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Serving the Heart of the High Country

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**BOONE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDATION
ANNOUNCES HIGH COUNTRY BUSINESS RESILIENCE
DISASTER GRANTS**

Applications open to businesses residing in Watauga, Ashe, and Avery Counties impacted by Hurricane Helene

BOONE, NC – Through fundraising that started shortly after Hurricane Helene made its devastating impact on the High Country region, the **Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation** announces the creation of the **High Country Business Resilience Disaster Grants**, positioned to help businesses in Watauga, Ashe, and Avery counties recover from the storm. Information about the grant program, including a link to the application is available at www.boonechamber.com/hope-for-the-high-country.

Over \$325,000 has been raised for the initial grant allocation, and future fundraising efforts will focus on creating more opportunities for future allocations. Applications are open for eligible businesses from Tuesday, October 22, 2024, through Monday, October 28, 2024 at Noon. Applications will be evaluated as they are received, and grants will be awarded based on the information gathered, demonstration of need, and available funds. Grant applicants do not need to be members of the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce to receive funding.

"Thanks to the generous support of friends and strangers that share a deep affection for the High Country business community, we are excited to begin the process of getting these funds to those that need them most," said **David Jackson, President and CEO of the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce**. "When news of the SBA Disaster Loan program running out of Congressionally allocated funding became known, many businesses were caught short of the finish line for these much needed low-interest loans, which also represented some of the only aid available. We hope these grants will provide bridge funding until more significant State and Federal aid and forgivable loan programs are authorized."

The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation remains focused on helping with community and business relief in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene's impact on the High Country. The 501c3 non-profit organization has raised nearly \$600,000 for business stability in the wake of the storm. Earlier this month, the Foundation allocated \$206,000 toward October 2024 tuition payments for numerous licensed early childhood development centers throughout Watauga County.

The Chamber Foundation will continue to raise and distribute funds locally to businesses and community efforts as needs are further assessed throughout Watauga County over the weeks and months ahead.

For more information on the challenge match or to donate, please visit www.boonechamber.com/foundation or contact Ethan Dodson at ethan@boonechamber.com.

****About the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation****

The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Commission, Inc. (BACC EDC, Inc), also known as the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is a 501(c)3 organization created to solicit, manage, and distribute funds and resources to further the development and welfare of the Boone, NC and Watauga County, NC, area through activities which are exclusively charitable, educational, or scientific.