From Our Director

by Jacob Willis

I hope you all had a wonderful New Year and are looking forward to spring time! As always, HCC is very grateful for your generosity throughout the year! We are serving more families than ever before and we could not do this without your help! Many not-for-profit organizations receive billable funding from the federal or state governments. HCC does not. HCC families receive little to no resources from government entities or subsidies. Our clients are mainly single grandmothers raising multiple children. Most of them work full time jobs in addition to raising their children.

This is why two years ago HCC, with Coach Jerry Moore’s leadership, began “The Coaches Golf Tournament”. Last year, funds raised at the tournament provided children with life changing experiences, especially the opportunity to attend summer camps. Many of these children are at-risk youths; many were born with drugs in their system. These children are most successful in a structured and active environment. Many of these grandmothers cannot afford to send their children to summer camp, which leaves the children unsupervised during the summer. “Coaches Kids” scholarships provided 68 weeks of summer camp for at-risk kids, who participated in nature adventure hikes and camping, 4-h, sports camps, horseback riding camps, Blowing Rock Summer Camp, recreational camps, and trauma informed camps.

One youngster in our program wanted to participate in a horseback riding camp. He is one of four grandchildren being raised in the home by their grandmother. The camp was apprehensive about accepting him at first because of behavioral issues associated with early childhood trauma. HCC assured the camp...
that our staff would help check in daily and monitor the situation if they would
allow him to fulfill his dream. He attended camp every day during the summer,
anticipating the day they would go horseback riding. He told his grandmother, "I
have to be good so I can ride the horses". On the day of the horsecamp he was
ecstatic. The camp counselors sent pictures of the biggest smile you can imagine.
While interacting with the other kids at camp his social anxiety diminished. Prior
to participating in the camp, he was only allowed to go to school for a half day,
because of conflicts with other children. After his camp experience and some
of the staff vouching for his behavior, he was given the opportunity to attend school the entire day. He has been
attending full school days ever since.

This is just one example of the life changing opportunities
made possible by the HCC Golf Tournament. Many of
you played or sponsored last year. Consider helping us
again to change the life of children in the High Country!
We thank the Coaches and sponsors who are willing to
donate their time, talent, and treasure to make this
event possible! We appreciate your ongoing support!

MISSION

The High Country Caregivers mission is to provide advocacy, support,
and education for kinship caregivers and their families.

BOARD SPOTLIGHT

Rebecca Scialpi

Rebecca was born in 1948 and brought up in Brooklyn, NY. She moved to Los Angeles in 1982
and lived there for eight years. After moving to Miami in 1990, she met her beloved partner,
Jesse Small. They have now been settled at Beech Mountain, NC for the past 17 years.

Immediately upon arriving in the High Country, they became heavily involved in the
area’s philanthropic efforts. Rebecca volunteers for High Country Caregivers and various
other charities including the American Cancer Society and a home for abused and
neglected children.

Rebecca was introduced to us by Dr. Carol Berns and immediately put her energies into
building our “Children’s Wish List” program. Her mission is to give children the childhood
they deserve and leads many fundraising efforts to supply our children with essentials for
school and home. Rebecca is always available to volunteer for events, fundraisers, and
support groups.

She and Jesse are glowing examples of philanthropy and citizenship. Rebecca says, “Children in need
should take priority, because you’re only a child once”. Rebecca is a kind, gracious, and giving person and we are lucky to have her
as a Board member.
Program & Event Updates

Snow Tubing

On January 27th, HCC’s children and caregivers gathered at Hawksnest Snow Tubing for a chilly, yet fun-filled evening on the slopes! While our children and wonderful volunteers spent time in the snow, our caregivers gathered in the lodge to sip on hot chocolate and meet new families from all six of the counties we serve. A huge thank you to Ashley at Hawksnest Snow Tubing and Zipline for allowing our families to continue this icy winter tradition!

AOPi Valentine’s Day Party

Love is in the air here at HCC, especially with Alpha Omicron Pi and Beta Theta Pi! This February our children and caregivers were able to gather in the Plemons Student at Appalachian State University and celebrate Valentine’s Day by making friendship bracelets, valentines, and goodie bags for the people they love most. We are so thankful for the relationships these brothers and sisters make with our children and we are thrilled to see them again soon in April!

SPONSOR A CHILD THIS SEASON

Spring Sport Sponsorships

With the warm weather approaching here in the High Country, HCC is gearing up for many new athletes in our program. We now serve 284 children and 239 caregivers, many of whom are unable to pay registration and equipment fees for their children’s athletic interests. HCC encourages our children to participate in extracurricular activities to build leadership and teamwork skills for a bright future. With this in mind, we need your help! If you are interested in sponsoring a child to play a sport, please reach out to our Kinship Navigator, Caroline Johnson, for more information. Sponsorships include registration for a recreational sport of the child’s choice and any equipment they may need to participate.

Summer Clothes & Camps Sponsorships

Summer is right around the corner for HCC’s children and caregivers. We are so excited for the warm weather and summer camp opportunities here in the High Country! Due to over 90% of our families being of low socioeconomic status, buying summer clothing and paying for summer camps can become a strain. This is where you come in! If you are interested in sponsoring a child for the summer, whether it is purchasing a few summer outfits or providing financial assistance to a family for their children to go to a summer camp of their choice, we would love your help! If this is something you may be interested in, please reach out to our Kinship Navigator, Caroline Johnson, for more information. Summer camps provide a significant amount of respite for our caregivers, especially the single grandmothers and grandfathers in our program, and provides opportunities for our children to enjoy their summer and many unique interests!

SPONSOR A CHILD TODAY

Caroline Johnson, MSW
Kinship Navigator
828-434-6693
caroline@highcountrycaregivers.org
RAPP UPDATE

Relatives as Parents Program

This year our kids have enjoyed making new friends and participating in fun activities through our RAPP meetings. One of our favorite activities this year so far was painting pots for our local veterans. Through this, our kids got to customize flowerpots and saucers any way they like as a way to say thank you to those in our community who have served. We are beyond excited to get to engage our kids in more fun activities as the year progresses!

FAMILY FOCUS

The Allens

Susan and Richard Allen, along with their two granddaughters, have been involved with High Country Caregivers since 2019 after they saw an ad in their local newspaper for a support group that was being offered in Mitchell County for grandparents raising grandchildren. This support group meeting is HCC’s Relatives as Parents Program (RAPP) Meeting that is held monthly by our Kinship Navigator in each of the six counties we serve.

The start of the year for the Allens has been full of successes. With the adoption of their granddaughter Joselyn being finalized at the beginning of January, Joselyn stated “I finally feel a part of the family.” Furthermore, their granddaughter Katie has since turned 18 years old and moved to Indiana to live with another safe family member and pursue a certification in Nursing Assistance. Since living in Indiana, she has been able to get a job at an assisted living facility and begin working towards her certification with an added sign on bonus from her employer. Katie and Joselyn have both participated very heavily in our Learning Shack program and found a significant interest in sewing and pottery. Both young women are very bright and motivated, and we cannot wait to see what the near future has in store for them.

Susan and Richard have been a blessing to the Mitchell County RAPP Program. They are always willing to share their story if it means they help other grandparents in their situation. They also bring a unique and valuable perspective on kinship caregiving that helps caregivers that are new to our program and raising children in their family.

The Allens’ success and willingness to help other kinship caregivers in our program is what HCC is all about, and we are so thankful for their constant participation in our programs for the last five years.
STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Caroline Johnson

At the heart of HCC is our Kinship Navigator (Social Worker), Caroline Johnson. Her focus and dedication to our mission of empowering caregivers and strengthening our community is incomparable. Caroline holds a Bachelor and a Master of Social Work degree from Appalachian State University and continues to further her education as she pursues her licensure in clinical social work.

“Growing up, I knew from a very young age I wanted to help others,” Caroline told us. “I just wanted to learn how to help people in the best way possible. When I became an intern with the Watauga LEAD Program in my Master of social work internship, everything clicked for me, and I realized that social work was my calling. I also realized I could help make a difference in someone’s life by planting a seed of hope through social and emotional support for individuals in active recovery of substance use.” Caroline also says she has “been able to see both sides of kinship caregiving by working with individuals that have had their children taken away due to drug addiction and working with our caregivers, who take in children due to drug addiction.” Her passion for our community and her willingness to walk with these kinship caregivers helps in keeping children with their families, away from the foster system and group homes.

Caroline considers the most enjoyable part of her job is not only being able to plan events for our children but also participate in these planned events that allows them to have opportunities they may not otherwise have. These events also give our caregivers respite services and time to prioritize their mental health, for which Caroline is a big advocate. “Being able to watch our families grow for the past year has been life changing. The strides that the caregivers and children make every day never fail to make my heart smile” Caroline states.

Outside of work, Caroline enjoys playing recreational sports and prioritizes her mental health by staying active. She also enjoys being a spectator at various sporting events and loves cheering on her alma mater, the Appalachian State University Mountaineers.

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MAY 8-9, 2023

The Coaches’ Golf Tournament

This Spring, Coach Jerry Moore will be hosting the second annual coaches’ invitational golf tournament, organized by High Country Caregivers. HCC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families who face the struggles of kinship care. Most commonly, High Country Caregivers assist grandparents raising grandchildren. All proceeds of this tournament will go towards HCC programs, including recreation & sports fees, dance & music lessons, legal fees, education, and family development. These families receive no government aid and are typically composed of single grandmothers raising multiple children.

Prior to this year’s tournament, HCC & Coach Moore will be hosting a banquet the night of May 8, in the Grandview Ballroom of Kidd Brewer Stadium’s north end zone. The night will consist of a silent auction and a delicious dinner, accompanied by HCC testimonials. Mack Brown, national championship winner and coach of UNC Tar Heels football, will be the keynote speaker. Joining Coach Moore and Coach Brown
are a star-studded team of athletes and coaches, including Scott Satterfield, Dave Doeren, Shawn Clark, Paul Johnson, Oval Jaynes, Tommy Burleson, and more.

Autograph signings and photo ops will occur as part of the banquet. Tickets to this event are $200 per person. We’re excited to see you there!

Event Details

At this four person scramble tournament, players have an opportunity to meet and get a chance to play with Honored Celebrities & Hall of Fame coaches including our very own board member, Jerry Moore. The tournament registration begins with a breakfast buffet and a shotgun start shortly thereafter.

Awards and prizes from past events include the following:

- 1st – 3rd teams (net & gross)
- Longest drive
- Closest to pin on all par 3 holes
- Putting contest

All proceeds are used to benefit the children of High Country Caregivers.

Thank you to our Sponsors

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ABOUT US

High Country Caregivers is a stand-alone not for profit organization dedicated to relatives, respite, and resources for kinship caregivers, and relatives caring for loved ones with life limiting illnesses and debility. Through a variety of programs HCC comes alongside grandparents to help them improve the lives of these children.

To find out how you can partner with us to change a child’s life or to make a donation, contact us at HighCountryCaregivers.org

Like Us on Facebook @HighCountryCaregivers
High Country Caregiver Foundation
PO Box 3356
Boone, NC 28607

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