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Strengthening Resources for Mental Health

As COVID-19 has certainly caused a physical health pandemic, it has also taken a heavy toll on mental health. Individuals who were already struggling with mental illness before COVID-19 are now facing even more significant challenges. Expanded resources and services are needed to adequately address the anticipated mental health impacts of COVID-19, to enhance community resilience, and to treat the direct and indirect consequences of the pandemic.



Community partners linked through the Wilson Wellness Collaborative are identifying ways to promote, protect, and care for mental health. The partnership is also seeking ways to expand the availability of emergency mental health and to provide recovery by access to mental health support and services. We are grateful for all of the partnerships that have made the Wilson Wellness Collaborative possible, and we appreciate the tireless efforts of our local agencies to respond in times of crisis.

Some Quick Facts About Mental Health in the United States*

- 1 in 5 young people (age 13-18) has or will develop a mental illness in their lifetime.
- 50% of all mental illnesses show early signs before a person turns 14 years old, and 75% of mental illnesses begin before age 24.
- More than 1 in 4 adults living with serious mental illnesses also struggle with substance abuse.
- Most Americans lack access to adequate mental health treatment. 56% of American adults with mental illness did not receive care in the last year.

*Source: DoSomething.org

Wilson Leadership Institute Focus: Engaging and Retaining Young Talent



Picture: Dr. Gary Daynes presenting at the WLI session on November 18th

Dr. Gary Daynes, the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Barton College, met with the Wilson Leadership Institute participants in November to share his perspectives on the group's white paper focusing on the attraction and retention of young talent in Wilson. Their research and recommendations will incorporate their own experiences as young professionals, and the 2020-2021 cohort will present their research and recommendations in the 2021 Annual Meeting of Wilson Forward.

In 2015, Wilson Forward partnered with the Wilson Chamber of Commerce and Wilson Economic Development Council to offer the Wilson Leadership Institute. The Wilson Leadership Institute is designed specifically to identify, train, and deploy individuals with an interest in representative leadership positions in and for Wilson. We look forward to seeing how this cohort of leaders applies their experience in service to Wilson!

Entrepreneurs Emerging In COVID-19

Entrepreneurship during COVID-19 has important implications for our eventual economic recovery. New businesses are major job creators of the economy and will be a key part of our community's post-pandemic response. According to the [Census Bureau](https://www.census.gov), across the age spectrum, there has been a rise in new business start-ups since May. The surge is likely "powered by newly unemployed individuals opting to start their own businesses, either by choice or out of necessity," according to the [Economic Innovation Group](https://www.economicinnovationgroup.com).

As local entrepreneurs and small businesses respond to market shifts created by COVID-19 and prepare for the critical role they will play in post-pandemic recovery, they will require support and resources. RiOT, an organization based out of Raleigh working on economic development by capturing emerging markets and accelerating startups, has recently partnered with the Gig East Exchange. Applications are being accepted for its next RiOT Accelerator Program (RAP) cohort in Wilson, NC. The program is free, takes no equity, and provides startups with access to high-quality business resources and a hands-on mentorship network. The program is based in Wilson, NC, and runs from February 17th - May 5th. The deadline for applications is July 30th.



Join RAP to learn, collaborate, and bring new products to market. The program gives startups access to high quality business and technical resources and a hands-on mentorship network.

- Intensive 12-week program (Feb 17 - May 5) based in Wilson, NC
- Industry agnostic: Open to all types of businesses or new startup ideas
- No cost, no equity taken
- Access to 50+ Mentors & Corporate Partners
- Access to shared office space and prototyping equipment
- Work alongside a cohort of fellow startup founders
- 50+ workshops & mentoring sessions (8-11 hr/wk on-site time commitment)

[Learn More Here](#)

Celebrating Holiday Events in Wilson

Though the holiday season might look a bit different this year, it has not stopped Wilson from hosting events full of holiday cheer. Here are just a few events for you and your family to participate in this holiday season, and be sure to check out Explore Wilson for more local events!

Wilson Arts Holiday Pop Up Shop
(November 14th - December 23rd)

WILSONARTS
Naughty or Nice? It doesn't matter, we've got amazing treasures for EVERYONE on your list!

WILSON ARTS HOLIDAY POP-UP GIFT SHOP IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS!
NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 23!
Tuesday-Friday 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday 10 am - 3 pm
Black Friday (Nov. 27) and Shop Small Saturday (Nov. 28): 10 am - 4 pm
Extended Hours (until 8 pm):
December 4, 5, 11 & 12
Shop local and hand-made with love!!!!

Edna Boykin Cultural Center • 108 Nash Street NE • Wilson NC 27893
(252) 291-4329 • www.wilsonarts.org

Stop by the Boykin Center during Historic Downtown Wilson's "Candyland Christmas" celebration on Saturday, December 5th - we will be hosting a children's "make and take" snowflake ornament event from 10 am - 8 pm!
Masks required, 10 participants at a time

Elves of Wilson
(November 28th - December 5th)

JOIN THE SEARCH NOVEMBER 28TH.

Ten elves are hiding in downtown Wilson! Visit participating downtown locations to find all ten. Write their names on Santa's Nice List. Nice Lists can be picked up from participating locations. Turn in completed Nice Lists to Imagination Station of Wilson by December 13th to be entered for a chance to win a Christmas prize pack.

NOVEMBER 28-DECEMBER 13
DOWNTOWN WILSON

Electric Light Fantasy Drive-In Holiday Laser & Music Extravaganza
(December 4th -12th)

ELECTRIC LIGHT FANTASY A HOLIDAY LASER AND MUSIC EXTRAVAGANZA

Downtown Candy Kingdom Christmas
(December 5th)

CANDYLAND CHRISTMAS
in
Historic Downtown Wilson

WCDSS Guardian Angel Tree and Holiday Wish List Drive
(November 9th - December 10th)

2020 WCDSS Adult Intervention Team
Guardian Angel Tree and Holiday Wish List

Help make the holiday season brighter for our guardianship customers by donating to our Guardian Angel Tree and Holiday Wish List drive!

November 9 - December 10, 2020

Each angel represents a wish of our guardianship customers and has a wish list of items.

If you are a member of the community and would like to participate, please contact Nichole Atkinson to adopt an angel or to make a donation to help cover the purchase of wish list items.

Gifts are needed by December 10 for Christmas delivery.

Contact:
Nichole Atkinson, Team Leader
(252) 206-4137 or nacur@wcdss.wilson-nc.com

wcdss

Historic Downtown Wilson Lollipop Lotto
(November 21st - December 5th)

The Lollipop LOTTO

[Find More Events During the Holiday Season at Explore Wilson!](#)

Become a Supporter Today

RECONNECT DIFFERENTLY

Reconnecting and rethinking have always been part of Wilson Forward's work, and there has never been a more important time to feel connected with each other and our community. Wilson Forward represents all sectors working together for all who work and live in Wilson. We build connections between people, organizations, opportunities, and resources to improve education, health and wellness, and workforce development. Wilson Forward cultivates relationships and strengthens partnerships to achieve significant and long-lasting changes. The success of Wilson Forward is dependent on the partnerships we have with our local community, and many of our partners provide annual investments to support our organization.



Wilson Forward operates on a modest budget, and we are funded through the steadfast support of our city and county governments as well as all organizations represented through our Board of Directors. Over the past few years, we have established a more significant investment from the corporate and private sector of our community, and in the years ahead, we will strive to build even stronger relationships with our local business partners and individual community members.

CONTRIBUTE TODAY!

Couldn't Join the Wilson Forward Virtual Annual Meeting? Watch it Here!



Please contact us with any questions or inquiries

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Connect with us through the links below!

