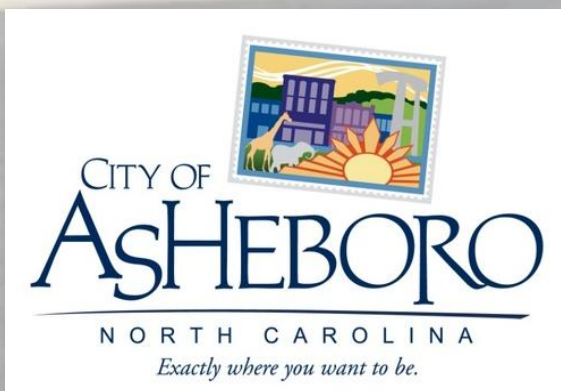


City of Asheboro

2016 All-America City Application



Community Information

Community name and state: **Asheboro, North Carolina**

Your community is applying as a:

Neighborhood Village Town Tribe City County Region

If applying as a region, name participating communities: **N/A**

If applying as a neighborhood, name city: **N/A**

Has your community applied before? Yes No If Yes, which years: **2014 & 2015**

Has your community been a Finalist before? **Yes** No If Yes, which years: **2015**

Has your community been an All-America City before? Yes **No** If Yes, which years: _____

Contact Information

All-America City Award contact (primary contact person available throughout competition & follow-up):

Name: **Justin T. Luck, AICP** Title (if any): **Zoning Administrator/Planner**

Organization/Government/Other: **City of Asheboro**

Address: **146 N. Church Street** City, State, Zip: **Asheboro, North Carolina, 27203**

Phone (business/day): **336-626-1201 ext. 292** Mobile Phone: **N/A**

E-mail Address(s): **jluck@ci.asheboro.nc.us**

The applying community will receive a complimentary membership (or membership renewal if an AAC application was submitted last year) to the National Civic League for one year. To whom should this membership be directed?

Name: **John Ogburn**

Address: **146 N. Church Street**

City, State & Zip Code **Asheboro, North Carolina, 27203**

Phone Number **336-626-1201 ext. 213** Fax **N/A**

Email **jogburn@ci.asheboro.nc.us**

We agree to follow NCL's rules regarding use of the All-America City Award logo, a registered trademark of the National Civic League. We allow NCL and the All-America City Award to share this application and the information enclosed in it with the NCL and AAC networks to promote the work of our community. If we are named an All-America City, we agree to conduct a post-AAC conference call or regional forum for the AAC network that features our projects. In a pay-it-forward spirit, if named a finalist or All-America City, we agree to consider supporting AAC through an NCL membership for a minimum of the next three years.

Signature:  Date: **March 8, 2016**

Name: **Justin T. Luck** Title: **Zoning Administrator/Planner**

Community Statistics and Map

Note: Use the most up-to-date statistics possible for your neighborhood, town, city, county, or region (source suggestions: U.S. Census Bureau, State Department of Economic Security, State Department of Finance, Department of Public Health, and local school statistics).

POPULATION (in year 2010 or most recent): **25,573**

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE 2000-2010 (indicate + or -): **+15.4 %**

Source/Date: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

RACIAL/ETHNIC POPULATION BREAKDOWN:

White	78.6 %
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	25.8 %
Black or African American	11.3 %
Asian	1.0 %
American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN)	0.7 %
Mixed Race	2.2 %
Other	6.3 %

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME: **\$37,097**

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES BELOW POVERTY LEVEL: **24.5 %**

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: **7.5 %**

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

POPULATION BREAKDOWN BY AGE GROUP (percentages, if available):

19 years old and under	29.7 %
20-24	6.8 %
25-44	27.5 %
45-64	22.1 %
65 and over	13.8 %

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

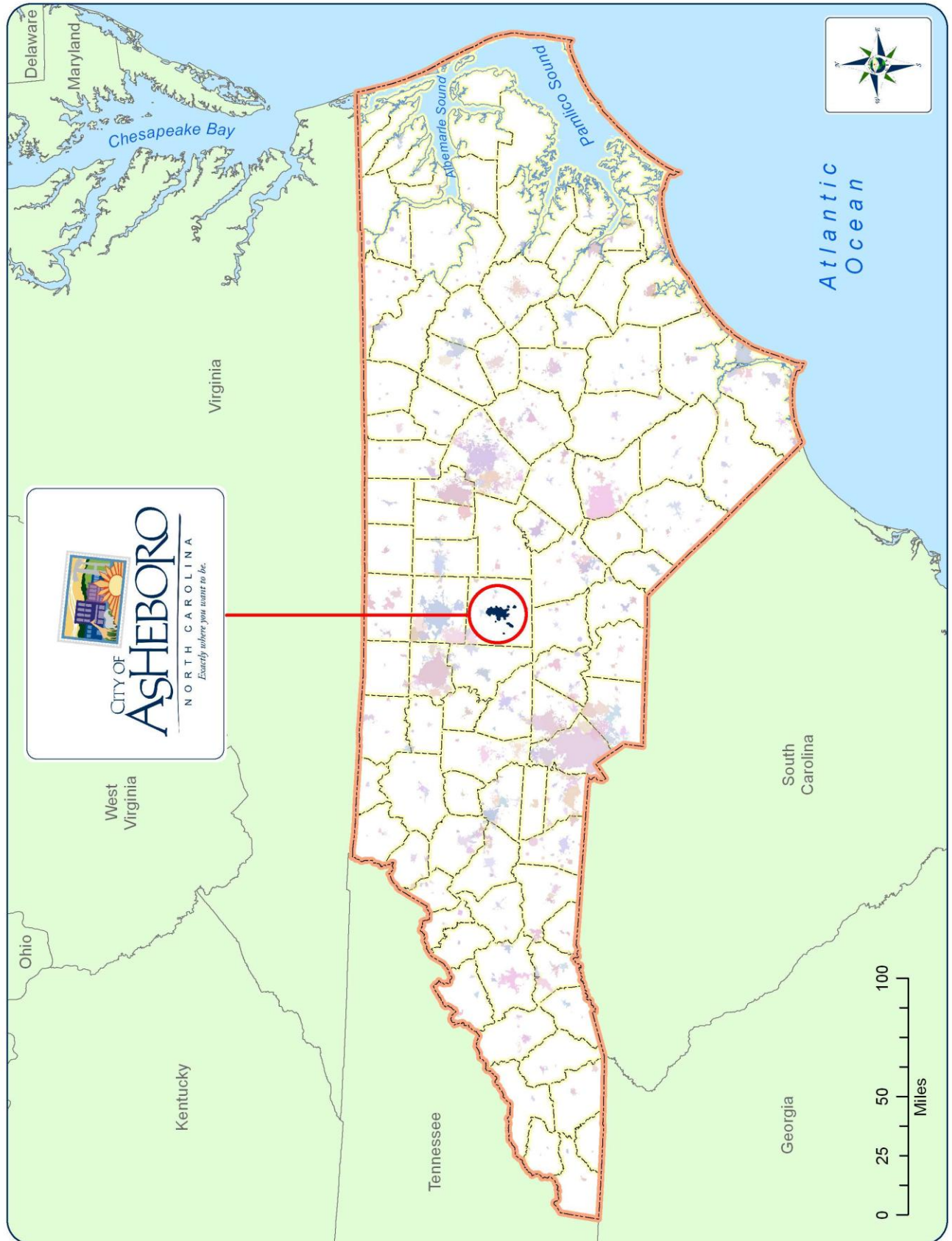
PERCENTAGE OF HOME OWNERSHIP: **48.5 %**

Source/Date: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census

WORKFORCE DISTRIBUTION -- Name the three largest employment sectors (include military services and/or installations, if any) in your community and provide the percentage of total employed in each:

Manufacturing	31.4 %
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	18.5 %
Retail Trade	10.9 %

Source/Date: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Part 1
Our Community Story



Greetings from Asheboro!

Asheboro, often referred to as the heart of North Carolina due its location in the geographical center of the state, is called home by a diverse population of over 25,000 spirited individuals. "Our people are what make Asheboro a model community to live, work and play," said Mayor David Smith. "Dedicated and hardworking families are a hallmark of our community," he added. The spirit of our community has been tested over the last 10 years, yet, in many ways, Asheboro has come through strengthened and renewed. Once a booming textile mill town, the city felt the effects of our country's most recent recession, which caused a decrease in the city's manufacturing base. Since 1999, Asheboro has lost over 7,500 manufacturing industry jobs. Despite the pressing challenges created by manufacturing decline, our community has come together and, through numerous cross sector collaborations, made great progress.



*Mayor Smith with Randolph County
4H Members*

In late 2005, recognizing a need to create an informed, comprehensive and energized approach to the future, a steering committee and four task forces comprised of local officials

and community residents from various ethnic, age, and socio-economic backgrounds initiated an 18 month strategic planning process. This cross sector collaborative effort lead to the creation of a vision for Asheboro: "Asheboro will be a model community in North Carolina as a place to live, work and play." This vision was supplemented by implementable strategies focusing on, for example, education, economic development, human capital and recreation.

Many of the strategies recommended to achieve our vision have been implemented with measurable success. One such area of progress is child nutrition and health. Individuals, local government, schools and nonprofits currently work hand in hand to ensure that families impacted by reduced wages or unemployment as a result of our manufacturing decline have the tools necessary to support a healthy lifestyle for their children. **Our work can be summarized in a simple formula:**

Nutritious Food + Active Bodies = Thriving Children Equipped For Success In School and Life

Randolph County WIC Program

In Asheboro, this support begins even before birth. The Randolph County Women, Infant and Children Supplemental Nutrition Program (WIC Program) is a federal program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture. The program is designed to safeguard the health of low-income women,

infants, and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk by providing wholesome foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care. While the national WIC program, as one of its goals, encourages children to consume more healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, the Randolph County WIC Program has implemented innovative techniques tailored to our community to achieve this goal. These techniques began as part of the 2014-2016 Randolph County Health Department Strategic Plan, a collaborative effort that involved local health care specialists, Asheboro



WIC Summer Garden

City Schools, multiple governmental agencies, and houses of worship that identified as a priority the need to "promote wellness/lifestyle changes by increasing healthy behaviors including healthy eating." In summer of 2015, the Randolph County WIC Program partnered with Dezern Farms, a local, small family farm, to deliver a total of 3,000 seedling tomato, lima bean, cucumber, pepper and watermelon plants directly to participating families free of charge. In addition to providing plants, Dezern Farms aided the WIC

Program in planting and maintaining a community garden. Fruits and vegetables harvested from the garden were given to all WIC families during their regular visits throughout the summer. In all, over 400 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables were provided as a result of this partnership. To aid participants with their plants and produce, WIC nutritionists distributed recipes, nutrition information and growing instructions, and provided one-on-one consultations to create participant specific nutritional goals as well. Special care was taken to ensure that all information disseminated was made available in both Spanish and English to eliminate language barriers. As a result, language had no statistical impact on participants' ability to grow, gather and consume produce according to post-program surveys. Randolph County WIC was acknowledged for its creative effort in September 2015, winning the North Carolina Public Health Associations' Sparkle Project Award, which recognizes a model health and/or nutrition project. Child and parent response was also positive; leading the WIC program to plant a fall and winter garden to continue the distribution of fruits and vegetables throughout the remainder of 2015 and in to 2016.

Boys and Girls Club of Central Asheboro

Beginning at age six, children are eligible to join the Boys and Girls Club of Central Asheboro. Again, while many communities throughout the country have Boys and Girls Clubs, the Boys and Girls Club of Central Asheboro has created innovative programs to achieve broad organizational goals within a targeted at-risk area of our city. The club is located in Asheboro's most poverty-stricken area, the East Side community, and it serves over 200 members per year for just a \$2 annual fee. 64 percent of members come from single-parent homes, and 89 percent of members live below poverty level.

Furthermore, the Club's membership is 72.45% African American, 9.18% Caucasian, 5.61% Hispanic and 12.24% Multi Ethnic. By combining this racial and socio-economic background data with the fact that 89% of the Club's members do not utilize services of other youth agencies, it becomes apparent that the club is providing critical programs to at-risk children of the community that lack access to supportive services. The club provides a variety of experiences to explore the lifelong learning opportunities of its members. One such program is Healthy Habits, where members are taught the importance of living a healthy lifestyle through nutritional eating. The club reinforces this message by providing nutritional snacks and dinners to its after school program attendees. In 2014, 50 members participated in Healthy Habits, with 93% passing the post-test verifying their understanding of living a healthy lifestyle. The club also teaches the importance of physical activity through Triple Play, a program that focuses on the benefits of exercising at least 60 minutes per day. In 2014, 80 members participated in 197 fitness sessions. In 2013, two members of the club, Isaiah and Randall, along with club director Andrew Oliver, were selected to attend the Boys and Girls Clubs of America's Triple Play Leadership Summit at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. At the event, Isaiah and Randall were given the tremendous opportunity to learn leadership skills, healthy living techniques and ways to overcome obstacles from a set of distinguished speakers and teachers. "We strive to make the Boys and Girls Club a fun place for learning and where members can be themselves and try new things that they may not have had access to before," said Oliver. The experiences provided to members would not be possible without cross sector support. Much of the club's funding comes from fellow nonprofit United Way of Randolph County. Additionally, the club partners with the Randolph County Family Crisis Center, Trees NC and Girl Scouts of America. Trees NC has been a partner for roughly 12 years and primarily focuses on educating kids, not only about environmental preservation, but about agriculture, gardening and nutrition as well. In January 2016, this partnership was awarded a grant from the Randolph Hospital Community Health Foundation in an amount of \$6,000 to increase the consumption of fresh vegetables and fruit for 750 youth and adult residents of the East Side community. The awarding of this grant acknowledges the success of the partnership, while providing additional funding to aid the club in attaining its child health and nutrition vision. Multiple houses of worship and schools provide further support for programs, funding and outreach. The end result of the club's community funded and supported programs are healthier children that are achieving more in school and life. "Many of the Asheboro members can be seen starting on their schools basketball teams, getting straight A's in school and receiving scholarships for college. They are also learning the importance of community service and giving back to their community," said Oliver.



Randall, Isaiah & Andrew

Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen

One of the longest standing community-driven projects in Asheboro is Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen (ODB). In service for now more than 26 years, Our Daily Bread was founded by Reverend Dora Atlas in January 1990 in the Eastside Community. "I feel like the boy who offered the two fish and the five loaves. I'm just that simple. I think I can feed the people. But miracles do happen today," said Rev. Atlas just a few days before opening Asheboro's first - and, to date, Asheboro's only - soup kitchen. Eight adults and 13 children showed up on the first day, but today, ODB serves an average of 85-90 people per meal, which is served daily Monday through Friday and one Saturday a month. These numbers increase in the summer and on holidays, when children are out of school. A total over 10,000 community members have been served in the last two years. This all inclusive program serves everyone who walks through the door with no questions asked. With regards to children's health and nutrition, ODB serves two purposes. On one hand, at-risk children, and their families, are receiving a much needed nutritious meal. On the other, children are given an opportunity to serve and feed. The nutritious meals and spirited volunteers come by the way of cross sector collaborations with a diverse group of over 25 agencies. The Asheboro Housing Authority allows ODB to lease one of their facilities for \$1 a year including utilities. ODB currently works with



Rev. Dora Atlas

organizations, such as the Randolph-Asheboro YMCA and Central United Methodist Church, to provide healthy meal options. Many of the fruits and vegetables served come from the YMCA community garden, which are grown, harvested, delivered, prepared and served by volunteers. The soup kitchen also strives to have diversity among volunteers with regards to race, age, gender and socio-economic background. For instance, Dr. Sukhwant Walha, a local physical medicine and rehabilitation doctor, comes the first Wednesday of each month to prepare a spicy meal of Indian fare. ODB also partners with Asheboro City Schools to involve children in serving and delivering meals. In December 2015, students of South Asheboro Middle



Asheboro High School Club

School collected and delivered 1,200 cans of food to ODB. ODB also partners with a variety of clubs at Asheboro High School to arrange service days where clubs may take majority control of cooking, serving, and clean up. ODB has a vision of expanding their impact through additional food, and non-food, services and building expansion. In 2015, ODB was recipient of a \$32,000 grant from the Randolph Hospital Foundation that will allow preparation food boxes for weekend meals. Also, ODB is now accepting non-food donations, such as school supplies and coats, which may be distributed to children and their families in need. Fundraising for building expansion, which will provide a larger seating area for guests, is also underway.

In summary, Asheboro's leaders and residents have identified child nutrition and health as a pressing challenge, partly a result of manufacturing industry decline over the recent years. This challenge, identified through multiple inclusive strategic planning efforts, has been directly addressed by a multitude of cross sector collaborations initiated by neighborhoods, governments, businesses and nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, these efforts have unified diverse segments, with regards to race, age and socio-economic background, of our community. Our residents are using innovative techniques, such as community gardens, soup kitchens, nutrition education workshops and exercise programs to support our at-risk youth and, not only guide them towards a healthy lifestyle, but in some instances simply provide food where it is scarce. It is Asheboro's vision to overcome this challenge, among others, and to "be a model community in North Carolina as a place to live, work and play." In part two of this application, we will explore three pioneering projects that are having a large impact in our community, and thus bring us closer to realizing our vision.



Part 2A

Randolph County Partnership for Children



The Randolph County Partnership for Children (RCPC) believes quality in early care and education includes more than quality classrooms and learning experiences, it also includes quality nutrition and healthy activity.

Why? Because obesity comes early in Randolph County, with 15.9% of children classified as overweight or obese according to the most recent community health assessment by the Randolph County Health Department. However, the equation is simple: Healthy children = better learners. Better learners = employable adults. Employable adults = a thriving community. RCPC is working with the whole community to do the math and ensure children are healthy and supported in school and life.

How? Instead of sugary drinks and empty-calorie snacks, RCPC early childhood programs are emphasizing fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Instead of sitting inside all day playing in enclosed spaces, early childhood programs are taking their classrooms outdoors, where children are able to let their imaginations run wild.

The Goal? *To establish a habit of healthy eating and increased outdoor play in their earliest years and shape a healthier generation.*



Learning to Garden

When it comes to obesity prevention, it's never too early to start. That's because the first few years of a child's life are fundamentally important. Evidence tells us that they shape children's future development, and influence how well children do at school, their ongoing health and wellbeing and their achievements later in life. A strong focus on the first few years of children's lives leads to huge economic, social and emotional benefits later on, both for individuals and for the community as a whole. Positive, nurturing interactions with parents and caregivers, good nutrition and health care, high quality early care and education are keys to success. Research also shows that children who are overweight when they start school are far more likely to be obese by the time they become teenagers. This means that we need to pay far closer attention to what our youngest kids are eating and how much they are moving. Our kids' nutrition and activity level not only improves their health, it also gets them ready to learn.

Realizing this importance, RCPC is placing early childhood nutrition and activity top of mind in Asheboro and all across Randolph County. RCPC is an integral part of education and health development for our community and is concentrating efforts toward the health and well-being of young children and their families in four primary settings: Child Care; Elementary School; Community; and Health Care.

Child Care Settings:

RCPC is leading efforts to transform existing playgrounds into rich, naturalized outdoor learning environments filled with rich opportunities for active play; as well as incorporating strategies to increase

activities and improve nutrition in child care programs through Shape NC and GONAPSACC (Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment in Child Care), as well as increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

GONAPSACC is an intervention aimed at improving the child care environments, policies and practices of nutrition and physical activity through self-assessment and technical assistance, as is Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of North Carolina funded program, Shape NC. Both programs focus on increasing the number of children starting kindergarten at a healthy weight and ready to learn and have seen tremendous results in increasing physical activity, healthy eating, and use of outdoor learning environments in child care centers. RCPC serves as a regional hub site for Shape NC and works with child care centers, families and the community to develop and implement strategies to prevent early childhood obesity. As a result of RCPC and Shape NC, 75% of licensed child care centers in Randolph County have new or transformed outdoor learning environments so that children have engaging outdoor spaces to get daily exercise, grow vegetables and learn. In addition, the amount of time children are engaged in active play (90 minutes or more) is on the rise from 51% in 2011 to 85% in 2015. The new outdoor areas feature safe, ready-made access to green places and engagement with nature. Best practice design of outdoor learning environments incorporates trees, shrubs, vines, flowers, grasses, edible fruits and vegetables—to connect children with nature and diversify their outdoor experience. To date, these outdoor learning environment improvements have impacted more than 2,700 children in Randolph County.

One early childhood program, The Growing Place Child Care Center located in Asheboro, recently advanced from a model center to one of only six child care centers in North Carolina classified as a Shape NC Demonstration Site. This means the program achieved a level of excellence for best practices. The Growing Place now provides tours of its innovative design to allow others across North Carolina to see the nutrition, physical activity and outdoor space in action and learn how these improvements are accomplished. This project would not have been possible without Shape NC and community support, which included private donations from parents and Farm Bureau Insurance, nonprofit donations from the Captain Planet Foundation and NC State Natural Learning Initiative and manual labor provided by Asheboro High School students and Eagle Scouts.



The Growing Place - Before



The Growing Place - After

The innovative work that is being done in Asheboro and across Randolph County is also providing inspiration and ideas to scores of early childhood teachers across the region. Each summer, RCPC hosts a 'Summer Summit' tour of outdoor learning environments in Randolph County. Over the past four years, educators have traveled from over 25 counties across North Carolina to see the work that is being done in Asheboro.

Dawn Greene, director at Precious Memories Preschool in Asheboro, noted: "With the new play areas we have created, the children are using their bodies in different ways than before and they are practicing deeper social interactions. We are naturally giving children the opportunity to discover new things, whether it is about themselves, their classmates, or the natural world around them."



And it's definitely working. Here is 4-year-old Aiden's story. One night Aiden's mom was fixing dinner and her son asked for 'green balls like they had at preschool'. She felt sure he was talking about candy and was surprised when he said they had grown the balls outside, cooked them and tried them as a class. She was stumped on what he meant by 'green balls', so she asked his teacher. She said he must be talking about Brussels Sprouts. Aiden's mom was slightly embarrassed that she had no idea what Brussels Sprouts were or even where to buy them, but she was thrilled that Aiden wanted to eat a healthy vegetable. It was this moment she realized the impact the garden that Aiden had been talking about for months was having not only on students but also on families. Children were not only enjoying growing vegetables in the garden, they were also excited about cooking and tasting these new healthy foods.

Elementary School Settings:

RCPC's first three years of Shape NC implementation focused on changing policy and practices in child care centers to promote healthy behaviors among children 0-5 years. In 2014, RCPC began the second, three-year phase of Shape NC which had a greater focus on expanding the work beyond childcare centers and into the larger community. One part of this expansion is focus on increased physical activity by introducing the concept of outdoor learning environments into local public schools. RCPC is working with local elementary schools, including Charles W. McCrary Elementary School (located in a low resource neighborhood in Asheboro—and whose students come from The Growing Place Child Care Center) to show how the gains made in improvement in nutrition and physical activity (0-5 year olds) can be sustained in an elementary school environment. McCrary Elementary is identified as a low performing elementary school with less than 60 percent of its students proficient based on 2011-12 testing data. In Randolph County, it is the lowest performing elementary school. McCrary Elementary also has limited financial resources; 73% of students are minorities and 81% of the students receive subsidized lunches. Research shows minority and low-income individuals are disproportionately affected by childhood obesity. McCrary Elementary reflects all the indicators we want to see improve: low reading scores, poverty, poor diets, and lack of opportunities for physical activity. Thanks to RCPC and Shape NC, as well as a generous \$48,000 grant from local industry Timken, McCrary Elementary now has an enhanced outdoor learning environment. A walking track with fitness stations has been constructed. Students also have the opportunity to grow and consume vegetables in the "Salsa Garden." With the success of these two additions, McCrary Elementary has the goal of adding more facilities, such as a walking track dedicated for K-2 students, as well as an outdoor amphitheatre for plays and concerts.

Community Settings:

In 2013, the RCPC hosted its first Play Daze event. Play Daze, a full one day event which is held in conjunction with Week of the Young Child, offers opportunities for supervised, unstructured time where children are free to explore and use materials provided or found. The event is an opportunity to bring the community and families together to support children's play—and most of all—to have fun in the process. The event features nearly 20 play areas, including fort-building, rope climbing, clay and mud play, sand play, dirt and water play, nature art, dramatic play and more. Over the last four years, over 2,500 children have participated in Play Daze. This impact is made possible by the 100 plus community volunteers that freely give numerous hours of service each year.



RCPC now serves as a regional hub for play equipment resources and technical assistance for other counties looking to host a local event.

RCPC is also working closely with Randolph Hospital on a collective impact process with multidisciplinary stakeholders to improve the health and wellness of families in Randolph County. The county-wide collaborative, including representatives from early childhood, medical providers and



the community, is working to build a strong network across sectors, educate key stakeholders and the community on promising practices and create a community action plan. The community action plan will serve as a blueprint for both short-term projects and long-term implementation strategies that focus on changes to create a healthier Randolph County.

Health Care Settings:

RCPC is increasing the role of doctors in preventing obesity and improving literacy through Reach Out and Read. Over the past five years, RCPC has significantly expanded early literacy programs in Asheboro and throughout Randolph County. Recognizing that a majority of language development occurs in the first few years of life, RCPC provides programs that develop early literacy skills needed for success in school, work and life. RCPC has teamed with six pediatric offices to implement Reach Out and Read, an early literacy program that supports doctors in their efforts to “prescribe” reading to young children and families during well-child visits. Because of this program, children have received 13,671 books over the last four years and 95% of participants have shown an increase in the amount of time parents spend reading to their children. The Asheboro Police Department has enhanced the program. Once a month, an officer visits a pediatric office in Asheboro to read to children. Sergeant Matthew Vann noted, “Anytime police officers can interact with children in a positive way, it leaves a lasting impression..”



Sgt. Matthew Vann

So, as you see, it all adds up. RCPC has bridged relationships across disciplines and sectors based on the belief that healthy communities are everyone’s responsibility. If we invest time and resources now by increasing access to physical activities and nutritional foods, we can ensure every child is launched as a healthy, lifelong learner. Nothing should subtract from that.

Program Contact: Andee Edelson, Child Care Services Programs Coordinator
Organization: Randolph County Partnership for Children
Address: 349 Sunset Avenue
Asheboro, NC 27203
Phone: 336-629-2128 ext. 30
Email: aedelson@randolphkids.org

Part 2B

Communities In Schools of Randolph County

"Backpack Pals"



For nearly 40 years, Communities In Schools' mission has been to "surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life." Today, Communities in Schools is the nation's largest and leading organization dedicated to this mission. In Asheboro, Communities in Schools of Randolph County (CISRC) has been making an impact since their relocation to our city in 2010. Chartered in 1998, CISRC originally started in the neighboring town of Archdale as a dropout prevention program. Today, the Asheboro location offers a plethora of programs to achieve their goal of providing all students five basic resources to help them succeed:

- 1) A personal one-on-one relationship with a caring adult
- 2) As safe place to learn and grow
- 3) A marketable skill to use upon graduation
- 4) An opportunity to give back to peers and community
- 5) A healthy start and a healthy future



Distributing Bags

To provide resource five, a healthy start and a healthy future, CISRC has developed a program that is unique to Asheboro and Randolph County: Backpack Pals. "A hungry child cannot concentrate on schoolwork," said Paula Owens, CISRC executive director. "For some students, the breakfast and lunch they receive at school are the only meals they eat. Backpack Pals helps alleviate childhood hunger by sending a bag packed with nutritious, non-perishable and child-friendly food home from school with the child on Friday afternoon," she continued. Indeed, since its inception in 2008, Backpack Pals has tackled a pressing challenge in our community, where the student population receiving free or reduced breakfast and lunch reaches over 80% at some schools. CISRC works with each individual school in Asheboro and Randolph County to identify students in need, and at this time, no student is turned away. Letters go to the parents/guardians to secure permission for their child to participate, and, once enrolled, the student receives their food on Fridays in a small bag that goes in their own backpack to keep food secure and to protect the students' identity and dignity. In each bag, the student will find two breakfast items, two proteins, two vegetables or fruits, two beverages, two snacks and one package of ramen noodles. The program runs for 36 weeks, starting in September and continuing until school is out in mid-June.

In school year 2014-2015, Backpack Pals provided 19,180 bags of food to 650 students enrolled in 24 different schools within the Randolph County and Asheboro City school districts. Through January of the 2015-2016 school year, over 10,000 bags of food have already been provided and 607 students are being served. The majority of bags, 476, are going to elementary school age children. Of the 607 students, 202 attend a school with an Asheboro address. Within Asheboro, 77 bags (38%) go to Caucasian students, 41 bags (20%) go to African American students, 73 bags (36%) go to Hispanic

students and 11 bags (5%) go to multi-racial students. From comparing this data to Asheboro's racial/ethnic population breakdown, we can see that Backpack Pals is confronting barriers, such as poverty, to child health, nutrition and academic success that disproportionately impact children of color in our community.

CISRC uses a variety of quantitative and qualitative techniques to document the results of Backpack Pals. One method used is teacher and student surveys. In 2014-2015, 96.3% of teachers who had students in the Backpack Pals program thought their students benefited from the food. Teachers and students surveyed were given the option to provide written feedback, much of which demonstrated program success:

"This has greatly helped Jeremiah's family. They constantly express their thankfulness for this program."

"I know that Jeffrey is hungry all the time. If it were not for this program, he would probably focus on his need to eat rather than academics."

Feedback from local students, January 2016:

"I get excited when I get the food" – A 4th grade child in Asheboro

"It is awesome because sometimes we don't have that much food at home." - A 3rd grade child in Asheboro

Other methods used to determine program success are individual attendance and academic goal setting. While not all Backpack Pal participants are assigned goals, those that are have shown a maintained improvement in their attendance record or academic performance, including grade promotion. The table below demonstrates the success of Backpack Pals in these areas:

Data for End Of Year Backpack Pal Students (2014-15)

Student Goal	Number with Goal	Number Attaining Goal	Percentage	Percentage Not Attaining Goal
Improve & Maintain Attendance	63	58	95%	5%
Improve And Maintain Academics	65	59	94%	6%
Promotion Rate	66	63	91%	9% (transferred to schools out of district and were not tracked)

Perhaps, the success and effectiveness of Backpack Pals is best told through the voice of the parents and guardians of participating children. Eddie, a father of three young children in the Asheboro City Schools district, volunteered to share his story. All three of his children began participating in Backpack Pals early in their elementary school years. Currently, his two elementary school age children receive the food bags while his oldest, now in middle school, no longer requests the service, though it is available. When asked about the impact the program had on his family, here is what Eddie had to say:

Oh, yes! They have been great! The girls especially love getting the bags. The bags have been very helpful for our family over the years. The canned foods, especially are great. When the children get home from school, they're always hungry. On Fridays, they will grab their bag and get a snack from it right away. Other days, if we still have some of the food in the cabinet, they will ask if they can have some for a snack.

The impact generated by Backpack Pals in Asheboro would not be possible without cross sector collaboration. In fact, 75% of Backpack Pals' expense and operation is outsourced and covered by community partners. CISRC works with over 30 organizations in Asheboro alone, not to mention many more individual donors and Randolph County organizations. "Backpack Pals is one program that ignites interest in the community," stated Owens. "Hearts go out to children that are hungry and our community sees the program as a way to make a direct and immediate impact in their lives." The support of the community is critical; in 2014-15, the total expense for the Backpack Pal program totaled



Volunteers Packing Bags

\$124,235.06. Over 30 hours per week are spent by staff and volunteers to make the program a success. One sector that plays a large role is the faith-based community. Many houses of worship not only collect food donations and provide financial funding, but many provide full service for one week of a month, or full service for an entire school. For example, volunteers at Rushwood Park Wesleyan Church are provided gift cards from CISRC to shop for food. Volunteers then pack the purchased food in bags and deliver the nutritious meals directly to schools. Whereas Rushwood provides this full service on

a weekly basis to one school, some faith-based partners, such as new partner the Asheboro Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, provide full service one week a month, and others, such as the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, provide full service to South and North Asheboro Middle Schools and Asheboro High School. Backpack Pals also partners with the local business community. In December 2015, CISRC held its 3rd annual Tacky Christmas Sweater Party. This private sector

partnership raised over \$8,000 solely dedicated to the Backpack Pal program. The event was a success thanks to \$10,500 in donations from corporate sponsors, free advertising by Asheboro's newspaper, The Courier-Tribune, free ticket printing by PIP printing, hosting by The Cetwick Event Center and door prizes from Asheboro Chick-Fil-A. Non-profit partnerships aid the Backpack Pals program as well. The United Way of Randolph County provides significant funding to the program. Support has also been attained through special fundraising events. For example, over the last five years, CISRC has partnered with local NASCAR champion Bobby Labonte and his Bobby Labonte Foundation to host the "Tour de Reason" charity bike ride. This event, which features three different bike courses, free meals and music, raised over \$5,000 for the Backpack Pal program in 2015. In addition to these sources of funding, many local individuals donate regularly to this cause. The donations include both financial and in-kind donations of food for the program.

CISRC has a vision of growing collaborative efforts with outside business, non-profit and faith-based organizations in the short term future to increase funding and support for Backpack Pals. "Our goal is for Backpack Pals to be fully community funded," said Owens. "This would allow CISRC to simply manage the student base and coordinate distribution of food." CISRC intends to strengthen collaboration by providing additional funding options, such as adopting an individual child for a month, three months, or an entire school year. Also in the short term, CISRC has a goal of providing more fresh fruits and vegetables to Backpack Pal participants. In January 2016, CISRC, in partnership with First United Methodist Church of Asheboro, received a \$3,300 grant from the Randolph Hospital Community Health Foundation to develop a community garden. Food grown in the garden will be used to supplement the Backpack Pal program, thus supplying additional healthy eating options to food-insecure children. In addition, the grant will help fund a series of nutrition education workshops and child surveys. "The survey will be designed to acquire food preference data from the participating children so that we may learn more about what they are currently eating and what foods they like. This will allow us to introduce healthier food options, tailored to a child's particular taste and diet, in the backpacks" said Owens. CISRC further hopes to establish partnerships to provide summer backpacks for the city's children in need. "It is our goal to bring food to the children, as many do not have transportation during the summer months to take part in school-based lunch programs," stated Owens. "We hope to develop a partnership and funding to support a summer mobile food program with free books for the children included with the bags of food," she added.

With hundreds of at-risk children currently being served, a growing funding and volunteer base of community organizations and a clear vision for the future, Backpack Pals is currently making a significant impact in the lives of Asheboro children and their families and stands to do so for many years to come.

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Part 2C

Asheboro High School

"Second Chance Breakfast"



Asheboro High School (AHS), the only public high school located within our city, graduated its first class, totaling three graduates, in 1905. Today, AHS has an enrolment of 1,365 students. As part of its mission, AHS is "committed to providing students with opportunities that will enable them to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners and productive citizens." Furthermore, AHS recognizes that students need special services and resources in order to achieve academic success. One such resource that has been identified is a nutritious meal. Being that 74.3% of the student population qualifies for the Federal Free and Reduced Meals program, the school identified food-scarce home environments as a pressing challenge.

AHS has undertaken multiple efforts to combat this issue. For example, over the past three years, AHS and other schools in the Asheboro City Schools (ACS) district have expanded their summer feeding program. Originally, the summer feeding program only provided meals to those enrolled in summer enrichment programs, but today, "open sites" are provided so that anyone age 18 years or younger can have breakfast and lunch. Three years ago, this program provided 3,281 breakfasts and 4,882 lunches. In summer of 2015, this number grew to 7,806 breakfasts, 9,893 lunches and 2,726 snacks. These numbers have grown, in part, due to "satellite sites" designed to serve those



Second Chance Breakfast

who may not have the means to visit an open site located at a school. In addition to improved summer feeding options, AHS also implemented the Afternoon School Snack Program in 2015. Last year, this new program provided 12,847 snacks to students after school hours.

While these two programs have provided additional food options to students at risk of missing meals, perhaps the most innovative and impactful feeding program AHS has introduced is Second Chance Breakfast (SCB). AHS serves breakfast from 8:00am to 8:25am each school day. However, of the 1,365 students, AHS calculates that, on average, fewer than 150 students actually eat breakfast in the cafeteria before school. "The school was concerned over the number of students who were actually eating a healthy and substantive breakfast," stated Dr. Brian Toth, principal of AHS. "Whether because they did not have access to a healthy breakfast at home or because they are teenagers and they were running late for school, we could only account that 7.4% to 11% of the student population was receiving a healthy breakfast prior to the start of the school day," he added. This issue was further complicated by the lunch schedule at AHS. Students are served lunch during one of three lunch times, beginning at 11:39am and concluding at 1:48pm. Roughly one-third of AHS students, if they do not eat breakfast, are not able to eat until 1:15pm each day.

To address this pressing challenge, AHS reached out to Asheboro City School's food service provider, Sodexo Food Services, and the Asheboro City Schools administration. From this partnership, Second

Chance Breakfast was born. "Second Chance Breakfast offers the entire student body a second opportunity to eat a healthy breakfast mid morning," stated Dr. Toth. "The intention was to take away all barriers that may get in the way of students having the opportunity to eat a healthy meal earlier in the day." Initially, the ACS administration raised objections over this program, citing numerous concerns:

1. Students had an opportunity to eat before school, in the cafeteria, if they wished
2. The program would not be used by students and would be a waste of time and effort
3. SCB would cause students to be late for class and would be exploited by students
4. SCB would distract from instructional time as students would be eating in their classes
5. SCB would make a mess of the school- spills, garbage, etc.

Despite these logistical concerns, AHS, school administrators and Sodexo agreed the need for students to have access to a nutritious mid-morning meal carried more weight. The parties worked together, tearing down barriers to implement a solution. The school agreed to extend the transitional period between first and second classes by two minutes in order to give students additional time to participate

in SCB and get to class. Teachers agreed to allow students to eat in their rooms and developed procedures for dealing with food and drink during the first few minutes of instructional time. The school custodial staff developed plans to deal with additional waste in the classrooms. Sodexo Food Services adjusted the schedules of their employees, building in the preparation of an additional meal into their workday, as well as overseeing the sale and distribution of SCB. "The success of Second Chance Breakfast could not have been possible without the partnership and trust of all organizations, as well as the mutual recognition of the importance of increasing the number students accessing a healthy meal early



Sodexo Staff Ready to Serve

in the school day to perform better in school," Dr. Toth acknowledged. In an interview with our local newspaper, The Courier-Tribune, Asheboro City Schools superintendent, Dr. Terry W. Worrell, added that SCB is an example of the school district's connections and, by working together, their ability to provide a possible remedy to a challenge fairly quickly.

Second Chance Breakfast began on December 1, 2014. The program operates between the first and second class of the school day. During class transition, students may get a "grab-and-go" breakfast from multiple convenient locations across the AHS campus. Importantly, students who qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program may participate. The meal includes an entree, a whole fruit, orange juice, and choice of 1% white milk or fat-free chocolate milk. The first day, 99 students participated in

SCB. Throughout the year, student participation steadily grew from two serving lines, to three, then to four, then five. Today, seven serving lines are required to feed all of the students who take advantage of SCB at AHS. An average of 580 students participate in SCB daily, and the number continues to grow. The number of students receiving breakfast before school has remained unchanged since the

implementation of SCB. In other words, AHS has improved from serving breakfast to 7.4%-11% of its students, to now serving breakfast to 49.9%-53.5% of the student body with the addition of SCB. In addition to tracking participants, AHS also solicits feedback from students and faculty to ensure that SCB is achieving peak performance. The response from both the student and faculty population has been overwhelmingly positive and speaks to improved student nutrition, engagement and satisfaction:



The Line Begins...

breakfast for various reasons, or who are simply not hungry until around 10am. This breakfast has aided students in their ability to focus in classrooms after they get breakfast. Another benefit is that I know some students even keep parts of the breakfast as snacks for the afternoon. For a majority of our population who do not get enough food to eat outside of school, this breakfast has been an added supplement to their overall nutrition.

- Katie Bunch-McCain, Social Studies Teacher

Second Chance Breakfast is the best program that AHS has implemented in the past few years. I say that because I see a dramatic difference in the alertness, attention, and behavior of my students who come to class with a full stomach. Now, almost all of my 2nd Period students are eating a healthy breakfast in class. Before 2nd Chance breakfast, most of my students were going until 1:15 (3rd Lunch)

without eating anything, or were eating junk foods that don't give sustained energy. Having breakfast available during the school day helps my students to stay awake during class, perform better on assessments, and generally makes my classroom a happier place to be!

- Leigh Anne Church, Family and Consumer Science Teacher

Second Chance breakfast has been incredibly influential in the academic lives of our high school population. There are many students who miss



...and Ends Around the Corner

Having the Second Chance Lunch option is increasing our student's productivity/attitudes on the job sites. They all received wonderful evaluations from their job site supervisors for the first 4 weeks and hope to continue that trend!

- Amanda Thompson, Occupational Course of Study Teacher

I am so happy that Second Chance Breakfast is in place. We are seeing many less students with headaches caused by no breakfast. Before, I had to beg and borrow for my food supply. It is an awesome support for our students' health.

- Lois Bagley, School Nurse

When Second Chance Breakfast started, I did not try it out at first. Now, I get Second Chance Breakfast every day. I am able to concentrate in class much better now.

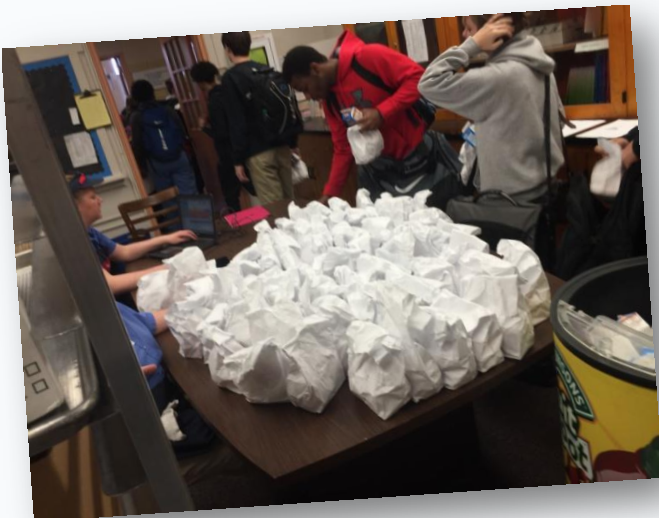
- Destiney Houghtalen, Sophomore

Second Chance Breakfast is so convenient! And teachers give us time to eat at the beginning of class. It's great because a lot of people would not eat for a long time without this opportunity.

- Diana Nieto, Junior

I get energy to stay awake. The extra food helps me work better in class because I'm not thinking about food, but I'm thinking about my class work. And it makes me happy--because it's food, and who doesn't like food?!

- Austin Romero Texca, Junior



Few Bags Remain After Another Successful Day

The success of SCB has not been unnoticed. The program, the only one of its kind in the state of North Carolina, has gained national attention. In October 2015, AHS received a Best Practice Award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the Best Practice Awards program is to encourage and reward outstanding practices in schools and in School Food Authorities (SFAs) in the Southeast Region.

SCB was recognized in the category of Increasing Participation in School Breakfast, School Lunch or Snacks for its achievements.

Looking ahead, AHS, ACS and Sodexo have come to realize the importance of offering nutritious meal options to the student body. To improve and strengthen SCB, the partnership intends to add hot meal components in the near future. Also, additional serving lines will be added as the level of student participation increases. The group also has a vision of providing all ACS students with the opportunity of three full, healthy meals each day. This would be made possible though a "dinner program," and is currently close to becoming a reality thanks to an additional partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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