

# VISION QUALLA

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FINAL REPORT

NOVEMBER, 2004

Prepared by:  
John Weiser, Brody Weiser Burns  
Ben Sherman, Medicine Root, Inc.



**BRODY • WEISER • BURNS**



Medicine Root, Inc.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report presents the results of the Vision Qualla planning process. The planning process chose three areas for focus: cultural and heritage tourism, knowledge industries, and entrepreneurial development. The goal of the planning process was to provide the Cherokee Preservation Foundation with a clear understanding of the key issues in economic development for the Qualla Boundary and the surrounding communities in these areas, and to create action plans that will help improve economic development in these areas in the near future.

A total of six Vision Qualla meetings were held, one per month, beginning in May 2004. The committee was composed of local and regional constituencies, including representatives from the EBCI Executive Branch and Tribal Council, Cherokee cultural organizations, hoteliers and merchants, Harrah's, community groups, banks, artists and regional organizations.

The Vision Qualla planning processes were conducted in a manner that attempted to define and incorporate Cherokee values. The committee approved statements of:

- Cherokee Core Values,
- Cherokee Business Principles, and
- Cherokee Tourism Principles.

These sets of values and guiding principles were used to help the committee know whether and how new business initiatives will support and enhance Cherokee culture. All of the action plans that were produced by the committee were discussed and measured against the guiding principles of Cherokee core values.

The committee subdivided the three focus areas into the following topics for careful review::

- Cultural Tourism
- Downtown & Retail Revitalization
- Entrepreneurial & Small Business Development
- Cherokee Arts Promotion
- Trout Fishing
- Knowledge Industry
- Student Education Development
- Integrate Cherokee Values

After considerable investigation and research, seven action plans were developed in consultation with members of the Vision Qualla committee as well as other key people in the community. Action plans define responsible organization, goals/activities, resources and timelines for implementation.

The Vision Qualla committee developed suggestions for communicating the results of this work. The Economic Development Office has agreed to take the lead in coordinating the communications. The goals for communications are to:

- Inform - help people understand the planning process and the action plans. Let them know about what's happening, and how it will affect their community.
- Call to action - encourage people to participate in the action plans. Let other groups know about Vision Qualla actions, so that they can coordinate their activities with Vision Qualla's.

The following is a brief summary of the seven action plans:

**Project Name: Cultural Tourism**

- Home Organization: EBCI Marketing and Promotion
- Goals/Activities: Develop a receptive tour operator office to create and market pre-packaged and custom tours of Cherokee cultural, historical and outdoor attractions.
- Resources Required: \$98,000 first year budget for new staff and program. The most likely sources of funding are the Cherokee Preservation Foundation (first year) and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (subsequent years). If successful, the receptive tour operator can become self-supporting over time.
- Timeline for Implementation: Begin Spring 2005.

**Project Name: Downtown & Retail Revitalization**

- Home Organization: EBCI Native American Business Development Center
- Goals/Activities: Upgrade business facades to conform to master plan, add public seating, signage, walkways and plantings.
- Resources Required: Cherokee Preservation Foundation has provided a grant of \$1.3 million. In addition, it has created a loan fund of \$1.0 million. EBCI is providing funding for grants for architectural work of up to \$8,000 per property maximum. No new staff needed.
- Timeline for Implementation: Initial loans by May 2005.

**Project Name: Entrepreneurial & Small Business Development**

- Home Organization: EBCI Native American Business Development Center
- Goals/Activities: Education/training for potential entrepreneurs, microenterprise, small business and larger business management; work experience, peer support as well; non-bank financing for purchase of businesses.
- Resources Required: Tuition reimbursement for education, funded by EBCI tuition reimbursement program. Creation of a \$5 million fund for non-bank portion of business financing. Potential sources for this include Cherokee Preservation Foundation, CDFI Fund, and other non-bank funding sources. No new staff needed.
- Timeline for Implementation: Class enrollment Fall 2005, business investment fund capitalization Fall 2006.

**Project Name: Cherokee Arts Promotion**

- Home Organization: Qualla Arts & Crafts Mutual
- Goals/Activities: Provide support to Cherokee artists for programs that support the promotion and sale of high-end art and crafts.
- Resources Required: \$100,000 for Qualla Arts & Crafts capacity building and artist training programs, creation of promotional materials and opportunities for art, and upgrade artist homes for public tours. Most likely source for funding: Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Timeline for Implementation: Funding by March 2005, develop new tours throughout 2005.

**Project Name: Trout Fishing**

- Home Organization: EBCI Fish & Game Management
- Goals/Activities: Increase number of trout anglers with an “extravaganza” that introduces a new season with larger fish. Increase promotion of existing programs.
- Resources Required: \$85,000 for increased fishing promotion and \$60,000 for purchase of additional trout. Potential sources of funding: Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Trout Unlimited, North Carolina Department of Environmental Protection, EBCI.
- Timeline for Implementation: New promotion by March 2005, Extravaganza September 2005.

**Project Name: Knowledge Industry**

- Home Organization: EBCI Economic Development Office
- Goals/Activities: Increase growth of knowledge industry in Cherokee, create a council to create an attractive environment for new business, increase qualified tribal member workforce.
- Resources Required: \$10,000 for council activities, \$30,000 for curriculum development. No new staff needed. Most likely sources of funding: Cherokee Preservation Foundation for council activities; North Carolina Community College system - for curriculum development.
- Timeline for Implementation: Council in place January 2005, new classes September 2005.

**Project Name: Student Education Development**

- Home Organization: EBCI Education and Training Office
- Goals/Activities: Increase number of EBCI members with higher education degrees. Mentor high school students, provide internships, create peer support networks.
- Resources Required: \$80,000 for increased EBCI staffing, \$5000 for mentoring and peer support programs. Most likely sources of funding: Cherokee Preservation Foundation for first year; EBCI for subsequent years.
- Timeline for Implementation: Staff and programs in place by Fall 2005.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The authors would like to gratefully acknowledge the help and assistance we received from many individuals throughout the Vision Qualla planning process. Particular thanks go to the members of the Vision Qualla Committee. Their generous commitment of time and energy enabled this planning process to be conducted successfully.

### Vision Qualla Committee

Representative Group	Individual	Organization
Legislative Branch	Marie Junaluska	Tribal Council
Executive Branch	Paxton Myers	EBCI Executive Office
Tribal Programs	Brenda Oocumma	EBCI Deputy Financial Officer
	Chrissy Arch	Economic Development Director
	Brian Burgess	Cultural Resources
	Tommy Cabe	Environmental and Natural Resources
	Mary Jane Ferguson	Marketing and Promotions Director
Merchants	Donna Ball	Hardware Store
	J.L. Burgess	Fort Tomahawk
	Trent Fouts	Microtel
	Leo James	Pizza Inn
	Dave Matheson	Saint Cinnamon
Community Members	Miranda Thompson	Student
	Merritt Youngdeer	Cherokee Baptist Church
Harrah's	Lumpy Lambert	Harrah's Cherokee Casino
Craft Persons	Davy Arch	Craft Person/Indian Village
	Vicki Ledford	Qualla Arts and Crafts
Community Clubs	Betty Maney	Craft Person and Community Clubs
Financial Institutions	Jerry Boone	United Community Bank
	Ellison Rudd	First Citizens Bank
	Dorothy Posey	Mountain Federal Credit Union
Regional Organizations	Fred Alexander	Duke Power
	Bill Gibson	Region A Partnerships
	Dan Keith Ray	Biltmore Institute

We also want to thank Susan Jenkins, Deb Grant, Annette Saunooke, James Bradley, and all the staff of the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, who worked tirelessly with us to complete this project.

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## REPORT OVERVIEW

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This report presents the results of the Vision Qualla planning process. The goal of the consultation was to provide the Cherokee Preservation Foundation with a clear understanding of the key issues in economic development for the Qualla Boundary and the surrounding communities in three focus areas, and to create action plans that will help improve economic development in these areas in the near future. The three areas for focus were cultural and heritage tourism, knowledge industries, and entrepreneurial development.

The report has three sections. In the first section, we present statements of Cherokee core values, and Cherokee principles regarding business and tourism. These values statements were developed after broad consultation with elders, community members, and the Vision Qualla committee. They will continue to be discussed and refined over the next several months. We also present a short perspective on how Cherokee would look in five years if the action plans are successfully implemented.

The second section of the report presents our assessment of business growth and retail opportunities. This section is based on a detailed analysis of the businesses located on the Boundary. It is the first complete look at all businesses on the Boundary, and was designed to serve as a benchmark against which future progress in generating jobs can be measured.

The final section of the report presents the seven action plans that were developed by the Vision Qualla Committee. For each plan, we present a short summary, and then the detailed action plan. We also note the Committee's recommendation concerning the plan. We are pleased to note that a number of these action plans are already being implemented, and that some results should be visible by the beginning of the next tourist season.

# SECTION ONE: VALUES AND VISION



## INTRODUCTION TO SECTION ONE

This section provides a summary of the work that the Committee did to clarify and articulate the core values of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. These values were developed through a process of consultation with elders, youth, community clubs, and cultural institutions. Research was also conducted to better understand how the values were reflected throughout EBCI history. The Committee reviewed the values statements several times, and worked carefully to ensure that the values were an accurate representation of Cherokee culture.

The Committee approved statements of:

- Cherokee Core Values,
- Cherokee Business Principles, and
- Cherokee Tourism Principles.

These statements are documented on the following pages. The values will be presented to the EBCI Tribal Council and Government for discussion and review in the coming months.

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**CHEROKEE VALUES STATEMENT**

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## **Cherokee Core Values**

- **Group Harmony, including Community & Kin Relationships, Giving & Sharing, and Sacrifice for the People**
- **Sense of Place and Identity**
- **Perseverance & Courage**
- **Respect & Trust**
- **Dedication & Loyalty**
- **Reciprocity and Balance**
- **Untiring Efforts of Leaders**
- **Integrity**
- **Humility**
- **Sense of Humor**
- **Honoring the Past**
- **Educating Our Children**
- **Strong Connection with the Natural World**
- **Prayer, Spirituality**

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**CHEROKEE BUSINESS PRINCIPLES STATEMENT**

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**Cherokee Business Guiding Principles.** The following six principles contain the core values that will direct EBCI decision-making and business conduct on the Qualla Boundary. Our business programs will:

- 1. Preserve, reclaim and promote Cherokee culture and heritage.**
- 2. Restore community stewardship and close connection with the natural environment of our homelands.**
- 3. Strengthen the community responsibility for teaching our youth the necessary life skills and values.**
- 4. Encourage the leadership qualities of humility, generosity, integrity, respect, humor, perseverance and courage.**
- 5. Support cohesion of Cherokee families and communities.**
- 6. Embrace the concept of "Ani Ga Du Gi," the traditional culture of community giving and generosity.**
- 7. Respect the spiritual beliefs of individuals.**

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**CHEROKEE TOURISM PRINCIPLES STATEMENT**

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## **Cherokee Tourism Guiding Principles**

- 1. Offer Visitors Authentic Cherokee Culture & Values**
- 2. Be Friendly & Hospitable**
- 3. Infuse Education into Tourism Programs**
- 4. Always Strive to Exceed Visitor Expectations**
- 5. Promote High Community Aesthetic Standards**
- 6. Reinvest in Cherokee Community Improvements**
- 7. Look After the Safety of Visitors**
- 8. Foster Excellent Community Cooperation**
- 9. Respect the Privacy of Community Members**
- 10. Preserve or Improve Natural Resources**

# SECTION TWO: BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

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## BUSINESS ASSESSMENT

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The consultants developed an assessment of the changes in employment and revenues for the businesses on the Qualla Boundary from 1998 to 2003.

### Methodology

The consultants found that there are very limited sources of publicly collected information on business revenue and employment that provide reports for the Qualla Boundary. Essentially all data collected publicly on business revenue and employment is reported by county, and the Qualla Boundary is split between two counties. As a result, the data reported publicly is not appropriate for measuring the revenue and employment just for businesses on the Boundary.

Instead, the consultants purchased information on the business establishments in zip code 28719 from Dun & Bradstreet. Zip code 28719 covers almost all the Boundary, and covers almost no other inhabited area. This makes it a useful source for information on activities on the Boundary.

We found that the Dun & Bradstreet data matched reasonably well with the Tribe data on the total number of businesses on the Boundary. This gave us confidence that the revenue estimates and the employment estimates are accurate as well.

We excluded Harrah's from our estimate for two reasons. The first is that we were primarily interested in understanding the non-gaming business growth, because the Tribe already tracks the gaming business growth very carefully. The second is that Dun & Bradstreet's reports employment and revenue in size ranges, not precise amounts. This means that the uncertainty introduced by putting one very large employer into the database could easily overwhelm the growth trends produced by a number of smaller employers. Accordingly, introducing Harrah's into our estimate would most likely have overwhelmed the trends we were seeking to measure. Accordingly, we chose to leave Harrah's out of our analysis.

### Analysis

Overall, our analysis found that total employment on the Boundary increased by approximately 250 jobs, or 7%, in the five-year period from 1998 to 2003. The retail sector was the largest generator of jobs, with a net increase of 232 jobs. Two caveats should be noted. The first is that the manufacturing job growth noted in our data was near the Boundary, but not on it. It is a plant manufacturing mirrors for cars, and is just outside the Boundary. But it is in zip code 28719, and so is part of the analysis. Second, the decline in jobs in the government sector was in part due to a reclassification of the sectors of some jobs when the Tribe took over functions that were previously part of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. These reclassifications did not affect the total count of the number of jobs, which is the most important finding. The details of the analysis are provided on the following two pages.

## Employment on Qualla Boundary by Sector\*

<b>Sector</b>	<b>1998 employment</b>	<b>2003 employment</b>	<b># Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Services	1281	1307	26	2%
Retail Trade	855	1087	232	27%
Public/Gvt	1117	819	-298	-27%
Manufacturing	158	336	178	115%
Transportation, Communications, etc.	62	89	27	44%
Construction	71	64	-7	-10%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	23	52	29	126%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	17	52	35	206%
Wholesale Trade	14	42	28	200%
Mining	0	0	0	0%
	<b>3598</b>	<b>3848</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>7%</b>

\* Excluding Harrah's

Source: D&B Data

## Change in Employment on Qualla Boundary, Ranked by Total Increase

2-Digit SIC	Title	1998 employment	2003 employment	# Change
58	Eating and Drinking Places	459	649	190
32	Stone, Clay, Glass, and Concrete Products	0	169	169
82	Educational Services	16	176	160
47	Transport. Services	0	49	49
84	Museums, Art Galleries, and Botanical/Zoolog. Gardens	9	46	37
54	Food Stores	63	98	35
86	Membership Orgs	14	42	28
51	Wholesale Trade - non-durable goods	7	33	26
02	Agriculture production livestock and animal specialties	0	19	19
60	Depository Institutions	19	38	19
09	Fishing, hunting, and trapping	17	29	12
72	Personal Services	6	16	10
79	Amusement and Rec Services	95	104	9
34	Fabricated Metal Products.	0	7	7
48	Communications	7	14	7
52	Bldg Materials, Hardware, and Mobile Home Dealers	7	14	7
65	Real Estate	4	10	6
17	Construction Special Trade Contractors	34	39	5
	Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, and Related	2	7	5
87		2	7	5
23	Apparel and Other Finished Products Made from Fabrics	0	4	4
76	Miscellaneous Repair Services	2	6	4
49	Electric, Gas, and Sanitary Services	9	12	3
53	General Merchandise Stores	23	26	3
01	Agricultural Production Crops	0	2	2
07	Agricultural services	0	2	2
37	Transportation Equipment	0	2	2
50	Wholesale Trade - durable goods	7	9	2
55	Automotive Dealers and Gasoline Serv. Stations	2	4	2
57	Home Furniture, Furnishings, and Equipment Stores	9	11	2
62	Security and Commodity Brokers, Dealers, etc	0	2	2
64	Insurance Agents, Brokers, and Service	0	2	2
73	Business Services	45	47	2
89	Miscellaneous Services	7	9	2
80	Health Services	107	107	0
	Bldg Construct. General Contractors and Operative Builders	4	4	0
15		4	4	0
24	Lumber and Wood Products, Except Furniture	150	150	0
27	Printing, Publishing, and Allied Industries	4	4	0
43	USPS	7	7	0
59	Miscellaneous Retail	281	281	0
75	Automotive Repair, Services, and Parking	18	18	0
22	Textile Mill Products	0	0	0
39	Miscellaneous Manufacturing Industries	2	0	-2
78	Motion Pictures	2	0	-2
56	Apparel and Accessory Stores	11	4	-7
81	Legal Services	7	0	-7
16	Heavy Construct. Other Than Bldg Construct. Contractors	33	21	-12
42	Motor Freight Transport. And Warehousing	39	7	-32
70	Hotels, Rooming Houses, Camps, and Other Lodging	487	426	-61
83	Social Services	464	303	-161
90	Public Admin	1117	819	-298
	(Harrah's is omitted from this analysis.)	3596	3848	252



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## RETAIL ASSESSMENT

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As part of the Vision Qualla process, the consultants conducted an analysis of “non-tourist” retail and services establishments on the Qualla Boundary. The purpose of the assessment was to provide an estimate of areas in which the Qualla Boundary had too many or too few retail and services establishments relative to similar communities elsewhere in North Carolina.

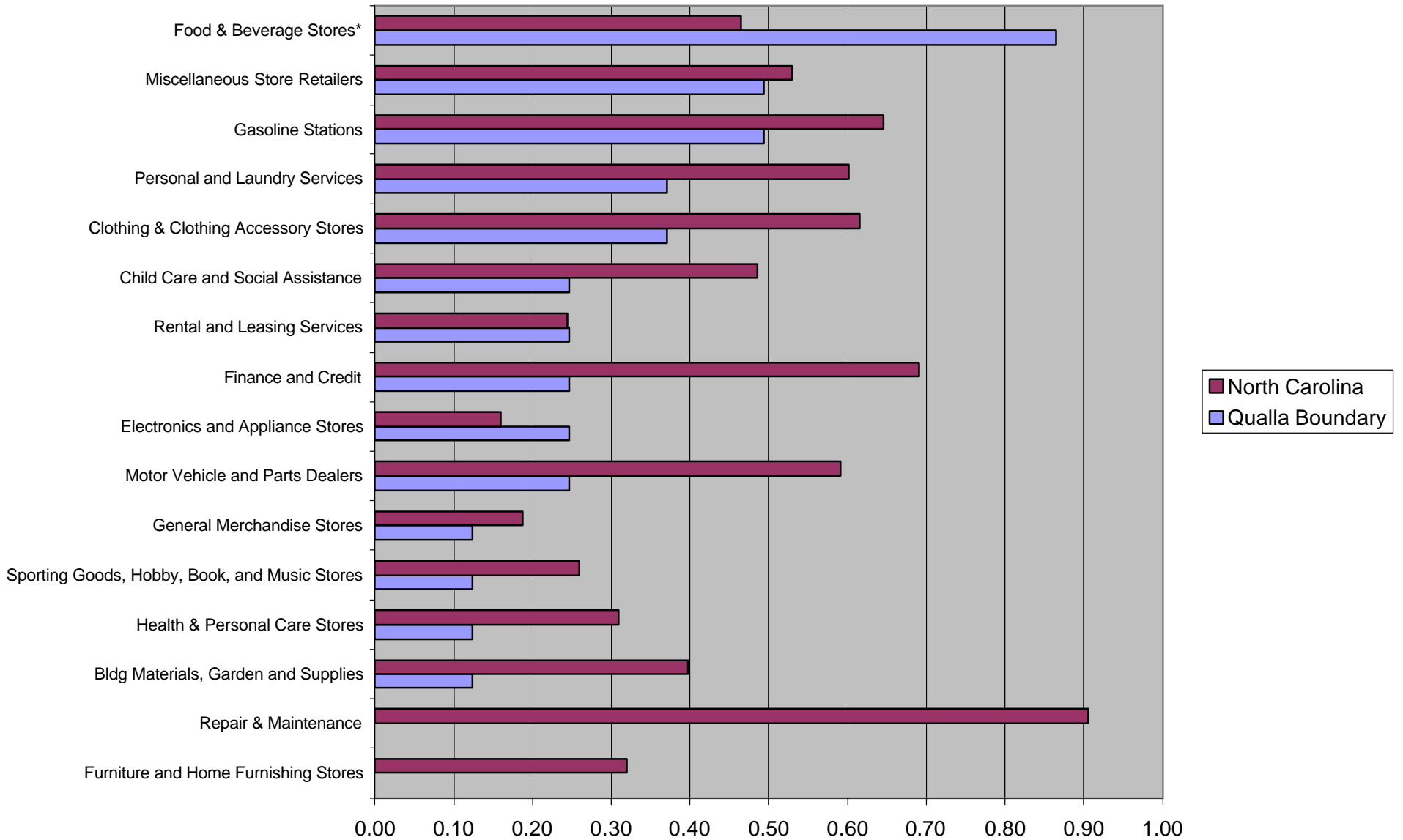
To conduct the assessment, we counted all non-tourist retail and services establishments in Qualla. We gathered data on the non-tourist retail and services establishments in North Carolina. We then compared the number of establishments per 1000 residents on the Qualla Boundary to the number of establishments per 1000 residents in North Carolina. This analysis suggests that the Qualla Boundary has a significant “shortage” in many retail and services areas, including the following:

- Personal and laundry services
- Clothing and clothing accessory
- Finance and credit
- Motor vehicle and parts
- Health and personal care stores
- Building materials, garden and supplies
- Furniture and home furnishings

This shortage of retail and service establishments indicates a potential opportunity for small business and entrepreneurial development.

We should note one caveat: we based our analysis on the number of establishments, rather than on sales revenue, because we could not easily collect data on sales by type of retail and service establishment on the Qualla Boundary. To the extent that the establishments on the Qualla Boundary have higher or lower sales per establishment than comparable stores in North Carolina, we may have over- or under-stated the shortages. Please see the charts on the following two pages for details.

## Retail and Service Establishments per 1000 People



## Retail and Service Establishments per 1000 People

NAICS 3-digit code	Description	Qualla Boundary		North Carolina	
		Total	Total per 1000	Total	Total Per 1000
445	Food & Beverage Stores*	7	0.87	3542	0.46
447	Gasoline Stations	4	0.49	4924	0.65
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4	0.49	4038	0.53
448	Clothing & Clothing Accessory Stores	3	0.37	4695	0.62
812	Personal and Laundry Services	3	0.37	4582	0.60
441	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	2	0.25	4504	0.59
443	Electronics and Appliance Stores	2	0.25	1213	0.16
522	Finance and Credit	2	0.25	5263	0.69
532	Rental and Leasing Services	2	0.25	1863	0.24
624	Child Care and Social Assistance	2	0.25	3707	0.49
444	Bldg Materials, Garden and Supplies	1	0.12	3026	0.40
446	Health & Personal Care Stores	1	0.12	2359	0.31
451	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores	1	0.12	1976	0.26
452	General Merchandise Stores	1	0.12	1433	0.19
442	Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	0	0.00	2442	0.32
811	Repair & Maintenance	0	0.00	6901	0.91

### Notes

For Qualla, we included gasoline stations/convenience stores twice, once in 447 and once in 445  
The retail data for Qualla is current and for North Carolina it is from 1997.

**SECTION THREE:**  
**ACTION PLANS**

## INTRODUCTION TO ACTION PLANS

One of the key goals of the Vision Qualla process was the creation of action plans for implementing each of the recommendations. The Committee was charged with developing action plans that would create a visible difference in the next one-two years; that were achievable with the resources that were controlled by the individuals and institutions in the community; and that would support traditional Cherokee values and culture.

The Committee followed a multi-step process in creating the action plans. First, the Committee brainstormed a range of potential strategies for achieving progress in the three focus areas (heritage and cultural tourism, knowledge industries, and entrepreneurial development). The Committee then ranked the potential strategies against a set of criteria including the fit with Cherokee values, the resources required, and the likelihood of success. Based on this ranking, the Committee then chose a range of strategies for detailed analysis. The Committee formed subgroups, each of which focused in one particular strategy for in-depth review. Working with the consultants, the subgroups developed seven action plans for implementing the strategies under consideration. These action plans were then brought back to the Committee for discussion, revision, and recommendation.

This section provides the seven detailed action plans that the Committee is recommending to the Cherokee Preservation Foundation and the EBCI Government and Tribal Council. Each action plan includes the following information:

- Specific goals for the action plan
- Step-by-step description of the actions to be taken
- Leadership and implementation responsibilities
- Where the resources will come from
- Timeline and milestones

The plans are presented first with a summary, and then in detail. At the end of each plan, the Committee recommendation is presented as well.

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## DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goals*

- Make downtown look more attractive to tourists
- Bring downtown buildings into compliance with the master plan

#### *Participants*

Any individual who owns a business or land in the downtown district, whether or not they are enrolled members.

#### *Activities*

The revitalization program will provide financing for all hard costs (construction costs) and soft costs (engineering, architectural, design, and legal costs) required to bring buildings into conformity with the façade requirement of the master plan. The financing has two components:

- A loan with a 10 year term and 1% interest, for 100% of the project hard and soft costs, up to total of \$150,000, for projects started by May 1, 2005.
- Payment for 80% of the cost of architectural services, up to a total of \$8,000, for the design and construction drawings for projects that are started on or before May 1, 2005.

#### *Organizational Home*

The staff for this program will be housed at the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center.

#### *Resources Required (preliminary estimates)*

- Loan funding for projects: \$1.0 million
- Payment for architectural services: \$80,000
- Staff support for lending activities: no additional costs

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Loan principal: Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Payment for architectural services: Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Staff support for coordination and education: none required

#### *Timeline*

Loan fund receives funding from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation by October 2004. Program details finalized by November 2004. Initial loans approved by January 2005.

## **Downtown Revitalization Action Plan Details**

### **Participants**

This program would be open to any individual who owns a business or land in the downtown district, whether or not they are enrolled members. The “downtown district” is defined as stores that front on Route 441 from where it leaves the National Park to where it meets Route 19, and Route 19 from the intersection with Route 441 up to the Cherokee Gap.

### **Program Activities**

The revitalization program would provide funding for renewing and improving the look of downtown, as laid out in the Master Plan. It includes funding for the following types of activities:

- Changing the facades and roofs of the buildings to bring them into compliance with the master plan.
- Removing burned-out buildings.
- Adding seating, signage and plantings as suggested in the master plan.

The program would specifically exclude funding for repairs and improvements to the inside of buildings, except where these would be necessary in order to complete the external improvements. For example, changing the façade and the windows might require a change in the emergency egress path, which might necessitate a change in the stairways inside. This would then be eligible to be covered by the revitalization program.

The revitalization program will provide financing for all hard costs and soft costs required to bring buildings into conformity with the façade requirement of the master plan. Hard costs would include all construction costs, such as carpentry, roofing, masonry, foundation work, electrical, windows, siding, and plumbing. Soft costs would include engineering, architectural, design, banking, accounting and legal costs.

The revitalization program would provide two types of funding: loan and grant. A loan would be provided for all hard and soft costs, up to a total of \$150,000, for projects started by May 1, 2005. A project will be considered as “started” once all design has been completed, permits have been obtained, and construction contracts have been signed. The loan will have a term of 10 years and an interest rate of 1%. The loan principal will be amortized in equal amounts per year over the ten year period.

Please note that the interest rate for projects that are started after May 1, 2005, is likely to be significantly higher than 1%. The very low rate of 1% is being offered as an inducement to encourage business owners to take advantage of this offer now.

In addition to a loan, the revitalization project will provide a grant for 80% of the cost of architectural services, up to a total of \$8,000, for the design and construction drawings for projects that are started on or before May 1, 2005. The owner must use one of several pre-approved architectural firms in order to receive the grant for the payment of architectural

services. Please note that the grant offer is a limited-time offer, and will not be extended to projects that start after May 1, 2005.

One question that has been raised, but not resolved, is what to do with very small businesses. For example, there are several businesses that are part of the downtown business district that have total gross revenues of less than \$150,000. It may unreasonable to expect that they will be able to invest the \$50,000 - \$100,000 needed to bring their buildings into compliance with the master plan. Two suggestions have been made. The first, and simplest, is to exempt them from the requirement of having to comply with the master plan. Instead, the EBCI would work with the owners to develop a plan for making the building more attractive, even if it is not in full compliance with the plan. The second suggestion is to provide some grant support to these businesses for a part of the costs of bringing the building into compliance.

### **Organizational Home**

This program would be run by the staff at the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center. The staff is currently running a revitalization loan fund that has provided loans for façade renewal. The existing fund would be supplemented with additional principal for more loans.

### **Resources Required**

#### ***Revitalization Loans***

We anticipate that as many as 8-10 businesses may seek funding from the revitalization program. We anticipate that the average cost for renovations will be between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Based on these estimates, we anticipate that a total loan fund of approximately \$1.0 million should be sufficient to meet the needs of the downtown businesses that will be ready to start construction by May 1, 2005.

#### ***Revitalization Grants***

Assuming 8-10 businesses applying for grants of up to \$8,000, we estimate that a maximum of \$80,000 will be required to fund grants for architectural and design services.

#### ***Loan and Grant Approval and Monitoring***

The program would be coordinated by staff at the Cherokee NABDC. No new staff would be required for approving and monitoring grants and loans.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

*Revitalization Loans:* The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is anticipated to be the primary source for the loan principal for the revitalization fund.

*Revitalization Grants:* The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is anticipated to be the primary source for the grants for architectural services.



### **Timeline**

The Cherokee Foundation has made a commitment of \$1.0 million dollars for the loan fund. The loan fund money should be able to be transferred to the EBCI CDC by the end of October, 2004. The grant funding for the architectural services should be able to be secured by the end of October, 2004, as well. The program details can then be finalized by November 15, 2005. The initial loans could then be processed and approved by January 15, 2005. The initial drawdown of funds by borrowers could take place as soon as February 1, 2005.

### **Committee Decision**

Committee members felt that revitalizing the downtown is key to tourist growth. If the facades aren't improved, it will be very hard to retain the tourists we attract. Revitalizing the downtown will create a visible, significant change, and help to develop local support for the revitalization effort. The loan funding is already committed. The Chief has taken a strong public stand in favor of this process. Accordingly, the Committee recommended that the Downtown Revitalization Action Plan should be implemented immediately in its entirety.

The Committee further recommended that the revitalization funding take place in three phases. The first phase will focus on downtown. If this is successful, the program will be extended to additional phases. The Committee is recommending working in phases for two reasons:

1. To concentrate the investment for maximum impact
2. To enable us to track the increase in revenue due to revitalization in the first phase, which will help determine the level of revitalization appropriate for the second two phases

The first phase will focus on revitalizing the downtown district. The Committee defined downtown district as Route 19 from Sequoyah Trail to the Soco Gap (just past where old 441 joins Route 19). In addition, the downtown district will include old 441 from Route 19 down to where it meets new 441.

The second phase will be Route 441 from the national park down to the intersection with Route 19. The third phase will include all of Route 19 from the Pioneer Motel through the Soco Gap down all the way to the abandoned campground.

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## ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goals*

- Assist enrolled members to develop skills and acquire financing to start a business or purchase one from an enrolled member, and to manage it successfully.
- Enable enrolled members wishing to sell their businesses to have a pool of qualified enrolled members interested and able to purchase their business.

#### *Participants*

Participation would be open to any enrolled member interested in starting or acquiring a business. Organizations participating in delivering the program would include the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center, Mountain Microenterprise Fund and Western Carolina University or a similar educational entity.

#### *Activities*

- Tiered levels of support and education for entrepreneurs focusing on different sizes of business: microenterprise, small retail and service businesses, large businesses in the hospitality industry
- Work experience managing businesses
- Peer group support
- Non-bank financing for purchase of businesses

#### *Organizational Home*

The staff for this program will be housed at the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center.

#### *Resources Required (preliminary estimates)*

- Tuition for management education programs: \$15,000 per year
- Staff support for coordination and education activities: no additional costs
- Non-bank financing for purchase of businesses: \$5.0 million business venture fund, plus funding from public sector funding sources.

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Tuition: Tribal program for tuition reimbursement
- Staff support for coordination and education: none required
- Non-bank financing for purchase of businesses: Business investment fund capitalized by Cherokee Foundation, Community Development Finance Institution Fund. Public sector funding sources include SBA, USDA Rural Development and others.

*Timeline*

Classes started by September 2006. Business venture investment capitalized by September 2006. First purchase completed by September 2007.

## **Entrepreneurial Development Action Plan Details**

### **Overview**

The entrepreneurial development program would create a system for helping enrolled members develop into successful entrepreneurs. The program would focus on three “tiers” of entrepreneurship. The first tier is microenterprise. Microenterprise businesses are very small businesses, typically employing just the entrepreneur and a few part-time assistants, and requiring no more than \$25,000 in capital to start up. The second tier is small businesses, particularly retail and service businesses located on the Boundary. These would employ the entrepreneur and several additional full-time and part-time staff, and require between \$25,000 and \$250,000 in capital to start or acquire. The third tier is large businesses in hospitality - primarily hotels and motels. These employ many staff, and typically require much more than \$250,000 in financing to start or acquire.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the system, entrepreneurs would be provided with coaching, mentoring, and education that would help them develop their skills and abilities to move up to the next tier if that is what they desire.

### **Participants**

The program would be open to any enrolled member interested in owning and running their own business. Based on past experience, the microenterprise tier might have 10-20 individuals participating in any one year. The small business program and the hospitality business program might each have 5-6 enrolled members each year.

There would be no experience requirements for participants in the microenterprise tier. All that would be required is a sincere interest in running your own business. There would be experience requirements for the small business and hospitality business tiers. In these tiers, participants would need to have several years of experience in a similar business, and demonstrate the interest and drive needed to succeed. Prospective participants would also be required to save their per-capita payments to help provide their equity stake in the business.

The program would work to identify enrolled members interested in selling a business as well. The enrolled members would be encouraged to participate as mentors for the program participants.

Organizations participating in delivering the program would include the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center, Mountain Microenterprise and Western Carolina University or a similar educational entity.

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank Dan Keith Ray for providing us with information about the Entrepreneurial League System for developing successful business entrepreneurs. This system was created and is being implemented by Collaborative Strategies.

## **Program Activities**

### ***Classroom Education***

#### *Microenterprise*

Participants interested in microenterprise would take an 8-10 week course covering the basics of running a business. This course would be based on the course now offered by the Mountain Microenterprise Fund at NABDC on the Qualla Boundary. It meets for three hours per week, and leads to the development of a business plan for each participant's microenterprise. The course also helps participants explore the realities of being in business for themselves, so that they can decide whether or not it is right for them.

If the participants decided to start up a business, they become eligible for participation in the business loan funds that the EBCI CDC currently runs. They also may be eligible for other loan funds. Ongoing technical assistance would be provided through the NABDC.

#### *Small Business*

Individuals with business experience who are interested in owning and running a small business, particularly a retail or service business on the Boundary, will participate in a range of courses, depending on their particular needs. These courses can include marketing, financial management, inventory management, e-business principles, business plan development, and minority certification and procurement. The courses are offered by the NABDC and by their strategic partners, including Southwestern Community College, Western Carolina State University, and NC Small Business Development Centers.

Individuals in business would also receive a range of one-to-one consulting services from the NABDC. We will also pursue the possibility of developing free consulting services from business students at these schools. Consulting might be appropriate for businesses that wish help with clear, defined projects that require some business knowledge, but not a high level of expertise. Examples might include setting up a basic bookkeeping system, helping a business to develop a web site, or creating personnel policies.

#### *Hospitality Business*

Participants interested in owning and managing hospitality businesses would take courses on nights and weekends for two years. The courses would give them the information they need to successfully manage a hotel or restaurant property. A description of the coursework follows:

*Core courses.* All participants would take 6 core courses: one each in entrepreneurship, accounting, customer service, hospitality and tourism marketing, event and meeting planning, and tourism planning. Examples of course descriptions (adapted from courses offered by Western Carolina University and other universities) include the following:

- *Introduction to Entrepreneurship.* The principles of starting, managing and operating an entrepreneurial venture. Sources of financing and capital. Development of business plans.

- *Accounting Principles.* Introduction to the accounting cycle, financial statements, merchandising, cash, receivables, payables, inventories, plant property and equipment, payroll, accepted accounting principles and partnerships.
- *Hospitality and Tourism Marketing.* A service management approach to the study of hospitality and tourism. Marketing's role as an activity that pervades all hospitality decisions and actions.
- *Hospitality Service.* Practical skills and knowledge for effective management of quality services within hospitality operations. Emphasis on time management, service protocol, interactions with guests, guest expectations and décor.
- *Meeting, Convention and Event Planning.* Scope and segmentation of meetings, conventions and special events, including marketing, sales strategies, negotiations, contracts and techniques used to meet market needs.
- *Tourism Planning & Development.* A comprehensive integrated approach to the issues associated with tourism planning, policy making and development. Case studies will be utilized.

*Elective courses:* In addition to the core courses, participants would take two additional electives that would help them to address specific knowledge and skills required to succeed in managing the specific businesses they hope to acquire. Examples of courses are as follows:

- *Front Office Management.* A systematic approach to front office management including reservations, checkouts, settlements, forecasting, budgeting and evaluating.
- *Facilities Management.* Management of facility operations, including personnel management, furnishing and equipment procurement, safety, security and interdepartmental coordination.
- *Restaurant Management.* Functions of management as applied to commercial food service systems. Emphasis on menu development, procurement, production and service.
- *Food and Beverage Cost Control.* Theories and techniques of controlling costs in food and beverage operations: analysis and evaluation of financial performance.
- *Cross-Cultural Communication.* Theory and techniques for understanding individual needs, interests and concerns across cultures. Effective communication in multi-cultural settings. Case studies emphasize practical applications.

### ***Work experience managing a property***

Each of the participants in the program would be expected to work in a supervisory or management position in the type of business that they are interested in purchasing. The work experience might be in a property on the Qualla Boundary, or it might be in a property in one of the neighboring communities. The program would help individual participants identify potential jobs and balance the requirements of work and education.

### ***Peer group support and mentoring***

The program would schedule regular meetings of the peer group of 5-6 participants, giving them a space and time to reflect on the challenges that they are experiencing, and to share with each other strategies for addressing those challenges.

The program would also work to help establish mentoring relationships between successful owners of businesses and the program participants. There would be no expectation that a participant would work for their mentor, nor would there be an expectation that he or she would purchase the mentor's business. This would help to make the mentor-participant relationship easier to manage and less complex.

### ***Non-bank financing for purchase of businesses***

The program would help participants assemble the financing required to purchase a business at the end of their time in the program. For microenterprises, each individual would be expected to invest \$5,000 of their own funds (or funds from friends and family) as their equity stake in the business. For small businesses and hospitality businesses, each individual would be expected to invest \$25,000 of their own funds (or funds from friends and family) as their equity stake in the business. The program would help identify sources of non-bank financing, such as federal and state loan programs. Most importantly, the program would help participants to obtain investments from a new business investment fund, to be set up by the Cherokee Preservation Fund and the Tribe. This business investment fund would have the specific goal of providing equity-type financing for the purchase of hotel properties.

### **Organizational Home**

This program would be run by the staff at the Cherokee Native American Business Development Center. The staff currently provides counseling and support services to a wide range of local businesses. They also manage the loan funds of the EBCI Community Development Corporation. The staff would coordinate all aspects of the program, and would manage the business investment fund.

### **Resources Required**

#### ***Classroom Education***

##### *Microenterprise*

Our estimate of the costs for the microenterprise classes is based on the fees charged by Mountain Microenterprise Fund for similar classes. They charge a sliding scale fee of \$30 - \$300 per participant per class, depending on the income of the participant. Assuming 10 participants per year, with an average fee of \$150, we estimate a total of \$1500 in fees per year.

##### *Small Business*

We based our estimate of course fees on fees charged by Southwestern Community College for part-time, in-state students. This year, Southwestern's tuition is \$38 per credit hour. The courses we are suggesting would be the equivalent of 3 credit hours per participant per semester. This implies a total tuition cost of \$114 per participant per semester, or approximately \$1500 for all the participants for a year.

### *Hospitality Business*

Classroom education would require tuition payments, and classroom space. To estimate tuition payments, we looked at the cost of Western Carolina University graduate courses. The program as designed would be the equivalent of 6 semester credit hours each semester. At the present time, Western Carolina University charges in-state graduate students tuition of approximately \$1000 per semester for a course load of 6 semester credit hours. If we assume a class of 6 students, this would imply tuition costs of around \$6,000 per semester, or \$12,000 per year.

It is important to note that this is a preliminary estimate. WCU's tuition costs are for enrolled graduate students taking classes at its campus. The costs might be significantly different for students in a certificate program offered off-campus.

### ***Program Coordination***

The program would be coordinated by staff at the Cherokee NABDC. No new staff would be required for program coordination, or for the operations of the business investment fund.

### ***Business Investment Fund***

The business investment fund would be used to provide 25% - 30% of the purchase price of the property. It would be focused primarily on meeting the needs of the individuals interested in purchasing larger businesses, because loan funds already exist to help with the purchase of small businesses.

The investment would be in the form of deeply subordinated debt, or some type of equity. We estimate that a fund of approximately \$5 million would be sufficient to serve the needs of the first one-two sets of participants in the hospitality program. This is a very preliminary estimate. We have based our estimate on our assessment of the potential range of properties for sale, and of the potential sales prices. We have identified a total of 12 hotels, motels, restaurants and gift shops that might potentially come up for sale. Our assessment is that these might sell, in total, for between \$15 million and \$20 million dollars. Our assessment is based on selling prices for similar properties in similar communities. Given this range of selling prices, a fund of approximately \$5 million would be required to provide 25%-30% of the estimated sale price.

We must stress that the owners of these properties have not said that they are for sale, and that the owners have not proposed a price. Thus, our assessment is quite preliminary.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

*Tuition:* The educational component of the program will seek to be structured in a way that will enable individual participants to qualify for the Tribal program for tuition reimbursement for higher education. This would enable the program to tap an existing source of funding to pay for most of the tuition costs. In addition, students would be expected to contribute a modest amount, based on their income.



*Non-bank financing for purchase of businesses:* The key new source of funding is the business investment fund. This is a critically important piece of the program. Without the type of high-risk financing provided by the business investment fund, it will be quite difficult for enrolled members to purchase existing businesses.

The leading sources for the business investment fund are the Cherokee Preservation Foundation and the Tribe. Without a significant commitment of funds from one of these two sources, it is unlikely that the business investment fund will be able to achieve sufficient scale to meet the needs of the program participants.

Investments by the Foundation or the Tribe could be matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by the Community Development Finance Institution Fund (CDFI Fund). There are specific funds set aside for loan funds serving Native American populations within the CDFI Fund. Additional non-bank funding sources include Small Business Administration, USDA Rural Development, North Carolina Rural Loan Program, Center for Community Self-Help and others. Additional research will be required to determine how best to structure the program to take advantage of these different funding sources.

### **Timeline**

If work commences on this program by January 1, 2005, the program structure and strategy could be finalized by April 1, 2005. The program could be publicized during the Spring and early summer of 2005, with the goal of selecting the first class of participants in all three tiers by the end of July. At the same time, program organizers would work with the educational provider to set up classes so that participants could enroll in their first classes on or before September 2005.

The planning and development of the business investment fund would need to take place at the same time. This work should be dovetailed with the current work taking place on the creation of a Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) in Cherokee. Having the business investment fund be part of a CDFI would give it specific advantages in seeking federal funds. Fundraising for the business investment fund would take place in the second half of 2005 and the first half of 2006, with the goal of completing capitalization by September 2006. With this in place, it would be possible for participants in the hospitality tier to complete their classes in the spring of 2006, and to complete the first purchase of a hospitality property by September 2007. Participants in the microenterprise tier and the small business tier would complete their courses earlier, and might be able to complete the purchase or start-up of their business by September.

### **Committee Recommendation**

Portions of the Entrepreneurial Development Action Plan should be implemented immediately. The task of raising resources has already begun, and should be pushed forward as quickly as possible. This may take two years or more to complete, and is a critical component of the program. NABDC has engaged Mountain Microenterprise Fund to provide training for individuals wishing to start businesses. This is in good alignment with the action plan, and should be expanded. Similarly, the classes and technical assistance

provided by NABDC to individuals who own small businesses, and those who wish to start or buy businesses, should be expanded now. In addition, staff from Economic Development should survey the 750 enrolled members now receiving support for their education, to determine what they are studying and whether they are interested in the potential of owning and managing businesses on the reservation.

The portion of the Action Plan regarding the development of a two-year, intensive educational program for individuals interested in owning and managing hospitality businesses should be delayed until later. This can be started in a year or two, once progress has been made on the other activities.

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## YOUTH EDUCATION ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goal*

Increase the number of Cherokee youth who gain associate's or bachelor's degrees, and who are familiar with computers and information technology, thus preparing them for high-paying jobs in knowledge industries.

#### *Participants*

Initial focus will be on enrolled members in high school and college programs, including those who live on the Boundary, and those who do not. Program may be extended to younger students over time.

#### *Activities*

- Educational and work internships on the Boundary
- Mentoring of high school students by college students
- Peer support networks for college students

#### *Organizational Home*

The staff for this program will be housed at the EBCI Training and Education Office.

#### *Resources Required (preliminary estimates)*

- Funding for internships: stipends for interns
- Staff support for coordination and education activities: \$80,000
- Support for mentoring and peer support networks: \$5,000

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Funding for internship stipends: Tribal program for internships; employers
- Staff support for coordination and education: Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Support for mentoring and peer networks: Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Eastern Cherokee Community Foundation

#### *Timeline*

Internships organized and filled by May, 2005. Peer support network and mentoring programs started in August, 2005.

## **Youth Education Action Plan Details**

### **Participants**

The youth development program would start with a focus on enrolled members who are juniors and seniors in high school, or who are enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year college program. Over time, if the program is successful, it may expand to include younger students, particularly in internships.

### **Program Activities**

The program would have three primary activities: developing and organizing internships; building mentoring relationships between high school and college students; and, increasing support networks for students in college. The details are as follows:

### ***Internships***

This activity would build on and expand programs that are already in place at the Education and Training Office. The program would create and manage internship opportunities on the Boundary for both high school and college youth. The goal would be to provide Cherokee youth with a good understanding of the job opportunities that education will open up for them, and help them explore different career paths. It also would provide youth who are not living on the Boundary with an opportunity to spend time living and working on the Boundary, so that they could explore the possibility of a move back to the Boundary.

The internships would be developed with local businesses and cultural organizations, in addition to the tribe and the Casino. Most internships would be paid, but there might be some - particularly shorter term internships or “job shadowing” opportunities - that would be volunteer. The internship program would also seek to ensure that all interns had the opportunity to live with a family on the Boundary and to participate in community activities.

The internship program would be managed by a coordinator, who would work to find internship opportunities, make students aware of the opportunities, help students get to and from the internships, and ensure that the internships are providing quality experiences for the students and the employers alike. For some internships, it may be helpful for the Education and Training Office to serve as the employer of record. This simplifies reporting requirements and reduces insurance liability for the organization providing the internship opportunity.

The final criteria for which students will be eligible to participate in the internship program will be set by the Education and Training Office. The preliminary criteria are as follows:

- High level of interest in internship
- Grade average of B- or higher
- Plan supported by teacher or advisor for linking internship to their education

The internship program would also require that students engage in some process of critical reflection at the end of the internship. What did they learn? How does this inform their

understanding of what they might like to study or what kind of career options seem attractive? This would help to ensure that students spend some time thinking about their experiences in the internship, and connecting the experiences to their studies and careers.

### ***Mentoring***

This program would link college students with current high school juniors and seniors. There would be an initial event and activity that would let students meet each other, and encourage them to choose a mentor/buddy to communicate with regularly. Both the college students and the high school students would have specific responsibilities for communicating regularly with their buddies via email or phone. One possibility is that each side would have the responsibility to write a one-page email once a month describing their daily activities. For the college students, this would be a stipulation for the continuation of their scholarship tuition. For the high school students, there would be some school-based requirement to report on what life in college is like. Students would have to report on their writing and what they learned. What is a typical day like on a college campus? What are their buddies learning, and why is it important?

### ***Support Network for Students on College Campuses***

This activity would be an expansion of the current program for helping students to connect up to other students at four-year colleges. The program would host events and create bulletin boards and lists that would help students who are enrolled members to get to know other students from the Tribe and from other Native American tribes who are the same college or at a nearby school. This program will help to address the loneliness and loss of support that some students feel when they move from their tight-knit communities to large college settings. It can be unsettling and difficult for a student to move from the Boundary, with its 7,000 residents, to a state university, which can easily have 30,000 students or more. This program will help to ensure that students feel supported and have a connection to other students in similar situations. Right now, there are 750 enrolled members from the Tribe who are in college programs. This is a great success - but the students now need support and encouragement to continue.

### **Organizational Home**

This program would be run by a new staff person at the EBCI Education and Training Department. This office currently runs internship and support programs, and would expand them to meet the growing need. The Education and Training Department currently runs the tuition reimbursement program for the Tribe.

### **Resources Required**

#### ***Stipends for internships***

Almost all of the internships would have a stipend. It is difficult to put a total dollar value on the total funding required, because the numbers of interns can vary quite a bit, as can their stipends. We will not attempt to make an estimate here.

### ***Staff support for coordination and education activities***

This program would require at least one new full-time staff person at the EBCI Education and Training Office. A very preliminary estimate of the total cost for such a person, including salary, benefits, pension, and office overhead, is \$80,000 per year. We must stress that this is a preliminary estimate, and that the total cost can only be fully determined by the Tribe. We also are not completely certain that a single full time person can handle all of the responsibilities, particularly if the program expands to cover more grades. Starting the program in a phased manner will help to make it easier to determine the long-term staffing required.

### ***Mentoring and peer support network activities***

The program would host a variety of fun activities for the students to create opportunities for them to meet each other and develop mentoring and support relationships. A preliminary estimate for the total cost of these activities is \$5,000 per year. This would enable the program staff person to travel to 5-6 different college campuses across the US, and host events at each one, as well as hosting 2-3 major events on the Boundary.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

*Internships.* The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians currently provides stipends for interns working with various tribal departments. The expanded internship program would be structured so that interns working for tribal departments would be paid by the Tribe. Interns working for businesses would be paid a stipend by the businesses. It is possible that the Cherokee Preservation Foundation might be a source for partial funding for internship stipends if the interns worked for local nonprofits or cultural institutions.

*Staff support for coordination and education.* Providing funding for a new staff person is the key to the growth and development of this program. The most likely sources for funding are the Cherokee Preservation Foundation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

*Support for mentoring and peer networks.* The Cherokee Preservation Foundation and the Eastern Cherokee Community Foundation are the most likely sources of funding for mentoring and peer networks.

### **Timeline**

If funding for the new position is confirmed by December, 2004, the new staff person to organize this program could be hired by March, 2005. The first internships could be organized and filled by May, 2005. Peer support network and mentoring programs could be started in August, 2005.

### **Committee Recommendation**

The Committee felt that this activity is critically important for the future of the Boundary, and builds on work that the Education and Training Department is already doing.

Accordingly, the Committee recommended that this activity be implemented now in its entirety.

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## RECEPTIVE TOUR OPERATOR PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goals*

- *For customers:* to enable visitors to experience “the soul of Cherokee” by creating pre-packaged and custom tour packages providing educational and entertaining cultural heritage activities, historical sites, and resources that meet their needs, interests, and budget.
- *For cultural institutions and resources:* to improve their ability to attract visitors and to reduce their costs of administration and billing by providing a comprehensive marketing and fee processing service.
- *For EBCI:* to create a Receptive Tour Operator staff and office that would develop processes for short and long term development, marketing and management of cultural heritage tourism, thereby improving economic benefits of tourism programs.

#### *Participants*

- EBCI Marketing & Promotion
- Cultural organizations (Cherokee Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Unto These Hills, Oconaluftee Village, Cherokee Potters Guild, etc.)
- Guides, outfitters, artists, story-tellers, teachers, performers, outdoor activities
- Caterers, restaurants
- Hotels, motels, campgrounds
- Transportation companies, including the Transportation Department of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

#### *Activities*

The EBCI Receptive Tour Operator would customize tours to the needs, interests and budget of the guests. Elements of the tour packages could include cultural institutions, outdoor activities, and other cultural and artistic activities

#### *Organizational Home*

Receptive Tour Operator office would be staffed by the EBCI Marketing & Promotion department and housed in the Welcome Center.

#### *Resources Required*

- First year budget of \$98,100

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

#### *Timeline*

- Obtain funding by March 2005; Set up the Receptive Tour Operator office by May 2005.



## Receptive Tour Operator Action Plan Details

### **Participants**

The EBCI Receptive Tour Operator could package tours for any organization or individual offering cultural, heritage or nature-based activities, including the following:

- Cultural organizations (Cherokee Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Unto These Hills, Oconaluftee Village, Cherokee Potters Guild, etc.)
- Guides, outfitters, artists, story-tellers, teachers, performers
- Organizations providing activities such as fishing, horseback-riding, canoeing, etc.
- Caterers, restaurants
- Hotels, motels, campgrounds
- Transportation companies

### **Program Activities**

The EBCI Receptive Tour Operator would create pre-packaged tours and customize tour packages to the needs, interests and budget of the guests. Elements of the tour packages could include:

#### *Cultural Attractions*

- Oconaluftee Village
- Unto These Hills drama
- Cherokee Museum
- Qualla Arts and Crafts
- Cherokee Potters Guild

#### *Outdoors*

- Mingo Falls Trip
- Kephardt Prong Trip
- Tubing, Canoeing and Fishing
- Hiking - any length, from short walks to long hikes. This may also include seasonal hikes - wildflowers, ramps, fall leaves.
- Bicycle rentals
- Festival events: Folk Moot, Ramp Festival, Leaf Season, Opening Day of Trout Fishing, Riverwalk Festival, Trout Derby, "Free for Kids" day at Oconaluftee Village and/or the Drama

#### *Cultural and Artistic*

There is a wide range of potential options here. Some examples:

- Classes with visiting artists at the Village, Museum, Coop or Guild
- "Summer camp" with artists, story-tellers, outfitters, naturalists and elders
- Intensive immersion courses working with artists

There are several tour packages that are already being offered in Cherokee. These include:

- 1) *Cherokee Experience*: This is a three-day package, aimed at group tours - minimum size 10-15 people. It includes a visit to the museum with lectures and local elders. It also has a hands-on experience in making a basket or a pot. There are trips to the Village and the Drama. There is a full-day step-on guide bus tour, a Cherokee meal, and Cherokee stories around a campfire. It ends at the Museum. The package does not include accommodations at this time.
- 2) *Museum Visit*: This can be two to four hours. It includes entrance to the Museum, a guided lecture and perhaps hands-on pottery making.
- 3) *Discover Cherokee*: This is a one-day visit (6-8 hours). It includes a visit to the Museum, the Council House, and Veterans Memorial. After that, the participants visit Unto These Hills and Oconaluftee Village. They then go to Dillsboro to ride the train to Bryson. The Transit system picks them up and takes them to Kituwah Fields. They return to Cherokee to see the artwork at the Casino Hotel. This package is currently aimed at groups with a minimum size of 6 individuals.

### **Marketing**

Marketing is one of the key activities that the receptive tour operator provides. The specific marketing strategy varies based on the type of customer being pursued. Target markets include:

- 1) College and universities

This is an attractive market because it offers volume and repeat business year after year. It is, however, a long selling cycle, taking at least a year or more from the first point of contact to sale. The best approach to marketing in this niche is to network to specific individuals in disciplines such as anthropology, art and social studies.

Other methods for marketing are “FAM tours” - “familiarization tours” - for individuals who can direct tourism toward Cherokee. FAM tours are typically free tours for the participants, and are aimed at helping institutions and organizations become familiar with what’s exciting, interesting, and unique about a travel destination. Colleges and university professors often welcome FAM tours because they have limited funds for travel. This can be a good way of helping to build awareness and interest in the college and university market.

- 2) Individuals, couples, small families.

This market is extremely large, but can be difficult to reach in a cost-effective way because these individuals do not buy tours for large numbers (as the college professors do). One of the best ways to reach this market is to be mentioned in articles in major magazines. Important magazines include Sports Illustrated, Southern Living, National Geographic, AAA, Pinnacle Living and USA Today.

One strategy to help get this publicity would be to create a one-day FAM tour for travel writers focusing on unique cultural experiences. These individuals can be reached

through the directory of travel writers from North Carolina Travel and Tourism. If the travel writers have good experiences, they are more likely to write about them.

3) Group tour operators

This market is very attractive, because it offers high volume and repeat business. Unfortunately, it is also a difficult market to crack because group tour volume has been dropping over the past several years.

The best way to market to the established tour operators is to attend the National Tour Association or Travel Industry of America trade shows, and to promote Cherokee.

4) Specialty markets

There are a variety of specialty markets that might be interested in Cherokee. These include individuals interested in Native American culture, eco-tourists, adventure tourist, and gay tourists. To reach these groups, it is important to use specialty publications and web sites.

### **Organizational Home**

Receptive Tour Operator office would be staffed by the EBCI Marketing & Promotion department and housed in the Welcome Center. This job currently envisioned as requiring a single full time staff person. The staff person would have several areas of responsibility. The first area is customer relations, communicating with potential customers, offering pre-packaged tours, customizing tours, taking deposits, ensuring that the tours happen as planned, and getting customer feedback on their experience.

A second area is the development and implementation of marketing activities, working with Marketing and Promotion to get publicity, setting up the web site, developing brochures, attending trade shows, networking in the industry, and organizing FAM tours.

The third area is to negotiate the price and content of the different elements of the tour, make financial arrangements with the vendors for the different components of the tour, and approve tour subcontractor invoices for payment.

The tribal accounting office would track the delivery of tour services with the Receptive Tour Operator staff and make payment on subcontractor invoices.

The Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Cherokee Historical Association, and numerous other stakeholders would help to promote tours.

### **Resources Required**

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Marketing and Promotion department would create a Receptive Tour Operator staff and office that would develop processes for short and long term development, marketing and management of cultural heritage tour packages, thereby

improving economic benefits of EBCI tourism programs for the Tribe and associated organizations, businesses and individuals.

Budget

The following is an estimate of the first year's budget:

Full time staff salary:

- Salary	\$44,000
- Benefits and indirect	\$22,000

Marketing and promotion:

- Trips	\$5,000
- Materials	\$3,000
- Web site	\$3,500
- FAM tours	\$12,000

Office	in kind
Computers	\$3,000
Other Office	\$3,600
Training	<u>\$2,000</u>

Total Cost: \$98,100

*Potential Funding Sources*

- Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

**Timeline**

- Obtain funding by March 2005
- Set up the Receptive Tour Operator office and offer new tour packages by May 2005.

**Committee Decision**

The Committee felt that it was important to move forward on the Tour Operator Action Plan. This plan is building on a set of components that are already in place - the tourism web site, the attractions, transportation, artists, and events. It will have an immediate effect on tourism. It also will need time to grow and get to scale. The Committee recommended that the Tour Operator Action Plan should be implemented immediately in its entirety.

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## KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRY ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary<sup>2</sup>

#### *Goals*

- Increase the growth of existing knowledge industry businesses
- Attract new knowledge industry businesses to the Qualla Boundary

#### *Participants*

Existing and new knowledge industry businesses that fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Owned by an enrolled member
- Employing enrolled members
- Located on the Qualla Boundary

#### *Activities*

The program will focus on three activities. The first is the creation of a council or working group with representatives of existing knowledge industry businesses. This council would identify changes that would be needed to improve conditions, and advocate for them with the Tribe and other entities. The second activity is to work with local higher education institutions to develop course programs that target the workforce development needs of knowledge industry businesses. The third is a recruitment effort, to attract knowledge industry businesses to the Qualla Boundary.

#### *Organizational Home*

The staff for this program will be housed at the EBCI Economic Development Office.

#### *Resources Required (preliminary estimates)*

- Support for Knowledge Industry Council meetings and recruitment activities: \$10,000
- Funding for curriculum development: \$30,000
- Staff support: no additional costs

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Knowledge Industry Council meetings and activities: Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Funding for curriculum development: North Carolina Community College system

#### *Timeline*

Program details finalized by December 2005. Knowledge Industry Council set up by January 2005. New curriculum developed and offered by September 2005.

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<sup>2</sup> We wish to gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Nancy Foltz, Principal, Communicatia, Inc. Her report "Attracting Technology Companies to the Asheville/Buncombe County Area", prepared for the Buncombe County Economic Development Commission, was the primary source for many of the suggestions in this document.

## **Knowledge Industry Action Plan Details**

### **Participants**

This program serves businesses that rely on broadband Internet access for sales, marketing, and operations. We will refer to these businesses as “knowledge industry businesses”. The term “knowledge industry businesses” covers a broad array of business types, including software development, web development, computer services, graphics, multimedia, database development, consulting, architecture, engineering, and medical imaging. It also includes data-intensive businesses such as call centers, claims processing, and financial service operations.

The program would seek to assist existing and new knowledge industry businesses that fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Owned by an enrolled member
- Employing enrolled members
- Located on the Qualla Boundary

### **Program Activities**

The program will focus on three activities. The first is the creation of a council or working group with representatives of existing knowledge industry businesses on or near the Qualla Boundary. This council would identify changes that would be needed to improve conditions for these businesses, and advocate for them with the Tribe and other entities. An example of such a change might be the creation of a mentoring program for connecting youth to potential careers in the industry.

The second activity is to work with local higher education institutions to develop course programs that target the workforce development needs of knowledge industry businesses. Knowledge industry businesses require a technically skilled labor pool for growth and success. New businesses will not come to the Qualla Boundary, nor will existing businesses thrive, unless local educational institutions provide the coursework at the undergraduate and graduate levels required for the skilled workforce these businesses need.

At the present time, there are only limited options for degree programs in computer sciences and multimedia arts at the educational institutions near the Qualla Boundary. One example is the BS in computer science at Western Carolina University. The existing array of courses at educational institutions in the area needs to be expanded, and degree programs started. The design of courses should be done in coordination with the council of knowledge industry businesses, to ensure that the courses meet the specific needs of the businesses.

The third activity is a recruitment effort aimed at attracting knowledge industry businesses to the Qualla Boundary. This effort should only start after broadband Internet services are available, and after some progress has been made in developing a council of knowledge industry businesses and in improving the course programs targeting the workforce needs of knowledge industry businesses.

A recruitment effort would focus on Cherokee's unique assets and their importance for knowledge industry businesses. This would include looking at:

- Access to higher education
- Workforce availability
- Tech opportunities within the region
- Unusual tech courses or synergies within the region (such as information technology in the arts)

There are several activities that need to be pursued to help promote and expand knowledge industry businesses in addition to those that this program will undertake. These activities are being pursued by other organizations, and include the following:

- *Install broadband service.* Broadband internet service is critically important for knowledge industry businesses. Broadband service allows these businesses to reach their customers and bring them products and services in a timely and inexpensive way. It also enables them to create their products and services drawing on a geographically dispersed set of suppliers and collaborators. Broadband Internet service is now being installed in Cherokee, and should be available commercially by the end of 2005.
- *Increase qualified workforce.* Knowledge industry businesses depend on a workforce that has at least an associate's or bachelor's degree, plus specialized training in knowledge industry technology and content. At the present time, the Qualla Boundary (and most of Appalachia) has a workforce that lags behind the US, both in terms of educational attainment, and in terms of familiarity with computers and information technology. It is critically important to increase the number of Cherokee youth who gain associate's or bachelor's degrees, and who are familiar with computers and information technology, thus preparing them for jobs in knowledge industries programs.
- *Develop additional office space on the Qualla Boundary.* The Qualla Boundary has a shortage of office space that is suitable for use by knowledge industry businesses. There are already knowledge industry businesses that would like to locate on the Boundary, but have been unable to do so because of insufficient office space of the right type and price. The EBCI Economic Development Office is currently working to develop additional office space with built-in data cabling on the Boundary. This would help to address the space needs of existing and new knowledge industry businesses.

### **Organizational Home**

The staff for this program will be housed at the EBCI Economic Development Office. Staff there are already working on a number of similar initiatives. No new staff would be required.

### **Resources Required**

The Knowledge Industry Council will require modest support for its meetings, and for recruitment activities. These are budgeted at \$10,000 for the first one-two years of operation. This is a very preliminary budget, and could increase significantly if the group

recommends pursuing a more vigorous communications and marketing campaign to attract new businesses.

It is somewhat difficult to estimate the costs of curriculum development without knowing how many courses need to be developed. We have put forth \$30,000 as a preliminary estimate, which should be sufficient to develop 1-2 courses in the computer science and multimedia field. This would increase if more courses are developed. We also would like to note that course development costs depend heavily on the extent to which new materials that are specific to an employer's needs have to be developed. We are assuming that a portion of each course would be new material developed specifically to meet employers' needs.

There will be no additional costs for staff support. This project could be taken on by the staff of the EBCI Economic Development Office without adding additional capacity.

### **Potential Funding Sources**

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is the primary potential funding source for the meetings and activities of the Knowledge Industry Council.

The North Carolina Community College System is the primary potential funding source for curriculum development. The state system has funding allocated to develop and deliver employer- and industry-specific training. An example of this is the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's "New and Expanding Company" program, which provides reimbursement for companies for their training programs. The program staff would need to work to ensure that the curriculum designed would qualify for state funding.

### **Timeline**

If the Committee recommends in October that this program be implemented, the staff of the EBCI Economic Development Office could finalize the program details by December 2005. They could then work to set up the Knowledge Industry Council by January 2005. Together with the Knowledge Industry Council, they could work to have local educational institutions develop and offer new 1-2 new classes by September 2005.

### **Committee Decision**

The Committee felt that working to attract the right knowledge industry company will generate demand and excitement on the Boundary. The types of jobs that will bring will also help motivate enrolled members to get the kinds of educational degrees that will help them succeed in a career in knowledge industries. Nonetheless, the Committee felt that it was not necessary to move forward immediately on all aspects of this plan, particularly as the broadband lines are not yet fully installed and operational.

The Committee recommended developing the knowledge industry council immediately. This work can benefit from the research that the Economic Development Department is doing under a USDA grant that they have received to explore the types of industries that can best be attracted to the Boundary. The Committee recommended deferring the work on developing new educational courses at local area institutions and the work on attracting new



companies. This work will better be able to proceed once the council is in place and the new broadband capacity is installed and functioning.

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## CHEROKEE ART PRODUCTS PROMOTION ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goals*

- *For artists:* to enable artists to access opportunities for selling higher-end authentic art and craft products to outside markets.
- *For cultural organizations:* to enable the cultural organizations that support and promote the sale of higher-end art and craft to help create marketing programs that reach outside markets.
- *For EBCI:* to create ongoing events and activities that provide artists and cultural organizations access to audiences for the sale of higher-end art and craft products.
- *For retail businesses:* to find the means to obtain and sell authentic higher-end art and craft products in retail stores.
- *For the proposed Cherokee Art Institute:* to seek the means of supporting an arts education program that promotes Cherokee arts as a viable fine art expression.

#### *Participants*

- Eastern Band artists and artisans
- Cultural organizations (Cherokee Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Oconaluftee Village, Cherokee Potters Guild)
- EBCI Marketing & Promotion
- Cherokee Retail Businesses
- Perhaps the Cherokee Art Institute
- Cherokee Preservation Foundation

#### *Activities*

- The Eastern Band artists and artisans shall unify and organize their efforts to provide high-end, authentic hand-made Cherokee art and crafts.
- The Cherokee Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Oconaluftee Village and Cherokee Potters Guild shall create artist programs and demonstrations in their facilities where the artists could meet with the visiting public for purposes of education and sales.
- The EBCI Marketing and Promotion would develop and offer events and tours that allow outside audiences to connect with artists in sales opportunities in various venues.
- Cherokee retail businesses shall seek to carry inventories and offer for sale high-end authentic, hand-made Cherokee art and crafts.
- The Cherokee Art Institute shall have a mission of teaching the authentic art and crafts of the people, developing emerging artists, and creating marketing and sales programs.
- With funding from the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Qualla Arts and Crafts would consider providing small grants to individual artist and families to assist in improving their homes for hosting visitors.

*Organizational Home*

Qualla Arts and Crafts is willing to consider becoming the organizational home for this activity.

*Resources Required*

- First year budget of \$100,000

*Potential Funding Sources*

- Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

*Timeline*

- Obtain funding by March 2005
- Create artists' educational and promotional materials by May 2005
- Set up initial artist home/studio tours by May 2005
- Provide artist demonstration sites at events and activities by May 2005
- Continue adding more artist home/studio tours throughout 2005
- Qualla Arts & Crafts prepare demonstration room in early 2005

## **Cherokee Arts Product Promotion Action Plan Details**

### **Organizational Home**

Cherokee artists and artisans possess the primary responsibility for creating their own programs for educational programs about their art, as well as the marketing programs to place their products before audiences.

Artists shall organize their efforts through their individual resources and supported primarily by Qualla Arts and Crafts. They shall receive support as well from the Cherokee Museum, EBCI Marketing and Promotion, Oconaluftee Village, Cherokee Art Institute, Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Cherokee Potter's Guild and other agencies and institutions.

### **Participants**

Artists, artisans and their families shall create a unified effort of developing educational and promotional materials for their art. They shall plan the logistics and details of hosting home and studio and home visits, and they shall work closely with the EBCI, cultural organizations and retail businesses to seek avenues for the promotion and sale of their authentic high-end artistic goods.

Cultural organizations (Cherokee Museum, Qualla Arts and Crafts, Oconaluftee Village, Cherokee Potters Guild) shall create artist programs and demonstrations in their facilities where the artists could meet with the visiting public for purposes of education and sales.

EBCI Marketing & Promotion shall create tour packages for the individual artists, their families and organizations participating in visitor education, demonstration, and the promotion and sale of higher-end art and crafts.

EBCI Marketing & Promotion shall also be responsible for creating the events and activities that provide a venue for artist and artisans to meet and interact with outside audiences.

Cherokee retail businesses shall, as their capabilities dictate, strive to include authentic high-end Cherokee art and crafts in their retail inventories. Retail businesses shall also seek to have artists in their facilities where feasible to demonstrate and promote their art and crafts.

The Cherokee Art Institute, if and when feasible, shall begin with the development and presentation of educational workshops aimed at both mature and emerging artists and artisans. One purpose of the workshops shall be to train artists in all the avenues of public education and promotion of their goods.

## **Program Activities**

Artists and artisans shall go through a process of coalition building, where they work together to plan a vision and mission for the future of their authentic high-end art and crafts, both traditional and contemporary styles.

The artists shall set up a leadership structure to support this organizing and coalition building, ensuring that their leaders properly represent all facets of the arts, including the literary and performance arts.

The artists shall be supported in this effort by the EBCI, the cultural attractions, the retail businesses, the Cherokee Art Institute, Cherokee Preservation Foundation and other groups, agencies and higher education institutions in the region.

EBCI Marketing and Promotion would create pre-packaged tours and custom tour packages that include educational exposure to authentic high-end Cherokee art and crafts. Elements of the tour packages could include:

### *Cultural Attractions*

- Cherokee Museum – Artist demonstrations and lectures, hands-on visitor interaction
- Qualla Arts and Crafts – Artist demonstrations, lectures and sales
- Cherokee Potters Guild – Artist demonstrations and sales
- Oconaluftee Village – Hands-on visitor interaction
- Various festivals and events – Artist demonstrations and sales

### *Cultural and Artistic*

- Classes with visiting artists at the Village, Museum, Coop or Guild
- Visits with artists at their homes and studios
- Intensive immersion courses working with artists at various locations

There exists a tour package that is already being offered in Cherokee. This *Cherokee Experience* tour is a three-day package, aimed at group tours - minimum size 10-15 people. It includes a visit to the Cherokee Museum, Oconoluftee Village and the Drama. This is a tour package that could be modified to provide a strong and in-depth focus on authentic high-end Cherokee art and crafts.

## **Shared Marketing**

Marketing is one of the key ingredients of this project. The responsibility for marketing shall be shared among the artists, EBCI, the cultural organizations and retail businesses.

Supplemental funding might be required for this. Target markets include:

- College and universities: The best approach to marketing in this niche is to network to specific college professors. Likely targeted disciplines are anthropology, ethnology, art and social studies.

- Group tour operators: This group can be reached through the general marketing of the “Cherokee Experience” tours that include a focus on Cherokee home/studio/demo site visits.
- The traveling public: The Cherokee community shall offer information at the Welcome Center, at cultural organizations, retail businesses and other outlets that promote the various educational and purchasing opportunities that exist for the visitors.
- Specialty markets: There are a variety of specialty markets that might be interested in Cherokee. These include individuals and groups both domestic and international that are interested in Native American culture and art.

The artist coalition shall work closely with the retail business community to seek ways of selling authentic high-end art and craft through retail outlets. This shall include the possibility of consignments, demonstrations and shared marketing.

The proposed Cherokee Art Institute shall develop educational programs for the public that position Cherokee traditional and contemporary art and crafts as a viable fine art expression, worthy of purchase by museums and collectors.

### **Resources Required**

First year budget of \$100,000 for:

- Artist and artisan coalition building
- Development and preparation of educational and promotional materials
- Artists’ home and studio improvements (est. 12 locations)
- Support for artists’ preparations by Qualla Arts & Crafts

### **Potential Funding Sources**

- Cherokee Preservation Foundation
- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

### **Timeline**

- Artists coalition obtain funding by March 2005
- Artists begin organizing the artist and artisan coalition in March 2005
- Artists create educational and promotional materials by May 2005
- EBCI set up initial artist home/studio tours by May 2005
- EBCI provide artist demonstration sites at events and activities by May 2005
- EBCI continue adding more artist home/studio tours throughout 2005
- Qualla Arts & Crafts prepare demonstration room in early 2005
- Museum, CHA and Guild prepare/upgrade demonstration activities in mid-2005
- Retail business seek to add art and crafts beginning the spring/summer of 2005

### **Committee Decision**

The Committee felt that improving the sales of Cherokee art products is extremely important. This will help to generate jobs and income that directly support Cherokee heritage and culture. However, they felt that it was also important to plan this carefully, to ensure that artists' views are fully represented in the process, and to ensure that the Qualla Coop was ready to take on the additional work. They also felt strongly that the Qualla Coop was the right group to serve as the organizational home for this effort.

The Committee recommended that the Qualla Coop should start the planning process now. It should work with a range of artists to determine the focus and extent of its activities. What is the goal for Qualla's work in this area? What should be the relative proportion of effort that goes into promoting traditional versus contemporary art? Who will drive this effort forward, and who will fund it? The Committee recommended a goal of developing consensus around a plan by the end of 2004, and implementing the plan during 2005.

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## TROUT FISHING ACTION PLAN

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### Action Plan Summary

#### *Goals*

- Increase the number of trout anglers who come to fish in Cherokee waters

#### *Participants*

Any individual purchasing a Cherokee trout fishing license.

#### *Activities*

The action plan focuses on two activities:

- Increase the promotion of the annual trout tournament
- Create a “rainbow extravaganza” - a winter fishing season in which streams are stocked with extra-large trout, and in which there are higher limits for length, and lower limits for the number of fish that may be caught and removed from the streams.

#### *Organizational Home*

The staff for this program will be housed at Cherokee Fish and Game Management.

#### *Resources Required (preliminary estimates)*

- Increased promotion: \$85,000
- Creation of “rainbow extravaganza”: \$60,000

#### *Potential Funding Sources*

- Increased promotion: Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Creation of “rainbow extravaganza”: Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians

#### *Timeline*

Increased promotion will kick off the last Saturday in March (opening day for fishing season). The “rainbow extravaganza” will kick off November 1, 2005.



## **Trout Fishing Action Plan Details**

### **Participants**

This program would be open to any individual purchasing a Cherokee fishing license.

### **Program Activities**

#### ***Increase the promotion of the annual trout tournament***

The annual trout fishing tournament date, and the dates for all activities in the fishing season, would be set by January, 2005. The annual fishing tournament would be scheduled to occur on a date that is during a lull in the tourist season. Tentative plans put next year's date on a Saturday in September, 2005. If possible, the annual trout fishing tournament would be promoted jointly with KOA Campgrounds, which has also hosted an annual tournament.

Fish and Game Management, in coordination with Travel and Promotion, would develop brochures highlighting the annual tournament and describing other yearly events. The brochures would be placed with each establishment that sells Cherokee fishing licenses, and they would be encouraged to hand them out to everyone who buys a license. Fish and Game Management typically sells approximately 50,000 daily fishing licenses each year. A significant number are sold on Opening Day, and so the Fish and Game Management Department would be sure to have the brochures in place by that day.

Fish and Game Management collects information on the individual angler's name and address on each fishing license. They would develop a mailing list from the 50,000 names that they collect on the licenses. This mailing list would be used to mail out an additional 20,000 brochures during the course of the season, promoting the fishing tournament. The 20,000 names would be chosen based on proximity to Cherokee.

Fish and Game Management, in coordination with Travel and Promotion, would develop two street banners promoting the annual trout tournament. The banners will be placed on the streets in second half of March and all of April, and then again in August. Travel and Promotion would feature the tournament in some of its promotional materials and on the web site. Fish and Game Management also would advertise the tournament in selected magazines aimed at sport anglers.

If the annual tournament becomes more successful, attracting at least 500 anglers, Fish and Game would consider adding additional tournaments, such as a teen tournament and a woman's tournament.

#### ***Create a "rainbow extravaganza"***

The "rainbow extravaganza" would be a new fishing season, aimed at attracting anglers during the winter months by the possibility of hooking trophy-sized trout. Currently, the fishing season runs from the last Saturday in March until the end of October. This would

add a new season - the winter fishing season - that would run from November 1 until the end of February. Most of March would remain off season so that Fish and Game Management can repair streams and stock them for the opening of the season at the end of March.

During the standard season, the streams are stocked three times a week with trout that are approximately 1 year old, 8 oz. in weight, and 8-9 inches long. During the winter months, the streams would be stocked with trout that average 2-3 years old, 1 - 3 pounds in weight, and over 12 inches long. The creel limit (number of fish that may be landed and removed from the stream) is 10 fish per day during the standard season, and would be 4 fish per day during the winter season. There would also be a size limit during the winter season. This size limit, as well as the lower creel limit, would increase the chances that every angler would catch a fish, and that some would catch a fish that was much larger than those that can be caught during the standard season.

The winter season would be promoted on the brochures that are handed out by the establishments selling fishing licenses and mailed out to 20,000 names from the license list. It would also be promoted with advertisements in selected fishing magazines. Travel and Promotion also would feature the winter season in some of its promotional materials and on the web site.

### **Organizational Home**

This program would be run by the staff at Fish and Game Management. The staff already manages an annual tournament, and the standard fishing season.

### **Resources Required**

The estimates in this section are very preliminary. It will be necessary to solicit proposals from vendors in order to get more precise estimates.

#### ***Promote annual trout fishing tournament***

Develop and print brochure - 75,000 copies @\$1.00 each	\$75,000
Banners, advertisements	5,000
<u>Create database and mail 20,000 brochures</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Total	\$85,000

#### ***Create "rainbow extravaganza"***

Purchase 20,000 extra-large trout, average 2 lbs @ \$1.50/lb	\$60,000
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### **Potential Funding Sources**

*Increased promotion:* The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is the most important potential source for funding the first year of this activity. If the activity is successful, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians would become the most important potential source of funding after the first year.

*Creation of "rainbow extravaganza":* The Cherokee Preservation Foundation is the most important potential source for funding the first year of this activity. If the activity is successful, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians would become the most important potential source of funding after the first year.

### **Timeline**

The schedule for annual fishing activities would be set by January, 2005. During February, the brochure and banners would be designed. The brochures and banners would be printed during March. Before the last Saturday in March, 10,000 brochures would be delivered to establishments selling fishing licenses. Additional brochures would be delivered to these establishments on an as-needed basis during the year. Before the last Saturday in March, the street banners would be put up, and would remain up during April. They would be put up again in August.

From April - June, the database of names would be designed, and data would be entered and checked. Data would be drawn from licenses sold in 2004 and 2005. In August, 20,000 brochures will be mailed out to anglers living within a several-hour drive of the Boundary. The tournament will occur in late September.

During the summer, the fishing licenses for the winter season would be developed and printed. Orders for the winter trout would be placed with commercial growers. The trout would begin to be stocked in the last week of October. On November 1, the winter fishing season would open.

### **Committee Recommendation**

The Committee felt that fishing is an extremely important draw for tourists. The Tribe sells 50,000 fishing licenses a year, which probably represent 100,000 or more individual visiting Cherokee. Parts of this Action Plan are expansions of existing activities, and should be started right away. Other parts needed more study and deliberation, and shouldn't be started until next year or later.

The Committee recommended that Fish and Game Management and Travel and Promotion implement the suggestions on promoting the annual trout fishing tournament in the coming year. This is an on-going annual event which has not yet hit its full potential for drawing fishermen. Promotion should be dramatically expanded over the next two-three years, so that it starts to rival the kid's trout derby in terms of the number of participants.

The Committee decided that the suggestions regarding creating a winter season and creating a catch and release section of the river not be implemented immediately. Rather, they should be studied thoroughly this winter, and Fish and Game Management develop a plan jointly with Environmental Management that both attracts more fishermen and also maintains or improves the environmental quality in the rivers and streams on the Boundary.

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## CHEROKEE IN FIVE YEARS: A VISION

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There are many projects now under way that are intended to help improve Cherokee and make it more attractive, both for visitors and residents. These projects include those that have been recommended by the Vision Qualla planning process, as well as those that are being pursued by other organizations, including the EBCI Economic Development Office and the EBCI Travel and Promotions Office.

But will all this planning actually make a difference? We believe so. To help share our views on how all these projects might improve Cherokee, we offer two visions on how Cherokee will appear in five years. The first is a vision of how Cherokee will appear to a visiting family, and the second is how Cherokee will appear to a graduating high school senior.

### *Cherokee, July 2009: The Visitor Experience*

When planning their summer vacation, George Harris and his family come across the Cherokee web site. It immediately grabs their attention with images of Cherokee culture and the natural beauty of the Qualla Boundary. They can navigate the site easily, and its descriptions of the attractions of Cherokee are intriguing. George's wife and daughter are particularly interested in the half-day tour in which they can visit with native artisans and learn about basket-making. They both enjoy crafts, and are skilled at knitting and macramé. The pictures and short video of the artisans are fascinating. George's son, however, is much more interested in the trout fishing.

Driving in through the Soco Gap, George and his family are struck by how clean and welcoming downtown Cherokee looks. The stores have facades of warm stonework and wood, and have tin roofs that recall earlier times. There are colorful banners and awnings, and the welcome signs are attractive and easy to understand. Traffic is heavy, but moving well, and George quickly guides his car to a convenient parking lot.

Getting out of the car, George's kids run through the greenway toward the river, which beckons them. Its cool banks and shady trees offer a welcome respite from the muggy summer weather. There is a walkway by the river, and many of the stores and shops have entrances out onto the walkway. Several have set up outside merchandise stands, and there are restaurants and ice cream shops that have set up decks on the river. George and his family stop for a bite, and are pleasantly surprised with the high quality and reasonable prices for the food. George's son tries bean bread, a traditional Cherokee dish, and really enjoys the crunchy pork strips that come with it.

After lunch, George and his family stroll through the downtown. There are colorful murals on the sides of several of the buildings, depicting scenes from Cherokee history. Well-laid out sidewalks and plantings make strolling easy and relaxing. George's wife thinks the shopping is great, with a wide variety of choices at attractive prices. George's children enjoy meeting the Chief and having their pictures taken in his teepee, although the Chief explains that his eagle-feather head-dress and teepee are traditional for Plains Indians. As they leave, he shows them photos of traditional Cherokee garb.

Later that day, George and his family stop at the cultural campus, which is festive and colorful. There are statues by local sculptors on display outside, and a tempting aroma of Cherokee cooking in the air. George's children are captivated by the hands-on pottery demonstration. George and his family wander through the fair grounds, enjoying the music and the stories that they hear. They are intrigued by the wares displayed by dozens of vendors, and George buys an authentic hand-made Cherokee pot to take home.

The next morning, it's time for the tours. George's family head off to the Welcome Center, where the parking lot is buzzing with activity. There are three small vans loading up for trips. One is going on a tour of basket-making artists' homes and workshops - the tour that George's wife and daughter are taking. Others are heading out on full-day trips to heritage sites on the Boundary and beyond. And some are full of fishing gear, heading to secluded fishing sites in beautiful settings on the Qualla Boundary. That's the one that George and his son are on.

The family meets in the late afternoon back at the parking lot, happy and tired. They are so pleased with the activities that they decide to stay an additional day. They feel there is more they can learn about Cherokee culture and history on this trip, so they plan on visiting the museum and other cultural attractions tomorrow with the children. Perhaps they can find some suitable books about the Cherokees to take home with them. They make reservations on the spot through the Welcome Center, which also provides them with information on a number of family restaurants further down the street where they can dine this evening. They have truly enjoyed Cherokee hospitality, culture and natural beauty. As they leave town the following day, they are sure they will come back next year.

#### *Cherokee, July 2009: The Youth Experience*

Jason Littledeer shook himself awake on an early July morning. In March, he thought that the idea of having an internship with Fish and Game Management would be great. Being outdoors all summer and getting paid for it! What could be better? But the reality of having to be out on the stream early in the morning, checking fishing licenses, was less fun than he'd imagined. He thought about his friends who had internships at some of the new businesses in town - businesses that had sprung up because of the new broad-band Internet. Maybe it would have been a better idea to get an internship with a web design firm or a desk-top publishing firm. It's true that he would be inside all day, but at least he wouldn't have to start work until nine. And there definitely were moments, drenched in sweat and fighting mosquitoes, when the idea of a job with air conditioning seemed quite attractive.

Jason also thought a bit about his plans to go to college in the fall. When he started high school, going to college seemed like a silly idea. Sure, the Tribe would pay for his tuition and board - but who needed to go to college? There was always work at the Casino, and the pay there was good. But then his mom had made him participate in the youth mentoring program at school, and he had gotten hooked up with Joe, a Cherokee student in college. He'd talked with Joe about what life was like on campus, and the kinds of courses that Joe was taking. Most importantly, he saw the kinds of opportunities that a college degree opened up. It really changed his mind.

Through Joe, he learned that a college degree was required to get into management in a hotel. Jason was interested in the hospitality business, and had worked in a hotel during the school year. He had enjoyed interacting with the guests, but changing linens was tedious. Being the general manager of a hotel - that would be much more interesting. And there even was a possibility that he could eventually get into business on his own. He recently learned that the Cherokee Business Fund had been set up to help tribal members start or buy businesses - and a distant cousin had used the funding to purchase a restaurant downtown.

“Come on down, Jason,” called his mom. “Your breakfast is getting cold.” As Jason meandered downstairs, rubbing his eyes, he thought that Cherokee was turning out to be a pretty good place to live. Who knows? Maybe he’d even run the local Holiday Inn one day. But today, his main goal was to stay away from those pesky mosquitoes.