



Summit County
CHILDREN SERVICES
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MEDIA RELEASE

Summit County Children Services ■ 264 South Arlington Street ■ Akron, Ohio 44306

For Immediate Release

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Summit County Children Services Announces Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative

AKRON, OHIO – December 2020 – Summit County Children Services (SCCS) is in the process of creating a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) plan. Over the past several months, the Executive Director and agency staff have met internally and participated in state level conversations on the topic of race equity in the child protective workforce and the disproportional number of children of color in the child welfare system.

In the initial steps, SCCS has created a DEI Steering Committee. This Committee will help to formulate a long-term strategy of creating racial equity in our workforce and the services we provide to children and families in Summit County.

SCCS had an overwhelming response of volunteers for this committee and selected a diverse group to serve the agency. The Steering Committee includes the following staff members: Janeen Akins, Protective Services, Sam Dunn, Client Rights/Quality Improvement, Chelsay Finney, Legal Services, Taranna Francisco, Protective Services, Lawanna Holt, Protective Services, Beth Kinney, Placement Services, Kristin Lopez, Intake Screening & Supports, Regan McKinney-Baity, Social Service Programs, Hannah Pittman, Intake Services and Deanna Shriver, Fiscal Services.

In addition, SCCS selected a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Consultant, Ms. Kelli Scott, MS, CDM, owner of Scott Strategy Partners, LLC. Ms. Scott will work with the Steering Committee and the SCCS Executive Team to develop a timeline and actionable plan to assist the agency in meeting the following initial objectives: Ongoing/Targeted Conversations, Recruitment/Retention/Promotion of Staff, Mentoring of Staff, Leadership Programs, Training, Diversity Committee Design/Evaluation and Communication Plan.

“I am pleased with the positive response and commitment from our staff to work towards a more diverse and inclusive atmosphere. Cultural change requires intentional planning and long-term dedication, but I believe we have the commitment and enthusiasm that can create lasting change for our workforce and the children and families we serve.” said Julie Barnes, Executive Director of SCCS.

For more information about SCCS, please visit their website at www.summitkids.org.

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