



May 2024
Special Edition
Mini Newsletter
Celebrating!
Kaaren Hayes

Click this image to find local, state, and federal resources related to disabilities, health care conditions, family right, laws, and more.

Parent to Parent Family Support Network™- High Country provides free support, caring connections and information to families who have a premature baby, a child with a disability, an emotional or behavioral challenge, a mental illness, a chronic health condition or to families who are grieving the death of a child. We serve Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey Counties.

Please contact us if you would like more information about our program or we can be of help to you or someone you know.

All donations gratefully accepted. To donate directly to Parent to Parent, please click the "Give Now" button.



An affiliate of Family Support Network™ NC

To contact, please...

call 828-262-6089, toll free: 866-812-3122,

email: parent2parent@appstate.edu,

or visit parent2parent.appstate.edu

Join us to celebrate



**Kaaren Hayes
Retirement**



You will BEE missed!

Bring your family and drop in to share your love and appreciation for 36 years of service with Parent to Parent Family Support Network-High Country through App State!



Friday, May 31, 2024

4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Leon Levine Hall

Beaver College of Health Sciences

1179 State Farm Rd

Boone, NC 28607



**In lieu of gifts, donate
in her honor using the
QR Code**



Dear Friends,

I am writing to share that my last day as Director of Parent to Parent FSN-HC will be June 1, 2024. I have been moving in this direction for some time but the time is here.

As I begin to write, to share my thoughts on my journey with Parent to Parent FSN-HC, and stare at this blank page with so many possibilities of what to say, I reflect that that was much the way our program began 36 years ago.... A big goal, a blank page yet to be written and so many possibilities.

When I became the director of this program I made a commitment that this program would not just survive but would grow in our ability to respond to the ever-expanding challenges facing families. I have had the privilege to be a part of the journey that has taken this program from a single-county program to serving families and providers in seven surrounding counties while building and growing connections for families in our rural counties locally, regionally, and at the state level. While we have so much more work to do we have made true progress and have grown significantly in our service to families. It has been a rewarding, challenging, exhilarating, energizing, and motivating ride!

As a program, we know what is important to the families we serve, and those touchpoints have guided us to where we are today. We are a program built on relationships. We respect and value lived experiences. These lived experiences brought us together, have created an unspoken bond that has held us together, and are the gifts we share with those who seek us out.

Collaboration and caring are not just words in our mission but deeply held principles that guide our everyday work. Those guiding principles have been the glue that created a circle of support around our program, and its success has been because of

Outstanding, dedicated, caring staff;

An advisory board that has always been supportive, and has worked together for the good of the program;

The university and the Reich College of Education that have provided us a home, a foundation of support and connected us to the students, staff, and faculty who have helped our program flourish;

The network of sister Family Support Network programs and the FSN University Office reinforce that we are not alone in this work;

The Children's Developmental Services Agency that welcomed us into their space and all the other community programs and providers that have been our partners over the years;

The hundreds of App State students who have shared their talents and energized and supported our program;

Our generous donors, grant supporters, and funding agencies who recognize the significance of our work;

And the tie that binds our circle together— the families who have trusted us to be a part of their lives.

All of these, and more, have created a continuous and ever-expanding circle of support that has sustained and nourished our program.

Parent to Parent FSN-HC is poised to move to even new levels of support for families with our move to the Beaver College of Health Sciences. I couldn't be more excited for the possibilities ahead, and I am grateful from the bottom of my heart for the privilege of being a part of this journey.

Karen Hays





KAAREN HAYES



RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Kaaren Hayes is set to retire from Appalachian State University on June 1 after 36 years of service with the Parent to Parent Family Support Network of the High Country. Recognizing that when families need help, one of the greatest resources can be another family, Parent to Parent provides support, education, and connections to families who: have children with diverse physical, emotional, intellectual, or health needs; have a child born prematurely; or are grieving the loss of a child.



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