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BOONE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ACHIEVES FAMILY FORWARD NC CERTIFIED EMPLOYEER STATUS

BACC becomes the fifth business in Watauga County to achieve this workplace certification

BOONE, NC - The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce has been named a Family Forward NC [®] Certified Employer by the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation's Family Forward NC [®] initiative.

Launched in 2018, [Family Forward NC [®]](#) is an innovative initiative to improve children's health and well-being and keep North Carolina's businesses competitive. It is employer-led change to increase access to research-based, family-friendly practices — big and small — that improve workplace productivity, recruitment and retention; grow a strong economy; and support children's healthy development. To date, Family Forward NC [®] has engaged with more than 10,000 employers across North Carolina.

A Family Forward NC [®] Employer Certification designates employers that offer policies and practices that support the health and well-being of working families and children. The certification looks at employer benefits like paid leave and wages, accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding workers, child care supports, health and wellness benefits, and scheduling practices.

Family Forward NC [®] defines best-practice policies through:

- The North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation's [Pathways to Grade-Level Reading Measures of Success and Action Frameworks](#);
- Guidance from medical organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics or the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; and
- Guidance from our partners in early childhood organizations, including the Child Care Services Association, MomsRising, the North Carolina Breastfeeding Association, and others.

“As an organization with a team that spans different ages, career stages, and family needs, it's important for us to lead by example and create a workplace where people can grow professionally, while acknowledging the need for work-life balance,” said **David Jackson, President/CEO, Boone Area Chamber of Commerce**. “The Family Forward NC certification process gave us the opportunity to review and strengthen our policies and procedures, and becoming a Certified Employer reflects our commitment to supporting our staff today while serving as a guide for businesses that wish to consider this type of certification.”

The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce offers the following family-friendly benefits to full-time employees and their families:

- Paid holidays
- Paid time off
 - Personal
 - Sick
 - Incidental leave
 - Special leave
- Comprehensive group health benefit plan
- Retirement plan with employer match
- Workers compensation insurance coverage
- Weekly remote workday option
- Pre- and post-natal workplace accommodations

The Boone Area Chamber of Commerce joins AppHealthCare, DMJPS CPAs and Advisors, Stitch Design Shop, and The Children's Council of Watauga County, as businesses in Watauga County that have achieved this certification.

“Employers want to attract and retain the best employees, and they want those employees to be happy and healthy,” said **Theresa Roedersheimer, Executive Director of the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation.**

The [U.S. is facing a massive talent shortage](#) that will result in a deficit of millions of workers by 2030, and a child care crisis coupled with lack of supports like paid leave mean pregnant workers and [working parents](#) and caregivers—especially women—are disproportionately forced to change jobs or leave the workforce entirely or are unable to rejoin the workforce after giving birth.

“For children, our future workforce, there is a critical window of time for brain development during the earliest years of life. In fact, the first 2,000 days of a child’s life are so defining that by the time that child turns eight, his or her third-grade reading outcomes can predict future academic achievement and career success,” said Roedersheimer. “Decades of research have established that children need supportive and supported families and communities to build strong brains, along with health and development on track from birth and high-quality birth-through-age eight learning environments with regular attendance.”

For more information about Family Forward NC ® and the Family Forward NC ® Employer Certification, visit www.familyforwardnc.com.

For more information about the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce, and for questions about the certification process, please contact David Jackson, President/CEO at david@boonechamber.com.

Image: Boone Area Chamber of Commerce staff at the 2026 High Country Economic Kickoff Luncheon L to R (if needed): Patrick Setzer, Mario Espinoza, Emma Faulkner, Carrie Henderson, Joe Furman, Lindsay Cook, Natalie Harkey, Ethan Dodson, David Jackson