



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Nathan Ramsey

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board

Land of Sky Regional Council

Nathan@landofsky.org (828) 768-3216

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board recognizes outstanding employers, adult, youth and workforce staff at 2020 Virtual Recognition Event on December 1. The program for the event is attached.

NCWORKS NEXTGEN YOUTH PROGRAMS

Gregory Clemmons—Goodwill Industries-Buncombe County

Paula Canty—Goodwill Industries-Transylvania County

WIOA BUSINESS & COLLABORATING PARTNERS IN THE MAWDB REGION

Buncombe Partnership for Children/Children & Family Resource Center-

Innovation Grant-Early Childhood Project—MAWDB Regional Business Services

Atlas Precision—MAWDB Regional Business Services

Eaton Corporation—MAWDB Regional Business Services

Friday Services, Inc. Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program –

Blue Ridge Community College/NCWorks Career Center-Henderson County

DEMME-INC. Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program—

Blue Ridge Community College/NCWorks Career Center-Henderson County

Brevard/Transylvania County Chamber of Commerce—NCWorks Career Center-
Transylvania County

PARTICIPANTS SERVED THROUGH NCWORKS AND MAWDB

Lauren Shuler—NCWorks Career Center-Madison County

Fabiola Badillo-Sanchez—NCWorks Career Center-Henderson County

William Macey—MAWDB Business Services for Dislocated Workers

Dawn J. McCall—NCWorks Career Center-Transylvania County

DEB HOLEBROOKS OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD

This year, MAWDB honors all of our Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Advisors and Case Managers in the Mountain Area Region, along with MAWDB Administrative Staff.

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Barbara Darby
Irene Canivet
Jason Chappell
Christy Cheek
Ronnie Copeland
Octavia Dunbar
Eric Edney
Derrick Edwards
Rodney Embler
Angela Fuller
Amy Green
Camille Hawks**

**Ginger Heskett
Stacy Hill
Vanessa James
Holly Jenkins
Vicki Kelley
Kristin Kress
Wanda Miller-Neild
Barry Morgan
Rachel Olson
Stacy Peek
Ellis Pinder
Brenda Ploss
Zia Rifkin**

**Suzanne Robinson
Chris Silvers
Kelli Stewart
Peggy Tittle
Anthony Ward
Melanie White
Melissa Wright
Phil Young**

EXPERIENCED WORKER INITIATIVE RECOGNITION

Natalie Shaft – Human Resources Director, Biltmore Farms, LLC

In Memoriam

Bill Ragland (1931 – 2020) Former long-time chair of the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board and member of the NC Workforce Commission for over 15 years.

About Mountain Area Workforce Development Board

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board, a department of Land of Sky Regional Council, oversees a single, comprehensive strategic plan for the four-county area by meeting the workforce needs of local employers and job seekers. Our budget approaches \$2.5 million annually, and we allocate those funds for workforce development and training in the four-county area. Learn more at www.MountainAreaWorks.org. The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider of Career Development, Training and Employment Services.

- END -

**MOUNTAIN AREA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
BOARD**

*Virtual
WIOA Recognition Event
via the Zoom Platform*

MOUNTAIN AREA

December 1, 2020

Mountain Area Workforce Development Board Virtual WIOA Recognition Event

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

AGENDA

- 1) INTRODUCTION – 11:00AM Master of Ceremonies- Peyton Holland, Executive Director
National Technical Honor Society
- 2) WELCOME MAWDB Chair, Dr. Abraham Pallas
- 3) NATIONAL ANTHEM
- 4) INVOCATION Commissioner Jason Chappell, Transylvania County
- 5) WIOA OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION PROGRAM – 11:20AM

NCWORKS NEXTGEN YOUTH PROGRAMS

Gregory Clemmons—Goodwill Industries-Buncombe County Kristin Kress
Paula Canty—Goodwill Industries-Transylvania County Rachel Olson

WIOA BUSINESS & COLLABORATING PARTNERS IN THE MAWDB REGION

**Buncombe Partnership for Children/Children & Family Resource Center-
Innovation Grant-Early Childhood Project**—MAWDB Regional Business Services Derrick Edwards
Atlas Precision—MAWDB Regional Business Services Barbara Darby
Eaton Corporation—MAWDB Regional Business Services Barbara Darby
Friday Services, Inc. & DEMMEL-INC. Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program—
Blue Ridge Community College/NCWorks Career Center-Henderson County Shanda Bedoian
Brevard/Transylvania County Chamber of Commerce—NCWorks Career Center-
Transylvania County Jason Chappell

PARTICIPANTS SERVED THROUGH NCWORKS AND MAWDB

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William Macey—MAWDB Business Services for Dislocated Workers Barbara Darby
Dawn J. McCall—NCWorks Career Center-Transylvania County Jason Chappell

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Phil Young
Daniel Harris
Carson Griffin
Stacy Hill**

EXPERIENCED WORKER INITIATIVE RECOGNITION

Natalie Shaft – Human Resources Director, Biltmore Farms, LLC

Irene Canivet

6) IN MEMORIAM—BILL RAGLAND

Nathan Ramsey

7) CLOSING REMARKS – 12:30PM

Peyton Holland

MOUNTAIN AREA

Background: Frontline WIOA staff and Workforce Partners who have worked with the participants and business partners recognized today submitted the following profiles. The MAWDB is honored to recognize these individuals and business partners for their achievements and contributions to the Workforce Development System in the Mountain Area Region.

OUTSTANDING NCWORKS NEXTGEN YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Gregory Clemmons
NCWorks NextGen Out-of-School Youth Program
Goodwill Industries-Buncombe County
Kristin Kress, Career Coach

Gregory came to NextGen with the goal of earning his GED. He devoted himself to this goal and worked tirelessly to pass his tests. Within 4 months, Gregory passed his final test and earned his GED.

At that time, he began considering options for pursuing post-secondary education. Working with animals was always an interest to him, so NextGen placed Gregory in a paid workplace experience. Gregory worked with a local animal shelter and got to learn from the medic team, kennel team, and adoption team. Gregory's positive attitude, willingness to learn, and gentle nature did not go unnoticed. After the paid workplace experience ended, Gregory was offered a permanent position and continues to work in the kennel.

Although COVID has thrown some obstacles in his path, we know that Gregory will reach his goals since he is quietly determined and hard working. Congratulations on all of your success, Gregory, and we look forward to seeing what you do next!

Paula Canty
NCWorks NextGen Out-of-School Youth Program
Goodwill Industries-Transylvania County
Rachel Olson, Career Coach

Paula was referred to NextGen when she became interested in the Nurse Aide program at AB Tech. She was enrolled and completed the Nurse Aide course with all A's. She then passed her state licensing exam at the beginning of 2020. The Nurse Aide course was the first step towards her goal of becoming an Oncology nurse.

Her passion for this career came from taking care of her mother when she was battling cancer. Since then Paula was slated to start a work experience with Transylvania Regional Hospital but due to Covid-19, this was unable to begin. However, Paula has taken advantage of every opportunity that has come her way. She received a car from Wheels to Work through the Brevard Sharing House and has applied to many scholarships.

Paula enrolled at AB Tech to begin her pre-requisites for the Nursing program and again looks like she will complete this semester with all A's. She plans to apply to the RIBN program in fall of 2021 and will continue to be supported by NextGen. Paula is dedicated to her school work and is kind and respectful to everyone she meets.

She will one day be a nurse with not only excellent medical skills but a sweet and empathic caregiver to her patients.

OUTSTANDING WIOA BUSINESS & COLLABORATING PARTNERS IN THE MAWDB REGION

Buncombe Partnership for Children & The Children and Family Resource Center
Innovation Grant – Early Childhood Education Project
Mountain Area Regional Business Services
Derrick Edwards, Business Services Representative

Our region faces a severe shortage of trained Early Childhood Educators. In 2018 the Board was granted, a \$400,000.00 NC Works Innovation Fund Grant. Our award was one of three in the State awarded at that level. This grant was made available under the guidance of Governor Roy Cooper and the NC Department of Commerce.

We put together a team from across the Local Area to plan and execute the grant. We have partners in all four counties that comprise the Local Area.

The grant has been successful beyond our expectations. We have been able to train multiple cohorts, including cohorts of Spanish speaking participants.

Due to the success of this collaboration, the Board is recognizing the Buncombe Partnership for Children, the Children and Family Resource Center, and all of our partners for the outstanding job they continue to do in support of Early Childhood education in our region.

Atlas Precision, Inc.
MAWDB Business Accelerator Grant
Barbara Darby, Business Services Coordinator

Atlas Precision, Inc. (Atlas) was awarded a Business Accelerator Grant for incumbent worker training in January, 2020. The grant's purpose is to increase the knowledge and skills of employees and also increase the stability and competitiveness of the employer. Atlas received \$9,526 to training two engineers in EDM Machining and four professionals in Leadership and Supervision. Training did not begin until October 2020 due to delays created by COVID-19. Fortunately, Atlas was able to quickly arrange on-site training for the technical training in October followed by the six-week Leadership Program that took place at Western Carolina Industries, Inc., October-November, 2020.

All participants were appreciative of the training opportunity as evidenced in follow-up comments.

1) "Leadership training gave me the opportunity to evaluate my personal weaknesses and learn methods to address them.
2) "These classes have helped me understand myself better which will allow me to become a better leader. Continuing training is a valuable part of being a leader in today's work environment. 3) "The training improved my leadership skills and knowledge. It built confidence in my ability. This will improve my performance and help me work more efficiently and effectively."

Dennis Kanupp, Vice President, stated, "Atlas and all companies in Transylvania, Henderson, Buncombe and Madison Counties are fortunate to have such a resource as the Mountain Area Workforce Board. This grant and the resources of the board has been a huge help for continuing to grow our team."

Congratulations to Atlas Precision, Inc. as the recipient of the Outstanding Business Accelerator Grant Employer Award.

Eaton Corporation
WIOA Business Partner for Diversity and Inclusion
MAWDB Regional Business Services
Barbara Darby, Regional Business Services Coordinator

Eaton Corporation has two facilities in the Asheville area, Avery's Creek and Arden. Both plants are part of the company's Electrical Sector. The company manufactures power distribution equipment for commercial construction, industrial, and utility applications as well as provides sales support for Eaton's domestic sales team. Eaton currently employs 1300+ workers and will be adding 100 positions over the next year.

In 2012 Eaton held its' first Inclusion and Diversity Summit (I&D) as an outreach program to employ qualified females, minorities, veterans and disabled veterans. Each year Eaton holds an I&D Summit at their Arden facility for community and workforce representatives. This is an amazing event that highlights the mission, vision, ethics, and core values of Eaton and how inclusion and diversity are integrated into all aspects of their business. As a company, Eaton embraces the different ideas, perspectives and backgrounds of individuals which makes them a unique company. This uniqueness helps them attract, retain and engage their employees and provides them a competitive advantage in their industry.

To foster inclusion Eaton encourages its' employees to participate in an iERG, Inclusion Eaton Resource Group, where they can make connections, exchange ideas and gain diverse perspectives. These groups serve to promote employee and community engagement and professional development. IERGs include: ENGAGE (next gen), iConnect (Black, African American and People of Color, SOAR (Asian American), #VAMOS (Hispanic, Latino), U.S. Veterans, WAVE (women), enABLE (disabled, caregivers), and Eaton PRIDE (LGBT and Allies). As part of community involvement, Eaton is participating as an Inclusive Hiring Partner (IHP) with the IHP Initiative led by the Asheville Area Chamber of

Commerce. IHP employers agree to level the playing field by reducing barriers in employment policies and practices for Buncombe County residents.

Employee development is important to Eaton and provides learning opportunities through Eaton University, cross-functional assignments, job shadowing, and a Leadership Development Program. Tuition reimbursement is available for college degree programs. Each year the company sponsors internships and co-ops for students and provides tours for high school and college students and other groups.

Mike Keenan, HR Manager, Asheville believes, "that our success depends on our ability to draw the very best people from the cross-cultural citizens from our community. We want to be a reflection of the diversity of Western North Carolina."

The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board recognizes Eaton's work both within their company and in the community for supporting inclusion and diversity. We are pleased to recognize Eaton as our Outstanding Employer for Inclusion & Diversity.

Friday Services & Demmel Inc.
Mechatronics Apprenticeship Program
Blue Ridge Community College/NCWorks Career Center-Henderson County
Shanda Bedoian, Director of Corporate/Customized Training

Friday Services has a long history of dedication to helping businesses in the Western North Carolina region thrive! Their mission is to better people's lives, increase their customer's successes and continue the longevity of Friday Services in order to continue what they do best – "connecting the right people to the right job"!

Sounds like what Apprenticeship Program Opportunities do!

Friday Services partnered with Blue Ridge Community College to develop the Fridays Services' Mechatronics Engineering Technology Apprenticeship Program. The Friday Services Apprenticeship Program is recognized by ApprenticeshipNC and is the first employment agency in the area to offer such a program, and the second in the state of North Carolina.

Game-changing!

The inaugural class of 11 apprentices representing five area manufacturers started their journey in February 2020. One of the five manufacturers is Demmel Inc., an innovative German automotive manufacturer in East Flat Rock, who decided to grow two of their identified high potentials. Mountain Area WDB enrolled the two apprentices in WIOA for 700 hours of the on-the-job learning requirement at Demmel. The apprentices were dislocated workers and the board was able to offset the cost of training through the OJT Program.

In the words of one of Demmel's apprentices: "I Couldn't Ask for Anything More"

These two forward thinking innovative organizations have created an excitement in our community for today AND tomorrow! On behalf of Blue Ridge Community College and the Henderson County NCWorks Career Center, I am proud to recognize Friday Services and Demmel Inc. as the "2020 Outstanding Partner of Year Champions for Henderson County".

Brevard/Transylvania County Chamber of Commerce
Outstanding Business Partner
NCWorks Career Center-Transylvania County
Jason Chappell, Center Director

When crisis hit earlier this year, the Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) stepped up to support the businesses and nonprofits of Transylvania County in an impressive way. Accurate, vetted, and up-to-date Information became more important than ever, so the Chamber ramped up their weekly e-blasts to three, and sometimes, four times a

week with a focus on meaningful and necessary information. They created two pages on their website focused on pandemic-related information, one with resources for the business community and the other with community information.

Recognizing the critical importance of collaboration during this time, the Chamber worked with the Transylvania Economic Alliance, Heart of Brevard, Transylvania County Tourism, and Blue Ridge Community College Small Business Center to co-found the Transylvania Business Support Task Force. The task force conducted surveys, at the onset of the pandemic and 45 days later, to learn of the specific needs of businesses and nonprofits in Transylvania County and then hosted three town hall meetings with experts to address those areas. Once restrictions began to lift, informative meetings were held for businesses in uniquely impacted industries, including retail, accommodations, restaurants, and artists, with local health officials on-hand to help guide business owners/operators through the reopening process.

Perhaps most impressive of all, the task force created the Transylvania Tomorrow Small Business Emergency Relief Fund. Businesses were encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$3,000 to help bridge the gap to reopening. To date, \$166,500 was raised and distributed to 93 businesses in Transylvania. When crisis hit earlier this year, the Brevard/Transylvania Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) stepped up to support the businesses and nonprofits of Transylvania County in an impressive way. Accurate, vetted, and up-to-date information became more important than ever, so the Chamber ramped up their weekly e-blasts to three, sometimes four, times a week with a focus on meaningful and necessary information. They created two pages on their website focused on pandemic-related information, one with resources for the business community and the other with community information.

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OUTSTANDING PARTICIPANTS SERVED THROUGH NCWORKS AND MAWDB

Lauren Shuler
WIOA Adult Program
NCWorks Career Center-Madison County
Stacy Peek, Center Coordinator

Lauren Shuler came to the NCWorks Career Center in July 2019 seeking opportunities to develop marketable skills in a career field that would offer stability and potential for advancement. She was underemployed in her current position and wanted to pursue better options. Lauren wanted a career that would provide opportunities to grow and become more financially secure as she advanced in the field.

She was specifically interested in obtaining employment in the emergency medical field.

After discussing emergency services and her interest in Healthcare opportunities, she applied for and received Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) tuition assistance to attend Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training.

This short term training through the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College Madison site would provide her with marketable skills and increase her awareness of other Healthcare disciplines if she decided to pursue additional training in the future.

Lauren began the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training at A-B Tech Madison in July 2019 and successfully completed the training in December 2019. She received her North Carolina Emergency Medical Technician certification in January 2020. In February 2020, she accepted a position with Mission Health in Regional Transport Services. Soon after she started her new job, she found herself on the frontlines of the coronavirus outbreak. Due to COVID-19, she had to quickly change and adapt to new policies and protocols for patient care and protecting herself and others. Even though this time has been challenging and unpredictable, she says she loves her job and hopes to pursue the Emergency Medical Technician -Intermediate and Medic training in the near future.

Lauren, we applaud your achievements and wish you nothing but success in the future. Thank you for the work you do in serving our community.

Fabiola Badillo-Sanchez
WIOA Adult/Early Childhood Education Project
Blue Ridge Community College
NCWorks Career Center- Henderson County
Jason Chappell, Center Director

Fabiola joined the Early Childhood Education Project in October 2019. Her lifelong goal was to become a teacher and work with children. Once she completed Phase 1 (the training) portion of the program, she was hired as a Substitute Teacher at Children and Family Resource Center in Hendersonville, NC. She was able to make use the knowledge she had gained from the training and apply it to the classroom. She subbed in licensed centers across Henderson County, gaining hands-on experience.

In January 2020, she was enrolled in EDU 119 through Blue Ridge Community College. She attended the first ever Spanish EDU 119 cohort. Despite challenges with COVID and having to switch to an online learning format, which was new to her, she excelled in the class. She received her North Carolina childcare credential in May 2020.

With her training, education, and experience, Fabiola is able to work full time in a licensed childcare facility. She is bilingual, which is an asset to have in classrooms. She is also passionate about caring for children and families in our community. She is now able to be self-sufficient to provide for herself and her family.

THANK YOU MOUNTAIN AREA for supporting Fabiola through her journey!

William Macey
WIOA Dislocated Worker Program
MAWDB Regional Business Services
Barbara Darby, Regional Business Services
Coordinator

Finding your niche in a career path can take time, and may involve short-term jobs and detours. Barbara met William in March 2019 after he moved to Asheville. He had gotten his CompTia A+ Certification through self-study in 2017, which helped him get his first job at Adidas in Spartanburg. Encouraged by a friend, he moved to Asheville and found himself long-term unemployed. Barbara enrolled him in OJT in March 2019 but the job was not a good match. She and William decided that additional CompTia certifications would be beneficial for an IT career path.

William found a temporary job In IT with Henderson County and began on-line study for the CompTia Network+ Certification. His studies were aligned with his job and soon the job went full time. After passing the Network+ exam in July 2019, William began self-study for the Security+ exam. In December 2019 he accepted a more challenging job with the London Security Exchange Group in Charlotte, where he works as an operations analyst. This job has helped him determine his interest in data analytics.

COVID-19 pushed his Security+ exam out several months but he passed the certification exam in June, 2020. Presently, he is enrolled in a B.S. degree program in Data Management and Analytics through the Western Governor's University.

Looking back over the past two years, William attributes hard work, pursuit of credentials and good luck playing a part in where he is positioned.

Congratulations to William for his perseverance as an Outstanding Participant in Credential Attainment.

Dawn J. McCall
Finish Line Grants
NCWorks Career Center-Transylvania County
Jason Chappell, Center Director

In Dawn's words- In 2019, WIOA helped me pay for repairs on a car I had purchased. Without the assistance I received, I would have not had transportation to allow me to attend my seat-based classes. WIOA again helped me pay for tuition for a required math class. Twice the program has assisted me. Because of this, I have earned Associate's degrees in Paralegal Technology and Criminal Justice, and I am currently completing a transfer degree so that I can attend WCU for my B.S. in Criminal Justice.

Until recently, I have been dependent upon Section 8 and other services. I was widowed in 2012 and suffered severe depression. My son encouraged me to go to college, something that I had dreamed of doing when I was younger. WIOA made it possible for me to attend my classes and pay for the math class I needed, but because of WIOA, I now have dependable transportation.

I have so much now and I can proudly say I have been paying my own rent since June 2020. This has been possible because of the assistance I have received, assistance that I am grateful for... and it gives me determination to continue succeeding.

MOUNTAIN AREA

EXPERIENCED WORKER INITIATIVE RECOGNITION

**Natalie Shaft
Human Resources Director
Biltmore Farms, LLC
Presented by Irene Canivet**

The Experienced Worker Initiative award is given to an individual in Western North Carolina for outstanding leadership in promoting engagement of adults age 50+ in the workforce continuum, including volunteer work, stipend-based training, and/or part-time and full-time employment. We are pleased to announce our second recipient is Natalie Shaft of Biltmore Farms.

Natalie Shaft's demonstrated leadership in promoting engagement of adults 50+ in the workplace is outstanding and consistent. During the economic recovery after the 2008 Great Recession, the NC Works Career Center noted that adults 50+ were experiencing longer periods of unemployment and bigger challenges in finding meaningful work. An "Experienced Worker Job Fair" was developed. It was important to find employers who were committed to interviewing and hiring 50+ workers. Natalie, with Biltmore Farms, was one of the first to sign up. Job Fair attendees reported that her insight and willingness to help them and provide information was invaluable. Since that first job fair, Natalie, with Biltmore Farms, has continually participated in similar events, including the "Experienced Worker Talent Jam" and the "Asheville 50+ Job Fair".

Along with participating in "Experienced Worker" events, Natalie has also worked to educate 50+ workers about hiring practices and help them develop job search skills for success. Her volunteer efforts began at NC Works by conducting mock interviews with 50+ job seekers. Then, three years ago, AARP, A-B Tech and the NC Works Career Center Asheville formed a partnership to offer a program called Back to Work 50+. The program provides career guidance and job search skills to 50+ workers. Natalie was one of the first to sign on to present a workshop and she has continued to help the program through all five cohorts. Her candid conversations with the participants help them understand the hiring process from a Human Resource perspective. Through her help, participants learn how to handle a wide range of job search challenges.

Along with her work with job seekers, Natalie has also worked to educate other professionals in the wider community. She has willingly dedicated time and effort to present at conferences, such as at UNC Asheville, the Asheville 50+ Symposium, and the South Eastern Training Association (SETA) Conference. Natalie has the skill and ability to address the challenges and misperceptions from an employer's perspective. This is likely the most important aspect of Natalie's leadership. "Ageism" in the workforce continues to be very prevalent, according to a 2019 survey by AARP, that states that approximately "3 in 5 older workers have seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace."

Some people demonstrate leadership by talking about their topic. A few not only "talk the talk", they also "walk the talk". We are very fortunate that Natalie is one of those leaders who "walks the talk", whether she is presenting to a large group of business or community professionals, or quietly assisting a job seeker.

Thank you, Natalie Shaft – for all your leadership and promotion of the engagement of Experienced Workers in the workforce! Congratulations!

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In Memoriam

William "Bill" Ragland

October 15, 1931 – May 19, 2020

Bill Ragland was the former long-time Chair of the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board and member of the NC Commission on Workforce Development.

Mr. Ragland served MAWDB and the region for nearly 25 years. He was a board member on the Private Industry Council (PIC) under CEDA, then JTPA and finally WIA.

Bill served on the MAWDB from May 14, 1992 until June 30, 2015, when the WIOA Board was constituted.

MOUNTAIN AREA

*The MAWDB thanks everyone for attending today's recognition event
We are honored to have you as our guests.*