

Dogwood Health Trust Awards WNCSource \$681,414 Grant

In late July Terri Bowman, WNCSource Development Director, was circling back on some grants we had submitted. In checking with the Dogwood Health Trust she found out we had been approved for a Strategic Opportunities grant. This grant provides funding for two initiatives. \$535,810 will be used to make capital improvements for WNCSource's two affordable housing complexes in Transylvania County. \$145,604 supports the first year of operation of WNCSource's Developmental Day program.

Excelsior and English Hills apartment complexes were completed in 1997 and 2006 respectively. WNCSource is now the sole owner of both of these properties. Renters generally have incomes that are 40% to 60% of the area median income. Without this grant the rents for these apartments would need to increase substantially. This grant allows over sixty units of much needed housing to maintain affordability and high quality.

WNCSource is partnering with the Henderson County Public Schools to provide Developmental Day services to preschool age children. Until we can ramp up to serve more children, we need funds to cover losses during the first year. The Dogwood Health Trust grant will allow us to provide a summer program and cover start up costs.

Please join me in thanking Terri Bowman, Ibby Whitten, Linda Carter, Robert Hooper and Tim Camp for applying for and securing this grant.

Strategic Plan Update

In July we made a strong push to complete stakeholder input for the 2025-30 Strategic Plan. Currently, 123 community members and 90 employees have responded to the survey. Two focus groups were conducted with a total of nine participants. Over a dozen stakeholder interviews have been conducted live, virtually and by phone. This information will inform our strategic planning retreat August 28th from 1 PM – 5 PM at Highland Lake Inn.

Advocacy

I will not be in attendance at the August 8th Board meeting. A nonpartisan organization that I currently serve as the president, will be hosting Representative Chuck Edwards that evening. Representative Edwards and his staff have met with WNCSource employees on several occasions. He has made a concerted effort to understand our programs, particularly Head Start and the Older Americans Act that funds our senior transportation and nutrition programs.

Speaking of advocacy, I will be in Washington, DC September 23 – 26 for the National Head Start Association Fall Leadership Institute. If you would like to attend, and help me spread the

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word about Head Start and Early Head Start on Capitol Hill, please let me know. WNCSource can pay your registration, plane flight and stay at the Capital Hilton.