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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Partnership for Children celebrates 20 years of service

**ASHEBORO, N.C. (September 9, 2019)** — On Thursday, September 12, Randolph Partnership for Children will host an open house from 4-5:30 p.m. in celebration of the agency's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In 1998, prior to its incorporation, MiMi Cooper was selected as the Partnership's first chair of the board of directors. In 1999, Randolph County Partnership for Children was officially incorporated as the last Smart Start Partnership established under Governor Jim Hunt's initiative to ensure all children were ready for school when they began kindergarten. At the helm of the fledgling agency was Pauline McKee.



The Partnership began operations in the historic Hayworth House in downtown Asheboro, where it continues to be housed. Although, expansion of services and funding led to a 2008 renovation project that added a child care services wing to the facility.

The agency's mission is to ensure strong families with healthy, well-prepared children by galvanizing our community to advocate for and invest in their future. The mission is realized through collaboration with dozens of agencies in Randolph County, professional development and incentives like WAGE\$ for early educators, and the implementation of programs such as Success by 6, Child Care Resource and Referral, More at Four, Parents as Teachers, Raising a Reader, Preventing Obesity by Design, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Shape NC, NC Pre-K, Reach Out and Read, Pinwheels for Prevention, Play Daze, The Incredible Years, Farm to Child Care, Randolph Books for Babies, KidsReadyNC, The Basics Randolph, the Infant-Toddler TA Pilot Project, and Strengthening Statewide Family Engagement and Leadership.



The staff has grown from two in 1999 to 14 today. McKee announced her retirement in 2014. During her tenure, the agency established an endowment, was recognized by the North Carolina Partnership for Children for meeting and sustaining performance targets, the old Liberty Elementary School was renovated to become the Liberty Early Childhood Center, a successful capital campaign resulted in the addition of office space. In 2002, the Archdale-Trinity Chamber of Commerce awarded the Partnership the Quality of Life Award for its work in the community. McKee was honored with the Extra Mile Award from the Archdale-Trinity Chamber of Commerce in 2012.

Lisa Hayworth was named McKee's successor, beginning her responsibilities as executive director on June 1, 2015. Since then, the Partnership has been awarded a Children's Trust Fund Grant to for The Incredible Years, collaborated with the City of Asheboro to become an All America City, rebranded its logo and website, received the Duke Energy Quality of Life Award for citizenship and service bestowed by the Archdale-Trinity Chamber of Commerce, helped the Friends of Randolph Library launch Books for Babies, and was selected for KidsReadyNC, Infant-Toddler TA Pilot Project, and Strengthening Statewide Family Engagement and Leadership.

Reflecting on the organization she leads and its community-wide impact, Hayworth stated, "Our staff, board, and volunteers embrace the mission of the Partnership for Children because we know we are part of something bigger than ourselves. Whether it's helping the young children of Randolph County to develop a lifelong love of reading, for example, or empowering families, or providing professional development opportunities for early educators, or finding ways to bring a community together in support of the next generation, we are united in our conviction that the impacts of our work today will go far beyond our time on this earth."

The Partnership's signature fundraiser, the Gala for the Children, has grown over the past 11 years and is responsible for establishing Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in the county, expanding and matching the Shape NC project, and expanding Reach Out and Read. Funds raised also support other early education endeavors as directed by the Board of Directors.

In addition to Cooper, board chairs for the agency have included Reid Pollard, John Freeze, J.B. Griffith III, Duffy Johnson, Dan McGugin, Lynn





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Jones, and Kevin Franklin. On August 23, the gavel was passed to the current board chair, Jerry Moore.

"There is no work more important than the work done to ensure a child's safety, happiness, and success," Moore said. "The work we do today pays dividends for years to come."

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**About the Randolph Partnership for Children:** Since 1999, the Randolph Partnership for Children (RPC), a non-profit organization, has made a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Randolph County children and their families. As the community's lead organization for young children and their families, RPC brings together diverse agencies, individuals, organizations and communities to ensure all children enter school ready to succeed. RPC is a United Way agency. For more information, visit [www.randolphkids.org](http://www.randolphkids.org).