

Abuzz with energy

Carroll County United attracts an engaged community

BY CYNDI PAULIN

Carroll County United

TAMWORTH — The K.A. Brett School was filled with activity on the evening of June 17 — people came from all over Carroll County to find out what the Carroll County United action teams have been up to for the past 6 months. And, after hearing from each team, many then signed on to help one of the five teams take their next steps forward. The teams' efforts woven together are focused on achieving the goal of "working together to make Carroll County a place where all generations can live, work and thrive".

Team members who have participated over the last six months should be congratulated for the hard work they put in to get the teams to where they are now. Each team's representatives concisely explained how the work from their team will help the families of Carroll County. Community members are invited to get involved at any time to help the teams carry out their actions and to make decisions about next steps.

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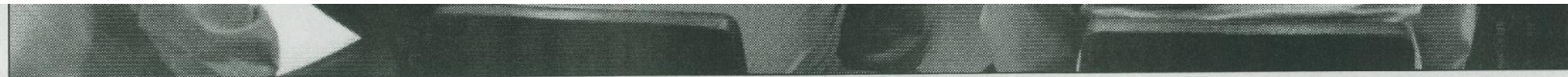
On Thursday, July 15th

ture people want to create together. It's about declaring a willingness to work toward having a future that citizens determine rather than accepting the 'default future,' he said. "The more people get involved and own this future, the more true and real it will

put in to get the teams to where they are now. Each team's representatives concisely explained how the work from their team will help the families of Carroll County. Community members are invited to get involved at any time to help the teams carry out their actions and to make decisions about next steps.

The Childhood Readiness and Success team will be gathering specific Kindergarten readiness data from the schools across the county over the summer. Putting this information together will help the community gain a clearer understanding of what our strengths and gaps look like in order to make decisions about what actions are needed to increase the percentage of children coming to school ready to learn.

The next team, Aligning Education and Careers, focuses on the success of youth in fourth through



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twelfth grade. They will be reaching out to local businesses to identify how they define success for their entry level workers. They welcome input on figuring out a way to find out how our youth are faring after they leave high school and enter college, the workforce and the military to give us a clearer sense of how well we are doing as a community to prepare our youth for the adult world.

A pivotal team, Individual and Family Economic Stability, invites the community to join them in a buy local effort grounded in the realization that locally owned businesses return three times more dollars into the local economy increasing the potential for stronger business-

es and more jobs. They are looking for more community involvement to work on actions around livable wage jobs which are crucial for economic security.

The Balancing Economic Development and Environmental Stewardship team had a very large and active breakout group on the 17th. They are anxious to tackle expanding broadband access as critical infrastructure for new businesses, working with communities to adopt shared regulations for shared resources such as watersheds, as well as strategies for diversifying our mix of jobs and the efficient use of resources.

The Health and Wellness team, a team created by the community back in Novem-

ber, is striving to increase access to health care, particularly for the 20 percent of uninsured residents in Carroll County by first increasing awareness of existing services.

Teams will continue to meet monthly and are completely open to any interested community members. Not only do the action plans they've put together require this monthly check-in, but there will also be periodic community meetings where each team will report their progress. People are encouraged to contact the Carroll County United staff to receive the newsletter and/or updates from any specific team's progress that they would like follow. Currently, newsletters go out informing

people of the larger perspective. Now staff will be putting together more specific mailings for each team informing people of the status of specific actions and reminding people of upcoming meetings.

On Thursday, July 15th the Balancing Economic Development and Environmental Stewardship team will meet at 8 a.m. and the Individual and Family Economic Stability team will meet at noon, both at the Tri-County CAP building. Both meeting locations are centrally located in Tamworth.

Jay Connor, the group's community coach, summed the evening up nicely. "Tonight was about Carroll County putting a stake in the ground about the kind of fu-

ture people want to create together. It's about declaring a willingness to work toward having a future that citizens determine rather than accepting the 'default future,'" he said. "The more people get involved and own this future, the more true and real it will be."

For more information about Carroll County United efforts, call Cyndi or Lori at 323-8139 or visit the website, www.CarrollCountyUnited.org. Support the work of these teams by joining their mailing list, becoming "friends" on Facebook, sharing this information with friends and colleagues, participating in the monthly team meetings of your choice or volunteering for a task.