

**WNC Source CEO Report
January 13, 2022**

Recruitment and Retention of Employees

WNC Source is currently understaffed. We need to hire and train approximately thirty-five staff members to get back to where we were before the pandemic and the resulting vaccination mandate. We also need thirty additional employees to fully staff our Early Head Start expansion grant. On December 16 we had the first meeting of a task force to work on recruiting and retaining staff. The kick off was a success with dozens of ideas being put forward by team members from human resources, administration, finance, children's services and transportation. The task force will continue to meet twice a month through at least April. We will develop strategic plans, goals and actions to meet the recruitment and retention crisis. Each team member has been assigned a current book on finding and keeping employees during the "great resignation." We are also scheduling a consultant to meet with the task force in January. By educating ourselves on best practices, communicating those ideas and developing an agency wide plan, we can solve this problem.

Virtual Winter Luncheon and Board and Employee Recognition

Kim Hall and the WNC Source Human Resources department did a great job of planning and executing the 2021 Winter Luncheon. Kim Wilson and Annie Fritschner provided greetings from the Board to the staff. Staff members enjoyed food from a local restaurant chosen by the employees at that site. The following awards and recognitions were celebrated:

<i>Volunteer of the Year</i>	<i>Jinx Vidrine</i>
<i>Participant of the Year</i>	<i>Sheila Wurzbach</i>
<i>Employee of the Year</i>	<i>Kim Hall</i>
<i>Transportation Employee of the Year</i>	<i>Bill Gibbs</i>
<i>Outgoing WCCA Board Members</i>	<i>Debbie McCrary, Erin Drew, Lucretia Starling, Tamara Lee and Rhodney Norman</i>

Covid 19 Updates

The Office of Head Start is in the process of changing the Head Start Performance Standards to make Covid 19 vaccinations mandatory for all employees of Head Start grantees, and employees of Early Head Start/ Childcare Partnership contractors. There is also a masking requirement for everyone over two years of age in centers. WNC Source has lost one partner that was serving a dozen children. Our other childcare partners are working with WNC Source to implement the required changes. One important part in retaining our childcare partnership contractors is our promise to continue paying them for their current enrollment, even if they lost staff, or had to close classrooms because of the changes.

Twenty-five states have sued the federal government over the new requirements. There is an injunction in place as the courts decide whether the changes to the Performance Standards are legal. For the safety of our staff and the families we serve, WNC Source was already implementing the requirements.