

Leveraging a Powerful Partnership for WNC Workforce Recovery

RFP for Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Montreat College

Mr. John Beaghan
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Montreat, NC 28757-0016

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Mr. Jason Elledge

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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. To date, Buncombe County has awarded projects totaling \$23,093,499, leaving a balance of \$27,639,791 available to award.

Visit <http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding><http://www.buncombecounty.org/recoveryfunding> for details.

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](#)

Organization Type*

Nonprofit

Nonprofit documentation

If nonprofit, attach IRS Determination Letter or other proof of nonprofit status.

[TaxExemptDocumentation.pdf](#)

Name of Project.*

Leveraging a Powerful Partnership for WNC Workforce Recovery

New/Updated Proposal*

Is this a new project proposal or an updated version of a proposal submitted during the earlier (July 2021) Recovery Funding RFP?

New project proposal

Amount of Funds Requested*

\$700,350.00

Category*

Please select one:

- Affordable Housing
- Aging/Older Adults
- Business Support/Economic Development
- Environmental/Climate
- Homelessness
- K-12 Education
- Infrastructure and/or Broadband
- Mental Health/Substance Use
- NC Pre-K Expansion
- Workforce

Workforce

Brief Project Description*

Provide a short summary of your proposed project.

We propose to leverage our proven technical, professional, and life skills program to support unemployed and underemployed Buncombe County residents into rewarding high-wage careers, address the barriers they face (technical, physical, etc.), and to collaborate with employers to directly align talent development with commercial needs.

Our proposed program addresses the following points:

- Forging a new career is immensely rewarding but quite difficult,
- Access to skilled IT/cybersecurity instructors is difficult and expensive,
- IT and cyber jobs are lucrative careers for which many can be remote positions IF the proper infrastructure supports the role/location,
- Finding “missing middle” individuals who could be uniquely and holistically served by this program (e.g., increasing diversity, not suited to college, validated financial need, additional support services required), and Buncombe County will benefit from both new high-tech jobs and improved cybersecurity services/awareness.

Project Plan*

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

The Carolina Cyber Center (C3) of Montreat College and our partners (e.g., ABCCM, TSACHoice, Land of Sky) propose to leverage multi-year funding from Buncombe County in concert with existing resources, additional state funding, and WNC partnerships to deliver focused academies that develop work-ready IT and cybersecurity talent.

Our academies will include the requisite technical talent development, and of equal importance, will also include:

- Professional skills development (e.g., writing and communication skills, resume, interviewing)
- State-of-the-art cybersecurity learning platforms such as Urvin.ai and Cyberbit
- HackerHighSchool, CompTIA, and Montreat College's extensive cybersecurity curriculum/learning materials

- "Wrap-around services" to address success barriers (e.g., childcare, internet access)
- Essential life skills (e.g., curiosity, critical thinking, discipline)

Essential life skills development is a crucial element of our mission and imbues students with a sense of self, skills to persevere, and the responsibility to give back to the community that has afforded them this opportunity – through their time, treasures, or talents.

The \$700,350 requested, matched with \$350,000 from a direct State Appropriation (i.e., \$1.05mm total), will fund over 80 individuals through a holistic program over approximately 24 months from program start (after a six month ramp-up period). An additional \$1mm has been applied for through the Dogwood Health Trust to serve the other 17 counties in Western North Carolina.

At a high level, the ROI:

- 80+ students entering, with over 65% earning industry-recognized IT and cybersecurity certifications, and subsequent job placement (~50)
- Average 1st-year internship/apprenticeship salary of \$50K (with above-average salary growth thereafter)
- Up to \$1mm in net new job growth (i.e., we forecast an average salary increase of \$20,000 for over 50 individuals) per year
- Reducing cybercrime in WNC through our existing (and maturing) unique blend of training, coaching, and mentoring to the benefit of local companies.

The requested funding for this program is \$700,350 for Buncombe County-specific training.

Months 1 – 6: Staffing ramp-up, community partners established, vision alignment, monitoring and evaluation program development, student recruiting, facility set-up, etc.

Months 7 – 18: Confirm corporate partnerships, continue student recruiting, conduct the first set of academies, set students up for internships and place first students in jobs.

Months 19 – 30: Mature corporate relationships, update academies with market and partner feedback, transition to a mix of paid and funded students (for long-term sustainability), add new training foci as appropriate, and place students in full-time roles.

Statement of Need*

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

The demand for entry-level and skilled labor in the Information Technology (IT) and Cybersecurity industry dramatically outpaces supply in the United States. According to the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs in computer and information technology occupations are projected to grow much faster than the average

for all other occupations. The sector is projected to grow at 11 percent from 2019 to 2029, representing about 531,200 new jobs. Most of these jobs can now be performed virtually, thus enabling talented, disciplined locals to remain in the community while serving companies across the country. These projections are based on the demand for cloud computing, the collection and storage of big data, and information security across all corporate sectors. (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020) The Bureau also states, “The median annual wage for computer and information technology occupations was \$88,240 in May 2019, which was higher than the median annual wage for all occupations of \$39,810. In addition to unemployment, direct business losses are mounting due to cybersecurity lapses. The Appalachian region of NC alone loses at least \$178mm per year to cybercrime, and the statewide losses are estimated at over \$1B and as high as \$6B.

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.

Unemployment and underemployment in Western North Carolina (WNC) were prevalent before the pandemic, but the pandemic clearly changed the landscape for job hunters. While many pandemic-related job losses hit the retail and hospitality industries, the IT and Cybersecurity fields continued to grow – but growth was severely constrained due to lack of talent. Thus, an opportunity exists to support unemployed and underemployed personnel into rewarding high-wage careers, to address the barriers they face (technical, physical, emotional, financial, etc.), and to collaborate with employers to directly align talent development with commercial needs. Fortunately, the partners on this proposal have demonstrated success with IT and cybersecurity workforce development and the relationships necessary to find and serve the “missing middle” people targeted by the program proposed herein. There are a great many men and women who dropped out of the workforce due to the pandemic and the workforce participation rate remains historically low. According to the Dept. of Labor Statistics in their March 2022 report: “The labor force participation rate, at 62.4 percent, changed little in March. The employment population ratio increased by 0.2 percentage point to 60.1 percent. Both measures remain below their February 2020 values (63.4 percent and 61.2 percent, respectively).”

Population Served*

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

Our academy will serve unemployed and underemployed individuals. This training is not focused on helping incumbent workers. The expected Employment Rate six months (2 quarters) after graduation is 65%. While this number may appear a bit low, recall that our target audience are the “missing middle” not being served in most any other way. These individuals require, and we believe deserve, a great deal of support to “unhook old and create new positive self-images”. The target populations are those:

- not in community colleges or 4-year institutions,
- requiring additional support services, and
- showing promise of succeeding in these demanding, rewarding, high-demand careers.

Thus, this proven program has been designed to “meet them where they’re at” in terms of finances, needed support services, emotional and educational support, and geography. This initiative is directly aimed at filling the over 20,100 (ref: cyberseek.org) open cybersecurity positions in North Carolina with an emphasis on the skills for remote workers and those for employers in Buncombe and regional counties.

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.

Workforce Innovation Performance Outcome Measures

Performance Outcomes & Targets:

- Total Participants served (cumulative 2-year total): 80+ Students
- Total number of Participants who complete the program and receive a credential (cumulative 2-year total): 50+ Graduates (65%)
- Total participants placed in internships/jobs within six months of graduation: 42 out of 52 Graduates (80%)
- Our prior like-kind academy programs have shown that even those not graduating and proceeding into IT or cybersecurity jobs have a dramatically increased set of employment opportunities and increased salaries - largely as a result of our immersive "life skills" program.

Evaluation*

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

We currently leverage a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) program built as part of the Carolina Cyber Network endeavor and our very similar Dept. of Labor program (with City of Refuge in Atlanta, from which we are applying a great many resources and lessons learned to this program for Buncombe County). The M&E program will also be supported by the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation (<https://www.fi.ncsu.edu/>) at NC State to avoid duplication of efforts while ensure effective learning, accountability, and sharing.

In summary, this program provides:

- Independent, objective assessments and measures for those entering the program (e.g., proper baseline)
- Student's academy performance; e.g., time on task (i.e., Carnegie hours), quizzes, grades, participation rates.
- Normative job designs and work-force ready assessments; e.g., NICE framework from the Dept. of Commerce, independent certifications (e.g., CompTIA, EC-Council) and comparisons to over 100 students who have graduated from our like-kind academies.
- Transparency by leveraging the Land of Sky (et al) supported Guided Compass platform for student job resumes, applications, skills, etc.

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?

This program has been proven to advance equity in terms of the three most needed attributes of the IT and cybersecurity workforce:

- Persons of color
- Women
- Increasing neurodiversity (diversity of thought, mental model)

We have run multiple like-kind programs in Charlotte, WNC, and Atlanta and thereby validating that over 50% of our students served and placed in jobs meet the first two criteria (the third, neurodiversity, being too hard to baseline and measure accurately). In summary, we have learned how to successfully serve these communities - but it is not easy, and we cannot do this alone. Thus, our community partnerships discussed below.

Engaging partners at the local level dramatically helps engage the most under-represented groups in the cybersecurity field such as rural community members, persons of color, Native Americans and women. This program helps to address the barriers they face. We seek to find people in the community to find those in the community who would be best served by this program. We seek local/community-based partners to reach those "in", "of" and "for" the community, to find those in the community best served by this program. "Does the student see someone like themselves teaching the course?" or "Do they see someone like themselves in a cybersecurity role?"

To counter these challenges and address the equity barriers, our program is designed to partner with mission-aligned organizations "in" the community, serve men and women "of" their community, in a way that leads the beneficiaries to serve "for" their respective communities. In order to efficiently and effectively "meet them where they are" we deliver this program through an innovative hybrid program (virtual and face-to-face), leveraging local partner engagement and recruitment as well as a mix of immersive, integrated teaching, coaching, and mentoring.

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.

Partner List

1. ABCCM (501c3 Nonprofit)

ABCCM's network recruits potential students from many different sources and focuses on recruiting students from the communities defined above. We will post job training opportunities in the community at local businesses and churches as well as online job postings, social media, newspaper outlets, etc. Strong partnerships enable participants in all programs to receive the comprehensive support they need to create a pathway out of poverty.

2. Land of Sky Regional Council (501c3 Nonprofit)

Land of Sky Regional Council's mission is to provide creative regional solutions to relevant and emerging issues in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania counties while providing a standard of excellence in the delivery of federal, state, and regional services for our member communities. LOSRC commits to providing a supportive role for the Carolina Cyber Center through project development assistance for the Center's infrastructure and workforce development to assist in fulfilling the proposed activities.

3. A-B Tech (501c3 Non-profit)

Partner to reach K-12 students and to attract high-school students into a career in IT and/or cybersecurity in alignment with local employers. Also, to provide technical training into various outreach facilities that might, in the future, become sites (such as the existing services they provide at ABCCM and FirstNC).

4. First at Blue Ridge (www.firstinc.org) is a North Carolina Licensed Peer Led – Peer driven, 12 Step Based, Modified Therapeutic Community with an Intensive Clinical Overlay. Opportunity to provide technical training at their site wherein they partner to provide facilities, wrap-around services, and mentorship throughout the program.

Additional partners include: Urvin, ISECOM & Hacker Highschool, IQ4, TSACHoice, Blue Ridge Community College, Foundation for Educational Success and Goodwill Industries of Northwest North Carolina.

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.

We, the Carolina Cyber Center, have the core foundation for capacity in the form of instructional materials, technology, instructors, and the partners that know these communities and those providing the wrap-around services. We don't have all the equipment, facility enhancements, and wrap-around services necessary, but this funding and these partnerships will provide what we need.

Adam Bricker began his career as an aerospace engineer working on cruise missiles, space vehicles, and hypersonic missiles. Next, he worked at Southwest Airlines as Director of Purchasing and Director of Information Systems, and later as VP of Application Development for Yum! brands. In 2000 he joined KPMG and built a successful IT and business consulting practice serving companies in capital equipment, industrial mfg., and aerospace/airlines.

Adam joined World Vision in 2006 as International CIO to bring a strategic vision to a federated IT function. The team built shared service centers in Asia, centers of excellence on four continents, and a discipline to find and scale innovations in health care, education, agriculture, and IT services. Leading a staff of over 900 across 85 countries, the team achieved top quartile performance across multiple independent benchmarks. Adam next was a leader in start-ups in EdTech, oncology informatics, SaaS software, and product development. Adam's most recent role was as the CIO of an international mining company, wherein they successfully worked through bankruptcy, migrated ERP and other systems to the cloud, and dramatically increased their cybersecurity posture.

Adam became the founding Executive Director of the Carolina Cyber Center (C3) in January 2020 with a vision to build a national demonstration resource for developing regional cyber awareness, cybersecurity professionals of character, and hardening regional resources. Since then, C3 has been awarded over \$10mm in DoD, State of North Carolina, NSA, Department of Labor, and other grants.

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-Montreat College.xlsx

Special Considerations*

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

We would very much like to invite you to a site visit to our program in Atlanta, which is a very similar program having tremendous impact on the un and under-employed. We also invite you to attend some of our technical and essential life skills training programs and try our new immersive learning experience app, which we've custom-designed for this program. Thank you so much for considering this proposal to serve our community in which virtually all of our team live.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- TaxExemptDocumentation.pdf
- Recovery-Funds-budget-Montreat College.xlsx

Address any reply to: P. O. Box 737, Atlanta, Georgia 30301

Department of the Treasury

District Director

Internal Revenue Service

Date:

In reply refer to:

November 1, 1971

411-12:NGG



Montreat Anderson College
Montreat, North Carolina 28757

Gentlemen:

On the basis of your statement and the information recently submitted regarding the admissions policy of your institution, and the publicizing thereof, and with the understanding that such policies will remain in effect, we confirm the exempt status of your institution under Internal Revenue Code, Section 501(a), as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3).

This confirmation does not preclude a re-evaluation of your admissions policy at a later date. It also does not preclude an examination of the operations of your institution to determine if the policy as described in your statement is being implemented.

Sincerely yours,


W. T. Coppinger
District Director

COPY

Department of the Treasury

Internal Revenue Service
District Director

Date: February 5, 1981

Person to Contact:

Marilyn Hall/jl

Telephone Number:

(404) 221-4627

Refer Reply to:

✓ EIN: 56-0543261

Your Letter Dated:

January 19, 1981

Internal Revenue Code Section:

501(c)(3)

Our Exemption Letter Dated:

April 1947

▷ Montreat Anderson College
Montreat, NC 28757

We have received your letter requesting confirmation of your exemption from Federal income tax.

You received recognition of exemption from Federal income tax under the above cited section of the Internal Revenue Code.

The tax exempt status recognized by our letter referred to above is currently in effect and will remain in effect until terminated, modified or revoked by the Internal Revenue Service. Any change in your purposes, character, or method of operation must be reported to us so we may consider the effect of the change on your exempt status. You must also report any change in your name and address.

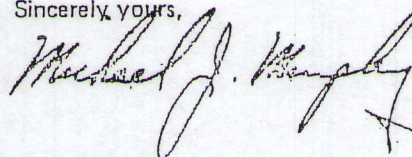
We have checked our records and find that your organization has not been recognized as exempt. If you believe you qualify for recognition of exemption from Federal income tax, you should complete the appropriate Form 1023 or Form 1024, "Application for Recognition of Exemption". Also enclosed is a copy of Publication 557, "How to Apply for Recognition of Exemption for an Organization". When the applicable form is completed, you should send it to the address shown above.

Our records indicate that your organization failed to establish recognition of exemption from Federal income tax. If you wish to have us reconsider your application for exemption, please submit the data previously requested in the enclosed letter.

Our records indicate that your exempt status was terminated revoked denied on _____.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



District Director

Enclosure(s)

- Form 1023
- Form 1024
- Publication 557
- SS-4
- Previous Request for Information

Internal Revenue Service
District Director

Department of the Treasury

DATE: JAN 29 1997

P. O. Box 2508
Cincinnati, OH 45201

Montreat College
P.O. Box 1267
Montreat, NC 28757-1267

Person to Contact:
Brenda Brock
Telephone Number:
513-684-3957
Fax Number
513-684-5936
Federal Identification Number:
56-0543261

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for submitting the information shown below. The changes indicated do not adversely affect the exempt status of your organization. The exemption letter previously issued continues in effect.

Please advise us of any future change in the character, purpose, method of operation, name, or address of your organization. Such notification is a requirement for retaining exempt status.

Thank you for your cooperation.

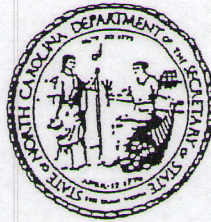
Sincerely,



C. Ashley Bullard
District Director

Item: Copy of your Articles of Amendment which were filed with the state and shown approved on August 3, 1995.

STATE OF
NORTH
CAROLINA



Department of The
Secretary of State

To all whom these presents shall come, Greetings:

I, Rufus L. Edmisten, *Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina*, do hereby certify the following and hereto attached to be a true copy of

ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT

OF

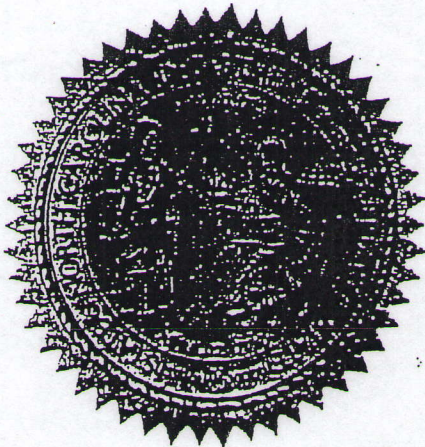
MONTREAT-ANDERSON COLLEGE, INCORPORATED.

Which changed its name to:

MONTREAT COLLEGE

the original of which was filed in this office on the 31st day of August, 1995.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal at the City of Raleigh, this 31st day of August, 1995.



Rufus L. Edmisten

Secretary of State

Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Proposed Project Budget

Organization Name:	Montreat College
Project Name:	Leveraging a Powerful Partnership for WNC Workforce Recovery
Amount Requested:	\$700,350

Proposed Project Revenue Funder	Amount	Confirmed or Pending?	Notes
Proposed Buncombe COVID Recovery Funds	\$700,350	Pending	
State of North Carolina SCIF Grant Funds	\$359,850	Confirmed	Funds received in March 2022
Dogwood Health Trust Grant Funds	\$1,000,000	Pending	Final steps of grant application review in April 2022; Decision Announcement in May 2022
List other sources here			
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List other sources here			
Total	\$ 2,060,200.00		

Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Recovery Funds	Other Funds	Total	Capital or Operating Expense?	Notes
Staffing: recruiting, case management, instruction, program management, and placement coordinators	\$ 185,000.00	\$ 309,000.00	\$ 494,000.00	Operating	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Class-specific assets: classrooms (computers, projection, desks, chairs, etc.)	\$ -	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	Capital	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Facilities (3): refurbishment, wiring, power, internet, etc.	\$ 40,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00	Capital	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Licensing for training materials, certification exam vouchers, books, cyber range, etc. direct for students	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 180,000.00	\$ 220,000.00	Operating	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Hacker HighSchool Instructional Materials	\$ -	\$ 176,000.00	\$ 176,000.00	Operating	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Student stipends, internship support, etc.	\$ 255,000.00	\$ 265,000.00	\$ 520,000.00	Operating	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Mature computer system leveraging AI and chatbots to accelerate student engagement, learning, and curiosity while reducing instructor workload	\$ 89,000.00	\$ 125,565.00	\$ 214,565.00	Capital	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
Overhead: 15% of non-capital/asset expenditures from DHT and 24% for State funding to Montreat College/C3	\$ 91,350.00	\$ 244,285.00	\$ 335,635.00	Operating	Proposed Recovery Fund xpenses are specific to Buncombe County as a part of this WNC initiative.
List expenses here			\$ -		
List expenses here			\$ -		
List expenses here			\$ -		
List expenses here			\$ -		
List expenses here			\$ -		

