



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Charlotte NC – August 15, 2025 – Life Scout Zyan Martin Launches “Beyond the Bridge” to Support Homeless Families in Charlotte.

Zyan will present a check to Dr. Trasha Black, Clinical Director of Genesis Project, for funds raised for his Eagle Scout Project – Beyond the Bridge. The presentation will be on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 10 A.M. at Genesis Project’s headquarters located at 5104 Reagan Dr, Suite 5, Charlotte, NC 28206.

Beyond the Bridge has had an accelerated launch as this Eagle Scout Project partnered with Genesis Project, Charlotte Garden Inn & Suites, Martin Sloane International, and others to provide emergency shelter, food assistance, and wraparound services.

Zyan is a Junior at Phillip O. Berry Academy of Technology.



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BACK STORY

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — August 15, 2025 — Life Scout **Zyan Martin** has mobilized community partners and local volunteers to launch **Beyond the Bridge**, a youth-led initiative providing short-term emergency lodging and essential support to families experiencing homelessness in Charlotte. Working with partner organizations, **Beyond the Bridge** is providing room-nights and restaurant food cards for families suffering the trauma of recent homelessness. Through his partners, the program also provides parents and children access to vital mental and behavioral health services, peer support, life counseling, workforce development and entrepreneur training, job placement assistance, and pathways to permanent housing.

The project recently completed a community event at **Charlotte Garden Inn & Suites**, where volunteers from **BSA Troop 67, Ebenezer Baptist Church**, partner and community organizations, and individual donors distributed food, clothing, school supplies, and personal items to hotel residents. His Eagle Scout Project culminates next week when he presents a check to **Genesis Project** to underwrite the initial cost of room nights and food assistance for six families in crisis.

But it does end there! Zyan plans to continue **Beyond the Bridge** as his life's mission.

Story at a Glance (for Assignment Desks)

- **Who:** Life Scout **Zyan Martin**; partners include **Genesis Project 1, Charlotte Garden Inn & Suites**, and **Martin Sloane International**
- **What: Beyond the Bridge**—emergency room nights, food assistance, and connections to wraparound services
- **Impact:** Support for recently displaced families (room nights and restaurant food cards), plus clothing and food distribution to hotel residents
- **Why it matters: 16 year-old scout** has put his service training into action by addressing one of the most pressing issues – homelessness – in Mecklenburg County.
- **Visuals:** Scouts and volunteers working at food and clothing drive; check presentation; family resource navigation



Testimonials

“I am so proud of Zyan, for not just recognizing that this major crisis in housing and basic needs exists, but having the wherewithal to actually do something about it.” **Dr. Trasha Black, Clinical Director, Genesis Project 1**. She adds, “For this young man to be a part of a solution when so many adults turn a blind eye is absolutely heartwarming and encouraging. We often say that the youth are our future, and if Zyan is any example of the leadership that is coming forth, I have high hopes for the days to come. I am thankful that he is getting into this fight early and that the **Boy Scouts of America** organization is standing by and supporting him. I believe that this is just the beginning for Zyan and the incredible impact that he will have on this world.”

“Beyond the Bridge is about restoring dignity and possibility,” said **Zyan Martin**, founder of the initiative and Life Scout with BSA Troop 67. “When a family has a safe place to sleep and a little help with meals, they can focus on the steps that lead to stability—work, schooling, and health. I’m grateful to everyone who came together to make this happen.”

“Zyan’s leadership is extraordinary,” said **Earl Owens III, Community Outreach Manager, Genesis Project 1**. “Beyond the Bridge meets immediate needs and connects families to proven services—counseling, job training, and housing supports—that change outcomes. This is the kind of community partnership that works.”

“This project reflects Scouting at its best—service, leadership, and real-world impact,” added **Stanley Reed Sr., Scoutmaster, Troop 67**. “Zyan identified a need, built a coalition of partners, and delivered results for families who needed a hand up.”

“Beyond the Bridge aligns perfectly with our mission to be a supportive presence in Mecklenburg County,” said **Jessica Woodard, Owner, Charlotte Garden Inn & Suites**. “Working with Zyan and his project partners has proven that strategic partnerships can make a real difference. I’m surprised that this has not been thought of before. Together, we’re providing the emergency shelter that will allow families to build a pathway to lasting change. This young man has an amazing vision and heart!”

Call to Action

Community members and organizations interested in supporting Beyond the Bridge or partnering on services can contact one of the media representatives above for introductions to Zyan and our project team and partners, including **Genesis Project 1**.

Media Access & Interviews

- **Check Presentation: Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 10 A.M.** to be held at Genesis Project, 5104 Reagan Dr, Suite 5, Charlotte NC 28206. Zyan will present a check to **Dr. Trasha Black, Clinical Director of Genesis Project**, for the funds raised for the Beyond the Bridge Project.
- **Interviews available:** Zyan Martin, representatives from Genesis Project, Troop 67 leadership, and participating partners
- **B-roll/Photos:** Check presentation and Food and Clothing Drive (*available upon request*)