

EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS OFFICE OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND ETHICS 2023-2024 S.O.A.R. AWARD RECIPIENTS

CHIEF NOAH POWELL FISCAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Handicap and Elderly Living Program (HELP)



The Handicapped and Elderly Living Program “H.E.L.P.” provides home repair services to Senior citizens and individuals with a medical or mental disability. The program offers home repairs every 3 years for large projects such as roofs, windows, and cabinets. HELP also installs accessibility features to enhance safety and independence for participants with mobility challenges.

In addition to these services the program provides lawn maintenance and garden plowing services and has a crew available 24/7 for emergency service calls such as water, heat, air, and electrical issues. HELP received grant funding through the American Rescue Plan which has allowed the program to provide home generators and Ecoflow battery packs to clients with medical equipment.

The program has over 1,200 participants. As of June 2024, the program completed 92 home repairs; mowed 387 lawns, plowed 36 gardens, and responded to 1,847 service calls.

FISCAL COMMITMENT AWARDS

Cherokee One Feather



The Cherokee One Feather serves as a liaison between tribal government and the community; a repository of banishments; and a documentarian for the community. First published in 1966, the Cherokee One Feather now publishes both digitally and print and uses several social media platforms to increase audience reach.

As of June 2024, the Cherokee One Feather received an average of:

- 18,769 web views,
- 73,364 Facebook visitors
- 7,325 Instagram visitors
- 51 YouTube subscribers, and
- 306 subscriptions

The Cherokee One Feather was recognized by the North Carolina Press Association with 10 awards. They also received a grant from the International Women’s Media Foundation’s Fund for Indigenous

Journalists which they have used to focus on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women through monthly articles, community education, and outreach.

Senior Citizens



The Senior Citizens program provides services to help support the health and well-being of tribal elders. The services include daily meals served at their facility, homebound meals, fuel assistance, holiday trips, regular outings, and interactive activities. Daily participation has increased from an average of 50 participants to 80.

Each year the program surveys the participants about their preferences such as meals, activities, and trips. This year over 50% of the activities from the survey are on the activities calendar. One activity is a garden project using the garden kit from the cooperative extension. The seniors garden project has produced onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, corn, and beans.

Public Health



Public Health promotes and protects the health of the people and communities through prevention efforts. In 2023 Public Health embraced a new emerging strategy to improve enrolled members' access to health and wellness supplies. Funded 100% by the North Carolina State Opioid Substance Use Grant, Public Health acquired and installed 10 vending machines on tribal lands. The vending machines provide free products 24/7 to enrolled members including a variety of supplies for hygiene, personal care, reproductive health, first aid, overdose prevention, baby care, and

personal protection.

As of June 2024, there were over 24,000 items dispensed from the vending machines. The top items dispensed were dental kits, pain relieve products, deodorants, and first aid kits.

Snowbird & Cherokee County HELP, Building Maintenance and Housing with Information Technology



Snowbird and Cherokee County Building Maintenance, HELP, and Housing in collaboration with the Office of Information Technology created an application that will allow the programs to provide services to the community in an efficient and effective manner. The programs oversee all building repairs for Tribal buildings and all repair and rehabilitation requests for enrolled members in Graham and Cherokee Counties.

Homeowners and facility managers can submit work order requests online. The application then assigns a technician automatically. Using a mobile device, technicians can fulfill the workorder, input relevant information, capture before and after photographs, and mark the workorder as completed.

The system enables faster completion of work, ensures efficient prioritization and scheduling, and provides visibility into maintenance operations. exercising the Tribe's sovereign power of determining membership, the Tribal Enrollment Office maintains and provides sound vital statistical data of the Tribal members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The program manages files for every enrolled member whether living or deceased. They currently maintain files on 16,252 active enrolled members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The Tribal Enrollment Office also assists with family tree research and do so with a customer service focus approach which they are very proud of.

Facility Management



Facility Management, with 32 full-time employees, provides support services to maintain all Tribal buildings and grounds to ensure a safe and clean environment. The services include building maintenance, HVAC, plumbing, carpentry, electrical, and grounds landscaping. The program works to enhance the Tribe's facilities through improvements and maintenance checks and has processed over 650 workorders as of June 2024. Employees are cross trained, ensuring they have expertise to handle a variety of tasks and are certified in asbestos and mold handling.

Facility Management also provides essential services for community events, and other special events. Natural Resources Department, created in 2015, carries out its mission to conserve, protect, and enhance natural resources for the benefit of the Cherokee community. Natural Resources is comprised of the Tribal Hatchery, Water Quality, Air Quality and Regulatory and Compliance. Through these programs and with over 7 million dollars in grant funding, Natural Resources provides essential services to ensure a safe and healthy environment including maintaining water quality, monitoring ground disturbing projects, and stocking streams.