new after school program focused on expanding opportunities in science and the environment. RiverLink seeks to use this opportunity for new programming to serve young people who have been historically marginalized in science and stewardship careers by delivering fun, science-based investigation of local waterways that most families or schools are not able to provide on their own.

Project Title: *Haywood Christian Ministry - Food Expansion and Food Hub*

Grantee: Haywood Christian Ministry, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Haywood Christian Ministry, Inc. in Waynesville, North Carolina for the *Haywood Christian Ministry - Food Expansion and Food Hub* project. Haywood Christian Ministry (HCM) staff and board, in partnership with a procured advisor, will conduct a fundraising campaign to expand their emergency food pantry, build and additional 5,000 square feet of warehouse space, and implement a Food Hub program. These efforts will enable HCM to increase their services to small and medium-sized farmers in Haywood County, provide food insecure community members with access to year-round fresh produce that can be purchased with SNAP benefits, and develop a pipeline for local farm goods that can be used to supplement emergency pantry boxes within their current food pantry programming.

OHIO (2 awards)

Project Title: *Economic Action Group (EAG) Strategic Plan and Financial Audit*

Grantee: Economic Action Group, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Economic Action Group, Inc. in Youngstown, Ohio for the *Economic Action Group (EAG) Strategic Plan and Financial Audit* project. EAG will create a three-year strategic plan and complete a 2022 financial audit. The resulting plan and audit will enable the organization to solicit funding from additional donors, supporting the long-term sustainability of EAG and strengthening their work on economic development,

community capacity building, and community engagement in the City of Youngstown, Ohio and surrounding areas.

Project Title: *Building Capacity Through Marketing and Grant Coordination*

Grantee: Ohio Valley Health Center

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Ohio Valley Health Center (OVHC) in Steubenville, Ohio for the *Building Capacity Through Marketing and Grant Coordination project*. OVHC will increase their organizational capacity through the hiring of a part-time Grant Coordinator and part-time Marketing Assistant. The new Grant Coordinator will help organize and streamline grant management for the organization, ultimately supporting efforts to raise more funds. The new Marketing Assistant will oversee and implement the organization's marketing strategy, to include event planning and promotion, social media, and donor communications. Together, the new positions will help OVHC overcome internal capacity issues to provide more care for their communities.

PENNSYLVANIA (1 award)

Project Title: *Nonprofit Capacity Building Through Implementation of New Human Resources Information System*

Grantee: The Learning Lamp

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to The Learning Lamp in Johnstown, Pennsylvania for the *Nonprofit Capacity Building Through Implementation of New Human Resources Information System project*. The Learning Lamp will purchase and implement a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to replace a makeshift HRIS that is no longer meeting organizational needs. The new HRIS will automate organization processes for talent acquisition, talent management, payroll, HR and document management, time and labor management, expenses management, and independent contractor processing – all of which are currently managed across three systems. A new HRIS will improve organizational efficiency, employee satisfaction and retention, and expand the HR team's capacity to expand services.

TENNESSEE (2 awards)

Project Title: *Workforce Development and Technology Sustainability Project*

Grantee: City Fields

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to City Fields in Cleveland, Tennessee for the *Workforce Development and Technology Sustainability Project*. City Fields, a community development corporation, will use funds to hire a new Workforce Development Coordinator (WDC) and update technology systems. The WDC and upgraded technology will enable the organization to sustain new programs providing unemployed and underemployed individuals in Bradley County with job training, stable employment, and livable wages.

Project Title: *Empowering Freight-Dependent Communities: A Data Training Program for the Greater Chattanooga Region*

Grantee: Thrive Regional Partnership

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Thrive Regional Partnership (Thrive) in Chattanooga, Tennessee for the *Empowering Freight-Dependent Communities: A Data Training Program for the Greater Chattanooga Region* project. Thrive will build a robust regional freight mobility technology and training program by hiring a Transportation and Infrastructure Data & Research Associate to gather, analyze and share relevant data-based information for the 79 communities within Thrive's 16-county, tri-state footprint. This training program will launch a new service offering at Thrive, including a fair and equitable fee-for-service model that will build financial capacity to sustain the new position and this program beyond the project period.

VIRGINIA (5 awards)

Project Title: *Rebranding in Support of NRCA Strategic Plan*

Grantee: New River Community Action, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to New River Community Action, Inc. (NRCA) in Radford, Virginia for the *Rebranding in Support of NRCA Strategic Plan* project. NRCA staff and board members, in partnership with a procured consultant, will conduct a rebranding initiative to develop a new agency name and logo, messaging, tagline, branding fonts and colors, brochures and key materials, and a new website. This initiative was identified as an action item in the agency's newly adopted Strategic Plan for 2022-2027. A clearly defined and well-articulated organizational identity will help NRCA better reach and connect with underserved populations, as well as donors, and ultimately support fundraising and long-term sustainability.

Project Title: *Local Capacity Building: GMEC Program Manager*

Grantee: Graduate Medical Education Consortium of Southwest Virginia

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Graduate Medical Education Consortium (GMEC) of Southwest Virginia in Wytheville, Virginia for the *Local Capacity Building: GMEC Program Manager* project. GMEC will hire a Grants and Event Manager to sustain funding for existing programming and increase capacity for STEM education to provide undergraduate and high school pathways into medicine. The new position will also increase the Executive Director's capacity to focus on grant writing and grant management to financially sustain the organization.

Project Title: *Shared Leadership Model and Unified Business Plan*

Grantee: Calfee Community & Cultural Center, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Calfee Community & Cultural Center, Inc. (CCCC) in Pulaski, Virginia for the *Shared Leadership Model and Unified Business Plan* project. CCCC

will use funds to support a new co-executive director position and the development of a one-year action plan to sustain the facility through its opening. While the new co-executive director focuses on managing communications, fundraising, and engaging community members, the current co-executive director will have increased capacity to draft, update, and modify business plans for the CCCC's various programs scheduled to begin operations in mid-2024.

Project Title: *Millwald Theatre's Audiovisual and Technical Capacity Building*

Grantee: Millwald Theatre, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Millwald Theatre, Inc. in Wytheville, Virginia for the *Millwald Theatre's Audiovisual and Technical Capacity Building* project. Millwald Theatre, a live event venue and movie house, will purchase upgraded audiovisual and technical equipment and supplies to better provide meaningful arts experiences and entertainment for their community. New equipment allows for more technically advanced and complex events, which in turn allows Millwald Theatre to become more marketable, attracting larger bands, performers, and visitors to the area.

Project Title: *CVCA Recruitment and Retention Analysis Project*

Grantee: Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Clinch Valley Community Action, Inc. (CVCA) in North Tazewell, Virginia for the *CVCA Recruitment and Retention Analysis Project*. CVCA will hire an HR recruiter/analyst to audit the agency's HR recruiting and retention practices, identify and provide trainings for existing staff, and more fully utilize the Orchestrated HR platform. The result will be more effective strategies for recruitment and retention of the organization's employees, which in turn increases capacity for mission fulfillment.

WEST VIRGINIA (7 awards)

Project Title: *Libera Staff Training and Fringe Benefits*

Grantee: Libera, Inc.

Award Amount: \$24,665

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$24,665 to Libera, Inc. in Morgantown, West Virginia for the *Libera Staff Training and Fringe Benefits* project. Libera will hire a consultant to help increase organizational capacity by providing staff training, developing grant accounting processes and policies, and providing fringe benefits to employees. The training and guidance provided by the hired consultant will develop necessary processes and policies to support current and future management of federal grant funds, and also provide a pathway for future fringe benefits for their employees.

Project Title: *Increasing Fund Development Capacity*

Grantee: Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council, Inc. in Charleston, West Virginia for the *Increasing Fund Development Capacity* project. Girl Scouts of Black Diamond Council will hire a full-time, philanthropy-focused employee to increase financial support from the surrounding community. This new Fund Development Manager will support key funding activities including grant reporting and proposal writing. Additional staff capacity will allow the organization to develop better relationships within their community and increase their fund development, which will allow them to scale and sustain their organization.

Project Title: *Five Year Strategic Plan for Tamarack Foundation for the Arts*

Grantee: Tamarack Foundation, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Tamarack Foundation, Inc. in Charleston, West Virginia for the *Five Year Strategic Plan for Tamarack Foundation for the Arts* project. Tamarack Foundation for the Arts staff and board members, in partnership with a procured consultant, will work to complete phase one of their strategic planning process with funding from this project. It is expected that the completion of phase one, as evidenced by the completion of two reports, will prepare and inform the organization for phase two of the strategic planning process, which will result in a five-year strategic plan and long-term sustainability for the organization.

Project Title: *LKADC Succession Plan*

Grantee: Little Kanawha Area Development Corporation

Award Amount: \$24,755

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$24,755 to Little Kanawha Area Development Corporation (LKADC) in Elizabeth, West Virginia for the *LKADC Succession Plan* project. This project will help address these issues by allowing the organization to hire a part-time coordinator to complete professional development training, implement and maintain new electronic databases, and develop a succession plan. The funding will also support temporary rental space costs, as well as costs for internet and phone services, that will help the organization get their business enhancement programming up and running. An IT consultant will be procured to enhance networking systems and establish new electronic databases for the organization. Office supplies will be purchased to support new organizational systems implemented by the coordinator. This project will improve operational functions of the organization long-term and preserve the institution's historical memory, allowing for organizational sustainability.

Project Title: *Proprietary Data Management Project*

Grantee: Faith in Action of the Greater Kanawha Valley, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Faith in Action of the Greater Kanawha Valley, Inc. (Faith in Action) in Charleston, West Virginia for the *Proprietary Data Management*

Project. Faith in Action will partner with a procured contractor to design, build, and implement a single proprietary data management tool that can accomplish the necessary tasks and measures which are distinctly unique to the organization. It is expected that the implementation of the new data management tool will streamline data entry, increase staff capacity, volunteer engagement, and performance metrics, and increase the organization's sustainability through the ability to analyze organizational needs, build recruitment campaigns, improved constituent communication, and more efficient operations management.

Project Title: *Generation West Virginia Capacity Building: Engaging a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) and Staff Professional Development*

Grantee: Generation West Virginia, Inc.

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Generation West Virginia, Inc. in Morgantown, West Virginia for the *Generation West Virginia Capacity Building: Engaging a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) and Staff Professional Development* project. Generation West Virginia will engage a professional employer organization (PEO) to support the organization's human resources functions and hold a strategic planning session for the entire remote staff to support organizational growth and team dynamics. This strategic planning workshop will support team building and organizational culture that will lead to more engaged employees and more dynamic and effective programming, fostering organizational sustainability.

Project Title: *Eastern WV Community Connection to Food Insecurity*

Grantee: Eastern Workforce Opportunity Regional Center and Services

Award Amount: \$25,000

Announcement Date: August 2023

Project Summary: ARC award of \$25,000 to Eastern Workforce Opportunity Regional Center and Services (EWORCS) in Moorefield, West Virginia for the *Eastern WV Community Connection to Food Insecurity* project. EWORCS will partner with a VISTA volunteer and a procured grant writing contractor to develop a new program aimed at addressing student food insecurity at Eastern West Virginia Community and Technical College. Additionally, project partners will help the organization apply for two federal grants to support additional college programming. This project will contribute to EWORCS' long-term sustainability by increasing student enrollment and retention at the college, which in turn supports the sustainability of the organization.