

HEALTHBEAT

Hunt accepted into Institute

Charlene Hunt, program coordinator for the North Carolina American Indian Health Board, was recently accepted into The NC Native Leadership Institute (NLI).

The Institute is the only culturally tailored leadership training program in the state for current and emerging Native leaders who are interested in sharpening their leadership skills, expanding their networks, and fostering unity across all tribes and Indian communities in North Carolina. Participants are selected through a competitive application process and receive a scholarship to cover expenses related to mileage, overnight accommodations, food, books and supplies.



Hunt

The North Carolina American Indian Health Board was formed in 2009 by the North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs to focus on promoting quality health care and healthy lifestyles within American Indian families and communities in North Carolina through research, education and advocacy.

The Board's vision is to eliminate health disparities for American Indian communities in North Carolina so that American Indians and communities can reach their full potential. The Board has a strong partnership with the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity (MACHE) of Wake Forest University Health Sciences. Angelou Center director Dr. Ronny Bell serves as chair of NCAIHB.

NAACP stands with workers

Elected leaders, NAACP officials and clergy from throughout the state joined State Department of Health and Human Services workers at Central Regional Hospital in Butner on Thursday, June 5 to address a series of long-standing concerns that have injured many workers and created high turn-over rates.

"My wife and I both sleep most nights every week in a recreational vehicle truck parked near the hospital because we are forced to work so much overtime, including several days of consecutive 16-hour shifts. We can not get proper sleep if we take time to drive home," stated Joseph Sterling, healthcare technician and UE150 union member.

Nearly twenty workers filed a group complaint, organized by UE local 150 of the N.C. Public Service Workers Union, on May 7 with the state Occupational Safety and Health Administration seeking redress for injuries that resulted from understaffing, severe forced overtime, lack of proper training and input to safety policies. The union workers have drafted a list of solutions that was delivered to D.H.H.S. Secretary Aldona Wos and C.R.H. Director Mike Hennike in March; as of June 5, they had not seen any response or action taken.

"State workers and union supporters are part of the Forward Together Moral Movement. We stand together," stated Rev. William Barber II, president of the NC NAACP.

The civil rights, clergy, union and elected officials plan to gather testimony from workers and meet with Director Mike Hennike to address the issues that plague many of the D.H.H.S. facilities across the state.

City's homeless commitment

First Lady Michelle Obama, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced the creation of the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness last week during an event at the White House.

So far, in North Carolina, Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines has pledged his commitment to ending veteran's homelessness by 2015 using the power of federal, local, and non-profit resources. Across the country, more than 75 mayors and county officials have joined the challenge.

Working in partnership with local officials, the Obama Administration has already reduced veteran homelessness by 24 percent since 2010. Ending veteran homelessness by the end of 2015 is within reach, officials say, if progress is accelerated. The successes of ending chronic homelessness among veterans in Salt Lake City and Phoenix have raised the profile of ending veteran homelessness and prove that with buy-in from local officials and community partners, this is an achievable goal.

"We're excited by the enthusiasm of Mayor Joines and other local mayors are showing for ending veteran homelessness in their communities," said Region IV Regional Administrator Ed Jennings, Jr.

To aid the mayors in pursuit of the goal of ending homelessness among veterans, the federal government has provided resources and enforced programs to strengthen the country's homeless assistance programs.



Joines

Local women give congressman Blind Sensitivity Training

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem Industries for the Blind brought its Blind Sensitivity Training to Capitol Hill on May 19 at the request of U.S. Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-N.C.), whose district includes IFB's manufacturing facility in Asheville.

Led by IFB employees Anastasia Powell and Stephanie Davis, McHenry navigated the hallways outside his office in the Rayburn building using only a cane, and took advantage of new technology delivered via cellphone to receive emails and count money.

Technology plays a huge role in bridging gaps that previously kept people who are blind or visually impaired from everyday activities or from participating in the workforce. Currently, seven out of 10 working-age adults who are blind or visually impaired are unemployed. During the training, Powell demonstrated commonly used technology called JAWS (Job Access with Speech) that converts text from a computer or phone screen to voice, and a new app called Money Reader that scans then reads the denomination of dollar bills.

"I would like to thank the Industries for the Blind for providing this unique training experience," said McHenry. "With over 6 million Americans either blind or visually impaired, the training provided me a rare opportunity to experience the world as they do. While I could never fully understand what it is like to be blind, this training gave me a new appreciation for these technologies and the tremendous opportunities they provide to blind Americans everywhere."

The idea for the Capitol Hill training came after McHenry toured the Asheville facility and learned about IFB's innovative community outreach programs like Blind Sensitivity Training. Other aspects of the training program include guide dog etiquette (tip: let the dog focus on the job of guiding his companion) and demonstrations of how a sighted person should guide someone who is blind. Numerous



IFB Photos

Anastasia Powell and Stephanie Davis with U.S. Rep. Patrick McHenry.

North Carolina schools, community organizations and businesses have participated in the training.

"IFB promotes a number of outreach programs across North Carolina designed to help people who are blind or visually impaired, and also to educate the commu-

nities in which they live," said Powell. "When Congressman McHenry invited us to take our Blind Sensitivity Training to the nation's capital, we jumped at the opportunity to showcase the great work happening at IFB on a much larger stage."

Leftwich talks workplace safety in India

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Aaron Leftwich, director of environmental health and safety at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), recently served as a speaker for the American Society of Safety Engineers (ASSE) in Chennai Madras, India.

Leftwich spoke on the importance of environmental health and safety training to safeguard the workforce. He explained the advantages of applying Lean Six Sigma principles to the assessment of training needs and methods of calculating an organization's return on investment of the training. His presentation was delivered as part of a four person panel session composed of executive representatives from the U.S., the United Kingdom and India.

The two day event also featured presenters from Australia, Germany, Kuwait and Spain covering environmental health and safety topics of interest to a variety of industries. Sessions covered such topics as behavior based safety,



Photo courtesy of WSSU

Suresh Tanwar, vice president of Tata Motors of India served as the moderator for the session which featured Aaron Leftwich (right).

ergonomics, global leadership and global trends in occupational safety and health.

This was the first professional safety and health conference administered by the Society in the Republic of India. Chennai is also the birthplace of the India's first ASSE Chapter and home to more than 350 American companies, supporting the \$100 billion in trade

between the two nations, and more than 1,000 foreign companies. ASSE worked closely with the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, the only bilateral chamber of commerce within the nation.

Leftwich joined WSSU in 2012 after serving as a safety and occupational health specialist with the U.S. Department of Labor. He has been a professional

member of ASSE since 2007. In October, he served as a member of an eight person team of safety and health professional members from the ASSE that comprised the People to People Ambassador Programs' Safety Professionals Delegation to India. Leftwich is also a member of the N. C. State Safety and Health Steering Committee.

Nursing programs at DCCC, UNCG form partnership

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE



DCCC Photo

DCCC nursing graduates enrolled in the RN to BSN program with UNCG are (front row, from left) Heather Cassada, Amanda Lio, Elizabeth Newsome and (back row, from left) Cheryl Bailey, Heather Burris, Lauren Styles, Jessica Trotter, Amy Essick and Olivia Bailey with Kimberly Benson, director of nursing programs at DCCC.

Davidson County Community College and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro School of Nursing recently entered into a partnership to offer the UNCG RN to BSN program on DCCC's Davidson campus. UNCG faculty will teach the courses which are expected to begin as early as fall 2014.

"DCCC is very fortunate to have the opportunity to work in partnership with such a prestigious nursing program as the one at UNCG," says Kim Benson, director of DCCC's nursing programs. "This partnership will provide access to a four-year education to working nurses in the local area. The program will be cost effective for many DCCC graduates as it will require less travel and offer students the ability to take required BSN courses through the com-