

News release

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Wisconsin Association for Caregiver Excellence

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MADISON – The growing crisis in meeting Wisconsin’s long-term care needs has inspired the formation of a statewide association, the Wisconsin Association for Caregiver Excellence (WACE). The association’s board of directors met for the first time and launched the effort to provide paid care givers the resources needed to excel.

“Over the next 25 years, Wisconsin will likely see a 50 percent growth in the number of residents needing long-term care, but a decrease in the number of people available to provide that care,” said Jackie Hauser, chair of the WACE Board of Directors. “Recruiting, retaining, sustaining and educating those who are interested in long-term care work is vital. The potential for this group to make very good things happen and meet a very real need in Wisconsin is truly exciting.”

Hauser said that WACE’s primary focus is on education. “We’re taking a university approach to this,” she said. “The technical and clinical skills will be taught, of course, but we’ll also offer education in career development, leadership skills, work-place interactions and employer-employee relations. These are professional care givers, and they deserve support that reflects their importance to Wisconsin. We intend WACE to become the focal point of that support.” WACE will offer hands-on conferences and regional seminars throughout the state, as well as opportunities for networking, advocacy, recognition of professional achievements.

The immediate focus of the association is to seek funding and an executive director, then to begin recruiting members from among the direct care workers across Wisconsin.

WACE is incorporated as a nonprofit, 501c3, organization. The current board of directors includes: Jackie Hauser (WACE chair), Home Care Co-Op, in Coloma; Laura Gutowski (WACE vice chair), with North Central Health Care CBRF in Wausau; Russell King (WACE secretary), Wisconsin Homecare Organization in Madison; Tracy Dudzinski (WACE treasurer), Home Care Co-Op in Princeton; Bruce Bartholomew, Oakwood Village LTC in Madison; Barbara Bowers, UW-School of Nursing in Madison; Rose Boron, North Central Wisconsin Assisted Living Association in Plover; Neill DeClercq, UW-Extension School for Workers in Madison; Kathy Intravaia, New Health Services in New Berlin; John Pett, a certified nursing assistant in Madison; Sally Sprenger, a home and personal care provider and trainer in Wauwatosa; Alicia Treadwell, New Health Services in Milwaukee; Donna Warzynski, Wisconsin Veterans Home in King; and Thomas Zwicker, Direct Care Alliance in Germantown.

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