FY2023 Buncombe County Strategic Partnership Grant Report

Organization Name:	Blue Ridge Pride Center	
Project Name:	Online Community Resource Center	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)		Quarter 1 (July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022)
		Quarter 2 (October 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022)
		Quarter 3 (January 1, 2023 - March 31, 2023)
	x	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Please provide a brief summary (no more than <u>1500 characters</u>). You may attach supplemental documents if needed.

Quarter 1	Q1 exceeded our expectations - especially given that we were focused on producing our annual festival. We published over 500 events on our Community Calendar, added over 200 organizations to our directory, and received visits from over 26,000 users. This last outcome greatly exceeded our expectations. We were pleased to see over 8,600 of these visitors from Ashevile, Canton, Weaverville and other surrounding communities. Major cities, such as Atlanta, Nashville, New York, Los Angeles and Dallas accoiunted for another 4,250 visitors. These, are presumably tourists and people interested in relocating here. Half of the phone calls to our center are from people planning to move here. Q1 was our pilot roll-out. We are now in the process of redesiging our calendar, directory, and news center to reflect user feedback and to improve site performance. We are also adding more sophisticated tracking so that we can track performance of each page. We also hired our first employee during Q1 (they started October 1). This was thanks in large part to this grant. That employee will play a major role in developing Pride Portal content, providing user support, and marketing the portal in surrounding communities.
Quarter 2	Q2 -Our first hired employee (hired October 1) has started to play a major role in developing the Pride Portal. In Q2 we focused on acclimating our employee with the site and on developing the bones/content on the portal. This included developing the structure of our Welcoming Pages (to be launched in Q3), gathering user feedback, and focusing on site performance. As we move into Q3, we will focus on the visual redesign of the pride portal and launch our welcoming pages. We are generally on track to reach our goals. We now have over 1300 registered users on our site and have had over 100,000 site/social media interactions.

Quarter 3	Q3- We have contracted a web developer who is working on improving pride portal welcoming pages and functions into the site. In Q3 we have soft launched our welcoming pages and we are now working with a web designer to focus on the visual redesign of the portal. With the visual/technical help of the designer/developer we have been able to focus on gathering feedback from the community and pull together resources and content to build the virtual center. We now have approx 1500 registered site users. The Pride Portal redesign is set to be implemented and live at the beginning of May. In Q3, we were able to offer a paid position to our 2nd hired employee, largely thanks to the grant. Her start date is in Q4 and she will play a major role in developing relationships and partnering with other organizations on content for the pride portal. During Q3, we had approx 110,000 social media/site visits and approx 1500 registered users.
Quarter 4	Q4- With the assistance of a web developer, we have redesigned the website and pride portal. Switching from wordpress to squarespace, and adding embedded searchable databases via Knack, has greatly improved the pride portal. We have gotten positive feedback from users on user-friendliness, visuals, speed and an overall much better experience for the user. Largely thanks to the grant, we now have a virtual pride center that contains incredible resources for the community including a welcoming space directory, resource library and community calendar. We will be working to partner with UNCA to hire interns to assist in gathering resources and updating the pride portal to keep the community up to date. Social media/site visits have both increased with our redesign of the site. Long-term, we have also reduced the annual cost associated with the portal by about $4,000 by switching website and database interfaces.

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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	
Number of user registrations	1,000	175	119	133		427
Number of participating businesses, organizations and groups	500	206	25	33		264
Number of page visits and social media hits	2,500	91,595	11,375	17,959	23,000	143,929
Dollar amount of donations through people visiting the portal	$ 10,000.00	$ 1,253.00	$ 1,766.93	$ 1,126.60		$ 4,146.53

Comments:

The focus in Q4 has been on the redesign of the pride portal, including its website interface, to improve the user experience. We have received wonderful feedback on the improvements. We are pleased that folks in the community have expressed interest in volunteering to assist in keeping the pride portal updated. During Q4, we opted to halt user registrations in order to avoid issues during data transfers as we switched website platforms. While this impeded reaching our annual goals, we are pleased with the improvements of the pride portal.

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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	$ 8,000		$ 3,030	$ 1,180	$ 1,360	$ 2,430
Training						$ -
Supplies/Materials						$ -
Meetings						$ -
Equipment/Furniture				$ 641	$ 1,208	$ (1,850)
Printing/Marketing					$ 370	$ (370)
Licensing/Memberships/Dues/Subscriptions						$ -
Client Support						$ -
Contract Web Development & Support	$ 3,000	$ 53	$ 1,039			$ 1,908
Professional Services						$ -
Insurance and Bonds						$ -
Building Maintenance						$ -
Web Site - Software / Hosting	$ 2,500	$ 614	$ 1,413	$ 498	$ 2,051	$ (2,077)
List other cost						$ -
List other cost						$ -
Total	$ 13,500	$ 667	$ 5,482	$ 2,319	$ 4,989	$ 42

Comments:

Software costs are highest in Q4 as we brought on a new website and database system. Q4 was also one of the most active for our Operations Director due to the migration. The ED assisted with portal redesign and database management via their computer.