

## Golden LEAF Foundation Announces Funding

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C., (February 1, 2024) – Today, the Golden LEAF Board of Directors awarded \$8,510,465 to support 13 projects through the [Community-Based Grants Initiative in the Piedmont-Triad Prosperity Zone](#) and \$1,225,000 to support five projects through the [Open Grants Program](#). The Golden LEAF Board also awarded \$360,500 in funding for eight projects through the [Shell Building Pilot Program](#) and \$110,200 in funding for a [Food Distribution Assistance Program](#) project.

The Golden LEAF Board also discussed upcoming application deadlines. The [Golden LEAF Colleges and Universities Scholarship](#) is due March 1st. The [Flood Mitigation Program](#) has a deadline of noon on March 5th for applications. [SITE Program](#) applications are due at noon on March 14th.

“Today, the Golden LEAF Board awarded projects that represent all three funding priorities of the foundation: job creation and economic investment, workforce preparedness, and agriculture,” said Golden LEAF Board Chair Ralph Strayhorn. “These projects will support the long-term economic advancement of rural, tobacco-dependent, and economically distressed communities. We look forward to the impact these projects will make for years to come.”

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors awarded \$8.5 million in funding for 13 projects through the [Community-Based Grants Initiative in the Piedmont-Triad Prosperity Zone](#). These projects will support agriculture, job creation and economic investment, and workforce preparedness in **Alamance, Caswell, Davidson, Davie, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham, Surry, and Yadkin** counties. [Click here](#) to read more about the awards.

“Through the Community-Based Grants Initiative, Golden LEAF works directly in one Prosperity Zone annually to identify projects with the greatest potential to have a significant

impact,” said Golden LEAF President, Chief Executive Officer Scott T. Hamilton. “This competitive process focuses on projects that invest in the building blocks of economic growth with the ultimate goal of moving the economic needle in a community.”

The North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$10 million to the Golden LEAF Foundation to implement the [Golden LEAF Shell Building Pilot Program](#). Under the authorizing legislation, governmental and charitable nonprofit entities in **Ashe, Bladen, Columbus, Franklin, Halifax, Robeson, and Scotland** counties are eligible to apply for funding. The program is intended to provide grants to increase the number of available, publicly-owned industrial buildings suitable for new or expanding businesses, other than retail, entertainment, or sports projects. The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors awarded \$360,500 in funding for eight projects through the first phase of the Shell Building Pilot Program. After completing preliminary designs and due diligence for shell buildings, these recipients will be able to apply for funding for construction of the buildings.

- \$40,000 to Ashe County to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 30,000-square-foot shell building located at the Ashe County Industrial Park. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$3,000,000 in private capital and create 30 new jobs with an average annual salary of \$40,000.
- \$50,000 to Bladen’s Bloomin’ Agri-Industrial, Inc. to develop a preliminary design plan to construct an approximately 20,000-30,000-square-foot shell building located in the Aviation Park contiguous to the Elizabethtown airport. Bladen’s Bloomin’ Agri-Industrial, Inc. expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$2,500,000 in private capital and create 40 new jobs with an average annual salary of \$50,000.
- \$50,000 to Columbus County to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 50,000-square-foot shell building (expandable to 100,000 square feet) located at the Southeast Regional Park. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$30,000,000 in private capital and create 100 jobs with an average salary of \$40,000.

- \$50,000 to Franklin County to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 30,000-square-foot shell building expandable to 60,000-90,000-square-feet located at the Triangle North Franklin Business Park, Lot 5. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$10,000,000 in private capital and create 55 new jobs with an average salary of \$45,760.
- \$27,000 to Halifax County to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 40,000-50,000-square-foot shell building located at the Halifax Corporate Park. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$10,000,000 in private capital and create 100 jobs with an average annual salary of \$47,000.
- \$50,000 to Robeson County to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 140,000-square-foot shell building at the COMtech Business Park. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$9,152,000 in private capital and the creation of 75 jobs with an average salary of \$45,000.
- \$50,000 to Scotland County Economic Development Corporation to develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 25,000-30,000-square-foot shell building located at the SCEDC Incubator Park. The County expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$1,500,000 in private capital and the creation of 25 jobs with the average salary of \$42,000.
- \$43,500 to the Town of Tabor City located in Columbus County to develop a preliminary design plan and a geotechnical report to construct a 24,000-square-foot shell building at the Tabor City Industrial Park. The Town expects that construction of a shell building could attract a business that would invest \$750,000 in private capital and create 20 new jobs with an average annual salary of \$40,000.

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors awarded \$1,225,000 in funding for five projects through the [Open Grants Program](#). These projects will support workforce preparedness and agriculture in **Carteret, Hyde, Nash, Surry, and Watauga** counties.

- \$200,000 to Appalachian State University in Watauga County for equipment for the learning lab to support establishment of a two-year, entry-level Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program.
- \$125,000 to Carteret Community College for equipment to increase the capacity of the college's welding program. The initiative is to address the increasing demand for skilled welders in numerous industries.
- \$200,000 to Mount Airy City Schools in Surry County for classroom renovation, technology, and equipment for a learning lab, housed at Northern Regional Hospital, that would train an additional 30 students from three high schools in the Mt. Airy City and Surry County school districts to be CNAs, and 40 adult students served by Surry Community College annually.
- \$500,000 to North Carolina Wesleyan University in Nash County for mechanical and electrical services and design fees to renovate a campus building to house a new baccalaureate nursing program.
- \$200,000 to The Ocracoke Foundation, Inc. in Hyde County to expand and renovate the historic Ocracoke fish house—which houses its Ocracoke Seafood Company—and to purchase a refrigerated van, expected to result in increased local retail sales, wholesale sales, and facility use.

The N.C. General Assembly recently appropriated \$10 million to Golden LEAF for the Food Distribution Assistance Program. This program is funded by federal State Fiscal Recovery Funds through the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Funds may be used for grants to nonprofit organizations to assist organizations in becoming eligible to be partner agencies of a North Carolina food bank or enhancing or expanding the capacity of current partner agencies of North Carolina food banks. Funds may also be used for grants to nonprofit organizations to assist organizations in establishing a school-based weekend food assistance program or enhancing or expanding the capacity of current school-based weekend food assistance programs. The Golden LEAF Board awarded \$110,200 to Northern Stokes Food Pantry located in **Stokes County** for a box truck and a pallet jack.

Since 1999, Golden LEAF has funded 2,245 projects totaling \$1.3 billion supporting the mission of advancing economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural, tobacco-dependent, and economically distressed communities.

### **About Golden LEAF**

The Golden LEAF Foundation is a nonprofit organization established in 1999 to receive a portion of North Carolina's funding from the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement with cigarette manufacturers. For nearly 25 years, Golden LEAF has worked to increase economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural and tobacco-dependent communities through leadership in grantmaking, collaboration, innovation, and stewardship as an independent and perpetual foundation.

The Foundation has provided lasting impact to tobacco-dependent, economically distressed, and rural areas of the state by helping create 68,000 jobs, more than \$780 million in new payrolls, and more than 98,000 workers trained or retrained for higher wages.

For more information about Golden LEAF and our programs, please visit our website at [www.goldenleaf.org](http://www.goldenleaf.org).

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