



Brian Raynor
Chairman of the Board

Scott T. Hamilton
President, Chief Executive Officer

TO: Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources
Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee
c/o Mr. Brian Matteson
Fiscal Research Division
North Carolina General Assembly
Raleigh, NC

FROM: Scott T. Hamilton
President, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: September 15, 2026

RE: Annual Report

In accordance with the requirements of G.S. 143-712, enclosed are the following:

- 1) Grants made in the prior fiscal year, including the amount, term, and purpose of the grant.
- 2) Outcome data collected by the Golden LEAF Foundation, including the number of jobs created.
- 3) Cumulative grant data by program and by county.
- 4) Unaudited actual administrative expenses and grants made in the prior fiscal year.
- 5) Current fiscal year budget, planned activities, and goals for the current fiscal year.

Enclosures as stated:

cc: The Honorable Josh Stein, Governor of North Carolina
Senator Phil Berger, President Pro Tempore, North Carolina Senate
Representative Destin Hall, Speaker of the House, North Carolina House of Representatives
Brian Raynor, Chairman of the Board, Golden LEAF Foundation
Byron Kirkland, Smith Anderson

Golden LEAF Foundation

Annual Report of Activities
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Overview

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of Golden LEAF Foundation activities for fiscal year 2025-2026. For more detailed information regarding a project referenced in this report, please contact the Golden LEAF Foundation staff. This report includes action taken this fiscal year on applications received in the prior fiscal year. Award amounts and project descriptions referenced throughout are the current amounts for awards made during fiscal year 2025-2026, reflecting any adjustments.

These amounts do not include funds for projects that were awarded but subsequently rescinded prior to release of funds. These amounts do not include funds for projects funded in the disaster recovery grant programs, flood mitigation, food distribution assistance program, the COVID-19 loan program, or the Hurricane Helene loan program, as those programs are subject to separate reporting requirements and frequencies. These amounts do not include funds for projects not reported on the Golden LEAF Foundation's IRS Form 990. The required annual report for the Golden LEAF Shell Building Pilot Program is included with this report.

Funds are awarded to governmental entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations to support permissible activities that lead to job creation and economic growth in rural, tobacco-dependent or economically distressed areas.

Summary of FY26 Awards

The Golden LEAF Foundation receives applications and makes awards through four primary programs. While these programs share similar priority areas, eligibility, application requirements, maximum award, and required outcomes distinguish each program from the others. Project proposals that do not fit within an established program may be funded as a special initiative. With the exception of the Community-Based Grants Initiative, programs are available year-round.

Open Grants Program	Economic Catalyst Program	SITE Program	Community-Based Grants Initiative (CBGI)
Awards up to \$500,000 for projects in Golden LEAF priority areas and outcomes.	Job creation projects at risk without Golden LEAF participation. Job retention projects are also considered. Funding for eligible projects, typically public infrastructure or workforce development, directly linked to outcomes at a specific company.	Focused on identification, due diligence, and development of new sites for industrial development.	Available in one prosperity zone each fiscal year. Awards are limited to three projects per county, totaling no more than \$1,500,000, with a total of \$11 million available in a prosperity zone. FY26 was the final year.

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors awarded \$52,521,306.05 to support 59 projects across 43 counties to enable implementation of agricultural, workforce preparedness, job creation and economic investment, and community, capacity and competitiveness projects. Funds awarded to local government entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations through the Economic Catalyst Program for announced projects are projected to support the creation of at least 1,881 jobs and capital investment of more than \$2.1 billion over the next few years.

Strategic Planning

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors adopted a FY2022-2026 strategic plan in February of 2021. The goal of the strategic planning process was to assess how Golden LEAF can increase the impact of its mission through implementation of programs that support outcomes in key priority areas. Beginning in 2022, the Board has reviewed progress on strategic planning initiatives and has conducted an annual review of the plan. In June 2026, the Golden LEAF Foundation's President announced his intent to retire at the end of 2026. Further strategic planning processes are pending.

Hurricane Helene Response

Following Hurricane Helene in September 2024, the Golden LEAF Foundation awarded \$7.5 million to Mountain BizWorks to establish the WNC Strong: Helene Business Recovery Fund to make loans to small businesses impacted by the storm. The N.C. General Assembly then appropriated \$50 million to Golden LEAF to increase funding available in the Fund to meet business demand. Golden LEAF reports on the status of repayments to the Office of State Budget and Management and the General Assembly in a separate report.

Golden LEAF also established the Hurricane Helene Disaster Relief Initiative, with funding through June 30, 2025 totaling \$4,997,654 for 14 projects. Funds through the relief initiative were focused on supporting nonprofits providing assistance to survivors including home repair and temporary rental assistance. The FY26 budget included \$2,000,000 to support increases of prior awards to nonprofits. Details about those increases are included later in this report.

Healthcare Workforce Initiative

The Golden LEAF Board created a funding opportunity that would allow entities that are developing healthcare workforce training programs with a capital budget of at least \$10 million to request up to \$1 million to cover the costs of training equipment and related capital expenses for those projects.

Strategic Projects Advancing Rural Communities (SPARC)

SPARC funds support bold, collaborative projects that address critical needs and unlock transformative opportunities in rural North Carolina. SPARC is designed to advance the Foundation's mission through innovative, high-impact initiatives. The projects that will be funded through this program will all have a rural focus, align with Golden LEAF's mission, include exceptional partnerships or leverage significant resources from other sources, and have a deep and enduring impact on the community served. SPARC projects are typically unique, multifaceted, and driven by regional assets and circumstances.

Golden LEAF Foundation Awards

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Priority Area	Number of Projects	Total Awarded*
Job Creation and Economic Investment	22	\$19,305,058.00
Workforce Preparedness	27	\$22,982,317.05
Agriculture	2	\$675,000.00
Golden LEAF Scholars Program	3	\$6,121,705.00
Strategic Initiatives (NC Ag Leads)	5	\$3,437,226
Total	59	\$52,521,306.05

*Numbers do not include projects that have been awarded and then rescinded with no funds released. Funds awarded for projects in the disaster recovery grant program, flood mitigation, food distribution assistance, or State-funded Hurricane Helene Response are not reflected. Numbers do include funds awarded for confidential economic development projects that have not yet been announced, if any. Numbers do not include funds for projects not reported on the Golden LEAF Foundation's IRS Form 990.

Golden LEAF Foundation Impact Data

The Golden LEAF Foundation assesses the success of funded projects by reviewing outcomes specific to each project. Data is reported by grantees and reviewed by Golden LEAF Foundation staff against established goals. Staff also conduct site visits and use other strategies to determine the success of awarded projects.

Impact Data as Reported by Grantees*	†FY2026
Verified New Positions Filled	1,309
New Payroll	\$54,269,367.66
Capital Investment	\$1,030,588,775.26
People Trained/Worker Skills Upgraded	1,928
Industry/3rd-Party Credentials Earned	779
Degree/Diploma/Certificates Earned	1,149

*Incremental impact for reports reviewed for FYE 6/30/2026

*Includes data from prior fiscal years that was not previously reported.

Golden LEAF Foundation Priority Area Activities

Job Creation and Economic Investment

The Golden LEAF Foundation partners with the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, and local governments and economic development organizations to provide gap funding to assist with job creation in rural, economically distressed and/or tobacco-dependent communities.

Through the Economic Catalyst program, Golden LEAF awarded \$9,147,975 to support projects that are projected to enable the creation of 1,881 jobs and capital investment of more than \$2.1 billion over the next few years. These economic development projects were at risk of not locating or expanding in North Carolina but for Golden LEAF support. Golden LEAF funds are used to fill a funding gap not addressed by state and local economic development programs. When determining whether to fund a project and at what level, Golden LEAF considers several factors, including the economic distress of the community, the expected capital investment, the number and quality of jobs to be created, and the importance of the project to the State.

Grantee	Award Amount	Purpose	Projected New Jobs	Projected Average Annual Wage	County Average Annual Wage	Projected Private Capital Investment
Town of Bladenboro	\$850,000.00	Wastewater infrastructure	83	\$58,824	\$46,867	\$10 million
City of Hendersonville	\$1,938,000.00	Water infrastructure	378	\$64,630	\$54,118	\$100 million
Johnston Community College Foundation, Inc.	\$3,617,455.00	Training equipment and renovations to training facility	1,000	\$82,000	\$55,456	\$918 million
County of Robeson	\$1,250,000.00	Improvements to public water supply infrastructure	100	\$59,730	\$44,628	\$150 million

Wilson Economic Development Council	\$1,492,520.00	Sewer infrastructure	320	\$116,529	\$54,673	\$1 billion
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Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Appalachian Mountain Health	\$200,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Appalachian Mountain Health to support the conversion of a former 8,740 square foot medical practice into a comprehensive Federally Qualified Health Center that will provide primary care, behavioral health, dental, women's health, and pediatric care and pharmacy and laboratory services. The facility is located in Black Mountain. It will also serve and draw employees from communities including Old Fort and surrounding rural areas. The project will create 51 new jobs paying an average annual wage of nearly \$77,000. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment.
County of Harnett	\$656,051.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Harnett County for due diligence and to clear and grade approximately 10 acres within the Western Harnett Innovation Park (WHIP). The county anticipates recruiting a manufacturing company to the site that will create 40 new full-time jobs with an average annual wage of \$55,000. The county also anticipates \$8,000,000 in private capital investment and investment of \$656,051 in publicly owned infrastructure. Golden LEAF Funds will be used for construction costs including design and engineering and clearing and grading, and for the due diligence reports for the entire park.
County of Jackson	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Jackson County Economic Development to construct public infrastructure for a new housing development. The property to be served by the infrastructure is owned by Mountain Projects, a 501(c)(3) organization, which will develop 33 affordable single-family homes to serve workers in the community. The project is a component of the larger Webster Village project that also includes multi-family workforce and senior housing. Golden LEAF funding will be used for water and sewer infrastructure that will serve the Mountain Projects development.
County of Martin	\$361,500.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Martin County to support the establishment of an emergency response system. The county will acquire Paramedic Emergency Response Vehicles to provide emergency and prehospital care to county residents. This care is essential as the county works to reopen its hospital. The project will create new paramedic positions paying at least \$62,000 annually. Golden LEAF funds will be used to purchase the vehicles.
County of Nash	\$1,000,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Nash County to expand critical infrastructure at its 142-acre I-95 Industrial Center. Located one exit north of Wilson County's Corporate Park which houses major life sciences companies but is nearing capacity, the I-95 site is well-positioned to capture spillover growth from this park. Nash County constructed a 100,000-square-foot shell building at the I-95 Industrial Center, ideally suited for life sciences, advanced manufacturing and logistics firms. Although the building has attracted interest, it has not sold. In contrast to the County's thriving Middlesex Corporate Centre, the I-95 Industrial Center lacks a fully developed entrance road and visible infrastructure, which has made it difficult for prospective tenants to fully appreciate the site's readiness and accessibility. This infrastructure expansion will include widening Highway 97, extending sewer lines, and upgrading water lines. The expansion is expected to enhance the Center's competitiveness as a shovel-ready site attracting high-value industries, such as life sciences, biopharma, and advanced manufacturing. These improvements are also expected to drive \$150,000,000 in private investment and create 120 jobs at a \$51,927.00 average annual wage. Golden LEAF funds will be used for construction and related expenses.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
East Carolina University	\$1,000,000.00	Special Programs Initiative	This award provides funding for technology needed for training rooms, simulation equipment, and equipment for clinical skills instruction to support the expansion of the Brody School of Medicine (BSOM) at East Carolina University. With \$265 million from the State of North Carolina, ECU is constructing a new Center for Medical Education (CME). The CME will allow BSOM to increase its medical school class cohorts from 100 to 120 students (with the capacity for additional expansion in the future), its PA program from 36 to 48 students, and the number of residents and fellows that train at ECU by 89. The expansion will position BSOM to significantly increase clinicians in rural North Carolina where shortages are most severe. ECU has a strong record of retaining graduates in North Carolina, and particularly in eastern North Carolina. Golden LEAF funds may be used for improvements to the technology in the Learning Studio and the Whitebox Simulation Room, for equipment, software, and related expenses for the expansion of simulation training at the CME, and for equipment needed to expand the clinical skills learning and training spaces.
East Carolina University	\$347,028.000	Open Grants	This award provides funding to East Carolina University to implement Phase 2 of the RISE29 program, which was launched primarily in Beaufort, Hyde, Martin, and Pitt counties through the support of a 2019 Golden LEAF award. For Phase 2, ECU proposes targeting rural counties not previously engaged in the project. Student teams will support the growth of existing small businesses in partnering communities. Community Asset Mapping, a key new facet of RISE29 and a prerequisite for Phase 2 engagement, is expected to assess the readiness of a project or community to engage with an intern team. Expected outcomes include 75 new full-time jobs created and 60 students engaged in work-based learning opportunities over a three-year period. Golden LEAF funds will be used for a graduate assistant, faculty stipends, student internships, travel, asset mapping/meetings, and outreach/marketing.
Harnett Regional Jetport	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Harnett Regional Jetport to construct a new access road that will allow the Jetport to create sites for construction of eight new hangars. Construction of the hangars will result in approximately \$11 million in private investment. The Jetport anticipates that the project will also create ten new aircraft maintenance positions paying an average annual wage of over \$60,000. Golden LEAF funds will be used for construction and related expenses.
Henderson-Oxford Airport Authority	\$600,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Henderson-Oxford Airport (HNZ) Authority to construct a 12" water main extension to serve HNZ. The airport is a transportation and economic development asset for Granville County and Vance County and the Kerr-Tar region. The water main is necessary to serve current and future hangars. The fixed base operator at the airport anticipates creation of up to 10 full-time jobs over the next four years related to growth at the airport following completion of the waterline extension, in addition to other growth opportunities. The Airport Authority also believes improvements to the airport will benefit nearby Triangle North Industrial Center. Golden LEAF funds will be used for construction and related costs.
Metropolitan Community Health Services, Inc.	\$400,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Metropolitan Community Health Services, Inc. (MCHS), a Federally Qualified Health Clinic that operates in Beaufort, Tyrrell, Hyde, Martin, and Washington counties. MCHS is restoring a former healthcare clinic in Aurora, in Beaufort County, converting a 4,700 square foot building into a modern medical facility. The building renovation will establish permanent access to primary care, emergency stabilization, diagnostics, and pharmacy support for the community, while creating 25 new full-time healthcare-related jobs. Golden LEAF funds will be used for costs related to building renovation.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Mountain Community Health Partnership Incorporated	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding for Mountain Community Health Partnership, a Federally Qualified Health Center serving Mitchell and Yancey Counties, to equip a new integrated healthcare clinic in Spruce Pine. The 20,000 square-foot facility will replace an existing facility in Spruce Pine and will integrate primary care, behavioral health, pharmacy, and supportive services under one roof. A major component of the project will be to replace a behavioral health clinic at the Micaville Health Center that was destroyed by Hurricane Helene. The project is expected to result in the creation of 24 new full-time jobs with an average annual salary of \$70,067. Golden LEAF funds will be used for essential exam room, diagnostic, and treatment equipment.
Town of Edenton	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to the Town of Edenton to renovate the second and third floors of the 22,027 sq. ft. former Edenton Furniture Company to attract Provalus, a business process and IT outsourcing firm. The project is expected to create 61 full-time jobs in three years, with average wages at or above the county average of \$46,384, and 155 jobs over five years. Golden LEAF funds will be used to support the renovation and construction of the facility through New Market Tax Credit financing.

Golden LEAF also awards funds for projects with economic development outcomes through programs other than the Economic Catalyst program. Eligible uses of Golden LEAF funds include: construction or improvement of public water, sewer, or road infrastructure and other strategies to support job creation. Economic development outcomes include creation of workforce housing units.

SITE Program

Golden LEAF recognizes that rural and economically distressed communities must have sites available for development to attract new businesses and create opportunities for existing businesses to expand. To address this need, Golden LEAF created the SITE Program. Through this program, Golden LEAF will provide support to communities to identify potential sites for economic development, enable completion of due diligence on sites already identified, or to extend public utilities to or conduct grading and clearing of sites for which due diligence has been completed. Golden LEAF will accept applications from organizations in all counties, but prioritizes awards within counties that have been persistently economically distressed (as demonstrated by County Tier status determined by the N.C. Department of Commerce) and in economically distressed, rural, and tobacco-dependent communities.

Communities are able to begin the process at any of the three phases, and a site may progress from identification through to development over time.

Identification	Due Diligence	Development
Support to identify potential industrial sites in communities that do not currently have quality industrial sites to market.	Funding to complete eligible due diligence activities such as environmental assessments, archaeological analyses, and mapping.	Funding for public infrastructure and, for publicly owned sites, clearing and grading, to benefit sites that have completed the due diligence necessary to demonstrate that the site is suitable for development.

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors allocated \$6 million for the program in FY26. The following organizations were awarded through the SITE - Identification phase. Funds will provide services, contracted by Golden LEAF, to evaluate and identify site(s) in the identified project area suitable for industrial development.

- Vance County
- Lenoir County

The following organizations were awarded funding through the SITE program to conduct due diligence, to extend public infrastructure, or to complete grading.

Grantee	Award Amount	Purpose & Outcomes
Due Diligence		
County of Greene	\$113,250.00	To conduct due diligence analyses on approximately 630 acres of farmland under option by the county.
Jacksonville-Onslow Economic Development Partnership	\$49,400.00	To conduct due diligence analyses on approximately 35 acres at Corbett Ave and Belgrade-Swansboro Road in west Swansboro.
Development		
County of Northampton	\$1,500,000.00	To extend 10,400 linear feet of 8" wastewater line and install a supplemental lift station. The project will support 225 acres in the Northampton County Commerce Park where the county anticipates recruiting manufacturing related businesses. The county projects the creation of 100 new full-time jobs with an average annual wage of \$53,750, compared to the county average of \$49,123, \$75,000,000 in private capital investment, and \$2,961,322.20 in investment in public infrastructure. The project will also leverage funding from the State's Industrial Development Fund.
County of Robeson	\$1,500,000.00	For development of 17 acres within the COMTech Business Park. The county anticipates that successful industry recruitment to the site would create approximately 75 new full-time jobs with an average annual wage of \$45,550 which is higher than the county average of \$42,730, \$9,152,000 in private capital investment, and \$9,841,695 in public investment. Golden LEAF funds will be used for site work related to clearing & grading, erosion control, adding backfill, and creating an access road. This site is also the location of a Golden LEAF funded shell building project included in the report below.

Workforce Preparedness

Golden LEAF supports the development and expansion of workforce development programs at North Carolina Community Colleges, high schools, and nonprofit organizations. As businesses evolve, workforce training must keep pace. Therefore, new equipment must be acquired, faculty trained, and facilities renovated. Eligible uses of Golden LEAF funds include: professional development for faculty, equipment and technology, and building renovations. Golden LEAF supports projects to help students graduate with the technical skills necessary to enter work and become productive citizens.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Appalachian State University	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Appalachian State University to launch a Doctor of Nursing Practice - Family Nurse Practitioner (DNP-FNP) program. Launched in response to NC's healthcare workforce shortage (currently over 1,300 FNP openings statewide and more projected). Demand in rural areas is significant and FNPs are more likely to work in rural areas. The program is a 4-year, part-time, hybrid program that expects to enroll 24 students annually. 20 students from the first cohort are expected to complete the program in May 2030. App State will build lab on its Hickory campus. The lab will also be available to students in the university's BSN program to relieve space limitations at the Boone campus. Golden LEAF funds will be used for simulation equipment, advanced clinical tools, and technology.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Brunswick Community College	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Brunswick Community College (BCC) to establish a comprehensive industrial maintenance program. BCC, together with local industries, has identified a need for individuals who are proficient in a wide range of technical skills, including electrical installation, mechanical repairs, plumbing, conduit installations, and the maintenance and programming of mechatronic production lines. BCC will launch the Industrial Maintenance program in fall 2025. BCC expects to be fully operational in three years - graduating 34 students annually. Additionally, at least 17 students will have the opportunity to participate in work-based learning annually. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment.
Central Carolina Community College	\$2,500,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Central Carolina Community College (CCCC) to support Phase 1A of a multiphase renovation of its 220,000 square feet manufacturing and biotech solutions center. The center will serve as a regional workforce hub that will support the CCCC service area and the expanding labor market beyond it. Phase 1A, which focuses on upgrading 25,000 square feet of the center, will create a training facility for students in the rapidly evolving manufacturing and biotechnology sectors. Key features include advanced laboratories for robotics, welding, industrial maintenance, electronics, and quality/instrumentation, as well as modern classrooms, offices, and an innovation gallery that is designed to enhance career awareness through interactive demonstrations aligned with industry standards. Centralizing advanced manufacturing training at the center will allow CCCC to optimize resources such as advanced equipment, experienced faculty, and dedicated staff. Upon completion of Phase 1A, it is expected that 102 additional students will obtain academic credentials annually. Additionally, 71 workers are projected to earn a combination of academic credentials and third-party certifications through employer training plans each year. Golden LEAF funds will be used for construction/renovation, equipment, and supplies.
Edgecombe County Public Schools	\$500,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Edgecombe County Public Schools to establish a welding program at Tarboro High School in partnership with Edgecombe Community College. The project will include the development of a welding lab equipped with eight welding booths, enabling 30 high school students to earn industry-recognized welding credentials through the community college. Edgecombe Community College will also provide a qualified instructor to teach the program. The project anticipates that at least half of the participating students will engage in pre-apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities, preparing them for careers in local industries. Golden LEAF funds will be used to support construction and equipment costs.
Fayetteville Technical Community College	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Fayetteville Technical Community College (FTCC) to establish its new Cardiovascular Technology Program (CVT). The program will prepare graduates to become invasive cardiovascular specialists or non-invasive cardiac sonographers to address critical healthcare workforce shortages, particularly in cardiovascular care, due to a growing and aging population, as well as high rates of heart disease in rural and economically distressed communities. The CVT will operate in a Vascular Surgical Services (VSS) Laboratory that will incorporate advanced medical simulation technology and industry-standard diagnostic equipment to meet accreditation requirements and support competency-based instruction. FTCC expects to enroll the first cohort of 25 students in fall 2026, growing to 40 within 3 years. By the 2028-29 year, FTCC expects 32 students will complete the program annually. Ninety percent of the CVT graduates are expected to obtain an industry-recognized credential. Golden LEAF funds will be used for the construction and renovation costs related to the new VSS lab.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Gaston College	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	This award provides funding to Gaston College to support its expanded Health Sciences programs, which include a new 80,000 square foot Health Sciences building that is expected to be completed in spring of 2028. The college has received \$60 million in State funding for the project. The new facility and renovation of existing space on the campus will expand the college's health sciences programs. In the ADN, LPN, and Surgical Tech programs alone, the college expects to increase the number of students earning an academic credential by 40 students annually, and for all of those students to receive their required license. The college also expects significant increases in other health sciences programs. The project includes the addition of immersive technology that will provide fully interactive, multisensory virtual learning environments. Golden LEAF funds will be used for the purchase, installation, and commissioning of the equipment for the immersive simulation labs that are not covered by the State funding.
Guilford County Schools	\$250,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Guilford County Schools (GCS) for a Signature Career Academy (SCA) of Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering at Southeast Guilford High School, located in rural Guilford County. This SCA will offer Career and Technical Education pathways that are focused on advanced manufacturing and engineering. This SCA is nine miles from Toyota's new battery manufacturing plant. Toyota is investing \$415,250 to support work-based learning in Guilford County. Forty ninth grade students will be admitted to the new program each year toward a goal of having 160 students in the program by the fourth year. By the 2028-29 school year, GCS expects that 95 students will complete a pathway in advanced manufacturing or engineering. Students are also expected to earn third party credentials and participate in work-based learning. Golden LEAF funds will be used for the renovation and upfit of space at Southeast Guilford High School.
Harnett County Schools	\$393,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Harnett County Schools (HCS) to support a comprehensive workforce development initiative that is expected to expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways. This initiative focuses on enhancing the attainment of industry-recognized credentials and strengthening alignment with high-demand regional sectors, particularly in healthcare, skilled trades, and sustainable agriculture. Key components include enhanced dual-enrollment partnerships with Central Carolina Community College (CCCC), expanded paid internship opportunities with county and industry partners, and investments in modern instructional spaces and equipment. HCS expects to increase the number of students graduating with a CCCC credential by 30 annually, from 38 to 68 students. The number of students completing a CTE pathway and engaging in work-based learning will increase by 100 annually for a total of 426 CTE completers and 250 students with work-based learning experiences. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment/supplies, construction, professional development, personnel, participant support, transportation, marketing, and laptops.
Isothermal Community College	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	This award provides funding to Isothermal Community College (ICC) to expand its high-demand healthcare programs. The college has received \$30 million in state funds to construct the 52,000 square-foot Dr. Bobby F. England Health and Sciences Center to house these programs. The new facility, expected to open in 2027, will allow ICC to double the number of graduates from its nursing, EMT, and paramedic programs to 214 students annually by 2030. The college also expects to add new programs such as Physical Therapy Assistant, Respiratory Care Assistant, and Medical Technician. Golden LEAF funds will be used for healthcare simulation equipment and related computers, software, and IT infrastructure.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Johnston County Industrial Development Corporation	\$1,500,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to the Johnston County Industrial Development Corporation to support the expansion and modernization of the Johnston County Workforce Development Center (WDC), the region's primary hub for technical training in biotechnology and automation. This initiative, spearheaded in collaboration with Johnston Community College, the Research and Training Zone Board, and the county, aims to expand classroom and multipurpose spaces to support the introduction of new programs and to train more students. The expansion is anticipated to increase training capacity by 25%, allowing service to an additional 80 students annually from life sciences programs. It will also increase capacity for local industry to conduct incumbent worker training. Industry collaborators, including Novo Nordisk and Grifols, are committed to ensuring that the program remains aligned with workforce demands. The current facility will be repurposed to provide additional laboratory space, while the new construction will accommodate all classrooms. Golden LEAF funds will be used for new construction, including design/engineering and construction administration.
McDowell Technical Community College	\$80,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to McDowell Technical Community College (MTCC) to establish a Nurse Aide training lab at its Old Fort Workforce Development Center to address demand for nurse aides and medication aides. The Nurse Aide and Medication Aide training programs at the main campus are at full capacity. The town originally renovated the building that houses the Center using a 2021 Golden LEAF grant. With this expansion, MTCC expects the number of students completing these programs annually will increase by 82. Eighty percent of completers are expected to earn a third-party certification. Golden LEAF funds will be used for upfit, equipment, personnel, and participant support services.
North Carolina Community College System	\$1,000,000.00	SPARC	This award provides funding to the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) to work in collaboration with AdvanceNC, a coalition of 11 community colleges, three universities, seven workforce boards, and other workforce entities working with employer stakeholders to build a robust talent pipeline serving the manufacturing community in a 19-county region in central North Carolina. In partnership with Education Design Lab (EDL) and in collaboration with employers, AdvanceNC is developing 10 micro-pathways to standardize training across institutions and to connect learners and high-demand, well-paying jobs. These pathways will permit students to earn micro-credentials at local institutions and pursue advanced training within the region. The initial pathways include Industrial Machinery Mechanic, Maintenance Repair Worker, Electrician, HVAC Technician, and Welding. The remaining five pathways are projected to be finalized by early 2026. This initiative anticipates an enrollment of 1,000 learners across the 11 community colleges, resulting in 800 learners earning micro-credentials and third-party credentials. Sixty percent of the learners are expected to achieve employment, promotions, and/or increased wages. Golden LEAF funds will be used for instructional personnel and equipment at Piedmont Community College, Sandhills Community College, Randolph Community College, Vance Granville Community College, and/or Central Carolina Community College, the five participating community colleges serving the 12 most rural counties in the region. The project will also leverage \$1.4 million from the EDL and funding from NCCCS and My Future NC. AdvanceNC is expected to implement a system to track outcomes for students that participate in micro-pathways at the colleges supported with Golden LEAF funds.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Pay It Forward Fund (d/b/a The Forward Fund)	\$1,000,000.00	SPARC	The Forward Fund, a Wilmington, North Carolina based nonprofit, will use Golden LEAF funds to expand a program that provides zero-interest loans to students from rural North Carolina enrolled in high-demand workforce training programs to remove financial barriers and improve student persistence. The program is designed to assist eligible students enrolled in CDL, electrical lineman and other skilled trades programs, healthcare pathways, and basic law enforcement at North Carolina community colleges. The loans are for essential living expenses and tuition gaps with repayment tied to successful employment. Success of the project will be measured by the number of students completing curriculum and continuing education workforce programs, job placement in aligned fields, and post training wages with a target of students achieving an income of at least \$45,000 annually. The Forward Fund estimates 100 students will benefit from these loans. Golden LEAF funds will be used for participant support (loan capital), loan servicing and origination fees, personnel, and technology and related equipment.
Piedmont Community College Foundation, Inc.	\$1,000,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Piedmont Community College Foundation to expand the welding program at Piedmont Community College (PCC) by relocating the program to PCC's South Campus. The current welding programs are operating at full capacity, and relocation will allow the college to increase the number of students earning industry-recognized credentials. The program will serve adult learners, dislocated workers, and high school students, expanding access to career pathways that lead to livable wages. The project's first phase will increase welding capacity from 16 to 28 booths. PCC anticipates increasing the number of students earning an academic credential from 42 to 75 annually. Ninety students are expected to obtain industry-recognized third-party credentials each year. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment.
Piedmont Community College Foundation Inc	\$480,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to support the expansion of Piedmont Community College's (PCC) truck driving program to meet both employer demand for drivers and student demand for training. PCC has outgrown its borrowed training pad and the waitlist for CDL training exceeds current capacity. With an additional instructor, truck and trailer, and a larger driving pad, the college will increase enrollment to 60 students annually from its current level of 26 students. Those earning academic credentials would increase from 18 to 44 annually with 100% of those earning CDL and forklift certifications. The new pad will be located at South Campus. Golden LEAF funds will be used for the construction of a 90,000 square foot CDL pad, a truck and trailer, and personnel.
Piedmont Community College Foundation Inc	\$175,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Piedmont Community College Foundation, Inc. to support Piedmont Community College's (PCC) establishment of an HVAC dual enrollment program at Bartlett Yancey High School (BYHS). PCC and BYHS currently offer Welding as a dual enrollment program. The high school will provide instructional space and a lab for the program, making this opportunity accessible to Caswell County students who currently must travel to Danville Community College to access similar training and certifications. PCC will also use the space in the evenings for adult learners. PCC anticipates that by 2029, 22 students will earn an academic credential annually with 100% of the students receiving at least one industry/third party certification, license, and credential. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Pitt Community College Foundation Inc	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Pitt Community College Foundation to expand and upgrade the Welding Technology program at Pitt Community College (PCC). PCC currently serves 400 welding students each year including 180 on campus and another 220 through its partnership with five high schools. To meet the increasing demand for skilled welders and address persistent space and equipment limitations, the college is constructing a 30,000 square-foot, \$17.7 million state-of-the-art facility that is funded by the Pitt County Commissioners and the college. The building, which is scheduled to open in 2026, will include two fabrication shops, space for robotic welding, and 96 welding booths, more than doubling the current number of booths. With the expansion, PCC expects to increase the number of students completing an academic credential by 33 students annually, from 164 students to 197. PCC also expects that 60-70 students will earn the AWS Certified Welder Certification as the new facility will allow PCC to become an AWS Accredited Testing Facility. Golden LEAF funds will be used for welding equipment.
Roanoke-Chowan Community College	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	This award provides funding to Gaston College to support its expanded Health Sciences programs, which include a new 80,000 square foot Health Sciences building that is expected to be completed in spring of 2028. The college has received \$60 million in State funding for the project. The new facility and renovation of existing space on the campus will expand the college's health sciences programs. In the ADN, LPN, and Surgical Tech programs alone, the college expects to increase the number of students earning an academic credential by 40 students annually, and for all of those students to receive their required license. The college also expects significant increases in other health sciences programs. The project includes the addition of immersive technology that will provide fully interactive, multisensory virtual learning environments. Golden LEAF funds will be used for the purchase, installation, and commissioning of the equipment for the immersive simulation labs that are not covered by the State funding.
Robeson Community College	\$500,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Robeson Community College (RCC) to support the expansion of its welding program. RCC has received \$24.5 million in state funding to construct a 27,450 square foot Career & Technical Education building to house its trade-focused programs. Welding will occupy over 7,000 square feet of indoor and covered outdoor space compared to the current 1,434 square feet. By 2030, RCC expects to increase the number of students completing a welding program by 40 students annually and expects to increase the number of students earning a third party/industry credential by 40 students annually. Golden LEAF funds will be used for welding equipment.
Sampson Community College Foundation, Inc.	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	This award provides funding to Sampson Community College Foundation to support the completion of a 36,000-square-foot, \$19 million Health Sciences Building. It will feature simulation labs, modern classrooms, and hands-on training spaces designed to provide students with real-world skills. Graduates will be equipped for high-demand healthcare careers: Nursing (including RN and LPN), Medical Assisting, Paramedic, Nurse Aide, and other related fields. SCC expects to increase the number of annual graduates in these programs by 59 students from 119 to 178 within five years. The number of students earning at least one industry/third party certification, license, or other credential annually will increase by 33 from 123 to 156. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment and equipment-related capital expenses.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Southeastern Community College	\$200,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Southeastern Community College (SCC) to expand its welding program that primarily serves high school students in Columbus County. SCC currently provides welding courses at three local high schools via a mobile welding lab. The program has seen strong enrollment and has grown beyond its current capacity. A larger mobile unit is needed to address increased demand in the three high schools and to provide courses at the fourth high school in the county. The current mobile unit will remain in service, helping reduce demands on the new lab. SCC projects that the program would result in 40 additional students earning an academic credential and 35 additional students earning a third-party credential annually as a result of this investment. Golden LEAF funds will be used to purchase and upfit a trailer and for project related equipment, supplies, and instructor training.
Stanly Community College Foundation, Inc.	\$375,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Stanly Community College Foundation, Inc. to support the launch of a new Plumbing program and to expand a recently established Electrical Systems Technology program at Stanly Community College (SCC). Both programs will be housed in SCC's new 32,000 sq. ft. trades education facility. Through a partnership with the Stanly County Home Builders Association, this initiative is designed to address the persistent workforce shortages and skills gaps in Stanly County and surrounding areas. Each program will integrate internships and registered apprenticeship opportunities, providing students with hands-on training aligned with industry needs. Each program will have the capacity to enroll 18 students (36 total) annually. SCC anticipates that at least 24 of the 36 students will earn an academic credential annually and 28 students will earn at least one or more industry/third party certifications annually. Golden LEAF funds will be used to support salaries and instructional technology.
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke	\$4,864,368.00	Special Programs Initiative	This award provides funding to UNC-Pembroke to support creation of North Carolina's first public College of Optometric Medicine. UNC-P received \$91 million from the State of North Carolina for construction of a Clinical Sciences Building that will house the college. UNC-P anticipates that upon completion of the building, the college will enroll 32 students annually, with 30 graduates per year. UNC-P expects that the college will attract students from rural areas of the state and that graduates will be more likely to practice in rural communities upon graduation. Golden LEAF funds will be used for diagnostic, imaging, and training equipment.
Uwharrie Charter Academy	\$350,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Uwharrie Charter Academy (UCA) to expand its Career Academy to include a new advanced manufacturing pathway. Since the Career Academy's opening in August 2023, UCA has offered industry-aligned programs in automotive, welding, construction trades, game design, and 3D modeling. In response to local business demand, this project would establish a new advanced manufacturing pathway. UCA expects that 25 additional students will complete a CTE pathway, 10 will complete dual enrollment courses, and 35 will acquire third-party credentials. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment and for the construction/renovation of the building that will be used for advanced manufacturing.
Vance-Granville Community College	\$750,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Vance-Granville Community College to support the establishment of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Applied Technology, a new \$15.2 million training facility to be located at the Triangle North Granville Business Park. The Center will support five high-demand programs: Electronics, HVAC, Industrial Maintenance, Mechatronics, and Welding. The initiative will also strengthen regional workforce readiness through expanded dual-enrollment opportunities for high school students, the integration of stackable micro-credentials, and enhanced work-based learning pathways connecting students with employers across Granville, Vance, Franklin, and Warren counties. Annual projections include 90 additional students earning an academic credential, 90 additional students earning a third-party or industry-recognized certification, and 48 additional students participating in work-based learning experiences. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment, supplies, and construction costs.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Western Piedmont Community College	\$479,949.05	Open Grants	This award provides funding to Western Piedmont Community College (WPCC) to support the expansion of its Heavy Equipment Operations (HEO) program which currently only uses simulation equipment. This expansion would add HEO equipment that will allow WPCC's students to develop skills with equipment that is used by industry. This will help the construction industry which is struggling to meet the demands of Hurricane Helene recovery. WPCC expects to increase capacity from 20 students to 40 students annually with all students receiving simulation training and hands-on training. The inclusion of training on heavy duty equipment will provide the opportunity for students to earn industry recognized Level I, II and III Heavy Equipment Operator certification. The award also provides the required match for an Appalachian Regional Commission grant recently awarded to WPCC. Golden LEAF funds will be used for equipment, instructional technology, and personnel.
Wilson Community College	\$585,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Wilson Community College to enhance the new Agribusiness Technology program that it started in fall 2025. The Agribusiness Technology program provides hands-on training for students to be employed in agriculture, ag-business, and related agriculture careers in the Wilson County region. One in three residents in Wilson County are employed in jobs related to agriculture, but rural students lack exposure and hands-on training for ag careers, and employers struggle to find qualified employees. Wilson Community College expects that 50 students per year, including Career and College Promise (CCP) high school students, will earn academic credentials in the agribusiness curriculum program. Golden LEAF funds will be used for personnel, a hydroponics lab, irrigation system, technology equipment, and related items.

Agriculture

Golden LEAF supports agriculture as an economic engine in rural communities. Projects include education or training opportunities to enable transition to a career in agriculture or technical assistance and research projects to support existing farmers. Eligible uses of Golden LEAF funds include salary, equipment, and other program costs.

Grantee	Award Amount	Golden LEAF Program	Purpose & Outcomes
Durham County Cooperative Extension	\$475,000.00	CBGI	This award provides funding to Durham County Cooperative Extension to support Phase 1 of the Durham County Farm Campus project. In 2024, Durham County purchased 129 acres in the northern part of the county to develop the Farm Campus. The Farm Campus will include an education and demonstration farm to train and support farmers by providing land, access to equipment, and education. It will also provide post-harvest food education, a shared kitchen and meeting space, as well as other agricultural uses and training areas. The Durham County Cooperative Extension team estimates that a total of 425 participants will attend agricultural training events per year at the Farm Campus including 275 from new trainings and 150 from existing trainings that will transfer to the Farm Campus. Golden LEAF funds will be used for personnel, construction, equipment, supplies, furniture, and related items.
North Carolina State University	\$200,000.00	Open Grants	This award provides funding to North Carolina State University to continue the development of an automated peanut grading system to modernize North Carolina's peanut inspection infrastructure. If adopted, the system will replace a manual process with high-speed imaging and sensing technology, reducing bottle-necks at grading stations and risk of loss farmers face while peanuts are awaiting inspection. Golden LEAF funds would be used for personnel, travel, and supplies.

Special Initiatives

Golden LEAF Schools

Golden LEAF Schools Initiative is a \$25 million dollar funding commitment over five years to strengthen middle school math instruction and career development in rural and economically distressed communities across North Carolina. It was launched in January 2025 as a partnership with the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

The nineteen selected schools are divided into two cohorts: the Transformative Schools Cohort (TS) and the Personalized, Competency-Based Education Cohort (PCBE). The initiative emphasizes collaboration within each cohort, aiming to foster long-term educational improvements and workforce development across the state.

The TS Cohort will receive comprehensive support focused on improving schools through implementation of the Marzano High Reliability Schools (HRS) Framework and the Open Up Resources Problem-Based Math Curriculum. Schools included in this cohort are:

- Bertie Middle School, Bertie County Schools
- Carver Middle School, Scotland County Schools
- Contentnea-Savannah K-8 School, Lenoir County Public Schools
- East Alexander Middle School, Alexander County Schools
- East Rutherford Middle School, Rutherford County Schools
- Harnett Central Middle School, Harnett County Schools
- Northern Middle School, Person County Schools
- Union Middle School, Sampson County Schools
- Warren County Middle School, Warren County Schools
- West Lee Middle School, Lee County Schools

The PCBE Cohort focuses on instructional transformation and assists schools with demonstrated readiness to begin a shift towards Competency-Based Education (CBE). Schools included in this cohort are:

- Dunn Middle School, Harnett County Schools
- Hayesville Middle School, Clay County Schools
- Swain County Middle School, Swain County Schools
- SanLee Middle School, Lee County Schools
- Waynesville Middle School, Haywood County Schools
- Rockingham Middle School, Rockingham County
- North Davie Middle School, Davie County
- West McDowell Middle School, McDowell County
- Overhills Middle School, Harnett County Schools

Since Golden LEAF Schools launched in January 2025, NCDPI Coaches conducted 252 school visits, providing job-embedded support for principals, teachers and instructional leaders. Participating schools have reported significant reductions in discipline incidents, creating stronger learning environments. Schools in the PCBE cohort met or closely approached state proficiency levels in math, reading, science and overall academic performance. This progress demonstrates encouraging early progress as the initiative continues its five-year implementation.

NC Ag Leads Strategic Plan

The Golden LEAF Foundation Board awarded \$1 million in November 2023 to the North Carolina Chamber Foundation to facilitate a stakeholder engagement process to identify priority issues affecting agriculture in North Carolina and to develop a strategic plan to address those issues prioritized during the process.

The strategic planning process was led by the NC Chamber Foundation, and developed in partnership with Golden LEAF and NC Farm Bureau. This effort was directed by a distinguished Steering Committee composed of NC's top agriculture leaders, including Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler.

The NC Ag Leads Strategic Plan was released in May 2025, and will serve as a blueprint to guide action, ensuring North Carolina will continue to lead the nation in agriculture innovation, resilience, and prosperity. In FY26, Golden LEAF provided a total of \$3,037,450 to the NC Chamber Foundation to continue the work of NC Ag Leads and to begin implementation of recommendations.

- GroundTruthNC: A comprehensive land-use assessment to better understand the economic impact of loss of farmland.
- Farmer Innovation Bridge: A strategy to bridge entrepreneurs and the ag community leveraging available resources including nonprofits and state entities.
- Workforce Assessment: An analysis of workforce data to understand needs of agriculture-related businesses and farmers to ensure the education pipeline is aligned with demand.

For more information visit: <https://www.ncagricultureleads.com/>

Hurricane Helene Relief Initiative

In October 2024, the Golden LEAF Board established a Hurricane Helene Relief initiative. Funds were available to organizations to support immediate relief for individuals and families including home repair and addressing unmet needs. Governmental entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofits were eligible to apply. In FY26, the Golden LEAF Board awarded an additional \$2,000,000 to support Hurricane Helene Relief projects. This list includes both recognized VOADS (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) and local nonprofits. Grantees provide reports on outcomes including the number of households served and homes repaired.

- \$1,630,000 for a total of \$4,570,000 to the North Carolina Baptist Men to support a range of needs including upfit of buildings owned by the Baptists on Mission for volunteers housing, vehicles, contractors, tools, equipment, and staffing for rebuild sites.
- \$150,000 for a total of \$325,000 to the Western North Carolina Annual Conferences of the United Methodist for tools and equipment necessary to support home repair efforts, and for other costs to assist survivors.
- \$100,000 for a total of \$200,000 to Camp Grier in McDowell County for staff salaries, utilities, and food/meal expenses to allow the camp to continue to support recovery in the community.
- \$120,000 for a total of \$220,000 to the Housing Assistance Corporation in Henderson County for home repair expenses and case management for projects in Henderson, Transylvania, and Polk counties.

Golden LEAF Scholarships

Since 2000, Golden LEAF has made scholarship awards totaling \$94,456,055 to assist more than 36,000 students from rural counties to attend two- and four-year colleges and universities in North Carolina. Scholarships target students who (1) reside in rural North Carolina counties that are designated economically distressed or that are tobacco dependent, (2) who demonstrate financial need, and (3) who show an interest in staying in a rural North Carolina county after graduation. Recipients may attend the participating North Carolina college or university of their choice.

Colleges and Universities

The North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority is the manager of the Golden LEAF scholarship program for colleges and universities. In FY26, Golden LEAF awarded \$2,963,330 to support 215 new and 570 renewal scholarships for students to attend public and private universities and colleges in North Carolina. Each scholarship is valued at \$3,500 per year, for a total of \$14,000 over four years.

Golden LEAF Scholarship recipients enrolled in colleges and universities are eligible to participate in the Golden LEAF Rural Internship Initiative. These internships provide students with work experience in rural communities. The goal of the program is to prepare the next generation of rural leaders and expose students to career opportunities in rural communities. Golden LEAF pays the students' wages. Golden LEAF administers this program through contracts with Spiron Solutions, which oversees application review and evaluation, and a payroll processing company.

Community Colleges

In FY 26, Golden LEAF awarded \$3,060,000.00 to the North Carolina Community College System to support at least 3,500 new scholarships for students from rural counties enrolled in the curriculum and continuing education programs at a participating community college. The scholarship provides up to \$2,250 per year to students in curriculum programs and up to \$1,850 per year to students in continuing education programs. Funds can be used for tuition and other costs of attendance.

Golden LEAF Foundation Annual Report

Planned Activities and Goals

Performance on FY 2025-2026 Goals

1. Provide funding for economic development projects across North Carolina that create jobs and add investment.

✓ The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors awarded \$52,521,306.05 to support 59 projects across 43 counties to enable implementation of agricultural, workforce preparedness, job creation and economic investment, and community, capacity and competitiveness initiatives. Funds awarded to local government entities and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations through the Economic Catalyst Program for announced projects are projected to support the creation of at least 1,881 jobs and capital investment of more than \$2.1 billion over the next few years.

2. Close-out many of the grants awarded to aid local governments and small businesses affected by natural disasters.

✓ Following Hurricane Matthew, Hurricane Florence, and Hurricane Dorian, the Disaster Recovery Acts of 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 appropriated a total of \$114.5 million to the Golden LEAF Foundation for repair or replacement of equipment and infrastructure damaged or destroyed as a result of one or more of the recent named storms, as well as to provide loans for small business recovery. With the exception of a small amount of funding held to address project modifications, all available funds have been awarded to support 215 projects. As of June 30, 2026, 205 projects are complete.

3. Complete North Central Prosperity Zone capacity building and grantmaking through the Community-Based Grants Initiative.

✓ Capacity building efforts concluded in the fall of 2025 with grantees submitting applications for projects. Applications were reviewed and grants awarded by the Golden LEAF Foundation Board at its February 2026 meeting.

4. Continue implementation of FY2022-2026 strategic plan.

✓ The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors adopted a FY2022-2026 strategic plan in February of 2021. The goal of the strategic planning process was to assess how Golden LEAF can increase the impact of its mission through implementation of programs that support outcomes in key priority areas. As a result of the strategic plan, the SITE Program was launched in FY22. In FY26, the Board continued development of new programs responsive to issues identified in the strategic plan including implementing recommendations from the NC Ag Leads strategic plan, implementing Golden LEAF Schools, leveraging capital funds to support developing the healthcare workforce, and funding projects under the SPARC initiative. The Board also approved a Shell Building funding opportunity, that was launched in August 2026.

Planned Activities and Goals for FY 2025-2026

1. Provide funding for economic development projects across North Carolina that create jobs and add investment.

2. Continue implementation and assess outcomes of the Golden LEAF Schools initiative.

3. Continue implementation and assess outcomes of projects resulting from the NC Ag Leads strategic planning process.

4. Welcome the new President of the Foundation in early 2027.

Golden LEAF Foundation
Annual Report of Foundation Activities
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Appendix

Funds Received by Golden LEAF
Prior Five Years

(in millions)	MSA Payments	Investment Income	Total Income
FY 2022	\$17.5	<\$159>	<\$116>*
FY 2023	\$17.5	\$108	\$138
FY 2024	\$25	\$160	\$200*
FY 2025	\$25	\$178	\$260*
FY 2026	\$25	\$263	\$289
Cumulative (since 2000)	\$1,314	\$1,582	\$3,206

*Includes state general fund appropriations for disaster recovery, COVID-19 recovery, flood mitigation, shell building pilot program, and food distribution assistance program.

Active Golden LEAF Foundation Programs (in FY2026)
Overview

Open Grants Program

Up to \$500,000 in funding available year-round to local governments and 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. Program places priority on agriculture, job creation and retention, and workforce preparedness.

Economic Catalyst

Focuses on job creation and retention projects associated with business locations or expansions that are at risk without Golden LEAF participation. Specific criteria include urgent need, eligible use of funds, and economic impact of the project (jobs created and capital investment).

SITE Program

Golden LEAF recognizes that rural and economically distressed communities must have sites available for development to attract new businesses and create opportunities for existing businesses to expand. Through this program, Golden LEAF will provide support to communities to identify potential sites for economic development, enable completion of due diligence on sites already identified, or to extend public utilities to or conduct rough grading and clearing of sites for which due diligence has been completed.

Community-Based Grants Initiative (CBGI)

Golden LEAF invites participation from counties in one prosperity zone each year. CBGI awards are limited to three projects per county, totaling no more than \$1,500,000 per county. This program is a competitive process and not all counties in a region receive funds in support of their projects. Golden LEAF completed two cycles through each prosperity zone in this initiative. FY26 was the final year of this program.

Scholarships

Colleges and Universities Scholarship Program

The Golden LEAF Scholarship Program assists current high school seniors and North Carolina community college transfer students. Recipients must be from certain rural or tobacco dependent counties, demonstrate both financial need and merit, and plan to attend participating North Carolina colleges and universities. Scholarships for students attending colleges and universities of \$3,500 each are funded through a grant to the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority. Students awarded Golden LEAF Scholarships attending colleges and universities are also eligible to participate in the Golden LEAF Rural Internship Initiative. The Rural Internship Initiative provides Golden LEAF Scholars a paid internship in rural communities.

Community College Scholarship Program

The Golden LEAF Community College Scholarship Program supports students from certain rural counties to attend a participating community college. The scholarship provides students with up to \$2,250 per year to students in curriculum programs and up to \$1,850 per year to students in continuing education programs. Funds can be used for tuition and other costs of attendance.

Active Golden LEAF Foundation Programs

Priority Goals and Outcomes Tracked

Job Creation and Economic Investment

Collaborate with EDPNC, N.C. Department of Commerce, and local governments and organizations to provide gap funding to assist with job creation. Support healthcare as an economic development engine in rural and economically distressed areas of North Carolina.

- Investment in publicly owned infrastructure
- Investment in privately owned property, plant, and equipment
- New full-time jobs created
- Average annual wage of new full-time jobs
- Business start-ups
- New housing units

Golden LEAF will also collect information regarding jobs retained that were at risk without Golden LEAF support; comparison to county wages; job creation in identified job sectors; etc.

Workforce Preparedness

Increase the number of qualified individuals with skills aligned with current and future needs of North Carolina businesses. Prepare students with the technical and life skills necessary to enter work.

- Increase in students earning at least one academic credential (curriculum diploma, certificate, or associate degree/con ed certificate) in the area funded.
- Increase in students earning at least one industry/third party certification, license, or other credential (nonacademic) in the area funded.
- Increase in high school students completing CTE pathways in the area funded.
- Increase in secondary or post-secondary students participating in work-based learning.
- Increase in secondary students receiving meaningful exposure and opportunities to explore local career opportunities.

Golden LEAF will also collect information regarding students employed; incumbent workers trained; employer input and feedback; survey results; etc.

Agriculture

Support agriculture as a means of promoting economic development.

- Number of participants at agricultural training
- Publication of research outcomes directed towards benefit of farmers
- Monthly use of agricultural facilities that benefit farmers
- As well as narrative outcomes including: jobs, revenue growth, new agricultural business formations, economic output, changes in agricultural practices; acres in production; new crops/products grown or produced; and other measures of agriculture projects

Golden LEAF will also collect information regarding increased revenues; acres in production; new crops/products grown or produced; etc

Community Capacity, Competitiveness, and Vitality

Golden LEAF awards funds to invest in improving economic competitiveness. Outcomes for these projects are set by the Board of Directors and may be unique to each project.

Golden LEAF Foundation Awards

Program (years active)	Number	Amount
Open Grants (2000 - present)	987	\$173,398,864.97
Community-Based Grants Initiative (2013 - present)	219	\$138,197,842.62
Economic Catalyst (2005- present)	156	\$382,772,995.49
Scholarships (2000 - present)	87	\$95,077,445.93
SITE Program (2021 - present)	67	\$30,236,229.54
Special Initiatives (2000 - present)	513	\$439,634,199.65
Total	2,029	\$1,259,317,578.20

*Numbers do not include awards made and then rescinded with no funds released. Funds awarded for projects funded by direct State appropriation are not included.

Golden LEAF Foundation Awards
FY2000 - 2026 by County

County	Number of Projects FY2000 - 2026	Amount Awarded FY 2000 - 2026
Alamance	14	\$5,232,855.96
Alexander	6	\$2,952,560.54
Alleghany	8	\$2,757,572.55
Anson	16	\$5,297,218.60
Ashe	10	\$3,585,290.60
Avery	1	\$739,581.67
Beaufort	31	\$8,291,944.06
Bertie	10	\$2,263,025.00
Bladen	22	\$6,519,020.12
Brunswick	14	\$6,009,557.26
Buncombe	47	\$27,297,182.51
Burke	19	\$6,874,664.72
Cabarrus	5	\$967,179.75
Caldwell	15	\$5,554,571.12
Camden	3	\$2,239,100.00
Carteret	13	\$2,995,622.69
Caswell	9	\$3,498,611.92
Catawba	29	\$7,541,819.52
Chatham	15	\$15,670,312.17
Cherokee	17	\$7,527,443.23
Chowan	7	\$1,896,985.02
Clay	6	\$2,105,571.00
Cleveland	23	\$12,615,780.29
Columbus	25	\$7,361,797.92
Craven	17	\$7,290,297.04
Cumberland	24	\$15,363,664.03
Currituck	0	\$0
Dare	4	\$479,441.10
Davidson	15	\$6,180,457.53
Davie	7	\$6,255,362.13
Duplin	26	\$8,378,872.83

County	Number of Projects FY2000 - 2026	Amount Awarded FY 2000 - 2026
Durham	54	\$61,606,570.12
Edgecombe	47	\$19,531,189.68
Forsyth	35	\$11,587,364.43
Franklin	5	\$1,970,072.49
Gaston	10	\$6,067,611.65
Gates	3	\$1,040,424.03
Graham	10	\$3,031,436.08
Granville	11	\$2,530,332.85
Greene	18	\$4,546,985.65
Guilford	40	\$90,065,024.86
Halifax	26	\$5,056,505.01
Harnett	15	\$6,698,853.78
Haywood	14	\$5,435,032.77
Henderson	16	\$7,814,199.86
Hertford	13	\$4,962,900.01
Hoke	6	\$4,578,518.65
Hyde	9	\$2,728,464.84
Iredell	6	\$2,397,243.41
Jackson	27	\$9,064,653.71
Johnston	31	\$14,896,965.88
Jones	20	\$9,705,601.98
Lee	16	\$64,758,172.61
Lenoir	30	\$111,441,034.14
Lincoln	1	\$200,000.00
Macon	2	\$564,556.49
Madison	15	\$3,827,731.48
Martin	21	\$5,490,147.81
McDowell	13	\$6,380,281.60
Mecklenburg	3	\$1,068,906.52
Mitchell	19	\$5,417,043.60
Montgomery	19	\$7,439,175.00
Moore	10	\$2,438,164.75
Nash	29	\$10,031,263.51

County	Number of Projects FY2000 - 2026	Amount Awarded FY 2000 - 2026
New Hanover	13	\$3,556,046.06
Northampton	14	\$4,794,725.53
Onslow	12	\$2,826,806.17
Orange	66	\$19,970,496.88
Out of State	17	\$4,493,861.21
Pamlico	6	\$2,051,462.75
Pasquotank	30	\$10,239,257.31
Pender	12	\$3,587,257.49
Perquimans	5	\$2,530,709.72
Person	12	\$4,553,294.37
Pitt	69	\$33,730,042.42
Polk	1	\$400,000.00
Randolph	19	\$6,430,801.84
Richmond	13	\$5,949,452.35
Robeson	42	\$20,654,661.25
Rockingham	26	\$11,526,191.67
Rowan	10	\$5,190,988.05
Rutherford	16	\$7,506,271.00
Sampson	17	\$5,505,683.28
Scotland	12	\$6,750,561.26
Stanly	19	\$7,099,914.34
Stokes	6	\$2,713,882.50
Surry	35	\$10,338,398.45
Swain	5	\$3,446,820.53
Transylvania	8	\$3,398,343.04
Tyrrell	7	\$2,719,430.90
Union	2	\$1,280,000.00
Vance	23	\$5,872,476.62
Wake	311	\$314,952,911.19
Warren	9	\$3,464,187.59
Washington	16	\$4,260,825.14
Watauga	21	\$3,953,567.64
Wayne	25	\$8,235,303.49

County	Number of Projects FY2000 - 2026	Amount Awarded FY 2000 - 2026
Wilkes	25	\$9,797,033.29
Wilson	32	\$24,767,950.45
Yadkin	10	\$1,475,321.50
Yancey	10	\$2,901,398.79

1. Awards reflect the county where the applicant is based which may not be where the project is located.
2. Awards to entities based in Durham, Orange or Wake to support projects throughout the state are included.
3. Awards to entities based in Durham, Guilford, Wake and Orange for administration of the Golden LEAF Scholarships and Golden LEAF Scholars Leadership Program are included.
4. Lenoir County includes \$97,441,121 awarded to the N.C. Global TransPark Authority for Project "Marco Polo" involving Spirit AeroSystems.
5. Funds for projects funded by direct State appropriations are not included.



Shell Building Pilot Program

Overview

The North Carolina General Assembly appropriated \$10 million to the Golden LEAF Foundation to implement the Golden LEAF Shell Building Pilot Program (Section 11.7 of S.L. 2023-134). Under the authorizing legislation, governmental and charitable nonprofit entities in Ashe, Bladen, Columbus, Franklin, Halifax, Robeson, and Scotland counties were eligible to apply for funding. The program was 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.

For this program, a shell building is defined as an industrial building, newly constructed, not previously occupied, without a known or intended occupant, that is designed to accommodate a future owner or tenant. Golden LEAF established the following minimum building requirements: 30,000 square feet, 30' ceiling height, gravel floor, presence of water, sewer, and electrical service at or in the immediate vicinity of the site in quantities that are reasonable in relation to expected uses of the proposed building, and a graded gravel parking lot.

Applicants could request a modification to these requirements if the applicant could demonstrate demand in or near the applicant's community for the modified building (examples include a smaller building or lower ceilings). Applicants may also use funds to provide a more "finished" product that includes elements in addition to the basic requirements such as cement floors.

Reporting

Section 11.7.(b) of S.L.2023-134 outlines the reporting requirements for the Program as follows: the number of shell buildings built, the number of shell buildings that remain vacant and the length of time they have been vacant, the number of shell buildings that have been occupied and the name of the company that occupied them, and the number of jobs based in the shell buildings that have been occupied.

Terminated Projects

Golden LEAF initially awarded funds for seven projects to seven grantees. Three were terminated at the recipient's request. See below for additional information.

- Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-Industrial Inc. requested to terminate its award in November 2024 due to a lack of sufficient funding to construct the apron, water, and sewer infrastructure at the project site.
- Franklin County requested to terminate its award in October 2024 due to a lack of resources and evaluation of existing capital projects.
- Halifax County requested to terminate its award in December 2025, as another economic development project has indicated it will be located on the site for which the shell building was planned.

Award Process

Funds were awarded in three stages. Grantees received initial awards to complete planning and design, and a second award to support construction expenses. Award amounts varied due to a variety of factors (amount of sitework/engineering required, etc.) and reflect amounts requested by grantees necessary to complete the proposed scope of work. Each grantee also identified strategies to prepare their shell building for future expansion (a common strategy to ensure appeal to a wider range of potential end users).

As a result of the termination of projects, additional funding was available for the remaining grantees. The Golden LEAF Foundation Board of Directors approved a process to reallocate those funds. This process prioritized reducing unanticipated costs that grantees had because bids were higher than previously reviewed opinions of probable cost and allowed Golden LEAF to increase awards to grantees even though projects are in different stages of implementation.

At its December 2025 Board Meeting, Golden LEAF approved four project modifications to increase the amount awards to the four remaining projects. These modifications supported expanded scopes of work and/or increased the amount of grant funds for the project while maintaining the required match ratio.

Funding Allocation

Golden LEAF received \$10m in funding to implement this program. Funds were also authorized for Golden LEAF administrative expenses. (Golden LEAF used \$37,518.50 for that purpose.) Golden LEAF has returned a total of \$1,204,410.69 to the Department of Commerce in unused funds for this program.

County	Grantee	Total Award Amount*	Amount Disbursed as of 6/30/26	Scope of Work
Ashe	Ashe County	\$2,500,000	\$40,000	Design and construction of a 15,000 square foot shell building, expandable to 40k
Columbus	Tabor City	\$1,984,688.56	\$1,984,688.56	Design and construction of a 25,000 square foot shell building, expandable to 50k (complete)
Robeson	Robeson County	\$2,500,000	\$9,600	Design and construction of a 80,000 square foot shell building, expandable to 142k
Scotland	Scotland County Economic Development Corporation	\$1,666,319.25	\$1,666,319.25	Design and construction of a 45,000 square foot shell building, expandable to 60k (complete)
Halifax	Halifax County	\$27,000	\$27,000	To develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 40,000-50,000 square foot shell building at the Halifax Corporate Park

County	Grantee	Total Award Amount*	Amount Disbursed as of 6/30/26	Scope of Work
Bladen	Bladen's Bloomin' Agri-Industrial, Inc.	\$30,063	\$30,063	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.
Franklin	Franklin County	\$50,000	\$50,000	To develop a preliminary design plan to construct a 30,000 square-foot shell building expandable to 60,000-90,000 square feet at the Triangle North Franklin Business Park, Lot 5.

* For completed projects, the Total Award Amount reflects the final amount disbursed.

Current Project Status

At the time each project was awarded funding, the grantee provided a timeline of when it expected to accomplish specific activities, including: completion of engineering and design, start of construction, and completion of construction. The initial date the grantees provided is referred to as the "target date".

Every six months, the grantee provides Golden LEAF with a summary of which activities have been completed, allowing Golden LEAF staff to compare their progress to the target date. Below is a summary of the accomplishments for each active project. For projects that have updated target completion dates, the updated dates are also included.

Grantee	Status	Completion of Engineering and Design	Start of Construction	Completion of Construction
Ashe County	Slightly delayed (<6 months)	Completed: 9/1/2025	Completed: 1/15/2026	Prior Target: 10/1/2026 Current anticipated date of completion: 11/30/2026
Tabor City	Completed	Completed: 2/28/2025	Completed: 6/16/2025	Completed: 5/26/2026

Grantee	Status	Completion of Engineering and Design	Start of Construction	Completion of Construction
Robeson County	Slightly delayed (<6 months)	Target: 9/10/2025 Following a design build process. Most elements of design complete.	Completed: 12/15/2025	Prior Target: 10/22/2026 Current anticipated date of completion: 12/14/2026
Scotland County Economic Development Corporation	Completed	Not applicable (design/build)	Completed: 4/1/2025	Completed: 4/16/2026

Anticipated Outcomes

Golden LEAF asked applicants to estimate the following outcomes for their projects: Investment in Privately Owned Property, Plant, and Equipment, New Full-time Jobs Created, and Average Annual Wage of New Full-time Jobs. Golden LEAF will also track Investment in Publicly Owned Infrastructure, determined by the total cost of the project that makes the shell building viable. This includes necessary water, sewer, and road extensions, and related infrastructure needs. These outcomes are aligned with the outcomes Golden LEAF tracks for similar projects.

Outcome	Defined As	Source
Investment in Publicly Owned Infrastructure	Total dollars to be spent to construct the building and associated infrastructure needs, including grant funds	Invoices and other records provided by grantee
Investment in Privately Owned Property, Plant, and Equipment	Total private dollars invested at the project location	Documentation from companies occupying the shell building or tax records
New Full-Time Jobs Created	Number of new full-time jobs created within the shell building	Report from the company
Average Annual Wage of New Full-time Jobs	Wages paid to employees located within the shell building	Report from the company

Each grantee developed anticipated outcomes based on factors such as the size of the building, the location of the building, the kinds of industries thought to be most likely to select the building based on review of data about demand for industrial buildings in the area, and the grantee's economic development strategy.

As grantees complete the buildings, Golden LEAF will begin tracking each grantee's progress towards these projected outcomes. Each project's projected outcomes are described in more detail below, including the anticipated sources of data to be provided by each grantee. Golden LEAF will report on the information

required to be provided to the General Assembly, i.e., the number of shell buildings built, the number of buildings that are vacant and how long they have been vacant, the number of shell buildings that have been occupied, the name of the company that occupied the building, and the number of jobs based on the shell buildings that have been occupied. Grantees will report to Golden LEAF on an annual basis once the buildings are constructed.

Grantee	Estimated Completion of Construction at Time of Application*	Target Investment in Publicly Owned Infrastructure	Target Investment in Privately Owned Property, Plant, and Equipment	Target New Full-Time Jobs Created	Target Average Annual Wage of New Full-time Jobs
County of Ashe	12-31-26	\$2,851,261.50	\$3,000,000.00	30	\$42,900
Town of Tabor City	3-31-26	\$2,218,368.35	\$750,000.00	20	\$55,000
County of Robeson	12-31-25	\$9,898,895.00	\$9,152,000.00	75	\$45,500
Scotland County Economic Development Corporation	12-31-25	\$2,261,902.00	\$1,500,000.00	25	\$45,116

*Initial estimates. Timelines vary due to the amount of work to be completed at each site and availability of sufficient funds to begin construction.

Status of the Shell Buildings*

Grantee	Number of shell buildings built	Name of occupying company or vacant	Length of time the building has been vacant	The number of jobs created
Ashe County	0**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Robeson County	0**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Scotland County Economic Development Corporation	1	Vacant	2.5 months	0
Tabor City	1	Vacant	1 month	0
Total	0	n/a	n/a	0

*Status is as of June 30, 2026.

**Currently under construction.

The Golden LEAF, Inc.
FY2027 Budget

	Budget FY 2027
Budget Sources:	
MSA Payment (Appropriated)	\$ 25,000,000
Flood Mitigation Program	716,137
Disaster Recovery Program	107,628
Food Distribution Assistance Program	32,299
Budget Carryforward (awarded in FY25)	60,000,000 **
Corpus	51,927,571
Total Budget Sources	<u>\$ 137,783,635</u>
Administration/Capital	\$ 5,715,385
Interest Expense and Fees (LOC)	40,000
Investment in Corpus	7,500,000
Grants/Programs:	
Open Grants Program	8,500,000
Economic Catalyst	10,000,000
Site Development Program	15,000,000
Scholarships	7,500,000
Other Initiatives:	
SPARC Projects	3,000,000
NC Ag Leads Implementation	3,000,000
Golden LEAF Schools Follow On	450,000
Healthcare Leverage	7,500,000
Small Business and Entrepreneurship	5,000,000
Other	3,722,186
Other Carryforward (FY25 award)	60,000,000 **
Disaster Recovery Grant Program (State Appropriated)	107,628
Flood Mitigation (State Appropriated)	716,137
Food Distribution Assistance Program (State Appropriated)	32,299
Total Grants	<u>124,528,250</u>
Total Budget	<u>\$ 137,783,635</u>
Corpus as a % of 3-yr rolling avg. of Net Assets	<u>4.36%</u>
Admin/Capital as % of Total Budget*	<u>4.59%</u>
Admin/Capital + Interest Exp as % of Total Budget*	<u>4.62%</u>

*Excludes Food Distribution grant as legislation includes an administrative allotment for administration of the Program

** Note: carryforward of large project awarded in June 2025 (due to accounting rules)

The Golden LEAF, Inc.
FY2027 Administrative Expenses/Capital Budget

	Budget FY2027
Administrative Expense	
Board of Directors Expenses	\$ 74,270
Depreciation Expense	128,400
Insurance	44,956
Miscellaneous & Bank Charges	4,800
Occupancy Expenses	171,906
Office Operations Expenses	38,156
Personnel Expenses	4,123,053
Professional Fees	826,396
Technology	266,848
Total Administrative Expense	\$ 5,678,785
Total Capital Budget	\$ 36,600
	\$ 5,715,385

The Golden L.E.A.F.
(Long-term Economic Advancement Foundation), Inc.

**Statement of Activities and Governmental Fund Revenues,
Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance**

<i>Year ended June 30, 2026</i>	General Fund	Reclassifications and Eliminations	Statement of Activities
Revenues			
Net investment income	\$ 263,210,442	\$ -	\$ 263,210,442
Proceeds from state appropriation	797,778	-	797,778
Proceeds from state settlement	25,000,000	-	25,000,000
Total Revenues	289,008,220	-	289,008,220
Expenditures/Expenses			
Grant distributions	49,048,927	-	49,048,927
Administrative costs	5,028,355	-	5,028,355
Line of credit expense	58,766	-	58,766
Capital outlays	81,592	(81,592)	-
Loss on capital assets	-	12,052	12,052
Depreciation expense	-	119,207	119,207
Return of state funds	16,204,411	-	16,204,411
Total Expenditures/Expenses	70,422,051	49,667	70,471,718
Revenues Over (Under)			
Expenditures/Expenses	218,586,169	(49,667)	218,536,502
Change in Fund Balance/Net Position	218,586,169	(49,667)	218,536,502
Fund Balance/Net Position, beginning of year	1,327,608,573	2,868,060	1,330,476,633
Fund Balance/Net Position, end of year	\$ 1,546,194,742	\$ 2,818,393	\$ 1,549,013,135

Organization	Project Title	Grant Amount	Program Area	Priority Funding Area	County of Applicant	Grant Begins	Grant Closed
Appalachian Mountain Health	Building Back Better: A Healthcare Investment that Creates Jobs and Restores Hope	\$200,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Buncombe	4-Jun-2026	4-Dec-2026
Appalachian State University	Preparing the Rural Nursing Workforce: Lab Expansion at App State Hickory Campus	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Watauga	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2027
Brunswick Community College	Industrial Maintenance and Gainful Employment (IMAGE)	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Brunswick	7-Aug-2025	4-Aug-2026
Central Carolina Community College	E.Eugene Moore Manufacturing and Biotech Solutions Center	\$2,500,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Lee	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2028
Cherokee County Local Government	Marble Industrial Park - Development	\$1,353,260.00	SITE Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Cherokee	5-Feb-2026	1-Jun-2027
City of Hendersonville	Project Vert	\$1,938,000.00	Economic Catalyst Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Henderson	4-Jun-2026	4-Jan-2029
County of Caldwell	Caldwell County Evergreene Industrial Park Grading Project	\$1,016,784.00	SITE Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Caldwell	2-Oct-2025	30-Nov-2027
County of Harnett	Western Harnett Innovation Park Site Clearing	\$656,051.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Harnett	5-Feb-2026	6-Aug-2027
County of Jackson	Webster Village	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Jackson	2-Apr-2026	2-Jan-2028
County of Nash	I-95 Industrial Center Infrastructure Expansion	\$1,000,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Nash	5-Feb-2026	5-Jan-2028
County of Robeson	Project Lupine	\$1,250,000.00	Economic Catalyst Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Robeson	7-Aug-2025	7-Aug-2026
County of Warren	Warren County Hwy 1 Industrial Site Development & Waterline Extension	\$1,087,460.00	SITE Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Warren	4-Dec-2025	15-Nov-2026
County of Yadkin	Yadkin County Commerce Park	\$15,000.00	SITE Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Yadkin	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2026
Durham County Cooperative Extension	Durham County Farm Campus Phase 1	\$475,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Agriculture	Durham	5-Feb-2026	4-Feb-2029
East Carolina University	Rural Innovations Strengthening Eastern North Carolina 29-Counties Phase II (RISE29 2.0)	\$347,028.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Pitt	7-Aug-2025	6-Aug-2027
East Carolina University	ECU Brody School of Medicine Center for Medical Education	\$1,000,000.00	Special Programs Initiative	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Pitt	2-Oct-2025	1-Dec-2027
Edgecombe County Public Schools	Tarboro High Welding Program	\$500,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Edgecombe	5-Feb-2026	5-May-2027
Fayetteville Technical Community College	Training and Education for Advanced Cardiovascular Healthcare (TEACH)	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Cumberland	2-Oct-2025	2-Oct-2026
Gaston College	Gaston College Immersive Technology and Simulation for Healthcare Programs	\$1,000,000.00	Special Programs Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Gaston	4-Jun-2026	5-Jun-2028
Guilford County Schools	Signature Career Academy in Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering at Southeast High School	\$250,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Guilford	7-Aug-2025	7-Sep-2026
Harnett County Schools	Career and Technical School Programs	\$393,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Harnett	5-Feb-2026	5-Mar-2028
Harnett Regional Jetport	Harnett Regional Jetport Corporate Area Development	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Harnett	4-Jun-2026	3-Sep-2027
Henderson-Oxford Airport Authority	Henderson-Oxford Airport Waterline Extension: A Building Block for Economic Growth	\$600,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Granville	5-Feb-2026	5-Jun-2026

Organization	Project Title	Grant Amount	Program Area	Priority Funding Area	County of Applicant	Grant Begins	Grant Closed
Isothermal Community College	Healthcare Simulation Equipment for Health & Sciences Center	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Rutherford	4-Dec-2025	3-Dec-2027
Johnston Community College Foundation, Inc.	Project Polaris-Johnston County	\$3,617,455.00	Economic Catalyst Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Johnston	18-Nov-2025	18-Dec-2026
Johnston County Industrial Development Corporation	Workforce Development Center Expansion	\$1,500,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Johnston	5-Feb-2026	5-Jul-2028
Kelly Services, Inc.	Direct Sourcing	\$611,776.00	Golden LEAF Scholarships	Scholarship	Other		
Martin, County of	Martin County Paramedics & Quick Response Vehicles	\$361,500.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Martin	4-Jun-2026	4-Jun-2027
McDowell Technical Community College	Nurse Aide Lab Expansion at McDowell Tech Workforce Education Center	\$80,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	McDowell	7-Aug-2025	7-Aug-2026
Metropolitan Community Health Services, Inc.	Aurora Healthcare Expansion Initiative	\$400,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Washington	2-Apr-2026	2-Jan-2027
Mountain Community Health Partnership Incorporated	MCHP Spruce Pine Healthcare Clinic Equipment Project	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Mitchell	5-Feb-2026	5-Oct-2026
North Carolina Chamber Foundation	Agricultural Workforce Intelligence Pilot	\$100,000.00	Other - Programs	Strategic Initiative	Wake		
North Carolina Chamber Foundation	The Farmer Innovation Bridge	\$2,150,000.00	Other - Programs	Strategic Initiative	Wake		
North Carolina Chamber Foundation	Groundtruth NC	\$275,450.00	Other - Programs	Strategic Initiative	Wake		
North Carolina Community College System	Golden LEAF Community Colleges Scholarship (2026-2027)	\$3,060,000.00	Golden LEAF Scholarships	Scholarship	Wake		
North Carolina Community College System	Scaling Learner Opportunity & Economic Growth Across Central North Carolina	\$1,000,000.00	SPARC	Workforce Preparedness	Wake	7-Aug-2025	7-Aug-2028
North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority	Golden LEAF Colleges and Universities Scholarship (2026 - 2027)	\$2,963,330.00	Golden LEAF Scholarships	Scholarship	Wake		31-Aug-2027
North Carolina State University	Implementing an Image-based Grading Method at Peanut Buying Points	\$200,000.00	Open Grants Program	Agriculture	Wake	4-Dec-2025	4-Dec-2027
Pay It Forward Fund (d/b/a The Forward Fund)	Education Loans Transformed to Move North Carolina Forward	\$1,000,000.00	SPARC	Workforce Preparedness	New Hanover	4-Jun-2026	4-Dec-2028
Piedmont Community College	Expansion of Welding Program	\$1,000,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Person	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2027
Piedmont Community College Foundation Inc	Piedmont Community College (PCC) CDL Training Expansion	\$480,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Person	2-Oct-2025	2-Oct-2026
Piedmont Community College Foundation Inc	Piedmont Community College HVAC Programming in Caswell County	\$175,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Person	2-Oct-2025	2-Oct-2026
Pitt Community College Foundation Inc	Equipping the Future: Welding Technology at Pitt Community College	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Pitt	7-Aug-2025	7-Aug-2026
Roanoke-Chowan Community College	Rural Healthcare Workforce Development through Allied Health Infrastructure Expansion	\$1,000,000.00	Special Programs Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Hertford	4-Jun-2026	2-Jun-2028
Robeson Community College	Advanced CTE Equipment Initiative	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Robeson	2-Apr-2026	1-Sep-2028
Sampson Community College Foundation, Inc.	Health Sciences Building	\$1,000,000.00	Healthcare Workforce Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Sampson	7-Aug-2025	8-Feb-2027
Southeastern Community College	Eliminating Barriers in Advanced Manufacturing	\$200,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Columbus	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2027
Spiron Solutions	Rural Internship Initiative (2025 - 2026)	\$98,375.00	Golden LEAF Scholarships	Scholarship	Wayne		
Stanly Community College Foundation, Inc.	Expanding Instruction in High-Demand Trades	\$375,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Stanly	2-Oct-2025	1-Oct-2027
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Lead for NC	\$300,000.00	Open Grants Program	Other	Orange	2-Oct-2025	31-Aug-2027

Organization	Project Title	Grant Amount	Program Area	Priority Funding Area	County of Applicant	Grant Begins	Grant Closed
The University of North Carolina at Pembroke	UNCP College of Optometric Medicine - Clinical Sciences Building Equipment and Instructional Technology Investment	\$4,864,368.00	Special Programs Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Robeson	23-Jan-2026	24-Jan-2028
Town of Bladenboro	Jay	\$850,000.00	Economic Catalyst Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Bladen	30-Sep-2025	30-Sep-2027
Town of Edenton	Project Teapot	\$500,000.00	Open Grants Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Chowan	7-Aug-2025	7-Sep-2026
Town of Troy	Uwharrie Business Park	\$120,000.00	SITE Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Montgomery	4-Dec-2025	5-Oct-2026
Uwharrie Charter Academy	Advanced Manufacturing	\$350,000.00	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Randolph	2-Oct-2025	2-Jun-2028
Vance-Granville Community College	Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Applied Technology	\$750,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Vance	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2028
Western Piedmont Community College	Heavy Equipment Operator Training Program	\$479,949.05	Open Grants Program	Workforce Preparedness	Burke	2-Oct-2025	2-Sep-2027
Wilson Community College	Pathway to Prosperity	\$585,000.00	CBGI - Community-Based Grants Initiative	Workforce Preparedness	Wilson	5-Feb-2026	5-Feb-2028
Wilson Economic Development Council (Wilson EDC)	Wilson Corporate Park Sewer Upgrade	\$1,492,520.00	Economic Catalyst Program	Job Creation and Economic Investment	Wilson	2-Apr-2026	2-Apr-2028