



CHEROKEE BOYS CLUB, INC.

Dedicated service since 1932

Club Motto: "By Prayer and By Work"

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

P.O. BOX 507
52 CHEROKEE BOYS CLUB LOOP
CHEROKEE, NC 28719
828-497-9101

www.cherokeeboysclub.com

Mission Statement

"To inspire and prepare individuals and families to reach their full potential, while embracing and honoring traditional Cherokee values."

LEADERSHIP



Board of Directors

President- Aaron Bradley

Vice- President- Donnie Owle

Secretary- Tagan Crowe

Assistant Secretary- Tiffani Reed

Board Member- Tara Reed- Cooper

Business Member- Doris Johnson

Business Member- Bradley Letts

CHS Student Representative- Tayvin Bark

Tribal Council Representative- Perry Shell



Department Managers

General Manager- Greg Owle

828-359-5509

Finance Director- Rhonica Via

828-359-5504

Human Resources- Tiffani Reed

828-359-5506

IT (Information Technology)- Terry Bradley

828-359-5505

Bus & Truck- Aaron Bradley

828-359-5585

Service Department- Donnie Owle

828-359-5591

Construction & Facilities- Sean Lawless

828-359-5521

RKLI Director- Tonya Carroll

828-359-5545

Cherokee Children's Home- Sharon Dills

828-359-5576

Child Development- Leslie McEntire

828-359-5570



HISTORY

The Cherokee Boys Farm Club was established at the Cherokee Boarding School in 1932. Two years later the Cherokee Motor Club was founded. When the Boarding School closed in 1954, the Cherokee Day School continued the two clubs. The clubs were combined in 1958 and continued to grow. On May 4, 1964, The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians incorporated the Cherokee Boys Club as a non-profit, self-supporting Tribal Enterprise. The club's mission has concentrated on the core needs of the Cherokee community and has been very successful in implementing programs and services to that end. The Cherokee Boys Club's specific objectives have been our top priority and pursuing these goals in a fiscally responsible approach has enabled the club to prosper for the past 90 years.

Club Objectives

- To provide educational opportunities, vocational and leadership training for Cherokee People, especially the youth.
 - To provide employment opportunities for Tribal members.
 - To provide services for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and surrounding communities.
 - To provide a Children's Home and services to children and families.
- Today, all divisions of the club combine their efforts to address these goals.

Revenue

The Club earns its revenue by providing services for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Performance of these services provides full-time employment for our staff and on-the-job training for Cherokee Youth. All funds earned by the Club are used for operational expenses, repayment of debt incurred for purchase of Club buildings and equipment, and for projects for Cherokee Youth.

Operations

The Club needs and receives donations for the operation of the Children's Home & Child Care Services projects, vocational training and scholarship programs. All other operations of the club are self-supporting. The Club borrowed money from financial institutions to purchase all Club vehicles, equipment, and to pay for the construction of most Club buildings. The Club repays all funds as well as interest on all funds borrowed.

Membership Criteria

Any person who is:

- Enrolled Member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- A graduate of Cherokee Central Schools
- Current or Former Employee of Cherokee Boys Club with at least two (2) consecutive years of vested employment.

all of the above must be 18 years of age or older

FRELL OWL AWARD RECIPIENT



2024 marked the 37th year that the Cherokee Boys Club Board of Directors publicly recognize a person or persons with the Frell Owl Award. Unfortunately, due to the Covid Pandemic, a recipient was not selected in 2020. The Frell Owl Award is given to those that best exemplify the character and accomplishments of the late Mr. Frell Owl, Cherokee educator and civic leader and to those who have significantly contributed to welfare of Cherokee children and families. Anyone may submit a nomination. Any person or persons may be nominated with the exception of current Cherokee Boys Club Board Members.

During Father's Day weekend, our twelve-year-old son, Kodesgi (Ko), exhibited symptoms resembling Bell's Palsy, which is what he was diagnosed with after an emergency room visit. Within twenty-four hours of that emergency visit, things quickly deteriorated, escalating the challenges we faced. What began merely as facial drooping on one side of his face, was now an inability to walk or speak clearly.

After quickly determining that Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority (CIHA) couldn't diagnose or treat Kodesgi, he was referred to Mission Hospital. Within thirty minutes of arrival, he was admitted. In addition to his other symptoms, his blood pressure was now within what is considered a hypertensive crisis.

Ko continued to decline after admission, he was now unable to move at all on his own, to chew or eat, had severe pain in his legs and began to have pins and needles sensation in his hands and feet.

Tests revealed Strep and possibly an Epstein-Barr infection (also known as Mono). Due to the extremity of symptoms, additional testing was required to determine what caused the unrelated symptoms to be delayed. It was nearly a week before he was officially diagnosed with Guillan-Barre Syndrome (GBS). This syndrome is best described as a condition in which the body's immune system attacks the nerves. It can cause weakness, numbness or even paralysis. GBS is rare and doesn't have an exact known cause. There is also no known cure, although treatments can ease symptoms and help speed recovery. Most people fully recover but it could take up to several years, with most being able to walk again six months after symptoms began. GBS is almost unheard of but there have been several recent adult cases in Cherokee, and it has gained national attention due to Freddie Freeman's (Los Angeles Dodger's First Baseman) three-year-old son being diagnosed with it this summer.

Ko received Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) as well as treatment for high blood pressure and infections. During this time, he was still unable to eat, and his weight drastically decreased. His paralysis and prolonged bedridden state led to additional complications, including the diagnosis of foot drop in both feet. During his admission, he had daily appointments with Pediatricians, Neurologists, Speech and Physical Therapists. After two weeks in Mission Children's, even after some improvement, the possibility of needing inpatient rehabilitation was heavily discussed.

While hospitalized, we had to worry about very little due to the love and support of our family and friends. Growing up in Cherokee, you realize that our support systems here are different. When inpatient rehabilitation was mentioned, it weighed heavily on us as parents. The only children's inpatient rehabilitation center in the area is currently in Charlotte, which quickly removes most of your support system due to travel. Not only did this decision weigh on us, but it also weighed heavily on Ko. During this trying time in his life, removing the ability for his family and friends to visit would have been detrimental to his mental health.

FRELL OWL AWARD RECIPIENT

After deciding rehab in Charlotte was a last resort, we reached out to Jennifer Thompson, Doctor of Physical Therapy at CIHA, and Cherokee Central School Board Chair. Jennifer quickly began collaborating with Mission Children's to reach a treatment plan that would allow for Ko to stay home. Jennifer gathered her team with the CIHA Physical Therapy Department and created a plan to make sure Ko would be seen daily until he no longer needed treatment.

Ko was released from Mission Children's Hospital thanks to Jennifer, the Physical Therapy team, and their dedication to helping him recover. At the time of his release, Ko was still unable to walk, or do many other things unassisted, and was required to wear braces and use a walker due to the foot drop diagnosis. He began PT with CIHA immediately upon being released from Mission. The projected recovery period of months or even years, remarkably changed. Ko was determined, but the unwavering support from Jennifer and the Physical Therapy team was proof that they had the same goal.

Daily physical therapy sessions with several therapists showed promising improvements. Within a month of being released from Mission, the walker and braces were no longer needed. Within two months, Ko was jogging on a treadmill. On September 24th, just three months after being diagnosed, Ko entered and was able to play the last minutes of the last JV football game of the season, with the therapists that worked with him the most in the stands. None of this would have been possible without Jennifer and the team of Physical Therapists at CIHA.

During these sessions, we witnessed the team's devotion to our Cherokee families. Early on, Jennifer approached us not only to check on Ko physically but mentally. She was aware of the heaviness that the diagnosis and the lingering questions caused Ko, and during that conversation she became visibly emotional due to him not receiving the mental/emotional care that was greatly needed. Someone that displays that level of concern for your child, when they're not required to, speaks volumes. This is not simply a job or career for this team.

If you walk into the Physical Therapy department, you will see enrolled members of all ages being cared for in an open room. If you pay attention, you'll notice the level of care being provided and just how fortunate we are. Whether it is sharing stories, laughter or even one of our elders teaching one of the therapists how to speak Cherokee, it's HOME. Not only does the team create a welcoming, comfortable, and supportive environment, but they also get to know you on a personal level. Even the team members that didn't work directly with Ko often commented on his hard work, dedication and praised him. The team members that worked with Ko quickly found a way to relate to him and make his therapy sessions not seem like appointments. While educating him on how to recover and gain his strength back, they also healed him emotionally. As he gained strength, his smile and laugh also returned.

Frell Owl was a civic leader and educator. In many ways, Jennifer and the Physical Therapy team are the perfect example of both. They went above and beyond to ensure Ko remained close to home and received the care he desperately needed. Not only did Jennifer do this in her capacity at CIHA but also as Cherokee Central School Board Member. Jennifer made sure Ko's transition back to school was smooth and that we had all the necessary resources to make it successful.

Not only did this team assist Ko, but during the Cracker Bowl, our youngest son, Keedan, was injured. Although Jennifer was not on duty, nor required to, she made her way to the sidelines to check on him. Within a week of his injury, she checked on him on two separate occasions prior to clearing him.

Individuals who leave a lasting impact on our youth and families, dedicating themselves to the betterment of our community often go unrecognized. We couldn't allow this opportunity to recognize the work of Jennifer, Irving, Kevonna, Stephen, Ellie, and Brett to pass by. We are deeply grateful for the care they have provided not only for our family but to many others as well. We sincerely appreciate your consideration of this nomination.

Thank you, Leigh-Anne, Kevin and Kodesgi Jackson





Scholarships

Hornbuckle- Bennes Scholarship

The Hornbuckle- Bennes Scholarship Fund was established in 1991, by the Cherokee Boys Club, Inc. Board of Directors to provide scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians who are furthering their education at a four or two-year college/university, vocational or technical school. This was done so to honor two leading citizens of Western North Carolina, Mr. Vernon

M. Hornbuckle and Mr. Joseph M. Bennes.

These two men contributed meaningful support to the work of the Cherokee Boys Club during their lifetime.

Mr. Hornbuckle served as President of the Cherokee Boys Club Board of Directors, was an employee of the Cherokee Boys Club and Cherokee School System, and at the time of his death was assistant director of the Indian Action Program.

Mr. Bennes was a pioneer of school bus safety in Western North Carolina. He helped train bus drivers for 16 years and assisted in educational programs throughout Cherokee, as well as the Western North Carolina area.

Ray Kinsland, Late General Manager of the Cherokee Boys Club, Inc. stated that “we know of no higher honor to bestow on these two outstanding citizens than through this scholarship fund.”

Bertha Saunooke Memorial Scholarship

The Bertha Saunooke Memorial Scholarship was established in 1994 in memory of Bertha Saunooke and be administered in the same manner as the Hornbuckle-Bennes Scholarship, to provide graduating high school seniors who are enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians who are attending a four-year college/university. Priority is given to students who are enrolled in private or out-of-town schools and to students who have unmet needs beyond Tribal Education Awards. Unlike the Hornbuckle-Bennes scholarship, students who are attending GED classes, truck driving, continuing education class or remedial/transitional classes will not be considered for the Bertha Saunooke Memorial Scholarship.

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Bertha Saunooke Memorial Scholarship



Name: Seshadri Pratama

Graduated From:

Rabun-Gap Nacoochee School

School Attending:

Georgetown College

Major: Chemistry with Pre-Med Track



Name: Loshi Ward

Graduated From:

Cherokee High School

School Attending:

Johnson & Wales University

Major: Psychology

Hornbuckle-Bennes Scholarship



Name: Janna Girty

Graduated From:

Cherokee High School

School Attending:

Western Carolina University

Major: Education w/ Focus in

Cherokee History & Language



Name: Alitama Perkins

Graduated From:

Cherokee High School

School Attending:

Arizona State University

Major: Cultural Anthropology & Linguistics

Administration



The Executive Division of the Administration Department is made up of the General Manager and Executive Assistant. Both provide oversight of all Boys Club operations.

In addition to general oversight, they also assist with preparation and maintenance of contracts, board meetings which includes maintaining all resolutions, Boys Club public relations, and liaison services between programs served by the Boys Club, which includes the Cherokee Central Schools, Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Tribal Leadership, and the many programs of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians.

The General Manager and his staff, with their combined experience, also provide support and guidance for all the Boys Club department managers. A monthly meeting is held with department managers to discuss their needs and concerns and to give them the opportunity to circulate ideas and strategies. They also provide updates and their departments activities as the Boys Club moves forward together. A monthly Board of Directors meeting is held to present resolutions and concerns of the Boys Club overall. The department managers may attend the Board of Directors meetings to answer questions that they may have about different departments and their activities.

The Boys Club Administrative Department includes the Finance Director, Assistant Finance Director, Human Resources Manager and Human Resources Assistant, IT Manager and IT Assistant, Grants Coordinator, Payroll Officer, two Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable Processors and a Receptionist/Switchboard Operator.

The whole Administrative Department provides finance and accounting, IT technology, and HR/Payroll services for all Cherokee Boys Club, Inc. Departments and the Cherokee Central School System. The Administrative Department strives to operate with efficiency and professionalism. The Boys Club also serves as a fiscal agent for the Cherokee Preservation Foundation as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization. Detailed audits are performed by independent certified public accountants each year and annual reports are available upon request.



Cherokee Central Schools



Empower our students, preserve our nation, and ensure our future is the vision of Cherokee Central Schools. On the 14-acre campus nestled beside the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Cherokee Central Schools lives it's mission daily.

The district, in partnership with its families and community, develops lifelong learners by providing challenging educational experiences that empower students for cultural stewardship, civic responsibility, future readiness, and academic success in a safe and healthy learning environment.

At the PK/Hope Center, some of the experiences included Family Circle Nights, raised garden beds, and a Teddy Bear clinic with high school HOSA students. Cherokee Elementary students celebrated Read Across America with Chief Hicks visiting classrooms and reading to students. Additionally, CES students performed the Jungle Book Kids musical. At CMS, students performed The Addams Family musical. Middle school students also participated in new CTE offerings such as JROTC, agriculture, drones, and woodshop. Cherokee High School students participated in the Real-Life Expo, teaching and simulating life skills for adulthood. Students were also able to travel and experience new culture with one group going to Hawaii and another to Switzerland. High school students performed well athletically, too. Notably, the Lady Braves golf team won the conference championship, and the Lady Braves Basketball team won the state championship.

The school district enrolls approximately 1400 students, PK-12, and employs approximately 400 faculty and staff. The graduation rate was 82%. The district has been accredited by Cogniz for a number of years with its most recent quality assurance review occurring in 2022.

Cherokee Central Schools enjoys a strong partnership with the Cherokee Boys' Club (CBC). The CBC is responsive to the changing needs of the students at Cherokee Central Schools, and it works collaboratively with the CCS administration in numerous ways. As the district's fiscal agent, CBC provides support to the district's finance department, including grants management. The two organizations' Human Resources departments work closely to ensure that our staff are supported. And the Cherokee Boys' Club provides daily bus transportation and bus service for CCS extracurricular activities.

Cherokee Central Schools- School Board

Chair- Dr. Jennifer Thompson

Co-Vice Chair- Tara Reed-Cooper

Co-Vice Chair- Melanie Lambert

Secretary- Kristina Hyatt

Roberta Toineeta

Micah Swimmer

Council Representative- Michael Stamper



Cherokee Central Schools- Administration

Superintendent- Consuela Girty

Associate Superintendent- Dr. Beverly Payne

Human Resources Director- Dr. Jo Ray

Finance Director- Howard Wahnetah



Bus & Truck Department



2024 Fiscal year we now have fourteen electric school buses. We are waiting for five more, that will be Gen two. Gen two buses will have motors on the back axles. Then our bus fleet will almost be electric. Every year the bus department goes to the CCS and does bus training with kindergarten through fifth grade.

Our Charter Buses have been all over the southeast to NY, and all the way to South Dakota. We get requests for weddings, field trips, school sports and church trips. We have been very busy!



There are four over the road trucks that we have going as far north as New Jersey and South of Georgia. Our solid waste we are running five trash trucks to Georgia two times a day.

Phase one of the solar grid was completed. Phase two should begin soon. This covers school buses and is hooked on the Eton chargers.



In February we celebrated 7 Cherokee Boys Club bus drivers with driving over 1 million miles. They were: Clyde Dull, Samuel Crowe, Jody Saunooke, Chad Swayney, Randy Lossiah, Jason Owle and Ernest Sneed.

We have one employee, June Wolfe, who has driven over 2 million miles.

We also have one employee, Robert Price, who has driven over 3 million miles.

Each of these employees received a plaque and were celebrated by the EBCI Chief and Vice Chief along with Tribal Council. In attendance were employees of Cherokee School, Boys Club Board of Directors and Boys Club employees. The National Safety Council has been an advocate for road safety for over 100 years. NSC recognizes employees for a million miles driven without a preventable accident.

Congratulations to each employee receiving this honor!

We truly appreciate you and are glad you are apart of the Cherokee Boys Club, Inc!



Bus & Truck Department

We have got three new bus drivers, Joise Saunooke, Daniel Bowers and Erica Hull. Erica is also our other administrative assistant.



Jason Owle, Chad Swayney, Randy Lossiah and Sam Crowe have been with the Cherokee Boys Club for over twenty years.



Jody Saunooke has been with the Cherokee Boys Club for over thirty years.



Happy Farewell & Retirement to Mr. Bob Price, Thank you for your thirty-four years of service. Bob drove a school bus and charter trips while here at the Cherokee Boys Club. Mr. Bob has also been recognized for three million miles of driving.

Happy Farewell & Retirement to Mr. Clyde Dull, Thank for your twenty-four years of service. Clyde drove a bus and the trash truck while here at the Cherokee Boys Club. Mr. Dull has also been recognized for one million miles of driving



Cherokee Children's Home

2024 has been a year of growth and change for the Children's Home. In March of 2024, the children's home got a new manager, Sharon Dills and assistant manager, Heather Sneed. We also received a golden doodle as an emotional support dog for the kids. His name is Winston. He will start his training with WNC Pawsitive soon.

We were able to fill the second Social Worker position as well.



We served a total of 25 kids. That was up from 2022-2023.

Our staff grew from 9 employees to fully staffed at 21.

Heather and Sharon started the accreditation process with CARF. This process will take approximately 1 year to be completed.

Upgrades to the cottages:

Due to circumstances beyond our control, we had to replace our generator, 3 AC units and a refrigerator due to lightning hitting our cottages.

We had the porches and sidewalks pressure washed to help preserve them.

CBC Construction came in installed new flooring in both cottages.

CBC IT came in and updated our security systems, internet, and computers.

We transitioned from recording of our medications on paper to the Electronic Medication system which is to help cut down on missed doses and misused medications.

Contributions/Donations/Fundraisers:

In June Harrah's Casino presented CCH with a check for \$18,986 from the Community Charity Change collection that they do yearly.

Our 40th Golf Tournament at Sequoyah National brought in \$72,000.

We held a large Bake sale to help raise money for the Beach trip that brought in \$2500 and a Raffle that brought in \$5600.

Total from March 2024-March 2025 with donations, monthly contributions, and fundraisers other than the Golf Tournament we raised \$51,963.41.



During the unfortunate event of Hurricane Helene, our admin staff reached out to help in multiple counties! We are blessed at CCH to have staff that are selfless everyday but during time of need they will go the extra mile.



Cherokee Children's Home



Community Involvement:

At Christmas we had multiple community businesses that reached out and supported the Kids Christmas. (RKLI, Agelink, Southern Charm, Peter's, Cherokee Chophouse, Harrah's Casino) The Cherokee Chophouse and Peter's Pancakes sponsored the staff and residents Christmas party and stockings for the kids at no cost. Over the last year we have increased our community involvement. We participated in multiple community events including multiple Christmas Parades in Cherokee and Swain County. Staff participated in the Agelink Halloween trick or treating for the kids.

The kids attended various vacation bible schools in the community.

Activities:

We have 9 residents who are playing in the Little League. The board paid for our registration fees to help offset the cost.

Our yearly Beach trip last June was to the outer Banks. We took twelve kids and four staff. We were able to stay on Corolla Beach with the wild horses.

During Hurricane Helene staff and kids helped in different communities. We were able to collect supplies and deliver to those in need. We helped in surrounding counties pack food boxes for those that were impacted.

We have started back monthly community service projects. The kids have enjoyed going to the Community table and serving.





Child Development

The Childcare department made some huge changes this year.

- We hired more staff and teacher to lower our Child/Staff ratio's.
 - Lowering our Child/Staff ratio helps us be able to give more attention to the children.
- We went from 25 employees to 52 employees.

Agelink Center

We are working toward our program goals to becoming a child development program. We have hired the following positions to help us with this:

- Behavioral Specialist
- Family Partnership Coordinator
- Compliance Coordinator
- Assistant Managers for each Child Care Center



We moved into the modular building and construction has started on the renovation of the Agelink Childcare Building.

We have been able to have 6 teachers complete Credentials I & II, and the remaining 6 are enrolled. Some teacher have chosen to pursue a degree in Early Childhood, which we are paying for.

The center has been able to incorporate more activities and events for children and their families such as :

- Back to School Bash
- Halloween Trunk or Treat
- Valentine Parent/Child Dance



We have also tried to have more community involvement. We were able to participate in:

- Cherokee Fair Parade
- Week of the Young Child
- the First Annual Autism Awareness Event
- Our after-school kids also did a bake sale to help raise money for the Children's Home Christmas.



Child Development



Snowbird Center

Our Snowbird Center was able to hire the following positions:

- Behavioral Specialist
- Family Partnership Coordinator
- Compliance Coordinator
- An Assistant Manager who can be onsite at or Snowbird Center every day.

We had all of our teachers sign-up for or receive their Childcare Credentials. We have had one staff member graduate with her Associate Degree in Early Childhood.

We were able to participate in Week of the Young Child and the Autism Awareness Event.

We fed our parents and grandparents' lunch; we also provided breakfast in to-go bags for Mother's and Father's Day. We have parent meetings once a month. We have invited parents to come and make valentine boxes with their children, we even had one class tie-dye socks for Dr. Suess week, and one class made sensory bottles with parents.

Snowbird is working with the Cherokee Language Learners and they come and read to our children in the Cherokee Language, as well as giving our students a book. Snowbird Community Library come to read and does a craft with our children once a month.

Our kitchen staff got Serve-Safe Certificates

Parents and Staff did fund raisers and bought Christmas for our students. Santa Clause and the Grinch came to our Christmas Party and Santa gave gifts and the Grinch stole them.

Ms. Melanie always dresses up for Dr. Suess week, she was "The Lorax" and "The Cat in the Hat".

We had 10 students graduate or Preschool Program in 2024.

Construction & Facilities Department



The Cherokee Boys Club Construction and Facilities Department commonly referred to as C&F, consists of 20 Employees. We have two employees, the Manager and Assistant Manager, who are both licensed General Contractors. Two of our major functions are providing the construction and administrative services for the implementation of the Tribal Housing Improvement Program (HIP)

and the maintenance and upkeep of the facilities here on the Boys Club Campus located on Acquoni Road and the Children's Home Campus in the Birdtown Community.

Through the Tribal HIP we provide turnkey construction of new homes for qualified applicants of elderly and disabled Tribal members. We also provide home rehabilitation services for qualified applicants. The rehab services typically consist of but are not limited to kitchen cabinet repair or replacement, window and door replacement, flooring, exterior siding and bathroom repairs.

This year we broke ground on the Tribal HIP housing community at the site of the old Norman Maney Recreation Park. The community grounds and home locations have been planned by a Civil Engineering service along with the help and input of Tribal Water and Sewer and the Cherokee Department of Transportation. We have started with all the necessary site preparation, which began with the removal of the existing buildings and infrastructure to maximize the usable space of the location and its boundaries. Several of the old and dilapidated cabins were "donated" to the Cherokee Fire Department and put to service (burned) in the training of their staff with a live fire emergency simulation. With the continued progress of this project, we look forward to starting the construction of the new homes of this community in 2025.

The maintenance of the facilities for the Boys Club requires our constant attention. As many in the Cherokee community know, the Boys Club started with just one building. Our campus now contains almost twenty buildings. So, it is a full-time job for the Construction and Facilities Dept. keeping them maintained and serviced.

The C&F Department also provides community service by building pine caskets for Tribal members who have passed. It is a free service that is jointly funded by the Boys Club and the Tribe. We also deliver the caskets to the designated funeral home as a part of the service. The hope is that it provides a little relief in the family's time of need.



Service Department



The Service Department, consisting of 11 technicians, maintains the Boys Club fleet of 110 buses, trucks, and coaches. The technicians provide all services, repairs, maintenance, parts, paint and body work, vehicle inspection, vehicle washing and daily sanitizing due to the pandemic. The staff operates out of a 16,000 square foot garage providing areas to work on larger vehicles like RV's, tractor trailers and buses. We do maintenance and body work for all Boys Club vehicles, EBCI programs, and for the public.

The Boys Club operates a full-service paint and body shop which includes any insurance work for tribal programs, and the public. Our state-of-the-art paint booth is large enough to put a charter coach bus inside, the largest in the area.

The Boys Club has an agreement with the Cherokee Tribal Department of Transportation to provide roadside mowing and trimming for the EBCI tribal roads and back roads. This agreement covers over 400 miles of roadways.

EBCI Senior Citizens and disabled members of the Tribe's home fueling is provided by the Boys Club through MOA's developed with Tribal programs.

Fuel pumps for the Cherokee Boys Club and Tribal vehicles are also handled under the Service Department.

Currently, there are fifteen electric school buses on the property. Our technicians are level three certified for repairing these buses. A solar canopy is being used as a cost-efficient alternative for charging the electric buses.

We would like to commend our mowing and trimming crew for all of their hard work and dedication for all they done during our Hurricane Helene Relief efforts.





Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute

The Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute (RKLI) is the umbrella organization for the Cherokee Youth Council (CYC), Youth Cultural Exchange Program (YCEP), Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program (JBLAP), and the Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program (RP) and is supported by the Cherokee Preservation Foundation (CPFdn).

Our mission is to create a community of lifelong, selfless leaders deeply rooted in Cherokee culture.

Our vision is Kituwah people living as Kituwah people: a community of lifelong, selfless leaders focused on preserving and practicing Cherokee culture for the betterment of our people.

The foundation of our programming is the seven Cherokee core values developed by community members through a planning process sponsored by the Cherokee Preservation Foundation. They are group harmony, strong individual character, educating the children, honoring the past, sense of place, spirituality, and sense of humor.

RKLI Staff List

- Tonya E. Carroll—Department Manager
- Martha Wolfe—Administrative Assistant
- Tara McCoy— Leadership Specialist, Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program and *Dhysqy Tgōō'ni* (Kituwah Ways) (ages 18+)
- Levi West— Leadership Specialist, Cherokee Youth Council and Youth Cultural Exchange programs (youth grades 7-12)
- Raylen Bark—Grants & Fundraising Specialist



Cherokee Youth Council (CYC)

The Cherokee Youth Council (CYC) had a dynamic and impactful year in 2024, demonstrating leadership, cultural engagement, and community service. Highlights of their achievements include:

- Group Project: Completed a Christmas stocking giveaway, distributing 200 stockings to brighten the holiday season for community members.
- UNITY Mid-Year Conference: Attended this national Native youth leadership event in Arizona, which provided training, networking, and inspiration for young Indigenous leaders.
- Cultural Skills: Made ribbon shirts and skirts, learned beadwork, and painted a mural at the Water Treatment Facility incorporating historic shell gorget designs.
- Junior NAIWA Event: Hosted this event with guest presenter Tracie Revis from the Muscogee Nation, who shared her work on developing a national park on her tribe's territory in Georgia.
- Field Trip: Took an overnight trip to visit the mounds discussed in Tracie Revis's presentation, deepening their connection to Indigenous history and culture.
- Workshops and Community Involvement: Sponsored workshops by Dr. Pearl Yellowman, volunteered at Elder's Day at the Fair, and participated in post-Hurricane Helene clean-up efforts in Swannanoa.
- Membership Growth: Conducted recruitment, accepting nine new members, and held their annual planning retreat to welcome these members and prepare for the coming year.



Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute

Youth Cultural Exchange Program (YCEP)

In 2024, the Youth Cultural Exchange Program traveled to Costa Rica and Panama, focusing on cultural exchange, environmental education, and community service. Key highlights include:

- Fundraising and Community Service: Held a coffee fundraiser to support the trip and solicited donations of clothes and shoes from the community, which were donated to a school in Costa Rica as part of their service project.

In Costa Rica:

- Snorkeled, hiked in a national park, and learned about the local flora and fauna, including encounters with monkeys and an eyelash viper.
- Explored how chocolate is made and participated in a night walk tour.
- Relaxed at hot springs and toured a pineapple farm.
- Engaged with local artisans, learning about ox cart painting.
- Shared meals with local families, immersing themselves in the culture.



In Panama:

- Participated in a scavenger hunt of the city and enjoyed local cuisine.
- Visited a fish market and a museum and learned about the Panama Canal.
- Engaged with an Indigenous tribe, sharing dances with community members.
- Experienced a lively local party bus.



These activities underscore the program's mission of promoting global perspectives while staying grounded in Cherokee values.

Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program

The Jones-Bowman Leadership Award Program continued its commitment to fostering leadership, service, and cultural preservation in 2024. This year, six Fellows achieved remarkable milestones:

- Volunteer Service: Each Fellow completed at least 40 hours of volunteer work, contributing to their communities.
- Individual Achievements:
 - Two Fellows graduated from UNC Chapel Hill.
 - One attended a business conference in Las Vegas focused on the supply chain.
 - One traveled to the Dominican Republic, meeting with Sports Illustrated's partner of EBCI and discussing EBCI investments with local leaders.
 - One visited Puerto Rico and engaged with local leaders.
 - One attended an AIDS conference in Germany.
 - One traveled to Boston, supporting the "4 the Future" organization with a fundraiser event and youth lacrosse camp.
 - One connected with Indigenous culture in Mexico.
- Group Project:
 - Fellows developed a Cherokee language booklet to help the community learn and practice the Cherokee language, a meaningful contribution to cultural preservation.

Retreats:

A summer retreat provided opportunities for bonding with mentors and skill development.

A winter retreat incorporated a site tour where Fellows used Cherokee language clues to navigate from location to location, fostering cultural learning and teamwork.

Through their individual pursuits, group efforts, and dedication to their heritage, the Fellows exemplified the program's mission to cultivate Cherokee leaders.

Ray Kinsland Leadership Institute



Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program

In 2024, the Duyugodv'i Right Path Adult Leadership Program expanded its focus to the second and third levels for alumni, emphasizing deeper cultural engagement and leadership development.

• Second Level: Kituwah Ways

- Seven participants spent one day each month building on the foundational knowledge gained during their initial Right Path experience.
- Each participant planned an individual project to be completed after graduation, aimed at benefiting the community.



Third Level: Dinedi Eginelv (To Give What Was Given to Us)

- Four participants dedicated 16 hours each month to a cultural topic of their choice, working closely with community experts.
- Topics included Cherokee pottery, Cherokee carving, and Cherokee language (selected by two participants).
- Participants shared their learning and connected it to leadership traits and skills.
- They also explored their family genealogy with guidance from Anita Finger-Smith and Robin Swaney, deepening their understanding of personal and cultural history.

This program exemplifies the commitment to fostering culturally grounded leaders who create lasting impact in their communities.





Financials

2024 Financial Summary
Fiscal Year Ended
June 30, 2024



Revenue:

General Fund: \$1,644,290
Cherokee Central Schools: \$47,427,490
Social Service Fund: \$8,264,218
Total Government Funds: \$57,335,998



Revenue (Non-GAAP):

Enterprise Fund: \$10,131,161
Internal Service Fund: \$1,188,458
Trust & Custodial Funds: \$932,917
Total Non-GAAP Funds: \$12,252,536

Expenses:

General Fund: \$2,094,934
Cherokee Central Schools: \$43,900,505
Social Service Fund: \$5,313,856
Total Government Funds: \$51,309,295

Expenses (Non-GAAP):

Enterprise Fund: \$10,807,378
Internal Service Fund: \$431,909
Trust & Custodial Funds: \$593,580
Total Non-GAAP Funds: \$11,832,867





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CBC Bus & Truck Dept



Cherokee Children's Home



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Cherokee Central Schools



Cherokee Central Schools Athletics



