



**Thursday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 | 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.  
In-Person Meeting**

**Agenda**

- |      |                                       |                      |
|------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| I.   | Welcome & Approval of Minutes         | Bob Troyer- COL      |
| II.  | Networking Activity                   | Scott Wood- SHRM     |
| III. | Denton County Leadership Teams Update |                      |
|      | • DCHLT                               | Gary Henderson- UWDC |
|      | • DCBHLT                              | Shanan Spencer-UWDC  |
| IV.  | Backbone Support Update               |                      |
|      | • Family and Children Support         | Shelby Redondo- UWDC |
|      | • AARP Grant                          | Shelby Redondo- UWDC |
|      | • Family Child Care Network           | Shelby Redondo- UWDC |
| V.   | Public Comment                        | Bob Troyer- COL      |
| VI.  | New Business                          | Bob Troyer- COL      |
| VII. | Adjourn                               | Bob Troyer- COL      |

**Upcoming Events & Dates:**

**Aug. 25<sup>th</sup>: Help Me Grow Tarrant County at United Way of Denton County (9:00am-11:00am)**

**Sep. 8<sup>th</sup> : Denton Kickoff Breakfast at UNT Gateway Center (8:00am-9:30am)**

**Sep. 15<sup>th</sup> : Lewisville Kickoff Breakfast at Hilton Garden Inn Lewisville (8:00am-9:30am)**

**Next Meeting Date:**

**Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 | 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. | In-Person Meeting**



Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team

8:30 am Friday

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Virtual Meeting Over Zoom

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Councilmember Troyer called the meeting to order at 8:30 am and the group approved anonymously the minutes from June's meeting.

### **Advocacy Update**

Ms. Redondo states there will be a couple of special sessions through August regarding education and property taxes which just passed. She presents the Education & Workforce advocacy one-pager that will be included in the United Way's e-mail newsletter. There will also be a Homelessness and Behavioral Health one-pager. The Education & Workforce advocacy one-pager includes **HB 2729**, relating to teacher requirements for high-quality prekindergarten programs; **HB 1755**, relating to the creation of the Lone Star Workforce of the Future Fund; **HB 1905**, relating to allowing school districts to make certain school safety training courses available to employees of certain private schools, child-care facilities, or organizations providing out-of-school-time care; **SB 459**, relating to early registration for parenting students at public institutions of higher education; **SB 1887**, relating to the requirements for the early college education program and the transfer of course credit among public institutions of higher education; **SB 2139**, relating to the establishment of the Opportunity High School Diploma program; **HB 8**, relating to public higher education, including the public junior college state finance program, and **HB 2209**, relating to establishing the Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership (R-PEP) program and creating an allotment and outcomes bonus under the Foundation School Program to support the program. The next steps are to address HB 2127 which removes in local ordinance cap on predatory lenders. UWDC will work with community leaders to create flyers and information packers about where to seek loans with non-predatory lenders and how to set up a non-predatory bank account. The child care task force will work continue its advocacy with Mayor Gilmor and Representative Bumgarner in the Flower Mound, Texas region.

### **Workgroup Updates**

Ms. Redondo reports that the child care workgroup has been working on their strategic plan. The group will be meeting in August as a full team to approve the strategic plan. The workgroup has about 30 participants mostly located in Denton County. There are a couple of entities that are located elsewhere but have funding to serve Denton County.

### **Economic Mobility**

Dr. Roxanne Del Rio gives an update on their meeting that was held on July 13<sup>th</sup>. The group welcomed Nichole Roberts from Denton Friends of the Family and Charles Williams with Workforce Solutions. Also in attendance were Dr. Jeng from Texas Woman's University, Olivia Mata-Williams and Shelby Redondo from United Way Denton County. Dr. Jeng suggested that the economic mobility work group identify resources within the community to help overcome the barriers for the ALICE household, thus creating a network that can be used by individuals and case managers. The group also agreed on concentrating on achieving that goal, meanwhile looking at establishing different pathways for the ALICE household so that they can achieve self-sufficiency using the in-pathway model. Ms. Redondo adds in some feedback that was received from the open-door agencies such as clients coming in planning to get a certificate to enroll and get their associates, but stop their long-term goals when they get their first job. It is necessary for case managers and non-profit agencies to make sure they are engaging with other industries and resources. Mr. Henderson gives an example of a client who receives support from Denton County Friends of the Family and moves through the crisis of domestic violence through shelter and was able to finish and are housed and employed, but not at a survival wage level. Everyone could agree that



Denton County Friends of the Family completed their work with the client. Where does that ALICE household go next to reach long-term goals?

#### VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

Teddy Yan the Finance Director at United Way of Denton County gives a presentation on VITA. VITA is a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. It is free tax preparation and electronic filing. Also, United Way Denton County serves 6 different sites within 5 different cities across Denton County. That gives geographic diversity because the population that is being targeted will face a barrier with transportation and the whole purpose is to bring the tax services to the taxpayers. The targeted population being helped are low-to-moderate income taxpayers roughly making \$60,000 or less, families with kids, people with limited English proficiency, single female head-of-household, senior citizens, retirees, students and their parents, and people with disabilities. Beyond the scope of VITA service that must be done by paid preparers include certain complex topics that various certifications levels are required, such as Schedule C which is for helping someone who has their own small business, high-deductibles HSA health plans, non-residents returns, married filing separately, sale of rental property, and small businesses with losses or inventory. VITA helps the community by performing high-quality tax preparation, saving ALICE money, time, and energy, increasing taxpayer knowledge and confidence, injecting liquid capital into low-income households such as earned income tax credit, and child tax credit. The high quality of VITA program is evident in less than 2% or less than 5 total rejects per site, meaning that VITA is 98-99% effective. No one who qualifies under ALICE should have to be paying the Texas average of \$313 to receive a tax return and even more. Mr. Henderson states that there are on average 102,000 ALICE households in Denton County, and their best year with VITA they have served 1,600 households which is a little over 1% of the ALICE population. The number one priority for the next step is to get volunteers, followed by more site coordinators, host sites, share print materials, canvas waiting areas, and interconnect and cross-refer. VITA would also like to partner with Carrollton Public Library, and find additional space in the City of Denton, including expansion of services at the North Branch Library which has maxed out the capacity of the computer lab. A VITA volunteer needs 12 hours of training, 24 hours during the entire VITA program so about 3 hours per week. Please see UWDC VITA website for more information.

#### Leadership Team Updates

##### **Homelessness**

Mr. Henderson presents the ARPA ERA2 Eviction Prevention & Housing Stability Program data report. In summary he states that the emergency rental assistance program is the last of the Treasury Department funded COVID related rental assistance programs. It opened October 2, 2022, and closes December 31, 2023. Funds are going to be exhausted sometime between the late third, fourth quarter. 1,028 applicants have been processed since July 21, 2023. There are 1,170 applicants in the pipeline waiting for review. The approach for the applicants in the pipeline is focusing on the priority of eviction notice or notice to vacate area. The focus is towards median income of \$30,000 or below, children or seniors or persons receiving disability benefits so trying to tease out those most at risk of eviction, and the most vulnerable in the priority. To date 5.4 million, deployed October to the middle of July for organizations predominantly pushing that out. Gary then highlights some of the dashboard data where it is 6 and a half months of breakout of dollars received by the community. Black or African American households are the largest group of recipients across the county of the ERA right at 3.5 million. Hispanic households led the way by ethnicity or the Hispanic households just at a half a million. The Lewisville mortgage assistance COVID program will come to an end in July, after 53 months of mortgage assistance and the funding of \$145,000. Mr. Henderson thanks the City of Lewisville and the City of Denton. The barriers fund of \$80,000 covers 109 households. The City of Lewisville senior rental gap assistance program started in June and deployed right under \$25,000 in rent funding that's serving individuals 62 years old and over, providing 292 months of partial month rent gap assistance.

##### **Behavioral Health**

Shanan, the Director of Health and Mental Health Initiatives from United Way of Denton County, Reports on the Behavioral Health Leadership Team meeting that took place on July 20<sup>th</sup> at 8 a.m. They are partnering with Texas Health Resources on is providing free QPR (Question Persuade Refer) suicide prevention trainings



available for the entire community it takes place once a month online for about an hour. The outcome of this training is for someone who encounters a person who is struggling with suicidal thoughts, they learned some very easy skills from the training now to be able to apply the person to the correct resources. Shanan shares information from the substance use prevention workgroup, they have developed a process map that is being distributed in the county that has some very quick, and easy information on where to direct folks if they are looking for substance abuse treatment. Next, they received a mental health update on their mental health navigators from Alex Reed and her team. They reported yesterday to start this program by working with some good technology to be able to provide this service to the community by mid-August. Lastly, United Way of Denton County received a call from Representative Stucky's office last week to follow up on Denton County days where they had a good meeting in his office in Austin and discussing what kind of legislation, they want to take forward to into the next legislative session surrounding mental health. Shanan states they will have a meeting in the beginning August with some key players and representatives from Stucky's office.

### **Backbone Support Child Care Update**

Ms. Redondo states they will be supporting 2 events which are family and children support. MHMR Tarrant County has funding for a handful of different programs that support working families, teenagers and children from birth to 17 in their development delays. The second event is the broadband open meeting. Texas received around 3.3 billion dollars to expand broadband, and they will be in Lewisville August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Belinda the family child care network coordinator from United Way of Denton County gives insights of how many members are a part of the Family Child Care Network program which is 101 participants. They have reinitiated their code-calling efforts to operational home child care centers as well as adding new marketing efforts like the next-door app for recruitment. Belinda states that her and Courtney the part-time family child care coordinator at United Way of Denton County attended the Texas Rising Star Conference where they were able to recruit participants for education educators and being able to network with other agencies. Ms. Redondo gives updates about meeting with vocational rehab and Daniel and Kelly will be attending the Workforce Leadership Team meetings. Also, Ms. Rodondo gives an update of Denton County seniors. There is an increase in rent, their fixed income is leading them to not know where to go and not know what to do.

### **Public Comments**

Councilmember Troy shares that they had the grand opening ribbon cutting for Serve Lewisville. It was a quick process from concept to grand opening, it took less than 2 years.

### **New Business**

The future DCWSLT meetings will take place on the second Thursday of every month from 4 p.m.- 5 p.m. beginning August 10, 2023, at UWDC. It will be a networking leadership team meeting since it's almost everyone's first time meeting. It is recommended everyone attends in-person.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting is adjourned at 9:52 am. If you have something you would like on the agenda for our next meeting, please contact Shelby Redondo, [shelby@unitedwaydenton.org](mailto:shelby@unitedwaydenton.org).

*Ling Jeng*

Dr. Ling Hwey Jeng  
Secretary of DCWSLT