

OUR BEAUTIFUL STATE



KEEP NORTH CAROLINA BEAUTIFUL FALL 2025 | VOLUME 1

*Celebrating community, education, and a cleaner, greener,
more beautiful North Carolina!*

A Message from Our New Executive Director

Good afternoon KNCB Friends,

I'm excited to introduce myself as the newest Executive Director of **Keep North Carolina Beautiful (KNCB)**. It is an honor to continue the incredible legacy of environmental stewardship and beautification across our great state.

Together, with your support, we're expanding programs, reaching more communities, and creating a lasting impact for generations to come.

— **Kyle Prairie**

Executive Director, Keep North Carolina Beautiful

Our Mission in Action

KNCB focuses on three core initiatives that touch every corner of North Carolina:

1. [K-12 WOO Grants](#) – Supporting K-12 schools throughout the state with funding for outdoor classroom learning projects focused on environmental education, gardening, biodiversity, and beautification projects.
2. [Affiliate Partnerships](#) – Strengthening more than 25 Keep America Beautiful affiliates across the state with volunteers, tools, resources, and support as needed.
3. [The Azalea Celebration](#) – Partnering with WRAL/Capitol Broadcasting to beautify schools, churches, and community spaces with azaleas from the coast to mountains.

Growing Environmental Education: WOO Grants

This year, KNCB expanded its **Windows of Opportunity (WOO) Grants** like never before:

- Increased the maximum grant award from **\$1,000 to \$2,500**
- Grew the number of grants awarded statewide by **40%**
- Expanded total overall annual funding by **60%**

From **Ocracoke School** on the North Carolina coast to **Cullowhee Valley School** near the Tennessee border, our team drove more than **3,600 miles in just five weeks** to hand-deliver financial grants. Projects included pollinator gardens, vegetable gardens, sensory gardens, and beautifying campus spaces where students can gather, learn, and thrive.

The Woo Grant application period for 2025-26 is now open! The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, December 19th!



Partnering for a Cleaner NC

Through our affiliate partnerships, KNCB engaged in **litter cleanup and beautification projects** across the state:

- Communities included **Ashe County, Gastonia, High Point, Durham, and Fayetteville** to name a few
- Supported major cleanups with **Keep Rutherford Beautiful** and **Keep Ashe Beautiful** post **Hurricane Helene** in areas such as Lake Lure, Chimney Rock, the Broad and New Rivers.
- Partnered with **Keep Ashe Beautiful and the New River Conservancy** on removing debris from the banks of the **New River**, with future plans for planting of native trees, bushes, and plants as we restore **Riparian Buffers**.
- Supplied affiliates with **thousands of litter grabbers, vests, gloves, and trash bags** for the [Greatest American Cleanup](#) in recognition of our nation's 250th anniversary coming up in July 2026.

Together, we're building the largest cleanup effort in state and national history beginning with our first statewide cleanup this Saturday, October 4th!

The Azalea Celebration

This **Saturday, October 4th**—will also represent the [39th Annual Azalea Celebration](#), in partnership with **WRAL/Capitol Broadcasting**.

- Over **5,000 azaleas** will be distributed to nonprofits across North Carolina.
- Churches, schools, and community groups from the coast to the mountains will bring the azaleas to be planted within their communities.
- To date, more than **350,000 azaleas** have been awarded and planted throughout North Carolina, brightening thousands of campuses, parks, and neighborhoods.

Fundraising Spotlight

This summer, we hosted a successful **39th Annual Summer Golf Classic** at Pinehurst Resort & Country Club in July.

Now, we're gearing up for **two exciting fall fundraisers, critical in helping to fund our programs annually**:

-  [Inaugural Poker Tournament](#) – Thursday, October 16th - Hosted at Marbles Kids Museum
-  [2nd Annual Bourbon & Spirits Raffle](#) – A chance to win some rare, hard-to-find bottles of bourbon in NC. Winning raffle tickets will be drawn over the course of the poker tournament on Thursday, October 16th.

Both events will support KNCB's education programs, beautification projects, and affiliate partnerships statewide.

 [Join Us or Donate Today](#)

 **Together, from the coast to the mountains, Let's Keep North Carolina Beautiful!** 

Whether through volunteering, joining our events, or donating, your support fuels this important mission.
Thank you for being part of the movement to help Keep North Carolina clean, green, and Beautiful.
Let's grow this impact—together.