

January

February

March

<https://communitydevelopment.ces.ncsu.edu/workforce-development-bre-entrepreneurship/create-bridges/>

# CREATE BRIDGES MOUNTAIN WEST NC

RESEARCH, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES DESIGNED TO SUPPORT RETAIL, ACCOMMODATION, TOURISM, AND ENTERTAINMENT BUSINESSES ("CREATE BUSINESSES")

## October

Formed Regional Steering Committee to oversee CREATE BRIDGES project. 50 stakeholders attended the Orientation.

## November

Regional Steering Committee created an Asset Inventory of CREATE sector businesses and a listing of business support resources.

## December

3 public forums held to gauge public awareness of regional strengths, challenges, and opportunities. 137 people attended the forums.



# 2020



June

April

May

# 2021

## January - May

CREATE BRIDGES staff, with input from the Regional Steering Committee, conducted BRE surveys and 9 business and 2 resource roundtables throughout the region. 33 CREATE businesses completed surveys, and 48 businesses and resources attended roundtable discussions..

## May - August

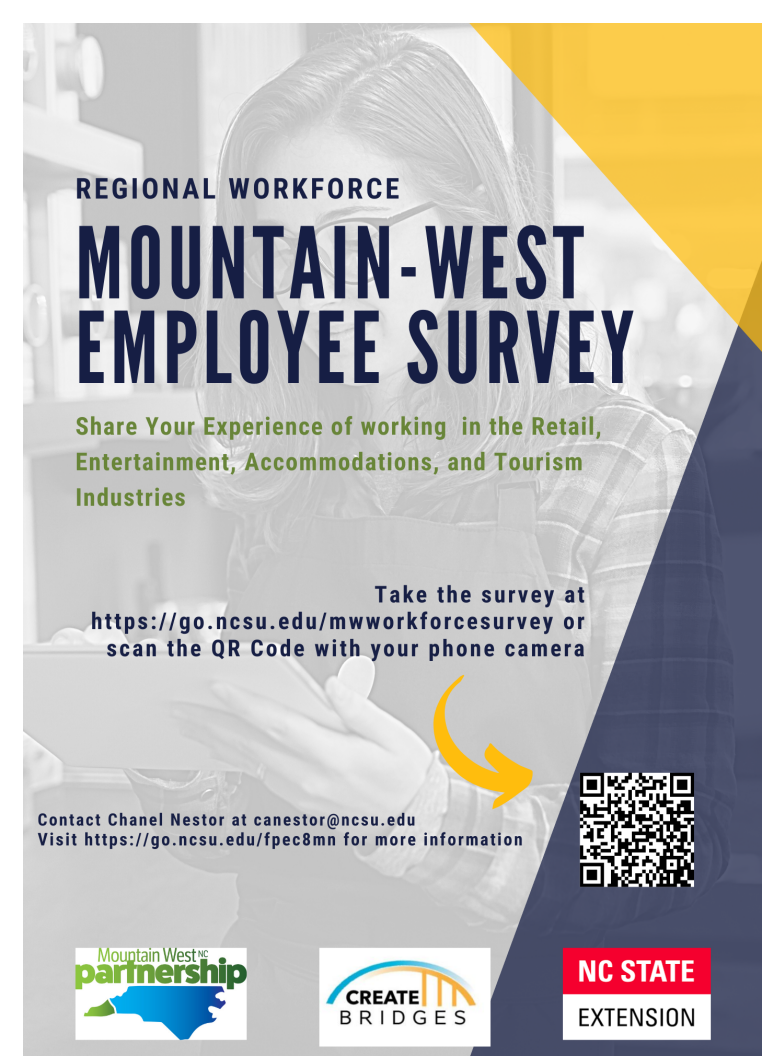
CREATE BRIDGES staff, with input from the Regional Steering Committee, distributed Employee Perspective Surveys. 74 CREATE employees participated.

## September

25 stakeholders attended the CREATE Academy virtual presentation of research findings. COVID outbreak prohibited an in-person meeting.

## October - December

3 strategic planning sessions held virtually with 20 Regional Steering Committee members.



## Project Outputs

CREATE Academy Research Presentation  
Annual Report  
SPARK Flyer



## January - March

Strategic plan completed with input from the Regional Steering Committee. 3 goals identified:  
1) Improve CREATE Business Viability;  
2) Increase CREATE Employee Career Growth Potential; and  
3) Enhance Public Support for CREATE Sector Regional Economy.

## April

In-person Got Your Back Business Summit held in Sylva. 13 people attended the summit which consisted of 8 presentations supporting business owners.

## May - July

Got Your Back training moved online; 13 additional participants. Planning for WCU Secret Shopper Honors Project conducted.

## August - December

WCU Secret Shoppers project reviews 120 businesses in the region. Macon High School Field Trip to CREATE businesses attended by 25 students. Planning for 2023 WeSpeakWNC Conference and start of website development. Ready to Rock Soft Skills Training developed.

## Project Outputs

CREATE BRIDGES Mountain West Strategic Plan  
Got Your Back Business Training  
Ready to Rock Soft Skills Training

# 2022



December

October

November

# 2023

## January - February

WeSpeakWNC Workforce Conference was held at Harrah's Event Center. Over 140 businesses, employees, and resources and over 160 students and faculty attended.

## March - June

Applications to secure funding for 2024 and 2025 were submitted by CREATE BRIDGES staff. 27 businesses and agencies wrote letters of support.

## April - August

Commissioned the production of a video to highlight origin stories of CREATE businesses. Engaged WCU film students to create social media footage for 9 GYB businesses. Further developed the WeSpeakWNC website. Conducted focus groups for the CREATE BRIDGES ripple map.

## September - October

Planning and implementation of the WeThankYou Adventures was conducted. 18 businesses and 32 employees have taken advantage of this opportunity so far.

## November

Regional Ambassador Quiz and financial compensation promoted to CREATE employees to encourage enrollment in Ready to Rock training.

## Project Outputs

WeSpeakWNC Presentations  
WeSpeakWNC Website  
Soft Skills Infographic  
Ripple Map