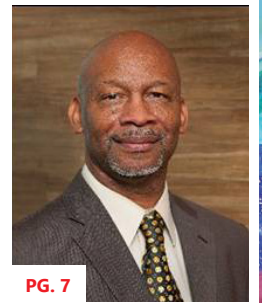


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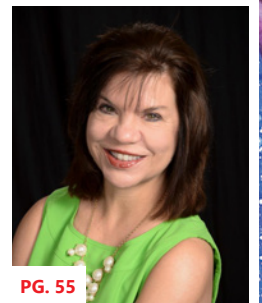
JANUARY 2020 VOLUME 10 ISSUE 1

"For All of Us"



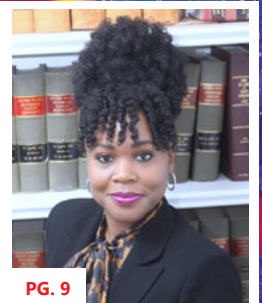
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James Myers
Honda of South Carolina Mfg.



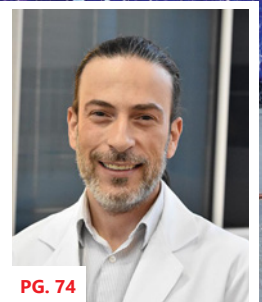
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Brenda Cranford School of Dance



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Finklea Law Firm



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Mo Bourji, MD
MUSC Health

COVER STORY: PG. 40
VISIT LAKE CITY

HONDA

Honda of South Carolina Mfg., Inc.



Honda's philosophy is based on "Respect for the Individual." We are committed to bringing together a diverse group of associates, dealers and suppliers to foster the kind of innovation and vitality that enables us to achieve our dreams of creating products and technologies that make people's lives better.



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MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION

Diversity Works© is a magazine for the socially conscious and responsible worker at any level. The magazine has a commitment to be a showcase for organizations and their individuals that represent best practices in diversity of the workforce and supplier choices. We feature articles on those displaying inclusionary vision in and for the marketplace and who can both encourage and provide role models to others. Diversity Works©, via its editorial content and other signature promotions, will be a vessel to inform the world about appreciating and accepting the physical, social, cultural and other differences in one another and promote better outcomes through interacting with those unlike ourselves. Our mission is to promote the concept "community" in the workplace, to stimulate literacy and save the planet via recycling printed matter.

OUR VISION

To create a more collaborative world wherein we practice diversity on a more balanced basis, to experience a return to reading and to reuse the ink and paper products that our reading materials are printed with.

Spanish Version

Translated by: Yadira Santiago, MA

NUESTRA MISIÓN

Diversity Works© es una revista dirigida a trabajadores, de cualquier nivel, socialmente conscientes y responsables. La revista tiene el compromiso de ser una vitrina para las organizaciones y sus individuos que representan las mejores prácticas en cuanto a diversidad de las opciones de plantilla laboral y proveedores.

Nuestros artículos muestran una visión inclusiva en y para el mercado; que a su vez estimulen y promuevan un modelo de conducta para los demás. Diversity Works©, a través de su contenido editorial y sus promociones de firma, será una fuente que informará al mundo sobre la apreciación y aceptación de diferencias físicas, sociales, culturales que promuevan mejores resultados a través de la interacción con los que son distintos a nosotros. Nuestra misión es promover el concepto de "comunidad" en el lugar de trabajo para estimular el conocimiento y salvar al planeta a través del reciclaje de material impreso.

NUESTRA VISIÓN

Crear un mundo más colaborativo en el que se practique la diversidad de una manera más equilibrada; experimentar un regreso a la lectura, así como la reutilización de los productos de tinta y papel con los que se imprimen nuestros materiales.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S HEART

LET'S SET THIS DECADE OFF RIGHT



Dawn "D.A." Goodwin
Editor

Did you know that 2020 could begin your best decade--not just year--yet? I am here to tell you that it can happen. And I know it may seem that our country is in a state of political and social disarray with human and sex trafficking at an all-time high and fears of a third world war sweeping across the nation. But with reading this edition of Diversity Works Magazine©, my desire is that you can find solace with us as we give you everything you need to be successful this year and in the years to come. So I urge you to fearlessly walk in faith as you get on track in fulfilling your purpose, and

become a vessel of positive change, beginning right here in your own community.

Inside, Ruiz Foods shares just how committed it is to the Florence community and how proud the company is of its "Team Members," whose giving reveals they have hearts of pure gold. Having employees committed to executing their job as well as committed to helping the community is a plus for a business to experience growth. And if you, too, are interested in growing your business this year, we inform you of which apps help employees the most and let you know how the owner of Euro Mobile Auto Repair LLC is changing lives, one repair job at a time. In other business stories, you'll learn how a father and daughter have successfully entered the minority business arena as owners.

I'm thrilled to see so many organizations and schools enacting change to become more diverse than ever. For instance, CCU discusses how it accommodates students through its Accessibility and Disability Services. Doing this gives all students the opportunity to thrive. On the other side of education, Marion's superintendent, Dr. Kandace Bethea, discusses recruiting and retaining a diverse teaching workforce. Embracing diversity and inclusion in this manner is sure to ultimately transform students' lives. In other education-related stories, FDTC empowers its students for the future and was even granted funds for its choir to have dress clothes. We also catch up with my alma mater, FMU, as President Carter describes how the school is making higher education accessible for all. We congratulate HGTC for its International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach Fowler Dining Room achieving Smart Catch Leader Status and for the HGTC president receiving the Champion for Youth Award. President Fore doesn't see her job as a job, and she is having the time of her life doing what she loves.

Have the time of your life when 20/20 vision as Robin Lewis gives you the steps to create an unforgettable year. First, learn how to pray bigger prayers this year, and then follow our tips for financial growth by doing things like estate planning or visiting ABB for your financial transactions. The bank is excited to announce its newest hires while you'll also meet HopeHealth's newest providers. Make this year unforgettable health-wise by paying attention to the warnings about the dangers of vaping. The message MUSC Dr. Rami Zebian gives us is as clear as smoke-free lungs. MUSC's Dr. Mo Bourji helps you to differentiate between sudden cardiac arrest and a heart attack, and we tell you how you can treat your diabetes and protect your heart at the same time. Read on to get answers to your questions about Alzheimer's. In addition to all this, Rubicon shares how this is the most dangerous time of the year because of drug and alcohol-related deaths. Pay close attention to that article, as well as others, because our writing team is

committed to sharing all pertinent information that could impact you and the community.

Witnessing positive change in the community is something the late Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would have loved to see happen. In this issue, we honor the peaceful activist and in doing so, we hear from Congressman Jim Clyburn. You won't believe how this representative has been pushing to get students free Internet access at home. This would surely help to create equity in local education. Pastor Adam Work and Bishop Michael Blue of Marion demonstrate how King's Dream still lives on by discussing how they brought the faith community together last year for a unity walk. But these men of faith are not done. Keep going to find out what they have coming in 2020.

Kicking off Black History Month for 2020, we begin by informing you on the significance of not only visiting a slave dwelling but also sleeping in one to gain the full life-changing experience. You'll also hear about the man who made ownership dreams a reality in the Pee Dee and have the opportunity to glimpse into the life of a woman whose legacy reveals how passionate she was about service, inclusion, and equity. Also, Emerge South Carolina's executive director discusses training women for the 2020 election cycle, which is something that shows just how far women have come in America.

So ladies, it is truly our time, and Diversity Works Magazine© is here for the celebration of Women's History Month. We meet a woman named Brenda Cranford who not only teaches dance moves, but she also gives her dancers the confidence they need in life. Life-long educator Dr. Irene Singletary discusses teaching in the hall, and Angel Daniels reflects on the quote "well-behaved women seldom make history." We report on two strong women who went from serving in the military to being leaders at Honda of South Carolina, and then we learn how Jamie Kelly is leading the local beauty industry by example while Carla Angus addresses issues affecting Pee Dee youth.

Much-deserved thanks goes out to social workers this issue for serving from the heart and often using their own experiences to positively impact others, including area youth. Some social workers we highlight include Clint Scott, Lorene S. Godbold, Scottie Hill, and Fredrick Williams, but you must stick with us to see which others we spotlight. Each is individually making a difference in the lives of so many others to ultimately create positive social change, but you will find that doing so is a continuous process. Therefore, we appreciate these social workers for exhibiting that they are here for the long run and are dedicated to ensuring change happens.

History has taught us that no community or city is perfect, but change takes citizens coming together to help it flourish into a place that is beneficial to all--a place in which everyone is proud to call it "home." For instance, this edition's cover story is adorned by members of an organization believe in the city it represents and whose name says it all: Visit Lake City. And once you see what founder and executive director Seth Kines says about the city's growth and happenings, you will soon want to experience it for yourself.

Please believe me when I say that our team of writers is not playing games in 2020. As you will see, altogether, we are handing you the tools to put together each piece of your life so that regardless of what happens, you will be able to weather any stormy sea in this new season you have entered. Thanks for tuning in, and Happy New Year!

You can reach me via email at admin@youreditingpro.net, or follow my author page on Facebook: @authordagoodwin. I would love to hear from you!

FLORENCE MOVING FULL FORWARD IN 2020!

Submitted by Amanda Pope, CMO Administrator



Top Work Place Award 2019- Mayor Stephen J. Wukela and City staff

Forward-Momentum: “to keep pace; moving with the times in the direction ahead of you, somewhere that is notably advanced or developed.” The greater the momentum, the harder it is to stop the object in motion. Growth in Florence remains progressive with the accomplishments achieved in 2019, encouraging continued investments and boosting quality of life.

In their first year competing, the City of Florence received the Top Work Places 2019 award as one of the best places to work in South Carolina. This award was presented to the city on May 2 in Greenville. The city also received recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree City USA for its 39th consecutive year, the Growth Award for its 14th consecutive year and was named as a Bee City USA affiliate earlier in 2019 by the Xerces Society. The designation of Bee City USA affiliate provides accountability for achieving pollinator conservation results each year, which is then shared with one another and the public.

Recently, Florence was recognized for excellence and innovation in clean water and drinking water infrastructure. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognized 30 clean water and 25 drinking water infrastructure projects throughout the nation for excellence and innovation within the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) programs. The city was recognized by the 2019 PISCES program for adopting the Town of Timmonsville’s Wastewater System.

The City of Florence was also selected to be featured in the South Carolina Association for Community Economic Development’s (SCACED) 25th Anniversary Publication. The SCACED is a coalition of individuals and organizations who support the development of health and economically sustainable communities throughout South Carolina. The book features 25 member stories and photos from the past 25 years.

So what’s ahead in 2020? Momentum is not only tracked by the recognition of the movement, but also by the gravitational affect it has on its surroundings. Development downtown will continue to include enhancements to the aesthetic appearance, which creates a more inviting environment. The City’s Streetscape Improvement project will continue in the 300-400 Blocks of West Evans Street where lanes will be reduced to two (one eastbound and one westbound lane) and will receive a planted median, turn lanes, on-street parking, as well as added sharrows for bicycle traffic, underground conversion of the power lines, new sidewalks and substantial landscaping. The Pine Street streetscape will include new crosswalks, sidewalk repair and replacement, new residential driveways along corridors and street trees.

In addition, community wellness will continue to be a focus in

2020. The highly anticipated opening of the City Center Market is slated for the first of the year. The current Farmers Market was set to relocate to the new site beginning on Jan. 4. The new facility includes an outdoor plaza space, a commercial kitchen and three tenant spaces. The market will feature local fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy and meats, providing the community with healthy choices. Good nutrition paired with physical activity is an essential element to wellness. The City of Florence is also working in partnership with the Atomic Mountain Bike Club and the Southern Off-road Bicycle Association (SORBA) on the addition of a mountain bike trail off interstate I-95 and Prosperity Way. The new High Hill Creek and Run Park will be a single-track, three-mile trail and is being constructed on 80 acres on the same property as the City Fire Department Training Center.

Residents should also look forward to continued improvements to City Parks & Recreation Facilities in the upcoming year. City Council’s decision to purchase \$15 million in revenue bonds for Parks & Recreation in 2017 has been designated for improvements for existing



New Maple Park Community Center

recreation facilities, a track facility, maintenance and improvements at Freedom Florence Recreation Complex, land acquisition and trail connectivity. The much needed new community center at Dr. Iola Jones Park will open for use in January. Additional improvements at the park include construction of additional parking at the new center; rerouting a portion of the existing asphalt trail and resurfacing the entire trail; and repairing, sealing and striping the existing parking and basketball courts. Also coming in 2020 is the anticipated completion of a new Soccer Pavilion and entrance way at the Florence Soccer Complex, a renovation of the Lawton–Chase Home (formerly Florence Museum), which is located adjacent to Timrod Park as an event space, renovations to the existing Northwest Park community center, as well as many other needed improvements throughout the parks system. The City looks forward to these additions and improvements in 2020.

Partnerships and collaboration are essential to the City’s momentum and will remain key elements in 2020. The generosity and interest of the Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation Board, combined with community partnerships with agencies such as Francis Marion University, HopeHealth, PDRTA and Florence School District 1, and the investment and support of so many developers and community members keep the momentum strong. Collaboration with the community is just as important and continues through neighborhood community meetings and City boards and commissions, which are comprised of city residents. The City of Florence will continue to implement goals and projects that move the community in a positive direction for all residents. Forward-Momentum is an accurate description of our goals for 2020: the greater the momentum, the harder it is to stop the object in motion as we continue Full Life. Full Forward. Florence.

FLORENCE CHAMBER HAPPENINGS



MLK, Jr. Celebration at FMU

On Jan. 16, the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce will partner with Francis Marion University to host the 22nd annual Martin Luther King Jr. event. The event kicks off on the campus of Francis Marion University with a

candlelit march from the Wallace House to Chapman auditorium. Attendees are asked to arrive by 6 p.m. to begin the march at 6:15 p.m. The annual celebration will take place at 6:30 p.m. at Francis Marion University's Chapman Auditorium. For more information call Daphne Carter-McCants at Francis Marion University at 843-661-1188 or Les Echols at the Chamber at 843-665-0515.

Contracting Workshop for Women-Owned Businesses



The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce PRISM program, in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), will host a Contracting Workshop for Women-Owned Businesses on Feb. 13 at the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce. The

program will begin at 2 p.m. At the workshop, representatives from the SBA will provide woman-owned businesses with the information they need to know about how to secure contracts to grow their respective business. Attendance for the Contracting Workshop for Women-Owned Businesses is free, but advance registration is required since seating is limited. A link will be provided soon to RSVP, if there are any other questions, contact Les Echols at the Chamber by calling 843-665-0515.



Leadership Florence Participates in "Ride a Mile"

The Leadership Florence class of 2020 took part in an annual program called "Ride A Mile" during its December session. "Ride A Mile" is a simulated society team-building exercise in which Leadership Florence cohorts utilize Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority to visit several local organizations and experience different socio-economic circumstances. The "Ride A Mile" program is made possible because of our community partners: PDRTA, Poynor Adult Education, Florence-Darlington Technical College, Lighthouse Ministries and Mercy Medicine Free Clinic.

Junior Leadership Holds Social Issues Day



The 2019-2020 Junior Leadership Florence County Class was busy on Dec. 20, learning about issues in our community and making a positive difference. Thank you to Harvest Hope, Lighthouse Ministries and Habitat for Humanity Restore for allowing our students to volunteer that day. The Greater Florence Chamber, Florence County 4-H and FMU have partnered to manage this student leadership program for Florence County. The program enables students to be able to develop leadership skills while also increasing their awareness of the community programs and opportunities.

move **FULL FORWARD**
into the New Year!

EMBRACE OUR **COMMUNITY COLLABORATION**

FULL LIFE. FULL FORWARD. 
FLORENCE
SOUTH CAROLINA

ENGAGE IN OUR **FORWARD-MOMENTUM**

LABELS ARE FOR CANS;

Not People.



At Glory Foods®, we believe in supporting diversity. From our wide array of canned, southern-style vegetables to our wonderful variety of customers who enjoy them, we like to think that diversity gives life flavor.

THE GREATER LAKE CITY COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER, A PROGRAM OF LAKE CITY CREATIVE ALLIANCE, PRESENTS

The 3rd Annual "Lift Your Voice"

Gospel Choir and Spoken Word Showcase

Friday, February 28, 2020 -6:30 pm

The National Bean Market, 111 Henry Street, Lake City, SC 29560

FREE Admission with the Donation of 6 Canned Goods

Get ready to "Lift Your Voice" in honor of the musical roots and oral traditions of the African American culture!



Sign up by Friday, January 31, 2020 to receive one of the prizes below!

High School Choir Prizes:

1st Place: \$2,000
2nd Place: \$1,000
3rd Place: \$500

College Choir Prizes:

1st Place: \$2,000
2nd Place: \$1,000
3rd Place: \$500

Spoken Word Prizes:

1st Place: \$1,000
2nd Place: \$500
3rd Place: \$250

To sign up for the gospel choir and/or spoken word competitions, email communityoutreach@lccreativealliance.org or call 843-374-0400.

HSC'S LAMP 6 PARTICIPANTS Submitted by Staff

TIMMONSVILLE-The Leadership Advancement Mentoring Program (LAMP) is a program designed to improve the readiness and capability of high-potential associates and accelerate their advancement into executive leadership. This year Darlene LeGrant, weld department manager, and James Myers, mass production parts quality manager, were chosen to participate in LAMP 6, along with 20 other associates from 10 other Honda facilities.

LeGrant started her career at Honda in 1999 as a production associate in weld. In 2005, she was promoted to coordinator and then to assistant manager in 2007 when she took over personal watercraft. In 2009 she returned to weld and is currently its department manager.

When asked about her LAMP experience, LeGrant said that the LAMP program benefitted her by helping her become a better leader, connect with others and build relationships. It also gave her the opportunity to get an overview of Honda get a chance to see others' job responsibilities and what they experience daily.

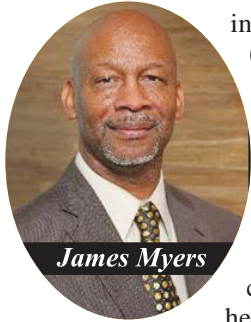


Darlene LeGrant

LeGrant's selected Scott Wilson as her mentor, who was president of SEE during her time in the program. "Scott had a big impact on developing my leadership and delegation skills, so I could focus on future planning," she said. He also told her how important it is to collect data from past issues and reflect it in your business planning.

LeGrant says if she could share any advice to others going through LAMP it would be to be open and honest about your struggles with your mentor because they are there to help you.

Connect with others that you come in contact with because you may be able to reach out to them for advice on some issues that they have experienced. Her advice for a successful Honda career is to "be open to change. Ask questions when you don't understand. Be honest, and respect others."



James Myers

James Myers started his career with Honda in 1998 in assembly frame quality control (AFCQ). He later transferred to mass production parts quality (MPPQ) and then became the localization project leader for that team. His career path soon led him to the purchasing division where he was a coordinator in new model parts quality (NMPQ) and then on to supplier development (SD) as Buhin project leader as an assistant manager. As Myers continued to grow in his role and responsibilities,

he was promoted to manager of SD/NMPQ/logistics. His current role is in supply chain management, manager of MPPQ.

When asked about his LAMP experience, Myers said that out of all the leadership programs he has had the opportunity to experience at Honda, he enjoyed this one the most. Throughout the program they were introduced to several top executives who talked about roles and responsibilities and company directions. "They showed passion and drive of good leadership--some things you can't get by studying books but that are added to your tool belt," he said.

Myers said initially he wasn't sure what to expect from the LAMP program. Like many of his cohorts, he wondered why he had been chosen. He said he always hears about AH sales and the design side, but what do things really mean? However, throughout his journey he was able to get a better understanding of SEBD at a high level. The advice and knowledge from each of the executives for each of these divisions is something Myers says he has been able to take back and reflect on as he continues his development journey in his leadership role.

Myers selected Travis Lee, HSC plant manager, as his mentor and says that he and Travis had trust and respect for each other by being

able to gain common ground. Throughout the year, they were open and honest as they discussed Myers' career goals. In addition, they established areas of improvement for Myers and worked on them during the year.

On the other hand, when asked what advice he would give others going through the program, Myers said, "Take notes, and be willing to go in each segment open minded knowing that you will take something back with you that will help you be a better leader with the knowledge and exposure you will have to SEBD."

Being open and transparent and gaining trust from your peers, along with being able to make clear decisions with the end in mind, are what Myers says he plans to apply to his current role.

When asked what advice he would give associates to be successful in their Honda career, Myers had several items that he's learned over the years and would share with associates:

- A. Do excellent work**
- B. Dream big and act on it**
- C. Do what you say you're going to do**
- D. Have a positive attitude, and say "thank you"**
- E. Help others get ahead and succeed**
- F. Continue to grow and get better**
- G. Spend time with your family**

Myers is grateful to the HSC leadership team for giving him the opportunity to participate in the LAMP program and for giving him the tools to develop his leadership skills.



LAMP 6 participants

LAMP 6 participants graduated in early October. With its conclusion, nearly 130 associates from genpos throughout North America have now completed the LAMP program.



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ATTORNEY MCGILL'S CHILDHOOD PLANS ARE NOW REALITY by Mallory Brayboy

Finklea Law Firm has been providing exceptional legal services to the Pee Dee area since 2004. Its offices are conveniently located across the region, with its main location at 814 W. Evans Street and two additional satellite locations in Hemingway and Marion. The firm has recently welcomed South Carolina native, Attorney Susan C. McGill, to its team of professionals.



Attorney Susan C. McGill

McGill was born and raised in the city of Marion, attended the public schools there, and it was there that she gained an interest in law. She knew from an early age that she would be an attorney. Upon reading the novel "To Kill A Mockingbird," her interest in the field began. She later, in high school, served on Student Government, which further ignited her passion for law. While serving, McGill dealt with the needs and concerns of students. Bringing their issues to administration and faculty gave her a passion for helping those that may not have had a voice. "We resolved a lot of issues while I was there," says McGill. "I've always been a team player, someone that likes to get their hands dirty and be involved."

When it comes to her career decision, McGill has always had strong support from her parents. "My mother would work, pray and do whatever she could," says McGill. While she was still in high school, her mother began introducing her to others as "Susan, the attorney." McGill went on to graduate from the University of South Carolina and received her Juris Doctorate from Charlotte School of Law. She now sees her childhood ambitions unfolded as she is admitted to practice law in both North and South Carolina.

McGill began her law career clerking for a local circuit court judge and later worked as a prosecutor. In July of 2019, she joined the staff of Finklea Law Firm. The firm is led by six attorneys with McGill being one of two female attorneys in the office. There, she practices criminal law, family law and personal injury. She says it's imperative for clients to understand that there is a process for each case. "Typically, there is no instant gratification," says McGill. "We have to file paperwork, get people served, wait for court dates, exchange discovery (evidence), etc. These are all necessary steps before resolving cases." In order to produce results faster, McGill recommends clients come prepared with a chronological timeline of events, names of the involved parties and locations.

When she is not busy working diligently on her client's behalf, McGill enjoys attending University of South Carolina home football games, assisting in service projects with her sorority Alpha Kappa Alpha, spending time with family, fellowshipping with her church family at Lamb's Chapel (Florence) and visiting her grandmother every Sunday. McGill adds with a smile that she also enjoys hitting the gym because she has to be able to enjoy grandma's good cooking.



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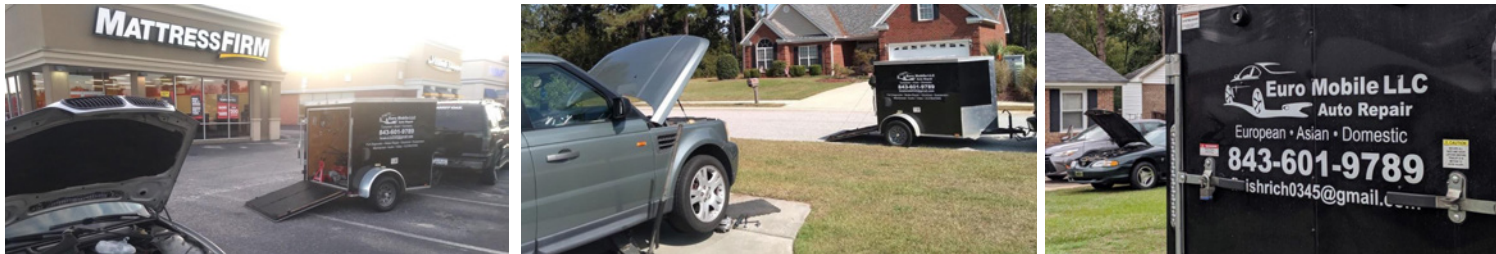
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ALL IN A DAY'S REPAIR WORK by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Photos of Euro Mobile Auto Repair at work, at place of business, and in the neighborhoods

LATTA-When you think about individuals who change the lives of others, do you only think about healthcare workers or law enforcement members, for example? In the last issue of Diversity Works Magazine®, we introduced Euro Mobile Auto Repair LLC, the Pee Dee's only European mobile vehicle repair service. Since the last edition, it has already been twice in one week over the holiday season that I have come across owner/operator Chris Green hard at work in Florence changing the way the repairs are done and thus changing lives in doing so.

Green said he receives countless phone calls per day from clients needing vehicles checked. Typically, customers call and tell him the type of issue they're having, and he schedules them for diagnostics that day. On a daily basis, Green deals with quite a few warranty companies, quickly emailing over the diagnostics with the pricing breakdown. There are often times in which he waives the deductible if it's cheaper or he can deduct the amount from the actual bill. Therefore, he encourages anyone with a higher-end vehicle to get an extended warranty to help with repair costs. This process, as a whole, saves the customer time and tons of money. At the end of each repair, the customer service continues as Green's fiancée, Karen Wheeler, who does a phenomenal job with making sure parts are right, ensures that all customer receipts include a coupon for future repairs.

With regard to competition, bigger vehicle repair companies might be able to complete more repair jobs at once, but they can't beat Euro Mobile's level of convenience or affordability. And quite often, some repairmen or dealerships simply are not honest in saying a repair can't be done or that special equipment or software is required.

Take, for instance, a recent call Green had for a 2012 BMW X5. Originally, the car only had a flat tire, but when the first repairman was jacking the vehicle, he placed the jack in the wrong spot, therefore, puncturing a hole in its fuel tank. The dealership wanted \$4500 and claimed the car had to be in the air to complete the job. Green, on the other hand, had the car towed to the customer's house, replaced the fuel tank while the car was on the ground, and saved the customer time and money--all that same day.

Whether you drive a Mercedes, Range Rover, Audi, Jaguar, Lexus, Porsche or Mini Cooper, Euro Mobile can handle them all. And whether you work for a hospital or a manufacturer, run your own company or work for the local government, Green treats all people the same and doesn't take advantage of customers, young or old.

As you can see, Euro Mobile is changing lives, getting repair jobs done, one car at a time. And when something is not needed, rest assured in Green's rule that "if you don't need it, you don't need it."

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IT'S TAX SEASON AGAIN--ARE YOU PREPARED? Submitted by Dr. C. Vicki Dixon, CEO



Dr. C. Vicki Dixon

Whether you are a first-time tax filer or a seasoned filer, tax time can be frustrating and stressful. The Tax Credit and Jobs Act (TCJA) of 2018 brought about a lot of tax changes for taxpayers, and the effects of the changes of the prior season will still be felt in this upcoming season. The key to stress-free filing is to be prepared and organized. Here are a few things you can do as a tax filer to have a more positive tax filing experience.

1. Get a list of your personal information.

Jot down social security numbers and birthdays of each dependent (if married, include your spouse) you will claim on your tax return and other information you are likely to need. For example, if you own a vacation home or rental property, note its address. If the property was sold in the past year, note the dates it was bought and sold, the amount originally paid and how much was received from the sale.

2. Get your tax records and documents together.

Everyone who has been employed during the year will receive a W-2 wage statement from each job worked that shows how much was earned and how much taxes were withheld. Other statements that may be received are 1099s. There are several types of 1099 statements, but some of the more common ones include: 1099-MISC--if self-employed and received \$600+; 1099-DIV--if dividends were received; and 1099-G--if money or benefits from the government (i.e. unemployment or state tax refund are most common) were received. Social security will issue an SSA-1099 in January showing the total amount of benefits received for the year. If contributions were made to an IRA, a Form 5498 will be needed. If student loan interest was paid during the year, a Form 1098-E will be needed, and a Form 1098-T for students who attended college. Include and list other miscellaneous income (i.e. award money, lottery and gambling winnings, and jury duty pay).

Old tax records are a good reference of who has sent you materials in the past. W-2 wage statements and 1099 statements aren't usually mailed until mid-January; therefore, this is a good time to ensure that employers, financial institutions and other pertinent places have the correct address. Getting records on time can help you file your return more quickly and accurately.

3. Self employed

If self-employed, a record of income and expenses related to the business will be needed. These records could be receipts, credit card statements and records of checks written. Keep a travel mileage record to get deductions for travel. If eligible for home office deduction, a record of home-related expenses (utilities, mortgage or rent) is needed

if using actual expenses or square feet of your office space and your home if using the simplified method. If estimated tax payments were made, a record of those payments should be made available.

4. Itemized Deductions



Under the TCJA, taxpayers can itemize deductions if their deductions exceed the standard deductions amounts under their filing status. For 2019 these amounts are \$12,200 for individuals, \$18,350 head of household, \$24,400 for married filing joint status

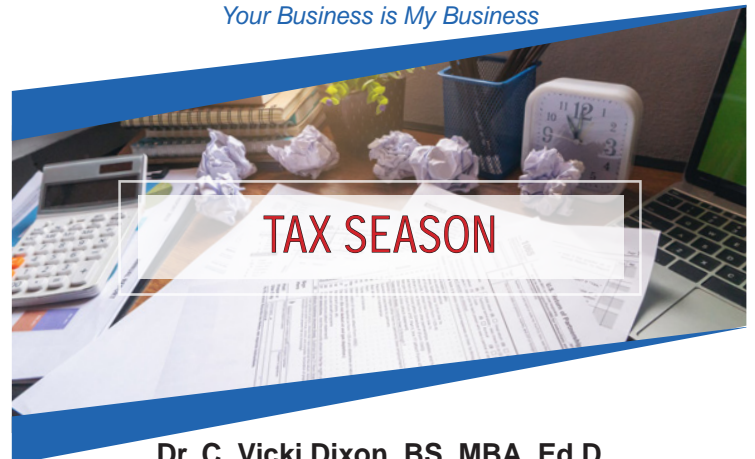
and an additional \$1,300 for aged 65+ or the blind.

If eligible to itemize, gather up mortgage interest statements (Form 1098), receipts for unreimbursed medical expenses, property tax receipts and charitable donation receipts. If enrolled through the Marketplace insurance, you should receive Form 1095-A. Insurance providers will send a 1095-B for individuals they cover. Employers should send a 1095-C.

Now your documents have been gathered, and you are ready to file. The list I have given has just the basics needed to file your return. Each individual situation is different; therefore, there may be additional questions about filing your taxes that were not covered in this article. Do not hesitate to seek the help of a professional. Pro Business and Tax Service will be glad to take the stress off you and assist you with your tax needs. Call for an appointment at 843-413-2826. Walk-ins are welcomed.



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THREE DIY EFFICIENCY PROJECTS TO TACKLE THIS YEAR

Submitted by Mary Grace McGee, Manager of Community Relations



Kevin holding caulk gun

Sealing air leaks in your home can help you save 10 to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills. Apply caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing to seal in conditioned air.

KINGSTREE—A NEW YEAR brings new opportunities to save energy—and money. You may think energy efficiency upgrades require a great deal of time and expense, but that's not always the case.

If you're interested in making your home more efficient but don't want to

break the bank, there are several DIY projects you can tackle to increase energy savings. Let's take a look at three inexpensive efficiency upgrades that can help you save energy throughout the year.

Trim dryer vent

Level of difficulty: easy. Supplies needed: tin snips, gloves, measuring tape and masking tape. Estimated Cost: about \$25, depending on the supplies you already have.

If your dryer vent hose is too long, your dryer is working harder than it has to, using more energy than necessary. The vent hose should be long enough for you to pull the dryer out a couple of feet from the wall, but the shape of the hose should form a line—it should not have a lot of slack with twists and curves. A shorter, unobstructed vent hose increases the efficiency of your dryer, dries clothing faster and reduces lint buildup, which can create potential fire hazards.

Simply measure, mark and trim the hose to the desired length, then reattach the hose to your dryer and exterior vent. If you're unsure about the hose length, check out YouTube.com for a quick video tutorial.

Seal air leaks

Level of difficulty: moderate. Supplies needed: caulk and caulk gun, weather stripping, gloves, putty knife, and paper towels. Estimated cost: \$25 to \$50, depending on the materials you purchase.

Sealing air leaks in your home can help you save 10 to 20 percent on heating and cooling bills. Apply caulk around windows, doors, electrical wiring and plumbing to seal in conditioned air. You should also weatherstrip exterior doors to keep out drafts and help you control energy costs. Types of caulking and weatherstripping materials vary but ask your local hardware or home store for assistance if you're unsure about the supplies you need. For more information, the Department of Energy provides step-by-step instructions for caulking and weather stripping: bit.ly/2Kesu6W

Insulate attic stairs opening

Level of difficulty: moderate. Supplies needed (if you build the box yourself): rigid foam board, faced blanket insulation, tape for foam board, measuring tape, utility knife, caulk and caulk gun, plywood. Estimated cost: \$50 to \$100.

A properly insulated attic is one of the best ways to optimize energy savings and comfort in your home, but many homeowners don't consider insulating the attic stairs or the opening to your attic space. Even a well-insulated attic can leak air through the stair opening. But luckily, there's an easy fix.

An insulated cover box can seal and insulate the attic stairs opening. You can build your own insulated cover box or purchase a pre-built box or kit from a local home improvement store like Home Depot or Lowe's for about \$60. If you decide to build your own, check out these step-by-step instructions from the Department of Energy: bit.ly/36YNCYQ. It should also be noted, if your attic opening is located in a garage that you do not heat and cool, this upgrade will not be as effective.

Saving energy doesn't have to be hard. With a little time and effort, you can maximize energy savings and increase the comfort of your home.



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7 WAYS TO CREATE ECONOMIC INCLUSION FOR MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES

By Dr. Nika White, President and CEO, Nika White Consulting, Best Selling Author of "The Intentional Inclusionist"® and "Next-Level Inclusionist: Transform Your Work and Yourself for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Success"



Dr. Nika White

GREENVILLE-Inclusive economics is the concept of ensuring that those who are part of historically disenfranchised, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities have the same opportunity to engage in capitalism and successful entrepreneurship. When people speak about disadvantaged businesses they are usually talking about ethnic-minority, women, LGBTQ+ and veteran-owned businesses. These populations are often challenged in terms of lack of economic inclusion and opportunity.

How do we offer them economic prosperity?

Typically, the reason this disadvantage occurs is because there is difficult access to capital, key networks, experience, mentors and a business knowledge base. These are all necessary support systems to launch, grow and sustain a business. If you are in those disadvantaged communities, you may not have someone in your circle to ask questions to, be coached by, or engage with.

A great metaphor for this is a first-generation college student (someone who is the first person in his or her family who is going to school or university). Higher education puts energy into supporting those students because they know that first-gen students often struggle, don't have parents or siblings who can answer questions and have general trouble in navigating the scholastic system. Many higher education institutions have addressed that by implementing different support systems, scholarships and mentorship programs.

This same thing has to occur with minority or disadvantaged business owners because they are basically "first generation" business owners. Without this support, it's hard to ask the right questions, know the right steps to take and chart a path for economic success. In the same way I talk about intentionality with diversity and inclusion, we need to be intentional with economic inclusion as well.

The Various Challenges These Business Owners Face

Minority and disadvantaged business owners face a variety of challenges in the marketplace. Some of the most pressing challenges include:

- Lack of access to capital
- Lack of skill access to employers
 - If you don't have the talent available, it makes your ability to grow and facilitate a business even harder
- Lack of ability for businesses to take on sizeable contracts
 - Even if the opportunity presents itself, many of these business owners can't take advantage of the opportunity because they don't have the bandwidth or the right people, systems or equipment in place
- Lack of personal and professional networks to provide guidance or growth
 - Often for a business to grow, they create joint ventures or collaborations to go after a contract, and many times, these networks are not available for minority-owned businesses
- The general misconception that ethnic-minority or women-owned businesses do not offer the same level of quality as a majority-owned competing business.
 - Often, this is the bias we have as a society

7 Ways to Combat the Challenges that Disadvantaged and Minority-Owned Businesses Face

The issues I've shared in this article are real and make the state of minority-owned businesses very vulnerable. To approach this vulnerability requires a level of intentionality. We have to realize that the responsibility for this rests on three parties: the actual minority business owners, the general consumers and the corporate community.

Here are seven important things these parties must do:

1. Educate ourselves on the WHY

We must dive into why is it important for us to care about this topic. There need to be purpose and benefit for us to support minority-owned businesses. The purpose is in the economic benefit.

Minority-owned businesses in America account for 1 trillion in gross receipts, and the last time I checked the stats they support 7-8 million jobs. That's a real significant source of economic growth in America, and it provides an incentivized WHY for the business owners, consumers and corporations to get involved with economic inclusion.

2. Don't speak in a shaming attitude

We do not want this to come across as shaming or to make anyone feel bad. This conversation is meant to bring awareness. Shaming is counter-productive. But, we do need to help people feel knowledgeable about the benefit of minority-owned businesses so they can get on board (and create buy-in "because of," and not "in spite of").

3. Minority communities need to invest in themselves and recognize their own strength and value

For whatever reason, minority populations do not have the same level of confidence and boldness about their value that majority counterparts do. I think that does a disservice. We need to make sure that we're coupling bold business leadership with the right knowledge needed.

It is already so hard in terms of competing in the marketplace, so minority and women businesses have no room for error. We really need to hone our craft and our trade. We must stay up to speed on the latest knowledge and new technologies and work on our business acumen. Just because you start a business and become an entrepreneur, doesn't mean you have the acumen to grow and sustain the business. They are skills that must be learned and developed. And once that business owner develops more skills and capability, his or her confidence in his or her own strength and value can grow.

I find a lot of disadvantaged businesses are in a rut where they are always working IN the business, and this leaves no room at all for them to work ON their business. That is a key point because if you're not focusing on strategic vision and growth strategy, you're always going to stay where you are.

4. Have Thick Skin and Celebrate The Win

I always tell minority business owners...we probably have to have thicker skin than most. If you are a women-, ethnic- or cultural minority-owned business, something that can help as you strive to grow your business and face challenges is to acknowledge and make the most of small wins.

We often get caught up in the process or sit around waiting for the right big opportunity to happen, rather than inspiring ourselves and taking action. Minority-owned business owners need to strengthen their psyches and celebrate each and every win—big or small. These mini celebrations help to provide self-value and strengthen the owner's mindset.

5. Support and Invest in Each Other

A message we have to send to minority-owned businesses is that they have to invest in each other. We are not exonerated from our part to play in all of this. There's a lot of conversation in the minority community that minority-owned businesses do not support other



7 WAYS TO CREATE ECONOMIC INCLUSION CONT'D

minority-owned businesses.

I have the fortune of knowing Maggie Anderson, and her whole platform is about supporting black-owned businesses. For one whole year, her family only purchased items and services from black-owned businesses.

If we are not supporting each other, how are we expecting our other counterparts to support us as well? If one of us wins, all of us win. Investing in each other also looks like creating partnerships, collaborating, doing business with each other and establishing mentor/protégé relationships—anytime you can mentor someone who is trying to get to where you are, that certainly creates tremendous value.

6. Support by the General Consumer

In the same way I share that minority-owned businesses need to support each other, the general consumer also needs to support minority and women-owned businesses. Not only does this provide obvious capital and economic benefit, but it also provides a social benefit.

If the consumer had a good experience with that business, he or she should refer them to someone else. Or, if the consumer didn't have a good experience, if they are missing the mark, that business owner needs to know—you need to give feedback. You can help improve and solve the problem.

Normal consumers need to be proactive about their own spending habits. Supporting minority-owned businesses makes a larger impact than people realize. As a tip, your local chamber can be a really good resource to learn more. So be more intentional with spending habits and what role you can play as a general consumer.

7. Support by the Corporations

There is an even bigger opportunity for the corporate community to support these businesses. This requires our corporations to be much more innovative in terms of developing strategies to help increase the number of contracts with minority-owned firms.

I happen to work with a lot of procurement leaders who are already doing this work quite well. Where I find the separation between those who are doing well versus those are going through the motions correlates directly with intentionality and creativity. They don't just let simple inconsequential details stop them from allowing a minority business owner to be in consideration.

Those corporations and businesses are on the pavement, searching for and connecting with those under-represented populations. I equate this to the scenario of if you're trying to hire someone for a job and you're looking to create a diverse application pool, it takes extra thought, intentionality and effort to deliver upon that. You can't just post. You must search. Corporations need to be intentional, be diligent and do the work necessary to create diverse supplier pools.

If a lot of employers and businesses in the market are being thoughtful, then you're going to have a diverse applicant pool from which you can contract. With this comes new services and innovation, almost like a domino effect. And this will continue to attract talent and corporations to the marketplace.

The Ripple Effect

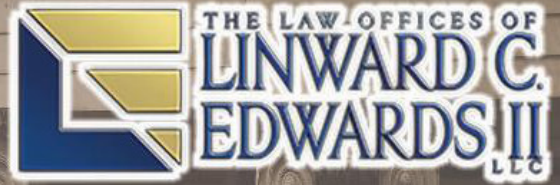
In the end, there is a ripple effect from the community, consumers, and corporations contributing towards economic inclusion.

When you think about the prosperity of a community, we have to be very thoughtful and intentional about the concept of "rising tides lifting all boats." By supporting economic inclusion, we can build cities and communities that are attractive to individuals who see themselves in this successful and supportive narrative.

By serving and supporting those underserved and minority-owned businesses, we increase the talent and output of the global business community.

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MAKE THE RESOLUTION TO TRY VOLUNTEERING IN 2020

Submitted by Rachel Baggett, Director of Marketing & Initiatives for the United Way of Florence County



The Volunteer Corps program helps connect volunteer with non-profits in the Pee Dee area

As we enter a New Year, millions of people across the world are starting to look at how they can improve their lives in 2020 through their New Year's resolutions. They may be looking to improve their health, become more

fiscally responsible or maybe just try something they haven't tried before.

If you are one of those people who would like to do something new this year, consider volunteering in your community. Volunteering is the act of sharing your time, expertise, and/or skills with an organization, such as a non-profit, for free. A volunteer project may be something simple like ringing the bell for The Salvation Army's kettlebells for an hour, or it may be something more involved like organizing a 5K to raise funds.

As a non-profit, we can say firsthand just how important volunteers are to us. Like most non-profits, we operate on a tight budget with a small staff, and we try to keep our costs as low as possible to ensure that we are helping as many people in need as possible. When we run our programs or hold big events, we often do not have enough available staff members to make these programs and events a success. Because of this, we, like many other non-profits, greatly rely on the generosity of individuals who volunteer their time with us. While we wish we could pay all of our volunteers for their hard work, the donation of their time allows us to continue to help the thousands of those in need in our community.

If helping a non-profit isn't quite enough to make you want to roll up your sleeves and start volunteering, you might be interested to learn that people who volunteer typically experience benefits themselves. In 2013, the Harvard Medical School published an article that discussed the mental and physical benefits of volunteerism. Several studies have found that people who volunteer could help prevent loneliness and depression because of the social interactions they were having and the new connections they made. Also, studies on the physical benefits of volunteering found that people who volunteered had lower blood pressure and lived longer than those who did not volunteer. Even though these studies weren't able to definitively say that volunteerism was the number one cause of those physical benefits, you can imagine that helping build a house for Habitat for Humanity or setting up for a fundraising event can certainly be a great workout while also making you feel great about your contribution.

With well over 50 non-profits in the Florence County area, there are always opportunities to donate your time to a worthwhile cause. If you already have a non-profit that you support or would like to support, check



Employees from Honda of SC recently completed a volunteer project for Giving Tuesday by packing over 150 comfort and school supply kits for deployed military personnel and elementary school students

with them to see what volunteer opportunities they may have available. If you aren't sure of where you would like to start, one of the easiest steps you can take is signing up for the Volunteer Corps E-Newsletter. Through a partnership with the Florence Convention & Visitors Bureau and the United Way of Florence County, the Volunteer Corps E-Newsletter is sent out each month with a list of short-term and long-term volunteer opportunities available in our area. The Volunteer Corps also has a volunteer database to help put non-profits in contact with volunteers that have interests in certain non-profits or in certain areas of



Volunteers from Patheon built benches for the YMCA this past September as part of the Day of Caring volunteer event



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OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

Submitted by Ruiz Foods



Tommy Pruitt, human resources manager at Ruiz Foods Florence makes check representation to the Pee Dee Coalition.

“As we shared in the October 2019 issue of Diversity Works,” said Pete Mayadag, Florence director of operations, “both Ruiz Foods Team Members and Ruiz family ownership are committed to giving back to our community.”

Kim Ruiz Beck, chairman, explains, “It goes back to our co-founders; my Dad, Fred Ruiz; and his father, my Grandpa Louis. They always believed it’s our responsibility, whether personally or professionally, to do what we can to help the children in our community. After all, they are our future leaders.”

This commitment--this philosophy--has been embraced by the third and fourth Ruiz Family generations and the Team Members from each of the three Ruiz Foods manufacturing facilities in California, Texas and South Carolina.

As a result, in addition to Ruiz 4 Kids, the non-profit organization created by Ruiz Foods Team Members, another avenue for giving, was conceived: the Ruiz Cares program. This program is designed to give Ruiz Team Members an opportunity to volunteer their time while Ruiz Foods supports the monetary needs of the project. “It’s a great way for our Team Members to become involved in projects that are dear to

each of them,” adds Tommy Pruitt, Florence human resources manager.

For example, recently 40 Florence Ruiz Foods Team Members donated a total of 69 hours and made 50 no-sew blankets. The blankets, crafted for the Pee Dee Coalition, were made to comfort families during a time of crisis. Presented to the Pee Dee Coalition on Nov. 22, they were divided between the Pee Dee Coalition’s Durant Children’s Center and its Emergency Safe Shelter. In addition to the blankets, Ruiz Foods also donated \$2500 in cash. Including this most recent blanket donation, Florence Ruiz Foods Team Members have donated a total of 85 blankets in 2019.

Also in November, the Ruiz Foods National Account sales team visited the Ruiz Foods Florence facility during its annual meeting. During their visit, the members of the sales team gave their time to Help 4 Kids by spending an afternoon packing lunches supporting the organization’s goal to help children not go hungry. In addition to their time, members of the Ruiz Foods National Account sales team also presented Help 4 Kids with a \$2500 check.

Finally, and once again, Florence Ruiz Foods Team Members participated in the Salvation Army’s “Angel Tree” gift program. Since the first year Ruiz Foods established this partnership, Team Members have purchased various gifts the children—ages newborn to 12 years old—put on their Christmas wish list. This year the partnership included 40 names.

“During the holidays, when many families are facing a bit of a tough time, our Team Members come through to help put a smile on a child’s face,” adds Mayadag. “This is our fourth year we’ve partnered with the Salvation Army during the Holidays...helping 195 children receive gifts.”

“We’re so proud of our Florence Team Members,” says Pruitt. “They understand that it’s all about community...and making a difference.”

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DON'T BE THE VICTIM OF A RENTAL SCAM

Submitted by Dr. John D'Ambrosio, CEO/President, BBB of Coastal Carolina



Dr. John D'Ambrosio

CONWAY-The holidays are over, and as winter takes hold on us, many of us start to think of warmer days and, before long, vacation planning begins. Or, maybe the new year brings a new opportunity, and it's time to move and rent a new place to live. Sounds simple to plan a vacation or find a new home. It can be a fun time to plan for the future.

Most of us start the search online. It's the easy thing to do, and the results can be shared with our family and friends. But when searching, are you aware of the pitfalls that can happen when looking to rent an apartment, house or a vacation property?

There are the usual questions that come up, like security deposits, parking, price, location, etc. And when you find the property that you're looking for, most of us act quickly to lock it in. After all, we don't want to lose the perfect place to someone else. However, the one question that almost no one ever asks is, "Does this unit actually exist, or is actually for rent?"

Millions of scam listings for apartments, houses and vacation properties dwell online. Property owners regularly report to Better Business Bureau (BBB) that people show up thinking they have a place to stay because they paid money upfront and signed an agreement, only to learn that they have been a victim of this cruel scam.

People are more likely to turn to free classified listing services such as Craigslist or Facebook Marketplace to look for rentals. There are large numbers of websites connecting renters with property owners or their property managers, including Apartments.com, Zillow.com, Trulia.com, Realtor.com, and Homes.com, all of which warn about rental scams, as does the FTC.

More than five million people lost money to rental scams, and 43 percent of online shoppers encountered a bogus listing, according to a recent survey. With fraudulent listings so common, anyone doing an Internet search to locate a place to rent faces a high risk of encountering a bogus listing. Perhaps the most common type of fraud involving rentals is the one where scammers simply copy the photo and description of a property, post it online with their own contact information and try to get a deposit and first month's rent from the victim.

Since it is unlikely that travelers will be able to inspect a vacation rental in advance, many turn to sites like Airbnb.com, VRBO.com or HomeAway.com to connect with property owners and pay using a secure payment system. But travelers still need to watch out for pitfalls associated with this industry to avoid arriving at a distant location, only to find their money gone and with nowhere to stay. In spite of the efforts of rental platforms to screen for bogus rental listings and alert users to fraud attempts, huge numbers continue to appear on the Internet, and millions of people lose money to them each year.

In 2019, the median loss of victims who reported rental scams to BBBScam Tracker was \$996. The survey found that the median loss was \$400, but one in three victims lost more than \$1,000.

Three of the most common scams involve fake listings and are designed to:

- Obtain up-front money by collecting a deposit or the first month's rent.
- Get people to buy online directories of homes supposedly for rent.
- Trick victims into signing up for credit monitoring.

After victims send money to the scammer, the supposed property owner simply disappears and stops responding. Many victims appear at the unit they believe that they have rented, only to find that the unit does not exist, is owned by someone else and who is not renting it, or is vacant and for sale. Landlords or property owners regularly encounter victims who contact them, thinking that they have a rental, and report this to BBB.

The same tactics used in apartment rentals may be employed to scam someone with a vacation rental, so the same red flags apply. BBB has received numerous reports of people who arrived at a vacation property with their families and luggage after having made advance payments only to discover that the location doesn't exist or is not available for rent,



leaving people stranded with nowhere to stay and finding that their money has disappeared. BBB and the FTC have issued alerts and tips for vacation travel. In addition, it is important to know that trip insurance may not cover fraud.

Home and apartment red flags to look for and may likely be a scam if:

- **The owner is out of town, and you cannot see the unit in person before sending money.**
- **There is a "for sale" sign in the yard.**
- **The rent advertised is well below market rates.**
- **The alleged owner or property manager wants money through Western Union, MoneyGram, or a gift card. No legitimate business gets paid this way.**

Those looking for a rental should first conduct an Internet search. Copy the photos in the post, and use Google Image Search or TinEye.com to check for multiple listings. Also, search using an interesting phrase in the description. And search for the address of the unit. If you see the unit in person, check ID and make sure you are dealing with the real property owner or manager.

If you are using a vacation rental platform:

- Beware of "owners" that want you to get off the platform to communicate or send money.
- Watch out for fake websites impersonating reputable vacation platforms. Real websites can be copied and created with another name.
- Research the rental property owner, and call them to be sure that they are real.
- Do a quick Internet search. Does the property exist at that address? Does the same photo appear at different locations?
- Look at reviews carefully. These can be helpful, but note that crooks may fake reviews.

If you think you are the victim of a scam, here's what you need to do:

- File a report with local police.
- Go to BBB.org to view a business' BBB Business Profile, including complaints and reviews, or to file a complaint or ScamTracker report.
- Contact the Federal Trade Commission at ftc.gov/complaint or by calling 877-FTC-HELP.
- File a complaint with the Internet Crime Complaint Center.

If you want more information on scams or want to report a scam, visit us at www.bbb.org/scamtracker. You can always give us a call if you want more information. BBB will continue our work to reduce the impact of scams to help consumers and legitimate businesses prosper in a trustworthy marketplace.

About the BBB: The Better Business Bureau of Coastal Carolina is located at 1121 Third Ave., in Conway, SC and covers the counties of Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion and Williamsburg in South Carolina and Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, New Hanover, Pender, Robeson and Sampson in North Carolina. For more information about becoming an Accredited Business, call 843-488-2227 or visit <https://www.bbb.org/myrtle-beach/accreditation-application>.

Rental Scams: Are You Falling For One?

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TOUGH LOVE HELPS MINORITY BUSINESS SUCCEED Submitted by Teowonna Clifton, Business Marketing Specialist, DESA Inc.



Alicia Vereen (K&J Logistics) and Reginald Vereen (Kwik Transport)

COLUMBIA— To be a successful business owner, it takes more than knowing how to do a job well; it takes knowing how to run a company. That's what Reginald Vereen, owner of Kwik Transport, found out when he moved from being a driver to an independent contractor for FedEx.

Vereen had been driving for another FedEx contractor for about a year when the opportunity to get his own truck and route surfaced. "I took advantage of the opportunity, and overnight, I became an owner instead of just a driver," Vereen recalled. While he knew how to make deliveries, he quickly realized the challenges that come with being a business owner.

Over the next seven years, Vereen grew his fleet from one vehicle to 11. However, while the company was making money, he felt that there was a piece of the puzzle missing. Along the way, he had reached out to business development organizations for help, but it never seemed to end with any real progress being made. "They tried to assist me, but for some reason, we just were not getting anywhere."

All that changed when Vereen read an article in Black Enterprise magazine about UP Community Fund, a minority-owned firm that provides flexible loans and technical assistance to small businesses. The article touted UP Community Fund's ability to not only provide funding, but to also provide assessment, direction, and guidance to entrepreneurs located within the southeastern region.

Vereen reached out and David Sharp, founder and managing partner, promptly responded. An initial meeting quickly ensued, and the business transformation began. To Vereen, the initial meetings felt like interrogations. The questions Sharp and his partners asked made him very uncomfortable.

"First meetings can be tough," Sharp admitted. "But I knew I had to get in there and find out what all the pain points were so we could see how to best help. For a business to be successful," Sharp continued, "the owner must know the numbers. What is the daily revenue for each route? How much does it cost to operate this truck daily? These are all numbers that a logistics company should review every single day."

It took a while, but with tough questions and a lot of analysis, Vereen got a grasp on his numbers, and his business began to make more sense.

Vereen had been grooming his daughter, Alicia, to take over his business. She had learned the delivery routes and how to monitor the operations and track the numbers. She had also become familiar with the staff and FedEx personnel. With industry changes coming about, Reginald Vereen decided it was time to move forward with making his company a family endeavor.

To make the transition successful, UP Community Fund determined strategies to decrease Vereen's business debt and reduce expenses. This included subleasing two

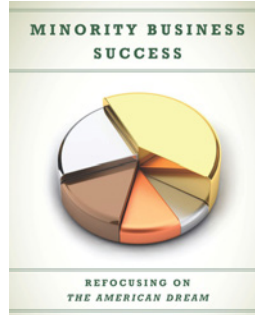
vehicles to other contractors to alleviate the burden of making the payments. In addition, his daughter, who had started her own company, K&J Logistics, was able to purchase his vehicles at a lower cost than purchasing new ones. UP Community Fund also provided funding for K&J Logistics to successfully kick off the business.

"Our goal always is to help our clients be more successful business owners," Sharp said. "This starts with listening to them and understanding their past and where they see themselves in the future. For Reginald and Alicia Vereen, this meant successfully ramping down his company while ramping hers up so she can have longevity and success."

With an exciting new venture on the horizon and the progress of his daughter's business, Vereen feels his family's business potential is unlimited. Wherever the businesses may go, he says UP Community Fund will be a part of his team.

About UP Community Fund

UP Community Fund's mission is to create upward mobility by providing flexible loans and technical assistance to small



businesses. UP provides the capital, direction and advice to help businesses succeed. For more information, visit UpCommunityFund.com, or call 704-252-5296.

About the MBDA Business Center

The mission of the MBDA Business Center is to assist Minority Business Enterprises compete in the global economy and to stimulate the national and local economy through job creation. To fulfill this mission, we assist MBEs with access to contracts and capital, strategic business counseling, and becoming export-ready. For more information on the MBDA Business Center and its services, visit ColumbiaMBDACenter.com, or call 803-743-1152.

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WHICH APPS HELP EMPLOYEES MOST? 3 TIPS FOR GROWING BUSINESSES



For many businesses in our increasingly technical world, future success will depend on how well they can take advantage of digital tools such as apps.

These days, it's all about finding and optimizing the right apps, which may explain why app usage has grown so much in recent years. In fact, 81 percent

of workers worldwide are using more apps now than they did five years ago, reports a recent Slack and GlobalWebIndex study.

Many of the apps most valuable to businesses are those that can step in to make work processes simpler, more productive and more collaborative. As you shop around for the tools that can help your business grow and function more efficiently, consider looking for the following capabilities.

*** Improve communication.** Workers are the heart and soul of your organization, and keeping them clued in to what's going on company-wide is key to keeping them engaged, supported and empowered. That's why many organizations are moving beyond email to an efficient workplace collaboration software like Slack. The digital workplace connects you to the people and tools you work with every day, no matter where you are or what you do. In Slack, teamwork and communication happen in channels. This new way of working enables teams to establish a single place for the sharing of messages, tools and files. Channel content can be organized by team, project or whatever else is relevant to the users. Chatbooks, a company that creates photo books, for example, uses Slack channels across remote teams in different

time zones to manage marching orders, product quality control and speedy customer support.

*** Create transparency.** Today's employees, particularly millennials, highly prioritize trust and transparency in their dealings with companies and organizations. To truly feel aligned and engaged, they must feel empowered to make decisions. However, that's hard to achieve when they don't have the information and resources they need. If you want everyone on your team to be able to find access and share that crucial information, you need to have the right system in place. Using Google Drive to create a "digital home" for all important documents is an easy and convenient way to ensure that happens.

*** Get organized.** It's hard to focus when computer desktops are packed with multiple notes, files and calendars that get clogged up easily. That's where Trello can step in to help users visualize and organize workloads. The project management tool has been a boon for Seattle-based ice cream company Molly Moon's, which integrates Trello with Slack so shop managers across branches can collaborate on day-to-day issues.

Modern work is more technologically driven than ever before, resulting in a fast-paced workplace and increased pressure with heightened demands. While apps and other tech tools help workers become more productive and collaborative, it's about providing better versions of them, not more, and carefully selecting consolidated solutions.

Optimizing technology can be a boost to your business, but bombarding workers with too much technology (just for technology's sake) can backfire by making them feel overwhelmed. Tools like Google Drive, Slack and Trello can help by letting employees decide how and when they wish to receive notifications and engage, so they face minimal interruptions and are able to remain productive and efficient.



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20/20 VISION – 7 STEPS TO CREATE AN UNFORGETTABLE YEAR by Robin Lewis



Welcome to 2020—a new year and the beginning of a new decade. I want to inspire your dreams, help you discover what may be holding you back and give you the “umph!” you need to create an unforgettable year. We’re going to talk about beliefs, goals and how you can create successful results.

Did you know that...



YOUR LIFE WILL ALWAYS REFLECT WHAT YOUR SOUL HAS DECIDED.

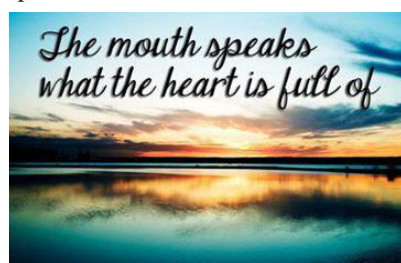
What we really believe is so powerful that even if it’s not what we want, it will be what we have. Allow me to explain. Beliefs start forming during childhood from our experiences and what our parents and others modeled for us.

Our soul is comprised of our mind, will, and emotions, and our beliefs are part of our mind. They are also intertwined with our feelings and choices. Together, all three parts make decisions for our life about what is possible, what to do next, what to react and respond to, etc.

Because we’ve all had some negative experiences, not all our beliefs are positive. From the hurtful or negative experiences in life, we can grow up to form beliefs that limit what we can accomplish. “Limiting beliefs” are the ones that often tell us what we “can’t” do, “can’t” accomplish or “can’t” become. They tell us what we’re “not” in our identity, value, and purpose. The limiting beliefs are the ones that tell us we can “never do enough” and that we will “never be enough” or that life is never going to be as good as we want it to be.

Limiting beliefs will limit our vision for the future, so it’s vital that we discover where they exist in minds. The key is knowing what is in our hearts and mind. We can discover limiting or wrong beliefs by listening to our thoughts, observing our choices and tapping into the source of our emotions.

By making a list of things we notice, we can discover where we are being held back. If the beliefs we discover do not agree with God’s word, then they are either wrong or limiting. To renew our minds and create new beliefs, we must state the new truth out loud daily for 60 days. Our brains are designed to receive the new beliefs based on the words we speak because our minds are renewable (Romans 12:2).



By the way, did you know that...

YOUR VISION WILL BECOME EMPOWERED BY YOUR WORDS.

Once we know what we want for our life this year, we must keep saying it. We must

declare it. Why? Because our words have creative power; we each are made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26). In the same way that he spoke every part of creation into existence, we too have power in our spoken words. Proverbs 18:21 says, “The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences.” This means that we can use our words to create, for better or for worse.

If we speak negative, fearful or angry words, then we will create results based on those things. But if we discipline ourselves to speak positive, faith-filled and hopeful words, we will create results that align with those beliefs and attitudes. Galatians 6:7-9 teaches that we will always harvest what we plant, for good or for bad. So, let’s plant or speak positive and hopeful words.

When we combine our spoken words with something physical or symbolic of our vision, then the resulting power is multiplied. Examples would be a picture of the result or a vision board. It’s also important to write your vision and goals down. We are 42 percent more likely to achieve goals we have written.



So, get ready to act on...

7 STEPS TO 20/20 VISION

1. Focus Forward. Be done with yesterday. Which disappointments, experiences, successes or failures from 2019 or before are you still talking about? Get it out, and let it go. Unless you bring closure to your past, you will carry it with you into the future. Your past only defines you if you give it permission to speak. Forgive others, forgive yourself and focus forward.

2. Design your future. Get inspired! Write down 7-10 goals that are going to design your life. This year move beyond what you want and define what you will do. Make sure they are....

ACTIONABLE: begin with a verb

ALIGNED: with seasons of life, your values and others you are traveling with

CHALLENGING: set high enough to demand your best effort

TIME BOUND: assign dates, but not the same for each goal

INSPIRING: not mundane but tap into your passion

OBJECTIVE: include criteria so progress can be evaluated

NARROW: specific, not broad or general

3. Determine your “why.” Your “why” is your motivation, your burning reason. Your “why” keeps you going when you want to give up. How would your life be affected when you reach the goal? How is your goal life-changing? Why does it matter? Who needs you to reach your goals? Get in touch with your passion, and fuel your dreams.

4. Share your goals selectively. Only share with a few inner circle friends for their encouragement and accountability. Share your goals with the world, and it actually lowers the possibility of completing them.

5. Review your goals regularly. Go over your goals weekly or monthly to keep them fresh in your heart and mind. Read over your “why,” and keep the passion alive. This practice will train you to believe in yourself and what is possible and help you envision the goal accomplished.

6. Make it happen! Get in on the calendar, in bite-sized pieces, and don’t make excuses. If you work your plan, adjusting as needed, you will accomplish your goal. Aim for victory, and get help when necessary.

7. Don’t do life alone! It’s the warriors who fight together who win the day. Those who fight forward alone tend to burn out. Share the load. When

20/20 VISION – 7 STEPS TO CREATE CONT'D

we team up with others, motivation and momentum are multiplied. If you don't have a team, get a life coach who works in the niche you need.

CAN I GUARANTEE RESULTS? ABSOLUTELY NOT!



You know as well as I do that life in this world isn't always fair. You can do everything right, and not everyone will see you as the amazing, creative, caring and intelligent visionary that you are. Only God sees your true worth and value.

So on the tough days, when you're still a long way from your goals or

you're tempted to give up, you are going to have to find that belief in yourself, in the unique person God made you to be, and remember that he is on your side.

On those days, don't change your goals. Instead, change your action steps. But keep taking steps. You have a destiny to fulfill that no one else

can, and that makes you utterly irreplaceable. Pray for wisdom, and ask God to show you the best way forward. In the journey, practice good self-care, take breaks and enjoy your life. Let's make 2020 an unforgettable year!



HOW CAN I SERVE YOU?

If there's a way I can bless, serve or pray for you, please let me know. You're invited to book a FREE 45-minute Life Discovery Session without further obligation. You'll walk away with a three-step action plan you can begin implementing right away. Your life matters and the world is waiting for you to become all you are created to be.

Robin Lewis is a certified Christ-centered life coach and author of "The Guts and Glory of Forgiveness, Living Healed." You can find her on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Visit her website at www.RobinLewisLife.com to book a FREE Life Discovery Session and find out about her coaching programs and online courses.

6 WAYS TO PRAY BIGGER PRAYERS IN THE NEW YEAR Meg Bucher, iBelieve

Prayer is powerful. God is all heart, and he knows ours fully. Prayer is an intimate connection with our creator, who hears us and loves us. Jesus sacrificed his life to forever open up the lines of communication between us and our great and holy God. Prayer doesn't have to be organized. There are no requirements for prayer. Prayer is simply talking to God. It's a conversation. It's a relationship.

How is your prayer life? If one of your resolutions for the new year is to become a person of prayer, we have a few tips for you. The following suggestions are meant to stir what God is already speaking to your heart. Here are ten ways to pray bigger prayers in the new year:

1. Pray the Word of God

There is power in the name of Jesus, and John 1:1 reminds, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (NIV). Praying the word of God and speaking Jesus' name brings the power of God's presence into our everyday lives. Our purposeful God chooses to communicate to us through the truth in his word.

Scripture is layered in God's love for us, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to connect it to our everyday lives. Spend time in God's word daily, and pray the scriptures he highlights. The Bible promises, when we seek him, we will find him. In our everyday lives, we can meet with him, praying for the perspective to see the way he is weaving it into our daily situations.

2. Pray Big Things

God is not unable to fulfill big requests in our lives, so long as they align with his will. Discerning which dreams are futile and worldly and which are God-planted can be hard to discern at times. Lift up every beautiful dream to God because he is the god of all ...including our dreams. He already knows our hearts better than we do. Our faithful father matures us in Jesus' with every faithful step we take towards him. Important, though, after we share our dreams with God, is to pray his will above all else. If our dreams do not align with God's will and purpose for our lives, we don't want them to come true. Always pray for God's perspective and overarching will in life over any dreams we have and plans we make.

3. Pray for the People God Has Placed in Your Proximity

God places us purposefully in this life, and surrounds us with people to encourage ...and others to encourage us. It's good to honor those people in our prayers and express our gratitude for family, friends, and community. Before we walk out into our day, it's important to think

of the people our lives border and to lift them up to God in prayer. He hears us. It matters when we pray for our neighbors and those who we know are hurting, sick or lost. Pray even bigger, including for those who we don't know yet but will cross our paths today or in the near future. Pray for eyes to see those around us as he does and to be an extension of his love to them.

4. Pray for Purpose

Humanity, created in God's very image, is purposed to honor and glorify him. Each, in our own unique way, knit together with different personality combinations and talents and have the opportunity to participate in the furthering of God's Kingdom. Jesus told his followers in the sermon on the mount to "Go!" and tell the good news they had heard. It's a command still ringing true today as our lives are the very feet carrying the gospel to the far corners of the globe. Our jobs, careers, education, service and statures in life are all meant for one purpose: that every ear will have the opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ and his gift of salvation. We are living life to the full, as Jesus died for us to do when we are operating within the will of God for our lives.

5. Pray Prayers of Gratitude for What God Has Done

Gratitude is clinically proven to improve our psyche. God knows it's good for us to recall our blessings, especially in times of trial. Some of the biggest prayers are the ones muttered through a soggy and crumpled up state but capped with "I love You. I thank You. I trust You. You are good, God." Big faith has the courage to remain grateful despite pain, injustice, loss and sadness. Our joy isn't fleeting like happiness, but a sustaining hope. When we intentionally set aside time and make the effort to recall the ways God has moved in our lives, we will find a rich treasure full of godly gratitude.

6. Pray for Provision and Prosperity

God knows the number our days here on earth, and when they are finished, we cannot take anything we've accumulated in this life with us onto heaven. A big prayer life keeps that perspective priority. Our good father blesses us more than we can ask for or imagine in this life. Sometimes, it's monetary and material things for us to enjoy, but we are never to cling to them.

In our prayer lives, we can diligently ask God to be the god of our finances and material possessions. Acknowledging all we have is his and from him guards our hearts against pride and idols. Colossians 3:23 admonishes us to work hard in everything our hands find to do. God is the reason we are, have and do anything.

Prayer is the most powerful weapon we have on this earth. God hears us, loves us, defends us and provides for us. His compassion for us is inexplicable. As we pray big things, let us discover more and more about our amazing God.





RUSH PROGRAM AT FDTC EMPOWERS STUDENTS FOR THE FUTURE Submitted by FDTC



R.U.S.H. Program's biology coach, Dr. Julius Oyekan, sets up an interactive forensic activity for a student.

The RUSH (Removing Underserved Student Hurdles) Program at Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) helps its students succeed by tackling hurdles encountered inside as well as outside of the classroom.

The RUSH Program assists its students on their educational journey through free tutorial services, academic advisement, career counseling, job shadowing, a book/laptop loan program, workshops and much more. It serves first-time freshmen enrolled in STEM and healthcare programs. An extension of the program, RUSH CTE, serves career and technical students and welcomes walk-ins for tutoring services.

When a student approaches the RUSH staff, he or she becomes a member of the tight-knit family. The staff tutors students on classwork and helps them prepare for a life beyond college as they market themselves for a job upon graduation from FDTC. RUSH regularly hosts workshops that help students create resumes and cover letters and learn how to dress and participate in a job interview.

“A lot of our students, especially on the CTE side, are not your traditional English and math students,” said Ashley Prosser, RUSH CTE counselor. “That’s typically not what their main need is. They’re looking for how to market themselves in order to get a job. For our Welding students specifically, we came up with a career readiness series, and the first one was ‘Resume and Cover Letter.’ That was immediately relevant to them and to those fields.”

The RUSH staff also helps its students tackle issues outside of the classroom that may be affecting their ability to concentrate on coursework. They help students develop good practices that will help them not only be employable but also stay employed. Students learn about time management and even have the opportunity to attend credit score seminars through the RUSH Program.

“Our students go through so much,” said RUSH program coordinator, Dr. Andre Boyd. “We try to teach them how to respond to life. We teach them that you have to face it, but you don’t have to accept life the way that it is. I think that all of us find ourselves in a place where we have a mindset of scarcity because we have few limited resources, and we don’t always think the way we should.”

Students these days have a lot on their minds and have to deal with scenarios that are happening in their lives outside of the classroom, such as finding transportation to the college or solidifying a warm meal in-between class. Add those stresses to testing anxiety, and a full day at the college can be very overwhelming. The RUSH staff tackles those issues by helping the students relax and mentally overcome the challenges in their lives.

“A lot of our students come in, and sometimes they’re just stressed out,” said Shelanda Deas, RUSH counselor. “We want them to relax and learn about different techniques that can help them in the long run.”

A really unique way students can relax is through virtual reality (VR) therapy. Today’s young generation grew up on technology, playing video games and learning how to use mobile apps. Students can now be digitally immersed in a VR world, which helps them escape reality for a few moments. The VR applications can also be fun and educational.

“On the VR subject, that is particularly amazing because most students aren’t exposed to it in their everyday lives, so they’re super excited about it,” said Mariah Spigner, RUSH ELA Coach. “We have the opportunity now that even when they’re not necessarily playing with an educational app as such, we can still educate them on this is how VR works, and this is why it works. Even the fun is educational.”

While RUSH offers an array of services to its students, the program does concentrate on STEM learning. Earlier this year, students placed machine learning and artificial intelligent bots on a Raspberry Pi, which is essentially a credit card sized computer that can plug into a monitor or TV. Students connected a camera to the Raspberry Pi and taught it to identify various details and objects in the room.

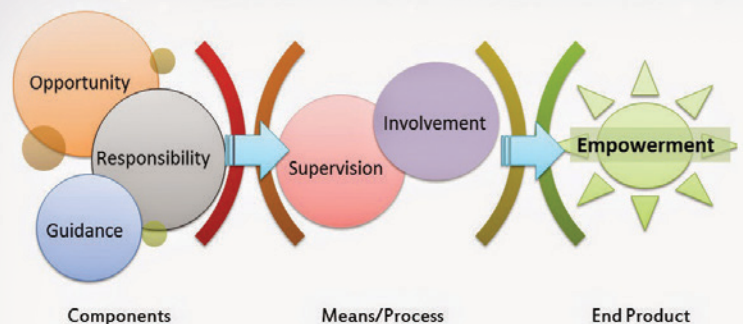
“With just connecting a camera, we could teach the computer to identify a phone, the color of the wall and anything else in the room,” Dr. Boyd said. “It has the sophistication to program and teach itself. The students started exploring how the camera can detect emotions of a person, whether they are frustrated as opposed to being perplexed or frightened.”

The Raspberry Pi project not only allowed the students to work with cutting-edge technology on an advanced level, but the actual language that communicated between the devices was actually written in the classroom. Students literally learned how to write code to solve an assignment.

“The students built it,” said Dr. Boyd about the coding used in the classroom. “The students designed it and made it up. They didn’t buy it, and they didn’t download it.”

At the end of the day, the RUSH program prepares its students for the real world through the transferable skills developed in the classroom. Students within the program are empowered and learn that the more knowledge they can obtain, the more marketable they will be upon graduation.

“We just help them understand that you have to be more marketable,” Dr. Boyd said. “There are things that you can do now to generate wealth and revenue for yourself before you graduate and after you graduate.”





FDTC STUDENT CHOIR GRANTED FUNDS FOR DRESS CLOTHES Submitted by FDTC



The FDTC Student Choir rehearses for winter performances.

Florence-Darlington Technical College's (FDTC) first student choir in more than 30 years will have tuxedos and gowns thanks to a \$2,500 grant.

The funds to buy the dress clothes came from the Florence Regional Arts Alliance just in time for big performances for the brand new group. The grant helped the choir purchase 10 formal black tuxedos and 10 formal

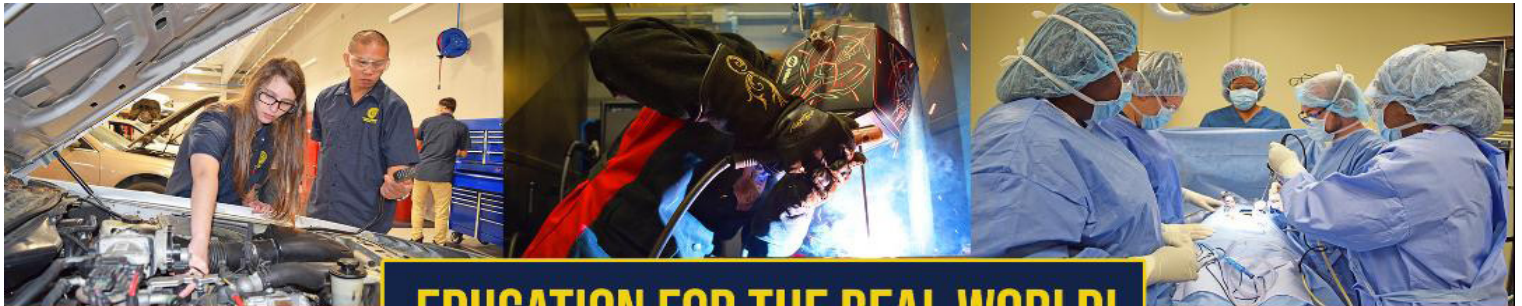
black gowns. It also helped the FDTC Choir purchase branded apparel from the bookstore on campus.

The FDTC Student Choir performed two patriotic songs at the Florence Veterans Day ceremony at the Veterans Park next to the Florence Center on Nov. 11. The students also performed during the Christmas Concert at the Francis Marion University (FMU) Performing Arts Center on Nov. 25. FDTC's choir joined groups from FMU and Morris College as well as the FMU Strings Ensemble.

FDTC's Student Choir was organized by Rebecca Hunter. The participating students are enrolled in her Music 101 class. In addition to local performances, she has also secured the choir an invitation to sing at the National Memorial Day Celebration at the Washington, D.C. Kennedy Center in May. "It's a great opportunity for students to learn from and hear other great musicians!" said Hunter.

Hundreds of students from choirs around the country are invited to the three-day celebration of the 2020 Memorial Day event in the nation's capital. The show will broadcast to the United States Armed Forces and their families serving around the world.

Music instructor Hunter is applying for other grants to help pay for the FDTC Student Choir's expenses to the nation's capital. For more information, contact Rebecca Hunter at rebecca.hunter@fdtc.edu or 843-661-8181.



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ACCESSIBILITY AND DISABILITY SERVICES AT COASTAL CAROLINA

Submitted by Emily Vrettos, CCU Student Marketing Assistance



Emily Gaspar

CONWAY—Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) at Coastal Carolina University (CCU) offers growing support and assistance to approximately 400 students at CCU who use accommodations. ADS offers support and assistance to current and incoming students with disabilities and medical conditions by coordinating and implementing appropriate accommodations and providing resources and services as they relate to academics, university housing, dining and campus activities. Alternative textbooks, like

audiobooks, are provided by ADS for students who are visually impaired. Accessibility and Disability Services has a team of four full-time staff who work with students to identify and implement accommodations, while also proactively creating greater overall access on campus.

Emily Gaspar, director of Accessibility and Disability Services, explains why ADS matters on Coastal’s campus. “Our perspective is that disability is a part of someone’s identity, and that’s also part of what makes the campus diverse and adds different perspectives and life experiences,” Gaspar said.

Gaspar is in her third year working for Coastal as director of ADS, contributing to the growth of the office and the setting and achieving of goals. She meets with faculty and staff around campus to incorporate ADS services in all departments. ADS moved to the newly renovated Laurel Hall on campus, which is a small building located right near

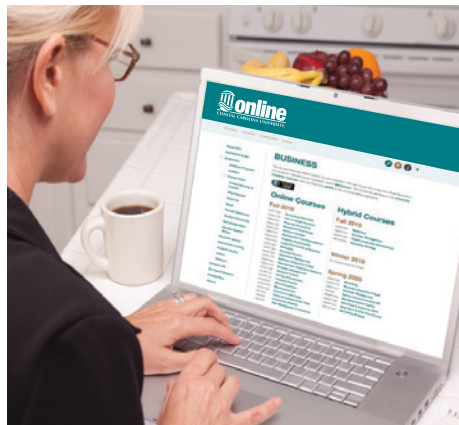
the heart of campus. This gives employees more room to provide the numerous services they offer and makes it easier for students to find and access those services.

The ADS team successfully transitioned from a paper registration process to an online system this summer. Now both students and faculty can log in to the web-based system to access accommodations and schedule appointments and testing. This new process is more accessible and reduces paperwork so the initial accommodation meeting can remain interactive and discussion-based.

The new location of the office also boasts improved testing space. There is a distraction-reduced testing room, along with several separate testing spaces. The separate testing spaces double as individual study rooms for students. This new study space is popular among students and provides a quiet, individual location for exam preparation, paper writing and focused time to organize assignments.

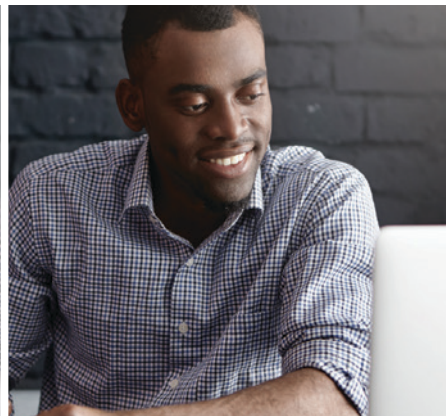
Gaspar believes the office’s first interaction with students, which takes place at summer Orientation, truly makes them feel welcome at Coastal Carolina University. “There are lots of different life experiences that people have related to their ability that might fall within the disability category, and some of those are more apparent to us visually than others,” Gaspar said. “During our first interactions with students and their families, we are working to spread that message and help them to understand our lens on disability.”

Accessibility and Disability Services is pleased with the recent improvements and expansion, and there continues to be room to grow. It is pivotal in the University’s success as an inclusive institution to have a disability service on campus to make sure every student—regardless of ability—has the opportunity to thrive.



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FMU MEDICAL COMPLEX NAMED FOR LEATHERMAN Submitted by FMU



Hugh Leatherman

Francis Marion University's new medical education complex will help the University continue to serve a great need in Pee Dee region. And, it will be named for a couple whose careers have been devoted to that same ideal.

The FMU Board of Trustees recently unanimously approved naming the new facility in downtown Florence the Hugh and Jean Leatherman Medical Education Complex at one of its regular meetings.

The 36,000-square-foot facility will be located in the former U.S. Post Office and federal building in downtown Florence. FMU received the building as a gift several years ago and is now in the process of renovating it. When complete, the facility will house classrooms, laboratories and office space for FMU's expanding School of Health Sciences.

Hugh Leatherman has represented Florence in the South Carolina Senate since 1981. He is chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and is President Pro Tempore Emeritus. Leatherman has been a trustee at FMU and a trustee emeritus since 1988.

Jean Leatherman, a real estate executive in Florence, is a long-time

philanthropic supporter of education in the Florence community, including both the Florence One schools and FMU.

In its naming resolution, the board cited the Leatherman's passionate advocacy of "medical, nursing, and health care education to better meet the needs of South Carolinians, especially in the Pee Dee region." They also noted Senator Leatherman's "effective leadership at the local, regional and state levels to develop collaborative strategies and affect creative solutions to enhance developmental growth and prosperity."

The resolution cited Jean Leatherman's work on behalf of "the citizenry through her extensive civic, community, and philanthropic efforts."

Robert Lee, chair of the board of trustees, said the honor was well-deserved. "Senator Leatherman has been a great friend to FMU and to the Florence community as well," said Lee. "Honoring the Leathermans with the naming of the new medical education complex recognizes the important role they have played in the revitalization of downtown, and in this community in general."

Dr. Fred Carter, FMU's president, agreed. "Hugh and Jean have been two of the University's strongest supporters for almost four decades. But everyone should understand that their support has done more than simply sustain us—it inspires us. They understand who we are, the constituencies that we serve. They have both helped us work through the challenges we've faced through the years, and they are an essential part of whatever success we've realized."



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RECRUITING AND RETAINING A DIVERSE TEACHING WORKFORCE

Submitted by Dr. Kandace Bethea, Superintendent



Dr. Kandace Bethea, Superintendent

MARION -Fact: South Carolina districts reported 555.5 teaching positions (in FTEs) still vacant at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year (CERRA Report, 2019).

Fact: In South Carolina 28 percent of first-year teachers hired for 2018-19 did not return to the same position in 2019-20 (CERRA Report, 2019).

Fact: Every state has a disproportionate number of minority teachers to minority students (Center for American Progress, 2017).

The fact is, we need more highly effective and diverse teachers in our schools. In recruiting teachers to the profession, we must also acknowledge that diversity benefits every workforce, and teaching is no exception.

Racial diversity among teachers also helps break down biases across races, thus having a positive effect on all students (Partelow et al., 2017). One rationale behind the correlation is that teachers with similar backgrounds to their students can relate to them more easily. For example, one study showed that African American male students taught by African American male teachers are more likely to attend a four-year college (Gershenson et al., 2017 as cited by Herrmann, 2018; Jacobson, 2018b). In South Carolina, we are fortunate to have programs such as the Call Me Mister (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) program, which started at Clemson University in 2000. This program is building a pipeline for next-generation African American male teachers. Its mission is to increase the pool of available teachers from a broader, more diverse background. Student participants are largely selected from

underserved, socio-economically disadvantaged and educationally at-risk communities. The Call Me MISTER program has expanded to 16 colleges across South Carolina and has been implemented in eight other states.

As school districts, we must actively recruit from institutions that are graduating a diverse population of teachers as well as actively engage our high school students in classes and activities that promote teaching as a profession. In addition, we must create favorable working conditions, to include:

1. Giving teachers with diverse backgrounds a voice and opportunity to build a community. We need to include diverse teachers in the hiring process and be intentional about hearing their voices.
2. Offering a comprehensive induction program to support diverse teachers in their first years of teaching. This may include being matched with a veteran mentor teacher, additional professional development opportunities and/or extra coaching support (Carver-Thomas, 2018).
3. Developing opportunities for career growth, including leadership academies, coaching, and opportunities to represent the district at conferences and other events.
4. Providing ongoing professional learning for school leaders so they are better prepared to promote inclusivity and support all teachers effectively.

As we continue to focus on initiatives to recruit and retain a more diverse population of teachers, school districts must provide platforms to help all teachers feel as though they have value and voice, create a culture that doesn't tolerate race-based stereotypes and foster environments that welcome and appreciate diversity in the landscape of our classrooms.

(Additional Reference: "Teacher Recruitment & Retention: Attract and Keep Your Most Effective Educators" published by Insight Education Group)

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Syquita Jones came to college not knowing what to expect. Would the classes be small enough for her to know her colleagues? Would her professors ever know her name? Could she get involved in multiple campus activities? The answer to all of those questions, as it turned out, was, “Yes.”

A member of the Francis Marion University (FMU) Student Alumni Association, the Baptist Collegiate Ministry, Phi Beta Lambda, the American Chemical Society and numerous other organizations, and a student worker within the FMU Police Department, Jones found herself involved in nearly every facet of campus life at FMU.

It wasn’t always that way, though. Jones, who is from Gresham, was shy and a little uncertain when she arrived at FMU—like many freshmen. “I kind of just went to class, did my work, came back to my dorm, ate at the cafeteria, took naps,” Jones says.

However, Jones’ eyes were opened to new possibilities by a visit to FMU’s Baptist Collegiate Ministry. She became a BCM regular, which allowed her to meet more people and become more engaged at FMU. Before long, she found herself surrounded by friends and feeling right at home.

“Because of its size, FMU is really intimate,” Jones says. “I walk by the same people all the time, and everybody knows everybody, and everybody’s friendly with everyone else. That’s a big part in building a community. You won’t meet a stranger.”

That feeling extended into Jones’ studies. “The professors make sure that you know the material and that you understand everything that you’re going into,” she says. “There’s a lot of faculty that want to see the best of you. If they see that you’re not really applying yourself, they’re going to call you out.”

Jones’ time as an undergraduate student is ending, but her time at FMU is not over. In August, she’s planning to enroll in the Physician Assistant Studies program at the Francis Marion School of Health Sciences.

BROAD-BASED EDUCATION PREPARES FENNELL FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL

Luke Fennell knew what he wanted from his college experience: a degree that would put him on the path to becoming a doctor. The biology major from the small town of Olanta found that at Francis Marion University—and so much more.

Fennell’s journey will continue next year when he begins medical school at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in Spartanburg. It began long before he ever set foot on the FMU campus. “I considered going to some of the larger universities in the state,” Fennell says. “FMU’s small class size and the relationships that the students have with their professors, as well as the Honors Program, specifically brought me here... I knew it was the place for me.” Fennell felt home at FMU.

But he reveled in trips far from campus as well. During his four years at the University, Fennell spent time in the jungles of Ecuador at FMU’s Wildsumaco Biological Research Station with professor Travis Knowles and the historic districts of England as an Honors Program ambassador with Dr. Jon Tuttle.

Those experiences helped Fennell grow in ways that changed his life, regardless of his chosen profession. “As a small-town guy from South Carolina, it was neat to be able to go through the jungles of South America and travel around the Andes Mountains,” Fennell says. “International travel broadens your perspective, regardless of career interests. As a physician, as an educator, or anything else, these trips help broaden your horizons. It makes you a more well-rounded person in whatever career you go into.”

Fennell was also able to dive into the world of medicine during his undergraduate career. He shadowed doctors at the region’s hospitals during internships and probed the world of biomedical research in his upper-level classes. Getting a taste of serious research is unusual for undergraduates at many schools, but not at FMU.

Fennell’s next stop is medical school and then, the

United States Air Force, where he hopes to serve as an emergency physician or a general surgeon.

The road ahead is full of challenges, but Fennell feels good about his prospects. And he knows he wouldn’t be where he is without FMU. “The relationships that I’ve built at FMU will continue throughout my career,” he says. “They provided opportunities I never thought I would have... There are so many opportunities that Francis Marion has provided.”



HGTC INTERNATIONAL CULINARY INSTITUTE ACHIEVES LEADER STATUS Submitted by HGTC



CONWAY—Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) is proud to announce that the International Culinary Institute (ICI) of Myrtle Beach Fowler Dining Room has achieved Smart Catch Leader Status by the James Beard Foundation.

“We have a commitment to sustainable sourcing and always worked hard on sourcing responsibly. This past year, we took it to the next level with the help of the Smart Catch Program and the James Beard Foundation,” said Joe Bonaparte, Executive Chef and Director of the International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach.

The James Beard Foundation partners with chefs and other leaders to work toward a better food world. One of the roles of the Foundation is to support the culinary community to become effective advocates for causes that make a positive change in the world now through food and about food and for the next generation.

“Due to the diligence in meeting the Smart Catch Leader requirements and eliminating red items from the menu, we are so excited that The Fowler Dining Room is Smart Catch Leader. Thank you for your commitment to sustainably sourced seafood. The overall performance in the program in the past year has been excellent,” said Megan Storms, Impact Programs coordinator for the James Beard Foundation.

“Special thanks to Chef Joe Bonaparte and our outstanding faculty and staff at the ICI of Myrtle Beach for your unwavering commitment to our students, our community and our planet,” said HGTC President, Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore.

To find out more, visit the International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach website and the James Beard Foundation website.

The International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach at Horry-Georgetown Technical College boasts a state-of-the-art facility at the heart of the Grand Strand. Located at 920 Crabtree Lane in Myrtle Beach, it offers associate degree and certificate programs, including South Carolina’s only associate degree in baking and pastry arts. Internships and scholarships are available to qualifying students. Horry-Georgetown Technical College’s Culinary Arts programs are accredited by the American Culinary Federation Educational Institute, and graduates are eligible for ACF certification.

About HGTC

Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) offers college transfer and skilled associate degree programs in more than 65 fields of study, and many with online class options. Nearly all programs feature internships that lead to jobs. Ninety-five percent of students either transfer to earn advanced degrees or start careers in their respective fields of study. Horry-Georgetown Technical College prohibits discrimination against students and employees. Please direct discrimination and accessibility issues to the Office of Student Affairs at 843-349-5228.



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MEDICINE AND MILITARY COMBINE FOR TWO NEW OFFICERS, FMU GRADS Submitted by FMU



Two members of the Francis Marion University Reserve Officer Training Corps program were recently commissioned as officers in the U.S. military ahead of fall commencement exercises. Both new officers will enter military medical fields and plan to advance their training while serving.

Second Lieutenant Nicholas Smith is entering active duty with the U.S. Army Nursing Corps. Second Lieutenant William Dunson Jr. was commissioned to the South Carolina National Guard's Medical Service Corps.

Second Lieutenant Smith traveled the world while growing up with his mother, Kathleen Smith, a former petty officer in the U.S. Navy. Kathleen Smith is an FMU alumna. During travels that took him from Japan to Germany and a few places in between, Nicholas Smith participated in Jr. ROTC in both the Army and the Air Force as they traveled to the various schools where his mother was teaching as part of the Department of Defense Education Activities (DODEA). DODEA operates school around the world for military-connected students.

"My mom's my inspiration and the idea of a hard-working and motivated individual," Smith said. "She's supported me from day one and never faltered in her belief that I will succeed."

Smith has served in the National Guard as a combat medic. He is the first ROTC student at FMU to graduate with a nursing degree.

Smith will be stationed in San Antonio, Texas, for training while he studies in preparation for nursing licensure exam. He plans to pursue a career in critical care and eventually wants to become a certified nurse anesthetist. "I'm a pretty fun guy, so people are surprised to see my passion for critical care," Smith said, "but being able to take people from seriously injured through the step down and healing process is all I have ever wanted to do."

Second Lieutenant Dunson, a native of Dillon, credits his long time mentor, Sergeant First Class Randy Gray, for encouraging him on his life path. Dunson joined Jr. ROTC under Gray in his freshman year of high school. "He (Gray) has supported me every step of the way," Dunson said. Gray gave Dunson his first officer's salute as part of the commissioning ceremony.

Always interested in medicine, Dunson will graduate with a degree in biology. But until a hip injury last year, he wasn't sure what type of medicine he wanted to pursue. "That injury really showed me that chiropractic care was where I wanted to be. I love to see patients through the process from injury through healing," said Dunson.

He will begin his chiropractic education in July at Sherman College of Chiropractic in Spartanburg while serving with the South Carolina National Guard.



DCSD GRADUATES PRIMED TO FIND SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE



Students work as interns at local business

overall criteria to be deemed career ready. The state average was 72.5 percent.

DCSD Superintendent Dr. Tim Newman attributed the success to an intensive district-wide focus on career readiness. "We certainly concentrate on our academics, but we also place great importance on helping students in every way possible," he said. "That includes work-based learning experiences and professional certifications. We want our students to be able to transition directly into the workforce after high school if they so choose."

In DCSD, 21.4 percent of graduates completed Career and Technical Education with certification. That figure is double the state average of 10.9 percent. More than 8 percent of DCSD diploma earners completed a state-approved work-based learning experience compared to the state average of 5.3 percent. DCSD's diploma earners met the state average on the standard career readiness assessment by earning a platinum, gold or silver certificate at a rate of 66.8 percent.

DARLINGTON—Data from the state's 2019 school district report cards indicate that most Darlington County School District (DCSD) graduates are prepared to find success in the workplace. According to DCSD's report card issued by the S.C. Department of Education, 75.7 percent of 2018-19 graduates met the state's

According to the State Accountability Manual, a student can be designated as career ready by achieving one of several options: Earning a Career and Technical Education Completer with an Industry Credential, scoring a 31 or higher on the ASVAB, achieving a designation of "Silver" or higher on the WIN assessment or by completing a work-based learning experience.

Since March, 65 DCSD students participated in Internship Signing Day ceremonies to work as interns for local businesses. Currently, the district has 31 business partners working closely with the Key to Career program to provide paid, work-based opportunities. Student interns from DCSD earned nearly \$100,000 in wages since March.

Businesses interested in partnering with DCSD's Key to Career program can contact Quinetta Buterbaugh, DCSD's business engagement coordinator, at 843-398-3520.





John Rhodes, 2018 Champion for Youth winner, and HGTC President, Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore

CONWAY—Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) is proud to announce that its President, Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore, was presented with the Champion for Youth Award 2019 by the Boys & Girls Club of the Grand Strand.

Dione Buonto, chief executive officer of the Boys & Girls Club of the Grand Strand, and John Rhodes, 2018 Champion for Youth winner, presented Fore with the award at the 2019 Champion for Youth Dinner

Celebration held at the Crown Reef Resort & Waterpark Conference Center.

Rhodes introduced Fore by saying, “She is someone who has been a great leader at Horry-Georgetown Technical College and a great leader for our youth. She does the job, but it’s not a job. She’s not there for the paycheck. She’s there for what she can do for the education of our youth.”

Following the presentation of the award, Fore was able to express her appreciation with the audience. “Thank you so much, Boys and Girls Club of the Grand Strand, for this great award. I’m so honored to receive it. I’m here because I believe in your mission. My life changed when I found mentors in my life. For those of you who can be a mentor, I am telling you there’s nothing like it in the whole world. That’s why I love what I am doing. There’s so much work to be done. I needed those people in my life, and now it’s my time. It’s been my time, and I’m having the time of my life.”

For more information about HGTC, please visit the HGTC Website.



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GSSM & HABITAT FOR HUMANITY WELCOME THEIR NEWEST NEIGHBOR Submitted by GSSM



Affordable Family Home

HARTSVILLE-When a parent asks his or her child what he or she did during a typical day at school, rarely is that parent prepared for the child to respond with, “We built a house.” Such ambitious projects are generally unheard of within the public-school curriculum unless, of course, the student is attending the South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) located in Hartsville.

Students from GSSM partnered with Darlington County Habitat for Humanity during the 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years to build an affordable family home in Hartsville on Mill Avenue, just near the GSSM campus. GSSM students participated throughout construction including framing, flooring, landscaping, and painting.



New Home Owners

On Dec. 8, GSSM students joined Darlington County Habitat for Humanity to dedicate the new home and hand the keys to their newest neighbor.

GSSM students contributed significantly to the completion of this home during 2019. This will be the fifth home completed with the assistance of GSSM students since the Fall of 2017 and the 50th home built by Darlington County Habitat for Humanity.

Mark Haenchen, executive director for Darlington County Habitat for Humanity, could not be more enthusiastic about the efforts of the GSSM students. “Working with the students from GSSM continues to be a wonderful experience,” he commented, adding that “these students are so gifted and have quickly learned to do a professional job, making a big impact on construction program.”

Building a home challenged students with practical applications of their lessons in mathematics, physics and, engineering while providing a change of pace from the regular daily tasks of high school. “Habitat for Humanity has allowed me to meet so many amazing people and make a difference in our community. I have learned so much about myself and what it means to be altruistic through my experience with this organization. I will always be grateful to Habitat for Humanity for allowing me to help others and grow as a person,” said Peyton Gregory (GSSM Class of 2021).

Students also gained first-hand experience with the challenges of turning conceptualized plans into reality, a process facilitated by the real-world know-how of Habitat for Humanity’s knowledgeable construction managers.

“One of GSSM’s missions is to develop ethically aware leaders. Students volunteering their precious time to build affordable, quality homes for our neighbors in need reflects their commitment to making the world a better place now and in the future,” said Dr. Josh Witten, GSSM Director of Research and Inquiry and member of the Darlington County Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors.

In addition to the rigorous coursework and research projects,

GSSM students participate in a wide variety of community service projects. GSSM students recognized the partnership with Habitat for Humanity as the “Best Community Service Project” for the 2017-2018 school year at its annual Student Follies awards.

The dedication ceremony not only marked the successful conclusion of one project but also a continuing commitment to the Darlington County community. GSSM students have already contributed to progress on three additional Habitat for Humanity homes in 2019.

About Darlington County Habitat for Humanity - for more information, visit <https://www.darcohabitat.org/>

Started in 1996, Darlington County Habitat for Humanity is part of a global, nonprofit housing organization operated on Christian principles that seeks to put God’s love into action by building homes, communities and hope. Darlington County Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes; by advocating for fair and just housing policies; and by providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions. Habitat for Humanity was founded on the conviction that every man, woman and child should have a simple, durable place to live in dignity and safety and that decent shelter in decent communities should be a matter of conscience and action for all.

Founded in Americus, Ga., in 1976, Habitat for Humanity today operates around the globe and has helped build, renovate and repair decent, affordable houses sheltering more than 9.8 million people worldwide.



GSSM Students helping to build the new home

About GSSM

Founded in 1988, the South Carolina Governor’s School for Science & Mathematics is a nationally recognized school serving over 400 of the state’s most accomplished STEM students in the 10th through 12th grades through its residential and virtual programs. GSSM offers college-level courses and experiences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at its campus in Hartsville. The school also delivers virtual curricula in engineering and STEM disciplines to students in partner school districts throughout the state. GSSM’s dynamic outreach programs, including science summer camps and teacher training, impact over 5,000 K-12 students every year. Learn more by visiting www.scgssm.org.



NURSING DEPARTMENT PINNING CEREMONY

Articles Submitted by Claflin University Office of Communication and Marketing



ORANGEBURG -The Claflin University Nursing Department held its pinning ceremony on Dec. 14, at Ministers' Hall. Thirteen graduates in the fall Class of 2019 earned a bachelor's degree through Claflin's RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Claflin launched the RN to BSN program in August 2016. The program offers registered nurses an opportunity to earn a bachelor's in nursing degree. Since the program's inception, 52 graduates have completed the 100 percent online program. Claflin is the only institution of higher education between Columbia and Charleston and the only historically black college/university (HBCU) in South Carolina that offers a bachelor's degree in nursing.

"I am absolutely delighted in the progress we're making," said Dr. Shannon B. Smith, associate professor of nursing and chair of nursing department. "A very special part of the pinning celebration is the 'blessing of the hands' because I have a chance to remind students that our hands have been blessed by God to touch the lives of our patients and families."

Claflin's RN to BSN program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Board of Commissioners. CCNE Accreditation ensures that the nursing program consistently demonstrates quality in mission and governance, institutional commitment and resources and curriculum and teaching-learning practices. It also establishes that the program is effective in assessment and achievement of program outcomes. These are the hallmark attributes of a high-quality nursing program.

The program was also awarded Best Nursing Program at the 2019 HBCU Awards ceremony this past August.

CLAFLIN STUDENT TO COMPETE IN BLACK COLLEGE QUIZ COMPETITION



Otiana Thompson

ORANGEBURG- Sophomore Otiana Thompson has been selected to participate in the 2020 Black College Quiz (BCQ) competition. The quiz show series, presented by State Farm, features students from HBCUs who showcase their knowledge and skill in African-American history. Hosted by radio host, actor, comedian, producer, and entrepreneur Thomas Miles, aka "Nephew Tommy," the weekly, half-hour series has featured more than 50 HBCUs since its inception and has awarded over \$500,000 in scholarships.

Thompson, a history major from Columbia, will travel to Atlanta on January 10-12 to compete in the competition. To prepare for the competition, she practiced with and serves as a member of Claflin's Honda Campus All-Star Challenge (HCASC) team. HCASC is considered America's premier quiz bowl for top HBCU students.

"I am so excited to participate in Black College Quiz," said Thompson. "I love learning about black history because it inspires me to fight for my dreams because anything is possible." Thompson is also a member of the Alice Carson Tisdale Honors College.

Dr. Belinda Wheeler, associate professor of English and HCASC coach, is equally excited about Thompson's upcoming participation in the competition. "We are very proud of Otiana and know she will represent Claflin well. Her knowledge of African-American history and culture is exceptional," Wheeler said. Wheeler will accompany Thompson on the trip.

The episodes featuring Thompson will be broadcast nationally on Bounce TV and several local stations later in the year.

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Visit Lake City, SC

FEEL THE SPIRIT OF LAKE CITY by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin

LAKE CITY - In every thriving town, it's imperative that organizations as well as its citizens stand behind that town and support its growth. One local team, in particular, that has been as busy as bees supporting as well as promoting all that Lake City has to offer is Visit Lake City.

In November of 2014, Seth Kines moved to Lake City to help open The Inn at the Crossroads, the city's luxury boutique hotel, in the heart of downtown Lake City. He said, "Prior to the move to Lake City, I served in management roles at Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Hyatt Regency Greenville, and in numerous sales leadership positions with Strand Hospitality Services. I also serve on numerous boards including the Southeast Tourism Society Board of Directors, which is responsible for promoting tourism throughout the Southeast."

"Having served as the director of sales for The Inn at the Crossroads for a number of years, the powers at be in Lake City realized that we needed someone to brand and sell the entire city, not just The Inn. I was asked to leave my position at The Inn at the Crossroads, and we created Visit Lake City in the fall of 2016. I have served as founder and executive director since growing Visit Lake City from a concept, to a full-fledged Convention and Visitors Center with an office located on Main Street in Lake City." Today, the group of dedicated tourism and marketing experts comprising Visit Lake City also includes Megan Ray, communications manager; Roberta Burns, marketing manager; and Haley Hughes, marketing manager. Together, the team promotes the city and also encourages diversity and inclusion within the community.

Visit Lake City is an eager participant in the Greater Lake City Community Resource Center's "Next Up" Internship program, which places select high school students with community organizations in the summer. Each intern class reflects the wide diversity of Greater Lake City, regardless of race, color, origin, gender, religion or socioeconomic circumstance. In fact, several exemplary students from "Next Up" have successfully secured part-time employment with Visit Lake City past the program's duration. These students take advantage of the hands-on experience to discover their strengths and abilities and explore opportunities for success through community engagement. After all, becoming a productive member of the society in which you live should be a goal of every citizen who is interested in seeing his or her city flourish.

It is no different there. Kines stated that Lake City's remarkable comeback story would not be possible without citizen buy-in. He added that "each member of the Greater Lake City community is a stakeholder in the success of their city, and they want to see it thrive. Over the past few years, citizens have wholeheartedly embraced the revitalization of the downtown district, including the repurposing of the historic Bean Market; the renovation of The William McClam Livery Stables into what is now The Stables at the Inn at the Crossroads, an 8,000-square-foot venue with amenities; and The R.O.B., a former charcoal briquet warehouse. Such positive change is a powerful vehicle for driving citizen involvement and community wellbeing."

On the other side of things, when you visit Lake City, you will do more than visit a historic community with deep roots in the agricultural traditions of its past. Not only that, but Kines said you also experience the best of what a Southern small town can be. "New life has been breathed into downtown, spearheaded by a comprehensive façade program that provides facelifts to historic buildings on Main Street

and Sauls Street. Old is new again with the renovations of the Bean Market, The Stables, and The R.O.B. We have added numerous businesses to downtown, including retail-like Main Street Mercantile and Shade Tree Outfitters; restaurants like Snax Gourmet Ice Cream & Hot Dogs; Inn at the Crossroads, a luxury boutique hotel; and CrossRoads Coach Resort at the R.O.B."

Many Lake City businesses even join in on ArtFields, a nine-day juried art competition featuring artists from across 12 Southeastern states and celebrating their work. Each fall, artists from eligible states are invited to submit their best work for consideration. Then, a selection panel made up of five visual arts professionals reviews and rates the work, and the top-rated artworks are invited to be displayed in Lake City, including at local businesses. For their other projects, Visit Lake City is inspired by so many artists and invite proposals to inform their decisions for murals and gallery exhibitions.

But art is just the beginning of what Lake City has to offer visitors. It also has Rhythm & Q's, a barbecue and live music competition, and the Hometown Holidays Festival, a joyful celebration in December that regularly draws thousands of visitors. In addition, less than 10 minutes from downtown is Moore Farms Botanical Garden, a 65-acre showpiece dedicated to horticultural excellence. And thanks to the professional horticulturists at Moore Farms Botanical Garden, alleyways, vacant lots, and open spaces have been transformed into lush green spaces and pocket parks featuring native and non-native plantings. In collaboration with Moore Farms Botanical Garden and the city's Beautification Committee, Lake City is dedicated to creating sustainable habitats for pollinators by consistently planting the right flowers and plants to attract them. This is important because, according to Bee City USA, a third of each bite of food we eat can be attributed to insect pollination. Thankfully, Lake City knows this significance and was even recognized for it by being named the first city in South Carolina to become certified a Bee City USA.

Yet, that's not all Lake City has accomplished. The spectacular city also made Travel & Leisure's 12 Best Places to Travel in May list in 2019, a list notably populated by larger destinations like Savannah, Stockholm, Sweden, Monaco, and London. Lake City was also named #1 Small Town Cultural Scene by USA Today in 2018.

Seeing the city's rich culture is one thing, but feeling it is another and is the experience you do not want to miss out on. So be sure that a part of your upcoming travel plans is to do just as the organization's name says: Visit Lake City!



Pictured left to right: TD Rykard, Haley Hughes, Seth Kines, Roberta Burns and Megan Ray

LAKE CITY, SOUTH CAROLINA : DOWNTOWN DINING

Submitted by Visit Lake City SC

Locals and visitors can park their cars upon arrival to downtown Lake City to experience the inspiring results of downtown revitalization on foot. Enjoy exhibitions at three art galleries, a growing collection of outdoor public art murals and sculptures, and shopping for clothing, antiques, and unique gift items all without having to move your vehicle time and time again. Not only is Lake City's pedestrian-friendly downtown beautifully landscaped thanks to the continuing efforts of premier local attraction Moore Farms Botanical Garden, but there is also a diverse selection of restaurants to satisfy every appetite at every meal!

Get your day started off right with breakfast, coffee or a hot, iced or frozen coffee specialty beverage at Baker's Sweets Bistro & Bakery. Good luck resisting the sweet temptations on offer at the dessert counter! Locals and visitors love that Baker's Sweets offers breakfast and lunch items on their menu all day long. Satisfy lovers of barbeque and seafood at the same restaurant: Piggyback's BBQ & Catfish. Po Boys, Phillies and tacos adorn the menu, and BBQ fans will love the "build-your-own-platter" option featuring a choice between pulled smoked pork, BBQ smoked pork ribs, BBQ beef brisket or BBQ smoked chicken and classic Southern sides like fried okra, collard greens, and mac & cheese. Located in Lake City's old train station, Lisa's at the Railway is known for mouth-watering steaks, a variety of chicken wing flavors, and a stellar Sunday lunch buffet. They have a full bar, and an outdoor deck that's often filled with folks enjoying live music or karaoke. If you're looking for pizza, lasagna or a hot-oven sub, you'll be happy to find Pizza Roma among downtown Lake City's dining choices. Jarrito's Family Mexican Restaurant is the place for marvelous margaritas, as well as popular favorites like quesadillas, chimichangas, and enchiladas.

Crossroads on Main, LLC, is a new local restaurant group that covers all the bases from casual to fine dining, with its three locations all in the downtown area! SNAX is headquarters for hotdogs and ice cream, and it's a hot spot for kids' birthday parties. Coming in 2020



will be Green Frog Social House, offering a healthy dose of fun in its casual dining atmosphere. Classic arcade games, Skee-ball, and interactive sports games are sure to keep kids and adults smiling. The menu features "shareables," sandwiches, salads and entrees, and the full bar will have a variety of

craft beer selections available. Located inside downtown Lake City boutique hotel The Inn at the Crossroads, Crossroads on Main is Lake City's home for fine dining and upscale atmosphere. Prior to a delicious dinner, enjoy cocktails in the newly renovated bar or in the adjacent outdoor courtyard.

Downtown Lake City is fortunate to have such a wide variety of locally-owned restaurants. Make plans to wear your most comfortable shoes for a small-town downtown adventure with no shortage of unique dining options to enhance your experience!

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HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



CONGRESSMAN JIM CLYBURN Articles by Adalia Ellis



Congressman Jim Clyburn

COLUMBIA -Congressman Jim Clyburn is in his 14th term serving as representative of South Carolina’s 6th congressional district. He demonstrates perseverance in the face of great challenges as he undergoes the task of making the highest ideals of our nation a reality for the vulnerable and historically underserved. He champions policies that affect access to affordable healthcare, quality education, and reliable high-speed Internet.

In 2009 with the creation of the Affordable Care Act, Congressman Clyburn insisted that it had to make a significant contribution to community health centers by providing 100 percent coverage. By the time the bill passed, he had 65-70 percent support for this provision, and it has since been methodically moving up the docket to be considered on the floor with support growing to 80 percent. The Affordable Care Act also includes a mechanism that would expand Medicaid. The decision to expand was left to individual states to decide. Although South Carolina did not expand Medicaid, the Congressman continues to persevere in his determination that healthcare should be affordable and accessible for all.

His passion for this basic human right is rooted in two losses he experienced. One was the loss of his mother, who died at the age of 55 from multiple myelomas. At the time of his mother’s death, myeloma was a death sentence but years later, with funding and research, being diagnosed with myeloma is no longer a death sentence. The second loss was that of his wife, who recently passed from complications due to diabetes. His own deeply personal experiences with health care and his passion for the health and well-being of others led to the creation of the James E. Clyburn Research Center, which is dedicated to researching the causes of and cures for diseases.

Education is also an area where Clyburn wants to see changes. We are firmly in the 21st century, and many schools are moving to Internet-based classroom assignments, homework and assessments. Due to persistent poverty, many students do not have access to high-speed Internet to be able to complete assignments at home. Students who don’t have access can sometimes be found in parking lots where there is an open wifi signal to get their homework done. The Congressman is working on a broad, robust infrastructure bill that would see 100 percent coverage of the cost of Internet as it would be included in a comprehensive infrastructure package along with funding for water, sewage and community health centers. He is working to build agreement through most of Congress.

In 2009 Clyburn created a formula to address persistent poverty and put it in 15 sections of the appropriations bill. There are 500 counties in the nation that experience persistent poverty and 14 of them are in South Carolina. The 10-20-30 formula is based on 10 percent of the budget going to communities where the US Census documents 20 percent or more of the population has lived below poverty level for at least 30 years. Clyburn got Congress to agree to 10 percent of the federal budget being disbursed to those communities hit hardest by poverty, and taxes are not affected. This infusion of funds first began in the Recovery Act, which funded four infrastructure projects in South Carolina: three water projects in Marion, Williamsburg and Orangeburg counties and a new health facility in Bamberg County. Now Clyburn is focusing on improving how the work is carried out by including a mandate that requires the Federal government to report how the funds are being dispersed and where it is working.

Clyburn does not give up easily. He lost elections three times before he was elected to Congress. He strives daily to pursue what will contribute to “making America’s greatness accessible and affordable to all.” And he serves Congress and the people of his district by living his life by South Carolina’s motto: “While I breathe, I hope.”

DETERMINED TO WORK FOR CIVIL RIGHTS



Bobby Jolly

Memory after memory flowed from Bobby Jolly--memories told in great detail of his experiences as a civil rights activist. Jolly was one of seven children where he grew up in Pelahatchie, Miss. His father died at a young age, which left his mother to care for seven children on her own. He thanks his mother, Marie King Jolly, everyday because she is the one who got him involved in the civil rights movement. She was strong. She had no fear, and it was one of her daughters

and his sister, Peggy, who was one of the first people to integrate the public school in Rankin County Miss. But in retaliation, their house was set on fire. When the white woman, whose family his mother worked for, took her child out of public school and put her in a private one, Marie King Jolly quit. And it was these examples of courageous action that put Bobby Jolly on the path of a civil rights activist.

He first started working at the Tri-County Community Center at the age of 19 and was there for three to four years. His supervisor was Congressman Billy Thompson. He then went on to be awarded a fellowship by the Ford Foundation, and he came to South Carolina to work with the Urban League. While on fellowship, he interned with the

South Leadership Council in Atlanta, the American Friends Service Committee, the social arm of the Quaker religious organization and with the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under the Law in D.C.

After Jolly’s fellowship, he was offered a job by American Friends Service Committee as an organizer for its office located in the Pee Dee. He represented students who had been expelled or suspended from school, and he did this for three or four years.

When Jolly was to be transferred to another location, Andrew Huggins, executive director of the Azalea Center, wanted him to stay here so he gave him a position as a community organizer for the Florence County Office of Economic Opportunity. He was in Florence County to start with but later on expanded to include Dillon and Marion Counties, so the name changed to the Pee Dee Community Action Agency.

Of all of the jobs he had during this time in his life, the one Jolly enjoyed most was his job with the American Friends Service Committee. “I enjoyed representing students that had been suspended or expelled from school for no reason at all. One case, in particular, that I think is very important was in Bennettsville, S.C. A four-year-old boy was expelled from school because he supposedly asked a white girl to have sex. We retained an attorney. The hearing had so many people they had to move it to the courthouse. And the courthouse was packed with black parents and black residents of that county.” It was found that the child



HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



DETERMINED TO WORK FOR CIVIL RIGHTS CONT'D

was illegally expelled, so he had to be reinstated immediately.

“The other case I remember vividly was in Dillon County. Reverend Franklin C. Reeves represented a student who was expelled. We quoted the law regarding expulsion, and we won that case. The school board said to me and Reverend Reeves, ‘Y’all need to leave.’ They weren’t playing. They had rifles and guns in the trucks outside. Reverend Reeves said he wasn’t going to go any damn where. And I wasn’t going to leave him. But the sheriff came up there and had a deputy lead us into Marion County. He wanted to make sure nothing happened to us.”

From South Carolina he returned to Mississippi where he worked with the Student Non-Violence Coordinating Committee (SNCC) under the direction of Stokely Carmichael. They organized the Black Student Union project in five high schools in Rankin County. This was the only place in the nation where the Black Student Union was in high schools as the rest were organized at colleges.

“In 1966, I and 10 or 12 students decided we were going to integrate this white-only restaurant. We went there at lunchtime when everybody was there. I remember very vividly. I got up to play. Back then, many restaurants had jukeboxes, so I got my quarter and decided to play a record by Johnny Cash, “A Man In Black.” When that record came on, the waitress came and told us they didn’t serve n****rs there. So I told her we didn’t want no n****rs. We wanted some fried chicken. I got that quote from Dick Gregory. I’ll never forget it. And these two burly white guys came and picked me up. The whole front was glass and threw me through the glass. I got cut everywhere--my head, my arm, etc. I still got the scar on my arm. I think I had 80 something stitches. Billy Thompson, one of my supervisors, sent someone to pick me up and take me to a black doctor in Jackson, Dr. Avery Shurely. When I got back to Pelahatchie, the police came and arrested me for disturbing the peace.”

Jolly’s mother and others went and bailed him out of jail. Two justices of the peace handled his trial, and he had two lawyers representing him. He was sentenced to 90 days in jail but the sentence was successfully appealed. He wasn’t looking forward to getting put in jail, and he didn’t know if he would make it out alive or not. Yet, this didn’t stop his involvement. He was even more determined to keep working for civil rights.

When considering a turning point in the civil rights movement, Jolly spoke about two events that are central to the history of the movement. “A lot of people think the March on Washington is what really made some things better for us. But I disagree. I think it was the march from Selma to Montgomery that really opened eyes. A lot of

people don’t know, but it was the Reverend James Bevel who came up with the idea of getting kids to march. When they did that in Birmingham, that was when they had the Public Safety Commission and the fire department and the police department under one person, Bull Connor. He sicced those dogs on those young kids, and that is what really spread it. It was all over the news, nationally and internationally, because those dogs were biting those kids.”

The images of dogs attacking unarmed people, tear gas clouding the area, Billy clubs being used to beat unarmed people and fire hoses hitting people at full blast were projected far and wide. For the first time, people who did not live where the struggle was most violent saw the reality of what was happening, and it galvanized the movement.

“Another memory that comes back very vividly is when the three civil rights workers were killed in Philadelphia, Miss. and was buried. A lot of people don’t know who found the bodies. Actually, who found the bodies were Choctaw Indians because it was a Choctaw Reservation. And they are the ones who gave the leads to where those guys were buried. I never will forget when they dug those people up, and that was when my mother, it just got her. It was something that had to happen.” In honor of the three youth the FBI building in Jackson is named after them.

Jolly’s three heroes are Stokely Carmichael, Huey P Newton, and his mother. Their examples of courage and taking action to change the way black folks were treated helped to keep him going.

What also kept him going was knowing that things weren’t right. “Black folks should not have been treated the way they were. I blame the founding fathers because they could have outlawed slavery in the constitution...it was so one-sided. I just felt bad that I couldn’t go into a restaurant. Even when I was traveling, when I was on Fellowship in the 70s, there were motels and hotels I couldn’t stay in.”

The Civil Rights Movement broke down social and legal barriers for people of color. It was the sacrifices and courage of hundreds, maybe thousands, of nameless people that not only changed circumstances in America but also around the world. There is still a long road to travel not forgetting the crises and victories that have brought us to our present. There is much to be learned from people like Bobby Jolly who made it their life’s work to dismantle systemic racism. In his memories and stories, and the memories and stories of others that have yet to be heard, there are gems of lessons and wisdom. Listen to and learn from those who came before lest we forget and repeat the past.

“

I have come to see more and more that one of the most decisive steps that the Negro can take is that little walk to the voting booth. That is an important step. We've got to gain the ballot, and through that gain, political power.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.





HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



WILLIS CONSTRUCTION CEO MAKES EDUCATION RIGHT *Submitted by Adalia Ellis*



Frank Willis

Sometimes it is unexpected challenges that force upon us the opportunity to envision creative solutions to inequities. Frank E. Willis experienced such an opportunity, and it became the issue that informed his business and political efforts for the rest of his life.

Willis grew up in Darlington around his father's construction business. He served as mayor of Florence from 1994-2008, the third-longest mayoral run in Florence history. He is now the executive director of Darlington

County Economic Development Partnership. This is a perfect fit for a man who, other than the 14 years he served in local government, has primarily run the family construction company as the chairman and CEO. It was in the early 1980s, while working as CEO of the family business, that he was faced with the reality of years of unequal education standards as a result of segregated school systems.

Willis grew up during a time when black and white children did not go to the same schools, and there were no discussions in the white community about the inequalities that existed. When he thinks back on this time he struggles to find the words to capture the time in which he lived. "It was normal. We never thought about it. During this time the inequality was traditional. It was just the way it was. It took me from the time I graduated high school in 1959-1980 to figure out something was wrong. Something was wrong, and we couldn't wait for somebody else to fix it. We had to fix it."

The 1980s were a pivotal time for Willis as he came to a deeper understanding of the impact of inequities in education on his black employees. His family's construction company was no different from other companies in that the majority of the employees were black. Where they did stand out was a decision he made to have an in-house training program for his employees.

The Willis Construction Company used heavy equipment that employees needed training to operate and sometimes employees traveled to other parts of the state on jobs. To prepare for the in-house training, the company had someone come in to assess the literacy level of the employees. Willis was astonished to find out that the median education level was the fourth grade. "I had no idea. I just didn't know...I had a guy that had been with me for years that drove our tractor-trailer. He moved all of our equipment all over South Carolina who couldn't read or write. He didn't know a yield sign from a stop sign. You couldn't... it's just crazy."

Willis' astonishment gave way to a determination to change this reality for his employees. Classes began onsite teaching reading and writing. The first classes were taught by four white employees who volunteered their time. The impact of this decision is best illustrated by the following recounting of experiences Willis had with two of his employees:

"We had a guy who was a motor grader operator. He called me one day and said, 'Mr. Frank, can I come talk to you? I said sure. He came over. He walked in and walked up to my desk and he said, 'You got a pencil and a piece of paper?' I handed him a pad. He begins to write on it. He hands it to me, and he says, 'It's the first time I have ever written my name. My child, I could never help. Now I can go

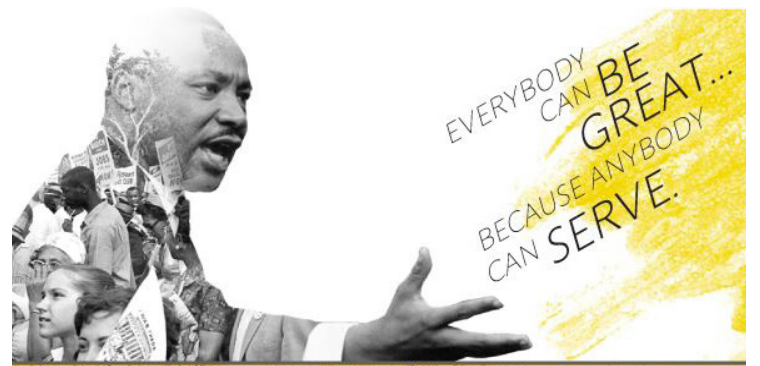
home at night, and I can help my child study.' I had another employee who couldn't read or write. Now, these guys didn't work downtown. They worked in the country. I asked him, 'Now when y'all knock off for lunch, and you go to one of those little service stations that serve lunch, how do you know what to order?' and he says, 'I order what the person in front of me ordered.' Isn't it sad?"

This was something he may have expected in the 1940s or 1950s but in 1980? He felt that it wasn't right. Willis describes these as life challenges, not Willis Construction Company challenges. "It gave this guy who wrote his name, it made him so proud that he could help his child with her homework. You couldn't take that away from him in a million years."

The culture of the company changed. It changed the way he saw education. When he looked around him at other companies that were hiring the same employees he had, and if his employees aren't able to read and write, then their employees are in the same position. Years of inequity in education created a workforce that could not progress to higher levels of excellence. Therefore, neither would the companies they worked for. "We can't recognize that it's a problem and that it's still a problem."

Willis spoke to the present gaps in the quality of education that are leading to a shortage of people trained in skills such as plumbing and electrical. "We had an all-day conference on economic growth and development. The last panel was three companies that moved to the Pee Dee. And they talked about how good the workforce was, how the work ethic...people here are willing to work. This guy from New York City said, 'I never saw people in New York City who were ready to work like these folks. The difference is that the ones in New York City knew how to fix the plumbing.'" For Willis, the time is now to come to solutions that address the quality of education and its impact on the economic well-being of individuals, the community and the city of Florence.

Education is the bedrock for personal advancement as it creates independence, pride in a vocation and the ability to contribute in a meaningful way to the betterment of all. Willis came to understand that education was a means of creating economic stability and growth and decided to do something about it. In the great drama that is life, it is not words but actions done with sincerity that lodge in people's hearts, transforms their lives and become a pivotal moment. "We gotta make this right," was Willis' mantra, and so he did.





HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



THE DREAM LIVES ON *by DeAngela Haynes*



Pastor Adam Work

As a program that will have so many young people and children in attendance and to be able to point to role models, past and present, that are persevering on their behalf. We will recognize Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for the progress that he made and his accomplishments, but in his honor we will also recognize young people and adults alike in our community that are continuing to better our community on his behalf.

It's easy to say that you look up to somebody. It's much harder to follow in their footsteps and keep moving forward. The people in Marion County are dedicated to moving forward together and showing our young people what positive role models look like. We have been celebrating and commemorating the Martin Luther King Unity Walk.



Bishop Michael A. Blue

Police escorted the procession of motor vehicles to The Door of Hope Christian Church for the sixth annual program. For several years now, Pastor Adam Work and Bishop Michael A. Blue have both served to demonstrate that Dr. King's Dream still lives on. They both have been very instrumental, as leaders of the Faith Community, in speaking at these annual programs to encourage and challenge the people of Marion as it relates to walking in unity. The event celebrated diversity through songs, prayer, dance and messages from community leaders and local students. Blue called it a privilege to welcome the crowd and honor Dr. King.

Blue has often stated that although we have done away with segregation as it relates to the laws, we still see separation in our Faith Community every Sunday morning across the United States. He stated that God doesn't have a "White Church" or a "Black

MARION - Adam Work serves as pastor of the Marion Baptist Church, and he said that wise men and women have always stood strong in challenging times in our nation. For the ones that do they seem to be remembered more than the challenges themselves. The hero is always remembered more than the villain. Adam serves on the board and as part of the board for the Marion Martin Luther King Jr. walk and remembrance, he's very proud to be a part of

Church." There is only one Body of Christ.

As it related to the Unity Walk, Sen. Kent Williams said he was happy to come out and remember a hero. "This collaborative team every year puts together this event that all are represented today," he said. "I don't know what this county would do without Bishop Blue's



Pastor Work and Bishop Blue at the Unity Walk 2019

leadership, commitment and dedication. Blue is a leader in the community that helps to organize a positive sign to continue to move forward," said Williams. Both pastors continue to put forth effort in displaying unity within the Faith Community because they each have hosted at their local ministries the annual National Day of Prayer in the month of May, providing for more opportunities to bring together the people of Marion to pray for each other, our city/county/town, the Pee Dee region, our nation, and world. These pastors are making impact just like Dr. King to see that the Dream Still Lives On.

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HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



GAMMAGE CONTRIBUTES TO EQUITY IN EDUCATION *by Les Echols*



Tre Gammage

HARTSVILLE -Like the late, great Martin Luther King Jr. himself, Tre Gammage is making a name for himself through impactful verbal communications, education, and service to community.

Gammage was born and raised in South Bend, Ind. and played football on scholarship with Miami University (Ohio). In his final semester at the university, he did an intensive study abroad in Europe, visiting 14 countries in 16 weeks. After graduating with a degree in

psychology and minor in management and leadership, he moved to South Carolina in 2015, moving to Hartsville to work with the SC Governor’s School of Science & Math (GSSM) as residence life coordinator responsible for student experience and safety.

During his time at GSSM, Gammage also began a public speaking career, traveling across the state and nation delivering over 100 engagements to 10,000 people. One of Gammage’s dreams was to become the world champion of public speaking. Each year, Toastmasters hosts an international championship that starts with 30,000 contestants and ends with the World Champion of Public Speaking. While Gammage didn’t become world champion, he did earn his way to the Semi-Finals in Washington D.C. and finished in the Top 100.

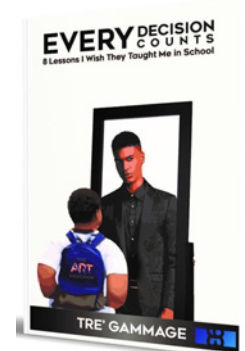
This experience, while humbling, helped Gammage to understand his next step, which was to start an education consultancy called the Gammage Consulting Group (GCG). The agency helps K-12 principals implement school-wide Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs. SEL programs help schools and school districts advance equity by cultivating adult and student practices that bridge gaps in opportunity and create a more inclusive school community.



Tre pictured with Phylicia Rashad and his wife Carmen

When asked how to equip and empower the community to battle inequities we see every day, Gammage was very thorough in his answer: “There are levels to equity, and as a person of color you are born at a deficit. You have more hurdles to climb than our white neighbors, and the barrier to entry is much more difficult than our white neighbors,” said Gammage. “This means utilizing the talents, tools, resources, people, and opportunities that exist in our community

to create producers rather than consumers. The producers are people that make it happen. Producers build businesses, serve people and create opportunities for others to grow, lead and experience. On a community level, our community leaders by position or ambition must bring awareness to the people about what talents, tools, resources and opportunities exist so that African Americans can build our capacity as producers.” continued Gammage.



Gammage’s New Book

Growing up, Gammage’s mother was active in the Civil Rights Heritage Center at Indiana University South Bend. So, before he was a teenager, he understood the history of his ancestors and civil rights leaders. “Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a radical man. I love that about him, he disrupted our country, he disrupted our culture, and he helped change a system of oppression with impacts we still being felt today. Today I have privileges that are possible because of Dr. King, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks and so many more of our civil rights leaders that wouldn’t exist if it wasn’t for them. Certainly, progress has been made, but the game has also changed; the barriers to entry are in new places. And we can’t stop fighting to be treated in an equitable way,” concluded Gammage.

Gammage’s new book, titled “Every Decision Counts: 8 Lessons I Wish They Taught me in School,” is a piece of his contribution to equity. The eight lessons are principles he wishes were taught in school.

Gammage defines the book as “a social and emotional learning workbook for middle and high school students.” It was important for him to align the book with National Guidance Standards and CASEL’s SEL core competencies. It is a book that can be used as direct classroom



Tre Gammage being sworn in as City Councilman

instruction, as an intervention tool in schools or just a book to buy and work through at home.

In 2017 Gammage was elected to Hartsville’s City Council, representing District #1, and in 2018 he married his best friend,

Carmen Gammage.

You can learn more about Gammage and his book or buy a copy on tregammage.com, Amazon and all other book retailers.

The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.

Martin Luther King, Jr.





HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL *by Adalia Ellis*



Dr. Fred Carter

To serve as president of an institution of higher learning, an individual commits oneself to facing challenges with perseverance and envisioning solutions to inequalities that take shape not only in words but also in action. Dr. Fred Carter is the longest-serving president of Francis Marion University. He began his tenure as president in 1999, and the board of trustees recently extended his contract to 2023.

During his service, Carter has overseen the construction of 13 new buildings to meet the needs of expanding educational programs. At the core of what has driven this growth is his commitment to providing the young people of our region the opportunity to pursue higher education by removing obstacles that have historically made it difficult for some students.

“You can distill all of these things in a dozen different topics. You can talk about the quality of the academics. You can talk about the importance of providing an extensive number of disciplines in fields where students can take their degrees. But first and foremost it’s all going to be about the opportunity to attend the institution. It has to be about the ability to get through those gates.”

Carter identifies factors that go into the perception of how accessible the gates are. The first of those factors is money. If the perception that an institution is too expensive to attend, the first place the conversation and the opportunity dies is in the home while students are still in high school. “A number of first-generation colleges can identify with those dinner table conversations where you bring up the question, ‘Do you think it’s possible, Mom and Dad, that I could go to college?’ And then there’s this sobering look that goes around the table as everybody mentally calculates, ‘How do we take what we have now and find a way for you to go to school?’”

Carter doesn’t think universities do enough to find creative solutions that get students into college without the student having to pay debt for the rest of their life because they got an education. However, to address the financial burden for first-generation, first-year students, Francis Marion University has initiated two very exciting initiatives. The university has very little debt because of its success in raising money for capital projects. So the university has slowly shifted its focus to raising scholarship funds for students who wouldn’t otherwise be able to attend university. “What group of students are most likely not to have money to go to college? First-generation. Frankly, their parents don’t have that type of money. And there are a large number of first-generation college students in this 12-county region that we serve.”

Based on these facts alone, the First Gen Fund was sensible and timely. “There are different ways to approach the funding of scholarships. Many of our sister schools raise money for scholarships on the basis of merit--the 1500-1600 SAT students. We began to focus more on students who require need-based financial support rather than merit-based financial support. Don’t get me wrong. We want the student with the 1500 SAT, but you know that person has a lot of opportunities for

funding college. The entering freshman with the 950 has a limited number.”

In addition, FMU has introduced the Freshman Supplement for the upcoming year. The tuition at Francis Marion University is \$11,160 per year. “So if you’re eligible for a Pell Grant, we’ll take that and any other financial aid for which you qualify and provide you a scholarship for the remainder.”

Carter says that it’s easier to raise money for need-based scholarships. “Donors understand it. The only way the state improves educationally is to find more extensive ways to educate our sons and daughters. Moreover, certain areas of the state, particularly the Pee Dee and the Savannah River Valley regions, are our most impoverished regions. They have students with the ability to pursue collegiate educations, but they need the support to make it happen.

A second requirement is the necessity for creating a climate and culture conducive enough for young people to feel at home as they pursue higher education. The climate is affected by the friendliness of the faculty and staff and the welcoming nature of the student body. “Many of those issues in our region come down to, not so surprisingly, how diverse is that student body? How diverse is that faculty and staff? How amenable are they to understanding the culture from which that student comes?”

Carter is delighted that Francis Marion University is an institution where students feel welcome, and the faculty makes an effort to be accessible, welcoming and friendly. Students routinely assist one another. The upperclassmen help the freshmen by providing leadership and mentoring. “By the time they get to be juniors and seniors, it is compellingly obvious to them that they have an obligation to do the same thing.” By encouraging a culture of inclusion in the student body, it helps to ease the transition for first freshmen and those unique first-generation freshmen. The faculty’s accessibility and innovativeness contribute further to learning environments where students can flourish.

Opportunity is the great equalizer in this society and creating a climate where young people can flourish as they pursue opportunity is imperative. With quality faculty and staff, welcoming students, engaged parents and the support of the Pee Dee region, Francis Marion University will continue to be a campus where students can flourish.





HONORING THE LATE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.



GLOVER DISCUSSES HOW TO CARRY ON MLK'S LEGACY *by Les Echols*



Maggie Glover

Maggie Wallace Glover has earned widespread recognition for achieving a string of “firsts” in South Carolina. In 1983, the former schoolteacher became the first African-American woman elected to serve on the Florence District One School Board. In 1988, she ran as a Democrat and achieved another “first” being the first African-American woman elected from the Sixth Congressional District to the South Carolina House of Representatives.

Glover served two terms in the House and in 1992, ran unopposed for a seat in the South Carolina Senate. This was a “first” too, as no political candidate in the state has gone unopposed in first bid for a legislative seat. So, when the South Carolina General Assembly convened in January 1993, Glover made history as the first African-American woman to ever serve in the South Carolina Senate. She served until 2004, and it would, unfortunately, take another decade to elect its second African-American female senator.

Diversity Works Magazine© caught up with Glover for a brief interview:

DW: In your own words, how do we equip and empower the community to carry on the legacy of MLK?

MG: First and foremost, we must tell children the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. When you do not know from where you have come, it is extremely difficult to move forward. From fields, riverbanks, around old kitchen tables and potbelly stoves, churches and segregated schools, we were told the stories of ‘how we got over.’ We were told about slavery, the KKK and surviving segregation and Jim Crow. It was explained to us that this is wrong. All men are created equal, and we as a people, and still are commanded by God and the ancestors to teach, love and fight always for what is right and fair for our people--all people. At age 9/10, I remember the family piling into my father’s old car and driving down to Kingstree, S.C., to hear Dr. King speak in an old wooden fenced baseball field about this nation’s denial of our civil rights and the urgent need for our right to vote.

I was in the 11th grade at the Wilson Senior High School when my family and I watched President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act, 1965 on August 6 with Dr. King standing directly behind the president as he had done a year earlier--July 2, 1964, when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dr. King and hundreds of

our people protested, marched, boycotted and fought for our right to be free and equal in America, ultimately, giving their lives for all that we enjoy, yet take for granted, today. Therefore, each one of us must learn our history and begin anew to teach the children.

DW: Are we moving in the right direction in terms of justice and equality?

MG: Many woke, or socially conscious, people are moving in the right direction for justice and equality. The problem is that’s a small percentage, and our strength has always been in our collective number. For example, 95 percent of registered black voters voted and elected Barack Obama, the 1st Black President of the USA in 2008. Ninety-two percent helped to re-elect him in 2012. Our numbers have never been higher before or since.

DW: Dr. King’s faith was a strong influence in his journey. Tell us how faith (in today’s world) molds the process of moving forward with the goal of justice.

MG: The Civil Rights Movement in this country grew out of the black church led by black preachers, with Rev. Dr. King being one of the most prominent. We were taught that God had brought the ancestors thus far along the way, and if we trusted and believed faithfully in God, he would never leave us or forsake us. To this day, this belief is what still guides my life and living, and I truly believe that the socially conscious among us also believe and operate on this premise.

DW: What has the civil rights and equity/inclusion movements meant to you?

MG: Every freedom--riding on any public transportation, checking in to any hotel/motel that I can afford, attending the school/university of my choice, freedom of speech and the right to vote--I owe it all to the brave men and women of the movement.

DW: How do we effectively continue the work of equity and justice?

MG: As our ancestors sacrificed much for us, we must tell the children of those past sacrifices how we got where we are today. Then we must equip them with knowledge and the skills needed to move effectively forward. Introduce each one to God, and encourage their personal relationship with him. Empower them to learn to love themselves and their sisters and brothers--all God’s children. Work each day to leave a better world for the next generation. We can, and we must.

Maggie Glover earned a BS degree in English/speech and theatre minor from Fayetteville State University and a Master of Education Degree in Guidance and Counseling from Francis Marion University. She was also awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree from Morris College for outstanding achievements as a civil servant.

MLK DAY OF SERVICE

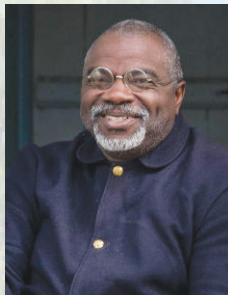
TIMMONSVILLE-Honda of South Carolina associates volunteer each January to commemorate MLK Day of Service by partnering with the Timmons ville community to restore, repair and/or enhance a much-needed area within the town. For many associates, volunteering is a passion and the opportunity to assist within the communities we live and work in is always greatly represented by our associates. HSC associates at all levels meet on the Saturday before Dr. King’s birthday during the early morning hours to begin the task of making the chosen community activity a success. It is an opportunity to meet and fellowship with the citizens of Timmons ville and Florence County.

Plans are underway for the 2020 MLK Day of Service activities in Timmons ville.



Left to right: City Worker, Matt Joseph, Emily Griffin, Aaron Robinson, Chris Floyd, and Becky Howle.

ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SLEEPING IN SLAVE DWELLINGS *by Bhakti Larry Hough*



Joseph McGill

LADSON—The French poet Victor Hugo wrote that “there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”

After 10 years and 200 nights slept in former slave quarters in 25 states and Washington, D.C., as well as national and international media coverage of the quest, few would argue that the Slave Dwelling Project was an idea whose time had come for historian and cultural preservationist Joseph McGill of Ladson.

The mission of the Slave Dwelling Project is to raise awareness and organize resources to preserve, interpret, maintain and sustain extant slave dwellings and other structures significant to the stories of the enslaved ancestors of African American people. The mission is accomplished in many ways but primarily through the organization of overnight stays at sites associated with slavery, usually slave cabins.

The light bulb lit up in McGill’s head in the spring of 2010 while working with a team of experts evaluating carpentry work at Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston. On Mother’s Day that year, he slept in his first slave dwelling at that same historic site.

“I got the idea about sleeping in slave dwellings because I was a part of a team of experts evaluating the work of the carpenters who were restoring the slave cabins at Magnolia,” McGill said. “The sleepover was an attempt to bring much needed attention to these often overlooked and sometimes neglected buildings.”

McGill’s career has been steeped in African American history and historic preservation. He was a charter member of the SC African American Heritage Council, which evolved into the SC African American Heritage Commission. He has held positions with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the historic Penn Center on St. Helena Island and the National Park Service. He also serves as a tour guide and interpreter at Magnolia Plantation and the Old Slave Mart Museum in Charleston, respectively.

So, it’s no surprise that McGill’s passion for preserving and interpreting African American history would evolve into the Slave Dwelling Project, his effort to honor his enslaved ancestors, who were more than just “a footnote in history,” he said. That made the extant--still surviving--places in which they lived important historical structures that deserve wider recognition. And one way to pay homage to the ancestors and draw attention to their former living quarters was to spend nights sleeping in them.

“I wanted to leverage the attention garnered by sleeping in a slave dwelling,” said McGill, a native of Kingstree. “I knew that once I got the attention of the public, historians and historic preservationists, we could initiate a broader conversation.”

There are more than 300 extant slave quarters in the United States and Canada.

“I wanted to use that attention to educate the general public about the need to preserve, interpret, maintain and sustain these obscure buildings,” McGill said. “In order to do that, I needed access.”

Getting that access was not always easy, and there were occasions when, metaphorically speaking, the response to McGill’s overtures was “Access Denied.”

“Some use insurance or the lack thereof to deny access. And some sites just aren’t willing yet to deal with the subject matter of slavery,” he said.

However, persistence has paid off for McGill, who is also a 54th Massachusetts Regiment Civil War re-enactor. “One of the toughest nuts to crack was Natchez, Miss., but I will be sleeping in slave dwellings there in 2020,” he said.

In the beginning, the Slave Dwelling Project was essentially a solo endeavor with McGill sleeping in cabins alone or perhaps with one other person. He’d go in with his pillow and sleeping bag, sleepover, get up the next morning and go home. But the project has evolved into a movement that has captured the imagination of the nation and received considerable national and international media coverage.

Nowadays, McGill is often joined on the sleepovers by many people – including scholars, historians, students and just interested persons, some of whom have slept in the dwellings with him many times.

“Very seldom do I sleep in these places alone anymore. Initially, it was me reaching out to the sites requesting permission. The sites are now contacting me for the Slave Dwelling Project to apply its vision, mission, and goals.”

The sleepovers always include conversations with groups and sometimes elaborate programs before or after the sleepover.

“The mission has evolved because now more emphasis is placed on the conversations (that take place) before the sleepovers,” McGill said. “The general subject matter of the conversation is slavery and the legacy it left on this nation. Through this exchange, I’ve been introduced to descendants of enslavers and other interesting people who have made this journey unforgettable.”



The Slave Dwelling Project

The conditions of the dwellings vary. “I’ve slept in some with dirt floors and some with modern amenities,” McGill said. “Some stewards of these cabins tend to over-adorn them with items enslaved people never owned or had access to.”

When sleeping a cabin alone or with others, McGill said he’s never had any experiences that might be considered “spooky,” such as visits from the deceased ancestors who may have lived in the cabins. Spending time in the cabins, however, could be considered a spiritual experience as he ponders the harsh conditions under which the enslaved people lived.

Despite the success of the Slave Dwelling Project, McGill still has his detractors. “Not everyone is buying what I’m selling,” he said. “There are some people, black and white, that would like this project to go away, but I’m not in that camp.”

“Still, the project has great significance to African American history and historic preservation. It helps to capture African American history and the history of the nation by promoting the preservation of the slave quarters and the people who inhabited them,” McGill said.

He added that the Slave Dwelling Project envisions a future in which the hearts and minds of Americans acknowledge a more truthful and inclusive narrative of the history of the nation that honors the contributions of all people.

“Unfortunately, the pride that I have for my ancestors was not instilled in me through the revisionist education that I got in schools,” McGill said. “Public historians and historic sites play a vital role in changing the narrative. We are the voices for our Ancestors, and we must ensure their voices are heard.”

The Slave Dwelling Project’s 2020 schedule will include repeat sleepovers in some dwellings and the first sleepover in a dwelling in Michigan. The 2020 Slave Dwelling Project conference will be held at Clemson University.

BACCUS ON VOTING POWER *by Ta’Meeka Epps*



Councilwoman Sheila Baccus

DARLINGTON-The year 2020 is a landmark year for voting rights. It is the centennial of the 19th Amendment (1920) which brought about the culmination of the women’s suffrage movement. It also marks the sesquicentennial of the 15th Amendment (1870) and the start of a new decade.

The 15th Amendment guaranteed the right to vote could not be denied based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” Then the 19th Amendment was enacted to give women the right

to vote, and it reads: “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.” This movement was known as women’s suffrage.

Both amendments were pivotal in helping to shape the history of our ever-changing country while solidifying the future for an entire culture of people. This year’s theme for Black History Month is: African Americans and the Vote. Historically, the struggles faced by people of color for their right to vote have been documented. Voter suppression is still a huge concern with 2020 being a general election year. The question posed during this celebration of black achievement and excellence is what does Black History Month mean to you, and how does it impact society presently and moving forward?

Who better to give a response to the question than Councilwoman Shelia Baccus? Baccus is an African American woman whose desire is to educate the citizens of Darlington and surrounding areas on the importance of their vote in each and every election. “Our vote is power, power to effect change. It is how we use our voice, resoundingly affirming our rights as citizens.”

During Black History month Baccus would like to express upon the younger generation the importance of knowing their history, which is stitched into every seam of this country. The world as it is today only exists because of the past events it is built upon. “Black History Month is a time to celebrate the lives of all the men and women who fought for freedom, justice and fair treatment for people of color in America. It’s about integrity, leadership, and determination. It’s about understanding, valuing and showing your true character.”

Baccus was elected in November 2017 and officially took office in January of the following year. As a member of the City Council, some of her responsibilities are to communicate policies and programs to residents, respond to constituent needs and complaints, review and approve the City’s Annual Operating Budget, and drive economic growth and development, which will impact the quality of life for the citizens of Darlington. Baccus’ purpose for serving the citizens is to see the City grow while making Darlington attractive to its native children in hopes of them staying in the City or returning home one day.

“I hope to help increase the City’s population by improving the lives of our citizens and fast-tracking economic growth and development to bring higher-paying jobs and more recreation to the citizens. I want to educate the citizens about the power of their vote, the importance of casting their vote in every level of elections, register the citizens to vote and ensure they are able to get to the polls.”

Council Woman Baccus is a strong, proud selfless public servant. She is a woman of conviction, honor, and dignity. She serves knowing she only has this opportunity because of the many selfless men and women who came before her.

Celebrating History
Arthur W. “Man” Stanley



Darlington native Arthur Whitfield Stanley served the Darlington chapter of the NAACP as its president, a post he held for 40 years, and led the effort to desegregate the public school system in Darlington County through legal action. In addition, Stanley initiated a legal challenge to the discriminatory polling practices of the City of Darlington municipal elections. His efforts led

to the adoption of three single-member electoral districts and three at-large districts. He holds the distinction of being the first African American elected to a seat on Darlington City Council. Stanley received the Order of the Palmetto from S.C. Governor David Beasley, and the Arthur W. “Man” Stanley Gymnasium in Darlington was named in his honor.

Sites of Interest

**Darlington Memorial Cemetery,
c. 1890, Avenue D and Friendship St**

Edmund H. Deas House, c. 1915, Avenue E

**West Broad Street Historic District,
featuring many late-19th to early 20th
century residences designed and built
by Lawrence Reese**

**St. James United Methodist Church,
c. 1866, 400 S. Main St.**

**Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church,
c. 1866/1935, 312 Pearl St.**

**Historical Museum of Ethnic Culture,
114 Coker St.**

**Henry “Dad” Brown Memorial Marker,
U.S. 52 and Brockington Road**



EXHIBITING CULTURE AND PRIDE THROUGH ART *by Bhakti Larry Hough*



Anita Singleton Prather "Aunt Pearlle Sue"

BEAUFORT-After Anita Singleton Prather and Marlena Smalls of the Sea Islands of Beaufort County issued a call for area singers to join their Hallelujah Singers in a rehearsal for a musical tribute to gospel great Mahalia Jackson in the late 1980s, the response wasn't quite what they had hoped for.

"Nobody answered the call," Prather said. "NOBODY showed up."

While some might have been discouraged enough by such an inauspicious beginning to fold their tent

and never try again, Prather and Smalls pressed on to create nationally-renowned singing groups, and Smalls took the Hallelujah Singers to great heights.

Prather, co-founder of the Hallelujah Singers, went on to create her alter ego, Aunt Pearlle Sue, and founded the musical performance group, Aunt Pearlle Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk, in 1999. And whether to audition for parts in her productions or to enjoy her performances, people have been showing up in droves to see Prather and the group, her actual relatives, ever since. For 20 years, the group of 20 singers, dancers, actors and musicians has traveled the United States and abroad inspiring audiences to do everything from roaring laugh to going deep in thought as they sing, tell and dramatize stories of the Gullah people.

The Gullah-Geechee people are descendants of enslaved Africans who lived--and still live--on the lowcountry coastal plains and Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia and Florida. They've maintained more of their African traditions and language and dialect than African Americans who live on the mainland.

Prather's aunt "Big Black Pearl" and grandmother Rosa Singleton ("a large no-sense woman who carried a pistol") were the inspiration for the Aunt Pearlle Sue character. They would be proud of her success and her determination to portray and celebrate Gullah culture and history through folktales, Prather said.

"When I worked with Marlena Smalls, my stage name was Auntie Sue," Prather said when explaining how she came up with the name Aunt Pearlle Sue. "I had an aunt we called Big Black Pearl. So, I dropped the 'ie' from Auntie, added it to Pearl, and stuck Pearlle in the middle."

Prather started performing as a child in school and church. After college, she played piano for her church, First African Baptist Church in Beaufort, worked with youth and wrote plays that they would perform. Later, she joined Smalls as co-founder of the Hallelujah Singers and achieved fame as the narrator on their Top 10 gospel hit, "Chicken Dinner Money." The two women were business partners for 10 years before Aunt Pearlle Sue struck out on her own.

Aunt Pearlle Sue is a full-figured matronly figure usually adorned in the kind of colorful garb her 19th and early 20th century ancestors would wear: an apron and with hair tied up with a handkerchief or wearing a straw hat with walking stick in tow. She bounces about on stage dispensing the wisdom of Gullah folktales with humor and wit in the rhythmic Gullah dialect.

As folksy and "down-home" as the Aunt Pearlle Sue character appears, Prather is an accomplished and educated storyteller, educator,

playwright, historian, businesswoman, singer, and actress. She appeared in the movie "Forrest Gump," on the ABC television program "Good Morning America" and in several educational documentaries.

Aunt Pearlle Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk performed at the White House during the Clinton administration. Also, she partnered with SC Educational Television to create an award-winning interactive website on the network's Knowitall.org/gullahnetthat features her animated character.

Prather's major works are her one-woman show, "Tales from the Land of Gullah," which was broadcast nationwide on PBS, and her true-life short film, "My Man Done Me Wrong." Every year, she and the Kinfolk stage her play, "A Gullah Kinfolk Christmas Wish."

As a solo act and with the Gullah Kinfolk, Prather has performed at numerous festivals, including Spoleto USA International and the Penn Heritage Days Festival at Penn Center on St. Helena Island. At this writing, she and members of her group were preparing for a 10-day trip to Africa after being invited by the mayor of Sierra Leone.

Prather has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Howard University and a master's degree in education from the University of South Carolina. She is a member of New Covenant Fellowship International Ministries of Beaufort, where she has been ordained as a licensed minister.

The mother of three and grandmother of eight, Prather said that her goal with her creative ventures is to express love of all people, but most of all love of God and love of self, especially her African and African American heritage.

"When I first started, I thought this would be a way for me to tell white folks how bad they have treated us and get paid for it," she said. "But God told me that Gullah would be my ministry. I told Him, 'If you give me a platform, I will promote love, not hate.'"

Highlighting Gullah culture through performance art is important because even though the Gullah people are considered unique, it is a blending of cultures that emerged from Africa, encompasses all people, transcends cultural differences and contains life lessons that resonate with people of all backgrounds," Prather said.

"Africa is the beginning of all of mankind's history," she added. "And we must continue to honor it and celebrate it. If you take Gullah and African and African American history out of the equation, you have nothing."

Prather's work is designed to express, uplift, teach and instill pride in African and African American history and culture through art, especially for African American children, she said, adding that's the message she aims to convey with her art. "We came from greatness. We weren't born to be great. We were born already great. Be great, and don't let anybody define you."



Aunt Pearlle Sue

THE MAN WHO MADE OWNERSHIP DREAMS A REALITY IN THE PEE DEE *by Jennifer Robinson*



James Brown & Terry James

Black history is so many things. It is learning--learning that the black culture you were born into is more than about enslavement and diasporic journeys from Africa. It is appreciating--appreciating that there were men and women who were brought to this land with a mindset to overcome the perils of oppression as they were forced to work a foreign land they did not think they would ever have as their own. Black history is unity--unifying as a people to encourage each other through dark times and praise each other through the victories of life. Black history is loving--loving your people unconditionally because you knew that your family, those whose melanin matched yours, were the only people whom you could count on. That loving also meant building upon those spiritual foundations that continue to be with us as they continue the fight for justice and equality. And black history is pride--pride in the journeys that many blacks have traveled so that those who live today can live in freedom. For Black History Month, Diversity Works Magazine© pays homage to Ervin James, a man who was enslaved in the 1800s but worked for his freedom, ultimately becoming the first black man to purchase land in the Pee Dee area.

When discussing Ervin James, "proud" and "focused" are two words I would use to describe Terry James as he talked carrying the legacy of his great-great-great grandfather, a man who believed in community and African American independence.



Parade Celebrating Enslaved Cook Nat Fuller

His vision is why American Americans in the Pee Dee can own, not only land, but also businesses in the Florence area. In 2019, many blacks in Florence participated in the downtown economic development and continued to purchase buildings for businesses throughout the Pee Dee and beyond.

One could say that Ervin James was a beacon for those who do not believe in the dream of ownership. He beat the odds of the times by being sold over 109

acres of land in 1870, purchased from a white man. Twenty years later, his five sons and a son-in-law purchased additional land that equal 200 plus acres. That land still brings life to the James family and the Jamestown community.

Terry James said the land purchased in 1870 from a white man named Eli McKissick is located in east Florence in the Mars Bluff community is being used today as a historical sight. Events such as reunions are held there for generations to learn about Ervin James. Terry James stated, "Keeping his legacy alive is so important because current and future generations need to know about ownership and community responsibility." He also said that his grandfather's purchasing of the land was not about being selfish. It was about teaching his family and the community that



SC African American Heritage Commission

true freedom was having your own so that there was no need for dependence on anyone else. "Whatever anyone needed back before the modern era, they had to cultivate on their own. The goal was to teach blacks that first, it was possible to be free, and secondly, it was possible to have ownership in land and farming."



Terry L. James

Terry James's efforts have not gone unnoticed. Within the past ten years, he has worked tirelessly for his great, great, great grandfather and the Jamestown District to be recognized nationally. In 2018, his work led to the property being listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Currently, Terry James is the director of the Jamestown Foundation, which is seeking funds to rebuild the cabin and upgrade the cemetery on the James' property. To learn about this important part of black history, visit jamestownfoundation.com.



DON'T LOSE FOCUS: THE STRUGGLE IS NOT OVER *by DeAngela Haynes*



Minister Louie Perkins

MARION - The year of 2020 is very significant as it relates to African American men's rights to vote and for women in general. This upcoming year marks the Centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment and the culmination of the Women's Suffrage Movement, as well as the Sesquicentennial of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) and the right for Black men to the ballot after the Civil War. The theme this year for Black History Month is the "African Americans and the Vote, and the

struggle for voting for voting rights continue to this day." The value of the voting rights for African-Americans is to be taken very seriously.

As an African American male, Minister Louie Perkins stated that this year's Black History Month's theme is more important and relevant to him now than perhaps at any moment in his life. As many are aware, the Civil Rights Voting Act of 1965 passed, putting in place voting rights of every U.S. citizen, no matter the race, gender or creed. However, over the last few years, the U.S. Supreme Court has overturned a key component of the Voting Rights Act, which allows the states and localities to change their election laws without prior federal approval. The 2016 election was the first presidential election in 50 years without full protection of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) to combat racial discrimination in voting.

Widely regarded as the most effective Civil Rights law in American history, the VRA prohibited a range of discriminatory voting practices and lets citizens and the federal government challenge discriminatory changes to election laws. Some recent examples of the questionable voter requirements' changes include the photo ID requirements or that the voter precinct locations are now being changed without prior federal approval. These things are designed to deter minorities from voting. This is why the upcoming Black History's theme should be a constant reminder to all as well as to celebrate this great milestone.

Perkins challenges everyone to become politically conscious, or as in his grandchildren's lingo, to be "WOKE." The sacrifices that our forefathers fought for to have "ALL VOTES" count use this valuable right and don't lose it. He states that we must be better stewards and stewardesses as it relates to enhancing our communities. "VOTE"

because if the Voting Rights Bill won approval by one vote. Make your one vote count. As one of the Old Negro Spiritual says, "Lift every voice (your voice)" and sing, call, cry loud and attract attention to the fact that we have the influence to encourage others to think, see and pray to our fullest with God's help.

Many who have fought, bled, participated in sit-ins and died, have paid a high price for our right to vote, so don't let their labor be in vain. We must not allow these rights to be taken or diminished in any form, especially by us as African Americans. We should not take for granted the privilege to exercise this right of the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) to the Constitution of the United States. Every vote does and shall count. Everyone 18 years old or older must vote because it is to be a great part of our vision for the future; don't lose the vision. (Vision is a divine mental preview of coming events.) In the past, the South Carolina Legislature introduced Black Codes, which imposed on African Americans a condition as close to slavery as was possible after the Emancipation. In response to the Black Codes and to the terrorism accompanying the first year of Emancipation, Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act of 1866 under military supervision. South Carolina convened its Second Constitution Convention of Reconstruction in November 1867 and 1868. It may seem like the past has no relevance, but it does.

Minister Louie Perkins and his wife Willaette Perkins are the owners of L&W Logistics. He's an alumnus of Wilson High School, involved in his community as Marion County Guardian ad litem, is a part of Pee Dee Big Brothers, serves as a board member for the Pee Dee Community Action Agency (Marion County), volunteers/partners with Marion County Schools for Real Men Read and is an associate minister at The Door of Hope Christian Church in Marion. Perkins is a very resourceful man and is willing to help whomever he can. He has a garden, is a great entrepreneur and loves his children and grandchildren. He's affectionately known in his family and in his ministry as "Pa-Pa."

Perkins encourages others to learn how to see things before you see things because in order to move FORWARD, you've got to do something about it. Hope is a companion of faith, and we are challenged to be visionaries for this generation. We should not have fears concerning our political and governmental future, so we must allow our faith, not our fears, to motivate us. Dr. Cindy Trimm said, "Your feet will never take you where your mind has never been." We are challenged, "Don't lose focus because the struggle is not over!"



WOMEN EAGER TO EMERGE IN 2020 ELECTION CYCLES *by Tonita Perry, APR*



Melissa Watson, MPH, MSW, LMSW

COLUMBIA-According to Forbes, out of the five most powerful women in the world, three hold government offices or have held a government office, one of which is the United States House of Representatives Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. We saw her smarts, political savvy and understanding of the partisan impeachment process for which she skillfully and strategically maneuvered both Republican and Democratic Party House and Senate members and the

nation in a way that can only command respect.

Women are globally under-represented in government. According to the Center for American Women and Politics, the United States House and Senate have only 130 women out of 535 members serving presently. Though the number is low, seeing how women account for a little more than half of the United States population, this does not mean women do not want to serve as elected officials. Women may not know just how to run and get the win. This is where the organization Emerge, started in 2002 in California and a South Carolina affiliate in 2016, enters the political landscape.

Emerge South Carolina’s mission is “to increase the number of Democratic women leaders from diverse backgrounds in public office through recruitment, training and providing a powerful network.” Led by Columbia native Melissa N. Watson in the role of executive director, the organization has had two training cycles since 2016.

“In 2016, Hillary [Clinton] did not win the presidential election, and that mobilized women like we have never seen before. With that disappointment of the election, so many women wanted to take that emotion and turn it into something productive,” said Watson. “We have seen a jump in women interested in running for office, a larger number

since 2016. With the Emerge South Carolina training program, we have trained 42 women in South Carolina so far and 4000 women through Emerge nationwide. We currently have three women who are in office who are Emerge South Carolina alums.”

Most women who participate in the training program do not necessarily have political ambition. For many of them, they are reluctant to join the political landscape by way of being a politician. What has really motivated participants is their frustration with what is going on in their communities and feeling they can make a difference.

Watson said, “Most women come to the program with leadership experience, whether it is from work, boards, clubs, sororities, etc. Many of them are actually very involved in their communities and advocacy. They are on local boards and serve as heads of nonprofits. These women know they can make the difference that they want to be seen in their communities. We build upon this experience to help them become viable candidates that can win.”

For 2020 elections, women will be a driving force at the polls for the state of South Carolina, as well as on a national level. Voices will not only be heard casting their ballot, but also being on the ballot. For South Carolina, women are 51.5 percent of the population. With this voting bloc, specifically black women, Democratic presidential candidates have strategies of mobilizing them in hopes of getting their vote, as they have been a force in history-making elections around the country.

“Women have been leaders in their households, as well as in their communities, nurturing and giving back always in some capacity. This is something that I have seen even in my household and communities, being a black woman. Overall, women have been advocates and involved in politics forever. Due to past outcomes, they are more determined than ever to work their convictions by running for various offices, in addition to voting them.”

At the top of 2020, Emerge South Carolina will hold its third training session, where the group will train 20 plus women who will go on to run in the 2020 election cycle to serve in various levels of government.

WALTERS REMINISCES ON WOMAN OF INTEGRITY *by Les Echols*



The late Harriet Smith

Throughout the past 150 years, many civil rights leaders have diligently fought to make sure black Americans had the right to vote for the candidate of their choice. The late Harriet Smith of Florence was one of those individuals. Smith was loved and appreciated by all that were fortunate enough to know and work with her. Although she died in 2013 at the age of 86, she is fondly remembered by her peers and family for her generosity and service to others.

Today Smith’s daughter, Patricia Walters, fondly remembers her mother’s dedication to the Florence community. “My mother was a strong leader in community efforts, particularly with regard to our voter registration and elections. She took a stand to improve the quality

of life for all through her efforts to educate others in the importance of expressing their own opinion at the voting polls. She was dedicated in her efforts to ensure that every citizen in Florence County and the state of South Carolina was provided the opportunity to be represented by the candidate of their choice and the citizens understood the significance of voting,” said Walters.

Smith served for over 30 years on the Voters Registration and Elections Commission and was a devoted member of New Zion Baptist Church. According to Walters, it was her faith that kept her grounded and made her believe in doing the right thing.

Described as “feisty,” Smith was visibly passionate when it came to service, inclusion and equity. “She never compromised her values and was a woman of great integrity. She was humble and grounded in faith with impeccable character traits that every one of us should desire to emulate. It is incumbent upon us that we strive to become more like her and follow the legacy she has set through her community service and the life of servitude she lived,” concluded Walters.

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
History Month

ON DR. SINGLETARY TEACHING IN THE HALL Submitted by Pamela Little McDaniel



Dr. Irene Singletary

“She Teaches in the Hall” is a series of anecdotal tributes to a life-long educator, Dr. Irene Reed Singletary. Though written by her students, the book’s authorship is attributed to Singletary because of her love and dedication to her students and the influence she had on their academic, professional and personal lives.

The work focuses on Singletary’s humble upbringing by granduncle, Aaron Reed, whom she called Poppa, her father. Poppa became a widower shortly after having been given the responsibility for raising Singletary and her

sister. He was a Bamberg County farmer who was relentless in raising them after the passing of his wife, even though his biological children had all grown up. From Poppa, Singletary learned the value of work, the worth of hard-earned money and the love of a caring adult.

Singletary’s book provides over 50 years of student testimonies on how she positively influenced their lives. The book begins with the making of an impactful teacher followed by four chapters, each highlighting an attribute that her students use to describe Singletary’s life: a proficient educator, a passionate teacher, a patient mentor and a prayerful advisor.

Parents who read the book will be able to realize that the love that they provide for the children that they are raising will be the single-most important factor in their child(ren)’s lives. That love will positively impact

their self-esteem and their ultimate impact on the world.

Aspiring educators who read “She Teaches in the Hall” will come to confirm that the path to becoming an educator may not be easy, but that the rewards received from the students who reap the benefits of a caring educator are immeasurable.

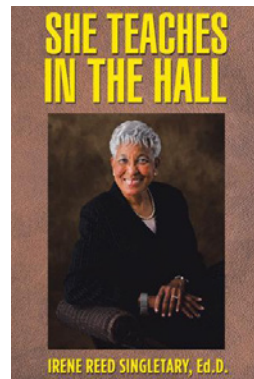
Others who read the book will be inspired to tackle whatever path or profession they choose with the will to be the very best they can be.

Because “She Teaches in the Hall” has been prepared with testimonials of real South Carolina students and educators, locals who read the book are bound to be familiar with some of the individuals who are featured paying tribute to Singletary. These tributes are documented from the early

1970s when she began her career as a middle school teacher in Bamberg County, to the mid 2000s when she served as director of Teacher Education at Morris College in Sumter.

Finally, reading this work will cause people to examine their status in life and consider if those in their circle were to write a book about them, what would that story be? “She Teaches in the Hall” encourages introspection and inspiration to set a course for revealing that personal life story.

Readers can purchase a copy of the book by its title at www.Amazon.com.



Dr. Irene Singletary's book

BCSD GIVES DANCERS CONFIDENCE TO DO ANYTHING by Ta'Meeka Epps



Brenda Cranford

HARTSVILLE-Women’s History Month is celebrated every year from March 1-31. Congress declared March as National Women’s History Month in perpetuity in 1981. The theme for 2020 Women’s History Month is “Celebrating the brave, bold, and fearless women who have influenced history.” During Women’s History Month the aim is to increase consciousness and knowledge of the many achievements and accomplishments women have contributed to their communities. The goal is to shine a light on the notable and

ordinary women so one day it will be impossible to teach history or for one to learn history without calling upon their contributions.

Brenda Cranford, of the Brenda Cranford School of Dance (BCSD), is a brave, bold and fearless woman sharing her love of dance in an extraordinary way. Born and raised in Darlington County, Cranford has called Hartsvillehome her entire life. She grew up dancing at the local dance studio where she started student teaching at the young age of fifteen. “I always knew I wanted to be a dance teacher. There was never any other career path I was interested in. Dance has always been my life and my passion. In 1981 I was blessed with the opportunity to open the doors to Brenda Cranford School of Dance.”

“No experience needed, but much to be gained!” Those are the words you will read when you visit the BCSD website. The studio is family-friendly, and the staff takes pride in its reputation. Also, they are certified and qualified to teach all levels and genres of dance. BCSD ensures proper dance education is a priority for their students regardless of age or level. “My mission at our dance studio has always been to properly instruct the art of dance in a

positive and loving way. We want each student to feel good about themselves and become more confident in their abilities to do anything! We have an amazing staff of certified and highly trained professional instructors who will also make sure they are correctly and safely taught.”

Brenda Cranford is owner and artistic director along with so many other titles she wears for BCSD. Diligence, hard work and dedication of the dancers, along with the staff, have made BCSD an award-worthy dance studio that has been voted “Best Dance Studio in the Pee Dee.” It has also been featured in Dance Spirit Magazine and named one of the Top 50 dance studios on the move. Through dance training, BCSD is providing its dancers with health and social benefits while instilling needed lifelong skills, which they will carry with them as they grow through life.

The heart and soul of BCSD is the joy the dancers exude when they perform. They display their skills at local events when they are not in competition season. They perform to upbeat joyful tunes doing their part to impart a little bit of happiness in the world. Cranford knows the importance of having strong, brave, bold women role models as she has had her share, and now she pays it forward.

“My life has been influenced by many great women. My mother, who worked hard to provide for her family, my first dance teacher who was my role model and school teachers who had a positive influence on me I impressed upon me the need to be confident and resilient.” Through the art of dance, Cranford and BCSD explicitly teach and model life skills. The dance studio has been a constant in the community of Hartsville for nearly 40 years. Its longevity speaks volumes to how vital the relationship is between business and community.

Brenda has been happily married to Kim Cranford for 42 years. They have two daughters, a parrot, and a cat. To learn more about the dance studio visit <https://www.bcschoolofdance.com/>.

WELL-BEHAVED WOMEN SELDOM MAKE HISTORY by DeAngela Haynes



Angel Daniels

MARION-Angel Daniels was born and raised in Charleston. She is the daughter of Thomas and Sandra Daniels, and she has four brothers. She attended Porter-Gaud School in Charleston and graduated in 2000. During her formative years, Daniels loved riding horses and reading books. She was also active in theater and debate and competed in track and field. For her undergraduate degree, Daniels went to Washington and Lee University and earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and Psychology. After college, she

attended law school at the Charleston School of Law and received a Juris Doctor degree. Immediately following law school, Daniels chose to specialize in trial advocacy, and she went on to attain a Master of Laws degree (LL.M.) in Litigation and Dispute Resolution at The George Washington University. After graduating from The George Washington University, Daniels clerked for Circuit Court Judge Diane S. Goodstein. Upon completion of her clerkship, she accepted a position as an assistant solicitor in April 2014 and has worked as a criminal prosecutor for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit in Florence and Marion counties since then.

Recently, Daniels found herself reflecting on the well-known quote: “Well-behaved women seldom make history.” She was curious as to where the quote originated, so she decided to Google it. She learned that it was penned by Dr. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, who is a history professor at Harvard. Ulrich focuses on women in her studies, and her approach to history is described as a tribute to “the silent work of ordinary people.” The quote comes from a 1976 scholarly article that she wrote about little-studied Puritan funeral services. When Ulrich wrote, “well-behaved women seldom make history,” it was in the context of commenting on how historians have mostly neglected to tell women’s stories of everyday life. Ulrich believes that studying the everyday lives and roles of women throughout history enriches and informs our understanding of our past.

Before Daniels looked up the quote, she had always assumed—like many others—that “well-behaved women seldom make history” was a mantra for encouraging rule-breaking behavior and that it was a “call to action” of sorts for women to assert authority and demand fairness. What she found most interesting about the quote was that Ulrich actually meant quite the opposite. Ulrich wanted to emphasize the importance of women’s contributions throughout history, and her intent was to show why the study of everyday women is so essential. Most of the women that Ulrich has studied are law-abiding, well-behaved women, and Ulrich believes that their stories need to be told because there is so much we can learn from them.

While researching “well-behaved women seldom make history,” Daniels came across an article that Ulrich wrote about Betsy Ross. Ross is credited as the seamstress who created the very first American flag. Ulrich discusses the veracity of whether or not Ross actually sewed the first flag. However, her focus is not on whether or not the

story is actually true, but rather on how and why historians latched onto and adopted Ross as part of the American national narrative. In the article, Ulrich writes, “Popular history chooses its own company. It is not enough to tell a good story. That story must be something other people want to hear.”

This statement really struck a chord with me. In today’s Internet and social media culture, there are now more outlets for free expression and the spread of information than ever before. She thinks it is so important to encourage women to express themselves and to tell their stories. The more that women are able to tell their stories, the more likely it will be that popular history will adopt the significance of women’s contributions. The audience is there and accessible. We just have to keep telling women’s stories.



Daniels loves living in the Pee Dee, and the warmth and the genuineness of the Pee Dee folk make her feel like she’s lived here forever. In her free time, she enjoys reading, running and traveling. She recently spent a weekend with her bestie from college at Devil’s Thumb Ranch in Tabernash, Colo., where she enjoyed the magical experience of seeing part of the Rocky Mountains on horseback. Daniels has a three-year-old son, Thomas, who is the center of her world, and his smile brings her more happiness than she ever could have

dreamed. Just like Dr. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, Betsy Ross and many other women in history, Angel Daniels is to be celebrated for her influence and impact on the Pee Dee region, and she’s an example that “Well-Behaved Women” Do Make History.



UP FOR THE CHALLENGE!!!



Councilwoman Tassie Lewis

also continues to serve the public as a local official.

Lewis was born and raised in Marion and is currently serving her first term in office as Councilwoman for the City of Marion's Electoral District 5. She's a great influencer in Marion and in the Pee Dee region as well. She's not one to say, "Do as I say," but she encourages others to "Do as she does!" However, with her bright smile, hard work, perseverance and commitment to her city, Tassie's success did not come without challenges.

Lewis says that her life has always been surrounded by challenges. For instance, her mother had her early. At the time, her mom had cancer of the uterus, so Lewis began her journey with health challenges because of her mom's condition. At age nine, Lewis was hit by the city's water truck, but despite all of these early challenges to her physical health, it did not deter her from being successful. She often says, "God has walked with me!!!"

When Lewis was 18 years of age, she decided to sign up for the military. Her brother was out in Panama at the time, and Lewis called a recruiter without her mom knowing. She did so because she knew that she was the baby of the family and being the youngest child, she did not want her mom to be worried about her. Surprisingly, Lewis was met with another challenge: a weight challenge. In order to go into the military, she had to be at least 100 pounds, but she was only 90. This did not stop her determination to accomplish and achieve this goal of being in the military. She had to get a waiver. She worked hard and finally was able to gain more weight.

Lewis had come from a great family of veterans, but they were all men. She was the first female in her family to go into the military. Lewis said, "My life has been about challenges, and I'm used to breaking barriers." The challenges were immediate during basic training at Fort Dix, N.J., where a 15-mile road march carrying additional medic gear and other physical tests were tough to overcome.

MARION - Throughout the history of the United States of America, there have been women who have been trailblazers and world-changers despite all odds against them. Women certainly have played and continue to play an important role in shaping our nation. In fact, well over 200,000 women serve on active duty in the U.S. military. The contributions of women to military history (and well beyond) cannot be ignored. Tassie Lewis is one of those women who has not only served in the U.S. Army, but

Also, when Lewis entered into the Army, she felt like she was always targeted. However, she also thought that the drill sergeants obviously saw something in her because of the ways they kept challenging her. She said that she couldn't march right, and basic training was very tough for her because this was all new to her, and she had never been far away from her small hometown in Marion.

Lewis served as a 91Alpha/Medical Specialist. She was only 19 years old and was beginning to find her purpose. Lewis says, "My purpose was being defined at that point." Her drill sergeants said to her at graduation that they knew she could do and that they saw great potential and leadership qualities in her. That's why they challenged her. After graduating from Basic Training, she went to Advanced Individual Training (AIT) to further discover and enhance her military job skills. Once she completed AIT, she was stationed in South Korea. In all, Lewis has been deployed to South Korea, Colorado, and Kansas. She had to get adjusted to flying, and medical problems were an obstacle before her honorable discharge.



Within her field of training as a medical specialist, plenty of challenges were set before her. She had never done anything or studied medical things before, so there were a lot of on the job trainings for her. Instead of looking at these things as challenges, Lewis was optimistic and saw them as great opportunities to learn something new. She charted and administered immunizations at the baby clinic, worked in orthopedics and radiology, and was

able to work directly with the physician. She said, "At the age of 19, I was able to work in the operating room, and it was very challenging."

The challenges didn't stop because about 10 years ago, Lewis was physically attacked in her home by someone she knew and, of course, the public/media always has something to say negatively about the situation, but she continues to heal, and she was able to pick herself up and keep her momentum of success.

As Lewis goes through life, she knows and continues to say that God has never failed her, and she never gave up. She believes that accountability is important and that integrity has to be in you. She loves what she does and whom she serves, and her motto is to "stay strong and stay focused!" Tassie Lewis is a great example that instead of looking down, she's always been UP For the Challenge!



be brave be bold
Be Fearless

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
History Month

FROM THE MILITARY TO HONDA Submitted by Staff



Jerri Alishia Small

TIMMONSVILLE - In 2011, Jerri Alishia Small swore in to defend her country as a member of the United States Marine Corps. Performing the duties of a 0621 field radio operator, Small assisted in many field missions and operations by providing communication support to all involved units. Throughout her time in the military, she was afforded the opportunity to deploy with the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit in 2013. Working with the Command Element detachment of the 26MEU, Corporal Small

worked alongside superior officers by setting up radio equipment and building and repairing antennas and power sources. Her number one responsibility was to establish and maintain contact with distant stations along with providing status check-ins across cryptographic channels as well as reporting all emergency updates related to each mission.

While deployed, Small traveled to Jerusalem, Israel, Greece, and Spain and even did a three-month assignment as the only African American female of the Command Element unit in Kuwait. Small's works did not go unnoticed as she was promoted to the rank of sergeant in 2014 upon returning from deployment. Proficient in her MOS, Small was sent on assignment to England to help train the Royal British Marines on all of the Marine Corps American radio systems. After gaining many awards throughout her USMC career, Small made a decision to leave the Corp to further pursue her education in 2015. She was able to complete her bachelor's in psychology and her master's in business management.

Small (as a civilian) now works as a cost procurement buyer in Honda of South Carolina's (HSC) purchasing department. Her roles and responsibilities consist of working with HSC suppliers to procure parts for the manufacturing of Honda products. She travels to supplier sites to tour their facilities and continuously works to maintain transparency in the business working relationships that suppliers have with HSC. Small uses her negotiation skills with suppliers to get the best tooling and piece cost of parts while also ensuring the best quality products are purchased.

Her favorite quote that sums up her experiences--past, present, and future--is "I'm stronger because I had to be. I'm smarter because of my mistakes, happier because of the sadness I know, and now wiser because I learned."



Emily Norris Griffin

Emily Norris Griffin comes from a family that has many members that made the decision to serve their country in the Air Force, Marines, and Army. She took her oath of enlistment to the United States Air Force in April 1993. Griffin's six-week basic training was at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. Her technical training, personnel specialist (3S0X1), was held at Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi and lasted for a little more than eight weeks.

A personnel specialist is similar to a human resources manager in the civilian sector but with counseling airmen

on their career goals and advising on promotions, training programs, and an array of administrative functions such as duty status changes, leave programs, casualty assistance and official documents such as letters of reprimand. Although the duties are similar to a civilian HR manager, there are many functions that are uniquely military.

Airman Griffin's first duty station was at Fort Huachuca in Arizona at the Morse Code Technical Training School. There, she assisted in the in-processing, out-processing and other specialized duties for all of the Air Force members that entered that specialty.

Griffin's next duty station was at U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart Germany beginning February 1995. She was soon married to a fellow airman and was transferred to Rammstein Air Base Germany in October 1995. Griffin worked at the 86th Mission Support Group in Customer Service and Manpower Control. The couple had a daughter at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Kaiserslautern Germany in December 1995.

Griffin decided in February 1998 to leave the Air Force to return to South Carolina to pursue a civilian career. She started at Honda of South Carolina (HSC) in December 1998 in the assembly frame customer quality department. In June 2001, she was given the opportunity to transfer into human resources. Since joining HSC, she obtained her bachelor's degree in business administration concentrated in human resources. In December 2018, Griffin was given the opportunity to transfer back to manufacturing to be the morale cross-functional leader, plant 5S leader and chair of the veteran's business resource group.

A quote that speaks to her in all of the roles that she has held is: "There is no limit to the amount of good you can do if you don't care who gets the credit" by Ronald Reagan.

ADDRESSING ISSUES AFFECTING PEE DEE YOUTH

Submitted by Jennifer Robinson



Carla Angus

The theme of 2020 Women's History Month is Valiant Women of the Vote. In searching for women who stand for women's right to vote, we also searched for women who believe strongly in all women's empowerment--women who create opportunities for other women to thrive. In this election year, there are several women who desire to impact our nation as presidential hopefuls. But as important as the election is, the campaigns of the female candidates need the support of female voters.

And for them to acquire support, they must address the issues that affect women, issues such as voting rights, wage equality, women's health care, #MeToo, #TimesUp and rights for women of color. Even though the focus may be on the women in the presidential race, we cannot forget the women who work to make a difference in our immediate communities.

One woman who has made a major impact in the Pee Dee is Carla Angus, a woman who has dedicated her life to working with the youth and who wants the opportunity to share with others how to effectively reach young people. Angus stated, "Every facet of my business, Transforming Minds LLC, and organization, Dramatic Coffee Beans, Inc (www.dcbinc.com)

CELEBRATING
WOMEN'S
History Month

ADDRESSING ISSUES CONT'D



Carla and her three men

org) reflects my passion for youth development. My purpose is focused on making a difference in the lives of young people through providing resources and mentorship to help them reach their fullest potential.”

Because of Angus’ selflessness and vision, Pee Dee youth have an opportunity for someone to help them focus on self-development: “I have dedicated my life to working with the youth, and I want the opportunity to share with others how to

effectively reach young people. As the owner of Transforming Minds, I provide trainings and interactive workshops for all people interested in the well-being of youth, including but not limited to teachers of all levels, school administrators, counselors, church youth organizations, community leaders, nonprofit organizations and youth groups,” said Angus. Girls today will become the women of the future who will lead us to change inequalities and injustices politically.



Carla and husband Dr. Josh Angus

As with many people who have focused passions, as a former school principal and educator, Angus has a history that drives her to help young people. She shared, “As an African-American female growing up, I saw a limited representation of anyone that looked like me in the media. It always seemed as though others could become accomplished, but there did not seem to be an obvious path for women, especially dark skin women who were accomplished. I feel it is important for me

to work with young people, especially young girls, to help them see their value early in life and not settle for less. I have been fortunate to work closely with young people to help them unlock their infinite potential and develop their mindset to work toward their goals in spite of what society says.”

For the next decade and beyond, Angus plans to continue to dedicate her efforts to providing resources and to continue mentorship to young women. It is very important to her to help them realize the importance of education, making good choices and self-worth beyond social media.

As she works towards this goal, Angus thanks her wonderful husband Dr. Josh Angus and her children Noah (13) and Nylan (9) for understanding her crazy work schedule and for providing awesome continued support.

Angus’ impact of youth will lead to a community of change agents who will be your next mayor, governor or president. Therefore, we salute Carla Angus.



LEADING THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY BY EXAMPLE

by Ta’Meeka Epps



Jamie Kelly

Women’s History Month seeks to shine a light on the contributions made by phenomenal women from all walks of life. Whether in the field of science, politics, business, health and beauty or any of the myriads of possibilities available, the impact made by women is undeniable, and by shining a light on these amazing women, the role model effect is created.

The effect of seeing someone who resembles you and embodies greatness has the ability to ignite a fire within someone you never knew existed. Diversity Works Magazine© takes this time to shine a light on Jamie Kelly, owner/operator of Indigo Salon and Day Spa, to educate young women about leaders who serve right in their very backyard.

Indigo Salon and Day Spa is where a metropolitan experience meets southern charm. Kelly has been in the industry for 15 years, and Indigo Salon and Day Spa has been a thriving asset in the city of Hartsville, giving back and growing right along with the community it calls home. The state of the art facility features licensed specialists, luxury brands, a quality customer service team, and a new innovative salon and spa.

Kelly is the 2019 Will Woodham Business Person of the Year. This is awarded to a proven leader of a Chamber member business. This prestigious award has an illustrious history in Hartsville and is reserved for the highest achievers in business. Kelly has over 20 years of experience as a business leader and career developer across the Pee Dee region and the state.

The beauty or personal care industry is charged with helping their clients create a look, style, mood or even a moment while helping them to feel good about themselves and the experience. Kelly and Indigo Salon and Day Spa aim to fulfill this mission for clients as well as the staff.

“After graduating from Francis Marion University, I worked for Sonoco Products Company, and I realized I enjoyed working with the public. I went back to school and obtained my cosmetology license. I’ve been in the industry for 15 years now. I purchased the assets to Indigo Salon and Day Spa in 2011. It is my responsibility to coach/grow the staff and help them create the life they deserve. As for our clients, we serve them from our hearts, and our number one priority is the client,” said Kelly.

The beauty industry has been tagged as being an industry for those who may not be deemed “college material.” However, the Indigo staff is fortunate to be a part of a national movement to change the conversations about the cosmetology industry. They are single mothers, breadwinners, and team members who are growing in their confidence every day. They are professionals, licensed and board-certified within their areas of expertise. They are writing and rewriting their stories, motivating and showing the way for those who are to come after.

Kelly and the staff of Indigo Salon and Day Spa are a team of dynamic women blazing trails and setting trends. They are thankful to the Hartsville community for its continued support and dedication. Everything they strive to do as a brand and business is for the clients and the community, and they are committed to bringing you the highest level of quality service by offering a variety of extra value services and the best customer service around. For more information about Indigo Salon and Day Spa, visit <https://indigosalondayspa.com/>.



A WORK OF THE HEART Articles by Kim Williams



Clint Scott

The journey to working as a social worker for the Palliative Care Service at McLeod Hospital has had many twists and turns for Clint Scott.

As a young college student in the mountains of North Carolina, Scott was undecided on what course of study he should pursue. He spent time searching the desires of his heart until he realized that he ultimately wanted to spend his life helping and working with people. That is what led him to major in social work at Western Carolina University.

After college, Scott felt a calling to go into ministry. Therefore, he attended seminary in Louisville, Ky. Once he completed seminary, he served as a youth pastor in several churches in the area around Chattanooga, Tenn. and in North Carolina for 19 years. During his pastoral service, he chose to enroll in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) classes. These classes exposed him to various needs in the hospital setting. It was at this time that he felt a calling towards working with people who found themselves in need of in-hospital care and who were at vulnerable points in their lives.

Shortly after those classes ended, Scott applied for an open social work position with the Palliative Care Team at McLeod Hospital in Florence and was offered the job, which he accepted. Since joining the team in Palliative Care, even he finds it hard to believe that it's been 12 years since relocating. He begins each day praying for God to help him help people in some way, no matter how small. He feels that God leads him into and through each situation that comes his way and that everything he has experienced thus far has shaped and molded him, especially for this position. Every day is a little different from the day before because of the wide range of patients he is able to come into contact with.

Each day Scott meets together with three nurses and sometimes a chaplain, all of whom make up their team. During the meeting, they are able to discuss the plan for the day. They are informed about the various people who are in-patient and need to be seen, as well as new patients. Scott is thankful for this dedicated and gifted team because it takes them all to work towards their goal, which is "improving patients' quality of life." Their area of service is a relatively new field, yet it is important because they focus on treating patients who may be facing chronic or life-threatening illnesses and helping them to cope and navigate the physical, social, emotional and spiritual aspects of illness and disease.

As for those who may be interested in joining a social work career, Scott advises that they must have the heart to help and mindset to work with people first and foremost. A benefit to social work is that there is a lot of variety and opportunities to pursue different areas. With such a personal field, there also comes struggles, like a limited amount of resources available for people who need them. Also, while social work can be very rewarding it can also be quite challenging as well. It is important to develop healthy boundaries by trying not to take work home and remembering to care for yourself and finding ways for self care and relieving stress.

Each person in this field needs to find activities for self care and then take the time to do it. Scott enjoys spending time with his family, yoga, and commuting by his bicycle daily, and the rewards of social work happen on a daily basis for him. One thing he values most about his work is that he can almost always feel like he has helped someone in at least some small way at the end of each day.

In July of 2018, McLeod Regional Medical Center publicly recognized Scott for outstanding professional services above and beyond the call of duty by presenting him with the Merit Award. While it was quite an honor, Scott shared that what is most meaningful is when family members of a patient or patients themselves take a moment to simply say "thank you" and that they sincerely appreciate him working with their family through some of their most difficult times. That is the ultimate reward. Scott's hope is that on his best of days, he can be an instrument by which God loves and encourages people dealing during difficult times in their lives.

USING HEARTBREAK TO HELP OTHERS



Lorene S. Godbold

When asked about her profession, Lorene S. Godbold jokes that she was born a social worker. She remembers herself always having a helper's heart and having a connection to people and animals that were hurting. Her natural desire to help those in need is what led her to courses of study that would allow her to pursue those passions.

Godbold attended Francis Marion University and diligently worked to earn her major in sociology with a minor in psychology. Unfortunately, during her last year of college,

her grandmother had a stroke. They were very close, so Godbold was closely involved with her grandmother's treatment, which gave her the opportunity to observe the medical care and how the various disciplines worked together to treat her grandmother and provide support to their family. It all weighed heavily on her heart.

Upon graduation, Godbold went to work with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) in Child Support Services. Thoughts of her grandmother often came to her mind and flooded her soul. That was a challenging year. Godbold recalled how life changing this experience was for her and her family and how she often thought about the people they had encountered along the way. The guidance and support they received from doctors, nursing staff, physical therapists, speech therapists, and social workers helped make a very difficult and heartbreaking experience manageable. Through it all, there was a social work theme that shone brightly. It was that theme, and the loving memory of her grandmother that gave Godbold a desire to return to school.

After much thought and contemplation, Godbold felt driven to apply to the School of Social Work at the University of South Carolina. She was accepted and then began working towards her master's degree in social work. She was thankful for having the opportunity to have the privilege of gaining experience through several internships under several talented licensed master social workers. It was through observation and practice that Godbold was able to receive valuable experiences that would prepare her for what lie ahead.

After graduating in 2001, Godbold was happy to be able to start working at McLeod Regional Medical Center. She has had the opportunity to work in several areas within the medical social work field, including inpatient case management and discharge planning, cancer services, hospice care, social work management and now outpatient case management services.

Since February of last year, Godbold has served as the assistant director of Access Health of the Pee Dee, which is a program that provides help to uninsured and underinsured patients with chronic illnesses to find services



USING HEARTBREAK CONT'D

for health, social and behavioral needs. The program works with community partners and other agencies throughout the Pee Dee region, but there are specific criteria that patients must meet to qualify.

Over the years, these experiences have helped Godbold create a professional collection of knowledge and skills that allow her to be innovative and creative in developing systems and processes that make it easier to connect the pieces of the healthcare puzzle to improve access to quality care. It can be difficult as there are many factors that must connect for this to be successful. Part of Godbold's job is to identify the challenges and barriers that prevent patients from utilizing available healthcare services and resources, then creating processes and enhancing program development strategies to simplify access to patient care.

A typical day consists of emails, morning meetings and patient reviews during which patients who meet criteria for available programs are identified and discussed. Godbold attends many meetings throughout the state including the Access Health Network with the South Carolina Hospital Association, Northeastern Rural Health Network and Coordinating Council Meetings throughout the Pee Dee region. These connections, community relationships and program availability are vital to improving access to care for patients. Godbold feels that God has given her these experiences and opportunities in the field of social work to be there for people, to meet them

where they are and to use her God-given talents and gifts to help them through their struggles.

One thing that Godbold is most proud of is working with social work students to help give them some of the same experiences and opportunities she had and to help them be able to have a positive impact on the patients and communities they will serve.

For those who are interested in joining the social work field, Godbold advises them to sharpen their communication skills and learn how to relate to a wide variety of people. They must study the area thoroughly and know their resources. They need to be prepared for the challenges that will come and be ready to advocate for those in need. One of the hardest things to face as a social worker is identifying a problem and then having to wait for a resolution. Having the patience to wait is a constant struggle within the profession. Change takes time, and there are often multiple factors involved in the process. Social work is all about making positive change. It is both frustrating and rewarding to be able to use your skills to create positive change.

For Godbold, the rewards of her career in social work are constantly being realized as her work has a personal impact on patients, the community and future social workers. And knowing she is making a difference is what continues to propel her through this career.

TRENT HILL CENTER FULFILLS NECESSITY IN LIVES OF YOUTH



Scottie Hill

HARTSVILLE-Trent Hill Center for Children and Families is a group home for youth who have been abused, neglected or abandoned. The Center also offers individual, group and family counseling services to local children and families. The Trent Hill Center for Children and Families operates a resale shop called Second Chances to generate revenue to support the Center.

The Center is a family business. It is named in memory of the founder's father, Trent Hill, who passed away in 2012 due to Pick's Disease.

Scottie and Becky Hill, sisters, co-lead the organization. Scottie Hill serves as CEO/executive director, and Becky Hill serves as the residential services director. Their brother volunteers in the resale shop and tutors some of the center's youth residents. Also, Scottie Hill's husband works as the maintenance director while other family members make financial contributions to the Center.

The Center officially opened its doors to house youth in April 2018. The mission of the Center is to provide trauma-informed care to our community's most vulnerable children in a setting that fosters physical and emotional safety; intellectual and spiritual well-being; curiosity; creativity; and exploration. It provides services in partnership with individuals, families, and organizations within the local community as well as community-based counseling services to children and families.

The Trent Hill Center was created out of the need for a local placement option where youth would be safe, supported and free to be themselves. This is because there is a DIRE shortage of safe, loving, high-quality foster care placements for youth in the Pee Dee area. The Hill sisters accepted the challenge and have housed children from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, faith-based belief systems, nationalities

and immigration statuses through the Center.

Most of the parents of the youth housed through the Center have had their parental rights terminated through the Family Court System. However, in situations where there is no court order prohibiting contact, the Center invites parents and family members to visit their children at any time. The families are allowed to dine with their youth. They attend special events at the Center, such as Fourth of July parties and Thanksgiving feasts. They are also invited to accompany them to their children's basketball games or other activities. The Center encourages visitation so parents are able to view, firsthand, the interaction with their children and vice versa as well as help build a healthy parent/child relationship.

Scottie Hill has been a social worker for 20 years. It is not a career but a lifestyle to her. "I chose social work because it was a direct pursuit of my personal and religious values. I was born into privilege but did not earn that privilege. It was given to me because I am white, heterosexual, Protestant and grew up in a family with adequate social, emotional and financial resources to support my growth, development and goals. Because I did not EARN it, I feel it is my obligation and my honor to use all I have been given in my life to help others. As a social worker, I fully believe that

healing occurs through relationships and partnership. I try to establish true partnership with people so as to diminish the inherent hierarchy that exists in helping relationships. I believe that families and children are experts on their own lives—sometimes they just need a little extra help to realize their potential."

For more information about The Trent Hill Center and to get involved with a great cause, visit <https://www.trenthillcenter.org/>.



The Hill Family



FINDING MEANING IN SOCIAL WORK



Raquel Serrano

exploring the field of social work in college. That is exactly what she did.

Serrano attended the National Catholic School of Social Services in Washington, D.C. and studied social work. She then trained for her second year in social work in maternal and child health at Georgetown University Hospital. There were times she wondered whether or not she wanted to stay in the field of social work, yet she graduated in 1976 with her master's in social work. As time passes, Serrano continues to fall in love with the work and grows more passionate about the field, which is a credentialed profession, meaning that it requires licensure in the state where one practices as well as 40 hours of continuing education credits every two years.

Serrano has become a lifelong learner and enjoys attending conferences and trainings specific to oncology social work and behavioral health offered by the Association of Oncology Social Work to remain current and be able to provide the best care for patients. She is certified as an oncology social worker and holds a certificate in sex therapy.

Since graduation, Serrano has had the opportunity to work in several areas under the social work umbrella, including maternal and child health, behavioral health, HIV/AIDs, migrant health, and pediatric cardiology. She also made the transition from Dallas, Texas, to Florence. At the time, she had just completed cancer treatments and used that time to recuperate, rest and get her life back. It was during that period of introspection and recuperation that she came to the conclusion that when she returned to the workforce, she would seek a job that was more meaningful to her.



When the time came that Serrano felt ready to join the world, she remembers seeing an online ad for a McLeod Cancer Clinic social worker. She was reminded of how early on, even before she had finished her cancer treatments, she would be able to use her social work skills in the field of oncology. In 2008, McLeod Regional Medical Center hired her for the job. It has been fulfilling to her as a provider because of her personal experience and educational background. For Serrano, there is no greater satisfaction than to know

that every day she is engaged in doing what she loves.

As a social worker, Serrano desires to mentor social work students. She currently serves as a field instructor for the University of South

Articles by Kim Williams

Carolina School of Social Work. Social work students are placed at the cancer center for a year, and Serrano works with them and teaches skills that will be needed upon their graduation. She also introduces them to the specialty area of oncology social work.

Serrano has some advice that she would like to share with new social workers: "The field is varied. Find your passion in social work. Know thyself; your role is not to solve everyone's situations but to engage and empower your patient/client to become a problem solver by focusing on their strengths." And she says to "be passionate, caring, and respectful of those you help."

When speaking about the stresses that come along with the type of job at times, Serrano says that "everyone that goes into this field has to have a self-care strategy, and each person has to find their own strategy, whether it be spending time with family/friends, exercise/yoga, nature walks, play music, create art, read, pray, meditate, get some extra sleep, or just chill." As for her, she says the care activity that she does on a consistent basis is exercise: "I walk 2-4 miles briskly out in nature, 3-4 times a week. And I meet with a personal trainer (Chad Gainey) once a week. I try watching special programs/movies and reading; however, I often fall asleep, so I guess I could say that maybe that is self-care. I also take long weekend breaks and vacations."

Serrano is thankful for the great joy she receives knowing how much patients enrich her life. Raquel Serrano continues to reside and call Florence her home with her husband. They have two children who live in North Carolina.

HOMETOWN DIFFERENCE MAKER



Fredrick Williams

One of South Florence's own strives hard to make a difference in his hometown. Fredrick Williams attended Coastal Carolina University and thought about becoming a clinical psychologist. However, he felt led in a different direction and chose social work instead. He graduated from Coastal Carolina in 2006 and then received his master's in 2010 from the University of South Carolina. While there, Williams found inspiration and encouragement from a vital professor along his educational journey when Professor

Eunika Simons helped him realize his potential and skill set so that he could apply it to the workforce after graduation.

HopeHealth is where Williams has served for the last five years. Since beginning there, he mainly worked in a community outreach role. In this role he compiles a list based on reports of patients who haven't seen their doctor in over a year. Then, once the list is available, it is imperative for Williams to gain an accurate view of patient situations as fully as he can. This includes gathering background information, medical history and other data that would help him not only identify the patients but also build a positive rapport with them. Once contact is made, the goal is that it leads to the patients coming in for care.

More recently, Williams' career has taken on a different perspective. In the past, his role consisted of more one-on-one contact and building



HOMETOWN DIFFERENCE CONT'D

relationships with patients. Now his position allows him to analyze data to help others on his team to be able to do their job more effectively. The data he compiles also helps to serve patients better by assuring they are getting the best medical care, can figure out preventative care options and can help prevent over hospitalization and possible future medical issues. Overall, the team is vital in implementing best practices as it relates to population health and value-based care.

Over the years, there have been instances that have left permanent marks on Williams and his team. For example, several years ago, a patient went in for care and continued on the path of medical treatment. He not only received top-quality care, but he also credits the HopeHealth team with giving him hope in life again. To this day, that patient continues to become more engaged with his own health and even volunteers in the community. In addition, he not only gives of his time but also spreads hope to others as well as encouragement to Williams and other staff members, reminding them that their work matters and has the power to change lives. These are the kind of results that push social workers to continue in their field.

As rewarding as social work can be, it can also be quite challenging. Therefore, personal care should be a top priority for social workers. Williams believes that laughter is the best medicine. There are no limits as he tries to find humor and keep things light in the office because, while it might be easy to fall into doom and gloom in certain

circumstances, he understands the importance of keeping people, and himself, in good spirits.

If others are considering going into the field of social work, Williams recommends comedy and personal development to combat not becoming too personally stressed. He would also share the same advice he was given as he pursued his degree: “Don’t limit yourself in opportunities or possibilities as you get into the career field.” Williams advises that you hone in on the skills you attain and seek to apply them to any career path you choose to pursue, even if it isn’t viewed as a typical social work job.

The important thing to remember is that with social work, “We are taught to deal with people holistically, from every angle. While every business deals with people, it becomes easier to apply these skills to a myriad of different job positions in order to make a difference,” says Williams.

Another way Williams and his HopeHealth team continue to make a difference is by building and maintaining relationships in the community. It is through these relationships that they are able to provide clients with the necessary resources in areas where they cannot serve them directly, yet the patients can still get the quality care they need. This is the business that focuses on the patients and one that Fredrick Williams is proud to continue to make a difference in.

COMMITTED TO CHAMPIONING EFFORT SOCIALLY



Manager Sharon Davis

March has been designated as National Professional Social Work Month. Social work is considered one of the fastest growing professions in the United States. According to the National Association of Social Workers, more than 777,000 are expected to be employed as social workers by 2028 in a number of capacities. These professionals are dedicated to helping citizens be their best selves in life.

To celebrate the profession, we caught up with The Dannon Project’s case manager, Sharon Davis. “I have been working in the social work profession for at least 20 years and at The Dannon Project here in Florence [S.C.] for a little over two years,” she said. “It is some of the most rewarding work that I have ever done in my profession.

The Dannon Project is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping those people who are transitioning, recovering from addictions and/or who are non-violent, on the edge of society. The organization offers a second chance and a new lease on life by helping participants receive a number of certifications in areas such as welding and phlebotomy, to name a few; licenses; and continuing education.

Davis said, “When I decided I would pursue a career in social work, I knew that it was what I wanted to do. I am passionate about helping others that may not be able to help themselves in life. Because I am dedicated to making sure people have options in life and are working to their fullest potential, I knew it was truly for me.”

She went on to explain when life does not always work out the

way one plans, everyone needs that person to champion their efforts to stay focused and keep going. That is the commitment of a social worker. The profession has many resources to offer clients to ensure they are facing challenges with successful outcomes.

“The future of the profession is having as many resources as possible to make living life enjoyable, successful and winnable,” Davis said.

The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.
Jane Addams

The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice.
George Eliot

**Social Work
Profession of Choice**



SPOTLIGHTING THE LIFE-AFFIRMING WORK OF TONI MARIE WILSON *by Ta'Meeka Epps*



Toni Marie Wilson

Social Work Month gives an opportunity for social workers and their allies to place a spotlight on the profession while highlighting the important contributions and impact social workers give to society. Every March, we celebrate the fact that every day, more than 682,000 social workers across the nation act as advocates, champions and leaders for those who are vulnerable and, in turn, make our society a better place to live.

Social workers are typically called upon when life is it's most challenging because they are skilled to bring calm to the chaos. The goal of acknowledging those who are social workers is to help children understand the profession so that they might choose to make social work their profession. Statistics from the Department of Labor stated in 2008 that the need for social workers was expected to more than double in size. This was expected in the areas of substance abuse, home health care, school social work, and social service agencies.

Toni Marie Wilson is a behavioral health consultant with a background in social work in the behavioral health department of HopeHealth. HopeHealth is a federally qualified community healthcare center in the Pee Dee region providing primary care, infectious disease management, chiropractic care, behavioral health services, substance abuse services, diabetes specialists, dental health, pain management, endocrinology, school-based services, women's health, and rheumatology.

As a behavioral health consultant, Wilson has been providing counseling, advocacy, interventions for chronic medical conditions and consultation services for patients at HopeHealth since September 2017. HopeHealth is committed to excellence through service that exemplifies love for people and passion for their well-being, and that commitment aligns with why Wilson chooses to serve.

"I believe every person deserves dignity and respect as these are integral parts of our humanity. In my experience, I found people in

vulnerable situations often have core aspects of themselves compromised. In serving others in this field, I believe I can assist in empowering individuals to restore the pieces of themselves which are essential to their human experience. When I was nearing the end of my undergraduate experience, I realized I wanted to leave a positive imprint on the world.

I recognized social work was the avenue I wanted to utilize to make a difference."



Toni Marie Wilson understands she is only able to complete the work she does because of those who came before, and she hopes to be the light that leads others to the profession. The theme for Social Work Month 2020 is Social Workers: Generations Strong. The theme has various meanings, as it

should. However, as we close out one decade and usher in the start of a new one

it is imperative that we bridge the gap between the younger generations honoring the powerful and positive impact of the past and embracing all the future has in store.

Social work professionals help families and individuals confront, cope with and overcome challenges. In other words, they do life-affirming work. They accomplish these feats through passion, purpose, and heart. Social workers advocate for social justice and fight against social injustice. They ensure access to basic services, resources and information for the ones they serve. The access provided by people such as Wilson and agencies such as HopeHealth are lifelines to the communities and the people who live in the communities.

Toni Marie Wilson has made a home for herself in Florence, which she shares with her Great Dane, Xander. She enjoys reading, shopping, swimming and caring for loving children in her home as she is a licensed foster parent with Florence County DSS. Wilson also enjoys spending time with her family.

Social Worker Month

Social workers make a difference in the day-to-day lives of millions of Americans by helping to build, support and empower positive family and community relationships.

POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE IS NEVER COMPLETE. IT'S A WORK IN PROGRESS.



ANDERSON BROTHERS BANK ANNOUNCES NEW HIRE



Brandi Turbeville

MULLINS – Anderson Brothers Bank announces its new hires with the recent additions of Brandy Turbeville, Brooke Rhodes, and Anita Tyson as branch tellers; Conda Parris and Angela Gibson as teller/CSR; and Shareka Sullivan as branch operations coordinator. “Anderson Brothers Bank continues to grow and expand,” stated Susan Grant, VP marketing and compliance officer. “By maintaining professional customer service that adds value to the organization in the best light possible, Anderson Brothers Bank will continue to grow and expand.”



Brooke Rhodes

Brandy Turbeville has been hired as a teller based in the bank’s Conway Main Street office located at 500 Main St., Conway.



Anita Tyson

Brooke Rhodes has been hired as a teller based in the bank’s Loris 701 office located at 302 Highway 701 N., Loris.

Anita Tyson has been hired as a teller based in the bank’s Dillon office located at 1006 US-301 Dillon.

In the role of teller, the job responsibilities include, but are not limited to, handling customer financial transactions, answering questions in person or on telephone referring to bank services all by maintaining great customer service and communication skills.

Conda Parris and Angela Gibson have been hired



Conda Parris



Angela Gibson



Shareka Sullivan

as teller/CSR in the bank’s Summerville office located at 2139 North Main Street, Ste. F Summerville.

In the role of teller/CSR in addition to handling teller job responsibilities, the customer service representative is responsible for handling an array of front-facing duties. Some of these tasks include interacting with customers over the phone, in person and/or via email and social media. Throughout all of these interactions, customer service representatives must maintain a high level of professionalism that must add value to the organization.

Shareka Sullivan has been hired as the BOC in the bank’s Summerville office located at 2139 North Main Street, Ste. F Summerville.

In the role of branch operations coordinator, she will be responsible for overseeing and coordinating all operations of the branch, building rapport with customers and the community, and creating and implementing strategies to improve productivity in efforts to achieve the financial targets of the branch.

About Anderson Brothers Bank

Anderson Brothers Bank is a full-service community bank offering a complete range of competitive loan services and deposit products. Founded in 1933, this family-owned bank blends the elements of traditional personal service, local market awareness and advanced technology to meet the financial needs of its customers.



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ESTATE PLANNING FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



An estate plan is not just for high-net-worth individuals. It's for everyone who is single, has a spouse, has a partner, has dependents, owns a business, has investments, has retirement funds, owns property or has material possessions of value such as a car. An estate plan may reduce estate taxes and shield your beneficiaries from having to go through probate. It means your last wishes will be heard. You can name a guardian for any young children and can even direct how you wish a beloved pet to be cared for after you are gone. Having an estate plan can also prevent a mess by bringing clarity to your beneficiaries, and it can protect assets from unforeseen creditors.¹

The estate plan² may contain a will or living trust, the names of your beneficiaries, the appointment of an executor, and/or a letter of intent that tells a beneficiary or executor what you wish to be done with specific assets, funeral details and special requests. It should contain a healthcare directive with a power of attorney appointing a trusted person to make medical decisions for you when you can no longer voice your opinion and a durable power of attorney appointing a trusted friend or relative to make financial and legal decisions for you if you become incapacitated. It may also contain a trust or trusts

for passing on assets to your beneficiaries. Life insurance can be an important component in the overall estate plan.

You should update your estate plan whenever a major change occurs in your life, such as purchasing a home, moving in with a significant other, getting married, having or adopting a baby, selling your business, getting a divorce, retiring, or having a beneficiary die before you do. Review your plan when federal and state laws on estate taxes change.

If you should die without a will (which is called "intestate"),³ the state and federal governments will have standard procedures for distributing your assets, and they may not be in line with your wishes. Your beneficiaries may have to pay more in estate taxes, and probate may take considerably longer than it would if you had a will in place.

Consult a professional financial advisor on tax and estate planning. Trusts can be complicated to set up, so consult a professional trusts and estates attorney or certified public accountant before you begin.

This educational, third-party article is provided as a courtesy by Julie A Cord, agent, New York Life Insurance Company. To learn more about the information or topics discussed, please contact Julie A Cord at 317-289-3010 or jacord@ft.newyorklife.com.

¹ Julie Garber, "Top 5 Reasons Why You Need an Estate Plan," The Balance.com, June 18, 2018.

<https://www.thebalance.com/top-reasons-why-you-need-an-estate-plan-3505444>

² Glenn Curtis, "6 Estate Planning Must-Haves," Investopedia.com, April 18, 2018.

https://www.investopedia.com/articles/pf/07/estate_plan_checklist.asp

³ Aine Cain, "What Happens If You Die Without a Will," Business Insider.com, August 21, 2018. <https://www.businessinsider.com/what-happens-if-you-die-without-a-will-2018-8>

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HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME OF THE YEAR

Submitted by Brandi Shepherd, Prevention Specialist, Rubicon Family Counseling Services



The Staff of Rubicon Family Counseling Services

HARTSVILLE - The Winter Holidays are almost over, and for most of us, it was spent as a joyous time with friends and family. It served as a time of spiritual renewal, gift-giving, relaxation and self-reflection. But for some, it marked the worst part of their year. According to the CDC, the months of December and January are the most dangerous times of the year in terms of drug and alcohol-related deaths. On average, 173 people die every day during the winter holidays from drugs and/or alcohol. This is likely due to the overall increase in consumption that happens around this time. A recent survey conducted by the American Addiction Centers revealed that 29 percent of Americans drink more during the holidays. While this does help to shed some light on the subject, it still begs the question—why now?



Part of the answer lies in our holiday traditions. From office parties to family gatherings, alcohol can be freely flowing. For a person in recovery, this can be an especially trying time.

The second part lies in stress. While the holidays can be the merriest time of the year, they can also be the most stressful. Worrying about finances, battling crowds for last-minute gifts, and being forced to spend time with unpleasant relatives are only some of the challenges we faced this holiday season. It's no wonder that 84 percent of Americans said that they were moderate to overwhelmingly more stressed during the holidays. While stress impacts us all differently, there is no denying the connection it has with alcohol and drug use. One of the dangers of choosing substance use as a coping mechanism is that stress can reduce the intoxicating effects of alcohol. This means that an individual who drinks to reduce stress will end up drinking more to feel the

“calming” effects of intoxication, thus leading to over-consumption and risk of alcohol poisoning.

With stress comes mental and emotional turmoil. Having a strained relationship with family members, missing loved ones who passed away, spending the holiday season alone and even juggling a large to-do list can all contribute to overwhelming feelings of anxiety and depression. This is why 82 percent of Americans said they felt more anxious during the holidays than normal, and 26 percent said they felt more depressed. While there is still much debate over the causal relationship between mood disorders and addiction, researches agree that individuals with an anxiety or mood disorder such as depression, are two to three times more likely to have an alcohol or other substance use disorder. Feeling anxious or depressed now and then, even around the holidays, is no cause for alarm, but if they start to become the norm then it's time to speak with a counselor.

As we see, the holidays can be a troubling and even dangerous time of the year. If you have found yourself using alcohol or other drugs as a means to cope with the pressures of the end of the year, then it may be time for you to speak to a specialist. With a new year comes a new you. Let our team at Rubicon help you on your path towards recovery so that you may enjoy a safe and happy holiday season next year.



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TACKLE TWO AT A TIME: TREAT YOUR DIABETES. PROTECT YOUR HEART



People living with diabetes are two times more likely to die from cardiovascular diseases, such as heart disease, heart failure, heart attack, and stroke. And, nearly 70 percent of people aged 65 or older with diabetes die from some form of heart disease.

Diabetes can lead to many complications, including having a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. There are many reasons for this. For example, people with diabetes often have high blood pressure and high cholesterol, which increases the chances of having heart disease or a stroke. Furthermore, over time, high levels of glucose and fats (such as triglycerides) in the blood from diabetes can damage your nerves (iii). People with diabetes-related nerve damage may not notice any chest pain, one of the warning signs of a heart attack, which can lead to delays in seeking treatment. Sadly, an adult with diabetes in the United States is hospitalized for heart disease every 80 seconds, and an adult with diabetes is hospitalized for stroke every two minutes.

Despite the known link between diabetes and heart disease, a 2018 Harris Poll survey examined people aged 45 and older with type 2 diabetes and found that only half of them recognized their risk or had discussed their risk for cardiovascular disease with their healthcare team. But that can change: if you have diabetes, talk to your healthcare provider about how you can better manage your disease and protect your heart. Do not delay because the longer you have diabetes, the higher the chances are that you will develop heart disease.

The American Heart Association and the American Diabetes Association recommend a few tips to care for your heart when you have type 2 diabetes:

- * Check in with your doctor regularly and ask specifically about your heart health
- * Maintain healthy eating habits like adding fruits and veggies to your diet
- * Keep exercising and moving
- * Perform self-care to help lower stress
- * Quit smoking
- * Monitor blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol and weight
- * Take medication(s) as prescribed

The link between diabetes and heart disease does not need to be twice as scary. When you manage your diabetes, you are also taking care of your heart.

[i] "Cardiovascular Disease and Diabetes." American Heart Association, <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/diabetes/why-diabetes-matters/cardiovascular-disease--diabetes>.

[ii] "Diabetes, Heart Disease, and Stroke." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/heart-disease-stroke>.

[iii] "Diabetic Neuropathy." National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes/overview/preventing-problems/nerve-damage-diabetic-neuropathies>.

[iv] Know Diabetes by Heart, <https://knowdiabetesbyheart.org/>.

[v] American Heart Association and American Diabetes Association. (2018). People with T2D Baseline Survey. Online survey; USA. Conducted by The Harris Poll in September 2018. <https://www.endocrinologyadvisor.com/home/topics/diabetes/type-2-diabetes/aha-ada-announce-joint-education-initiative-to-reduce-cvd-deaths-in-t2d/>.

[vi] "7 Tips to Care for Your Heart When You Have Type 2 Diabetes." Know Diabetes by Heart, https://knowdiabetesbyheart.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/KDBH_7TipsToCareToCareforHeart.pdf.

HOPEHEALTH EXPANDS ACCESS TO CARE

Articles submitted Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth



Through Access Hope, HopeHealth patients can visit with a provider outside regularly-scheduled appointments

Fitting health care into today's busy schedules becomes an excuse for many to put off their annual checkups and preventive care visits with their providers. HopeHealth has been making it easier for patients to take care of their health with the Access Hope program at the HopeHealth Medical Plaza since its opening in early 2016. Now, Access Hope has expanded to patients in Manning with office hours from 8 a.m.–8 p.m. Monday through Saturday at HopeHealth in Manning.

Through Access Hope, providers are available Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. to help existing HopeHealth patients address their health care needs. The program also allows for the intake of new patients who are unable to receive care during traditional business hours.

HopeHealth's relationship with local hospitals is strengthened through the Access Hope program by being available for patients who have historically sought non-emergent treatment in emergency departments. Through Access Hope patients can receive prompt care and less expensive services than urgent care.

Services available include cold and flu sick visits for children and adults, annual and pre-employment physicals, specialty referral services, immunizations, flu shots, ppd testing, finger stick testing/blood sugar, pulse oximetry/oxygen testing, STD treatment, and urinalysis.

HopeHealth is one of 23 nonprofit, federally qualified health centers in South Carolina. We provide quality and affordable health care services to individuals in Florence, Clarendon and Williamsburg Counties and infectious diseases services in Aiken, Clarendon, Florence, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg Counties. To become a patient in Manning, visit hope-health.org or call HopeHealth in Manning at 803-433-4321 or HopeHealth Pediatrics in Manning at 803-433-4124.

HOPEHEALTH BEGINS VETERANS PROGRAM



First Veterans with Hope program inaugural event discussing the importance of behavioral health

HopeHealth hosted the first Veterans with Hope program in early fall with Dr. Farrah Hughes, director of HopeHealth Behavioral Health Services, kicking off the inaugural event discussing the importance of

behavioral health, followed by a guest visit from Drums on the Front, a local organization that uses group drumming as music therapy treatment for physical and mental combat-related injuries.

The program is open to all veterans and their family members on the third Tuesday of each month at the HopeHealth Medical Plaza in Florence. Each event provides unique presentations on health-related and veteran-specific topics and is part of a new Veterans Engagement Plan at HopeHealth. This plan includes a veteran liaison and trained veteran staff experts who assist veterans and their families in navigating care and accessing resources and support.

For more information about Veterans with Hope, call Ashleigh Bryson at 843-432-2971, or email abryson@hope-health.org.

HopeHealth is one of 23 nonprofit, federally qualified health centers in South Carolina. We provide quality and affordable health care services to individuals in Florence, Clarendon and Williamsburg Counties and infectious diseases services in Aiken, Clarendon, Florence, Orangeburg, and Williamsburg Counties. To become a patient, call 843-667-9414, or visit hope-health.org.



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HopeHealth's primary care providers meet the needs of individuals across rural and urban areas of Florence, Williamsburg, and Clarendon Counties.

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Our health care providers offer access to both primary and specialty health care services and integrate a range of health resources to provide the very best in patient care,

prevention, and support services.

HopeHealth educates patients on the importance of having a health care home. As a primary care facility, HopeHealth's medical team works to prevent and detect illness and the early onset of disease, provide routine physical examinations, and promote overall healthy lifestyles.

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6 WALKING RESOLUTIONS TO MAKE NOW

Submitted by Marc Lindsay, My Fitness Pal

If getting in shape always seems to be something you'll start in the new year, it's time to change things up. These six walking resolutions are easy to commit to and are healthy habits that will give you a head start on reaching your fitness goals.

1 WALK AT LEAST 30 MINUTES EVERY DAY

Instead of setting lofty and often unreasonable goals, start small. Work on increasing your walking duration to at least 30 minutes per day, which can lower your risk for disease, improve your mood and help you lose weight. After a few weeks, you can increase two or three of your weekly walks to up your step count even more and increase your calorie burn as your cardio improves. But no matter how far you walk, the point is to get into a routine of daily exercise. The rest of your goals come with time.

2 FIND A WALKING BUDDY

A dedicated training partner can be motivating and keep you on track on the days when you don't feel like exercising. Plus, it's a great way to be social. Consider joining a walking club or plogging group or enlisting your spouse, best friend or other family members. Bonus: Your dog counts too. **READ MORE:** What 1,500 Calories Looks Like (High-Protein Edition)

3 WALK YOUR FURTHEST DISTANCE

While small goals add up over time, it's always good to have a goal that pushes you beyond what you think you might be capable of, like a walking event. From 10Ks to the marathon, there is something out there for everyone, and there's no better time to begin training for a long-distance event than right now.

4 INCORPORATE STRENGTH TRAINING TWICE A WEEK

If you want to improve your walking performance so you can increase your cadence and distance (while also preventing injury), you'll need to strengthen muscle groups like the core and glutes that are commonly neglected during walking. A resolution that focuses on yoga, bodyweight

exercises at home or hitting the weights in the gym twice a week helps you get in better walking shape and be healthier overall.

5 WALK SOMEWHERE NEW ONCE A WEEK

One of the big problems with any fitness routine is boredom. Doing the same workout in the same location day after day can eventually become tiresome and mentally challenging. That's why getting out of the neighborhood and exploring a new trail or park is important to stay fresh and keep your routine exciting. While it might not always be possible, when you have a little more time try to head to a location you've never been before for your workout. It will not only make the time fly by, but you'll also keep your muscles from adapting to the same terrain and get in a great workout.

6 GET MORE QUALITY SLEEP

Even though walking is a low-impact activity, a big part of being able to walk every day as you increase distance and intensity is recovering properly. While stretching and icing sore joints are certainly part of the equation, one of the most overlooked aspects of recovery is making sure you get plenty of high-quality sleep nightly. Inadequate sleep can negatively affect mental and physical health, increasing stress hormones, elevating your risk for obesity and suppressing your immune system. If you aren't doing so already, make it a point to shut off your devices an hour before bed and sleep for at least 7–8 hours each night.



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COSTELLO NAMED DAISY HONOREE AT MUSC HEALTH

Articles submitted by MUSC Health Florence and Marion Medical Centers



*MUSC Health Florence Medical Center is proud to recognize Darlene Costello, RN, as the third DAISY Award recipient.**

Darlene Costello, a registered nurse (RN) in Day Hospital at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center, was named the third DAISY Award Recipient of 2019. Costello has been a part of this organization for more than 30 years.

The DAISY Award is given to a nurse whose job performance exemplifies the mission, vision, and values of MUSC Health. The recipient must also keep a consistent focus on meeting patient-family goals, collaborate

with the healthcare team to meet patients' needs, use critical thinking to deliver extraordinary patient care and demonstrate a caring attitude, as well as professionalism in the workplace during all situations. Costello was nominated by a patient and his or her family member.

The nomination was received from a patient she cared for in Day Hospital. The patient and patient's family described Costello as "full of kindness and patience--the exact kind of nurse that you would hope to have. She was so good to us the entire time of our visit." The family member of the patient further explained that Costello provided additional resources and answers to their questions, which made their visit pleasant during a time when they were anxious.

"Darlene cares for her patients as if they were her own family," said Cheryl Dorriety, director of Outpatient Services – Day Hospital/Endoscopy. "Darlene explains and educates patients on the processes and expectations; not only are patients a priority, she also assists and supports her co-workers and peers with her skill for teamwork and respect. She utilizes her skills of innovation with assisting other staff members and departments on improving customer experiences and

outcomes. Darlene takes accountability for herself and the department through her words and actions, as demonstrated in her own daily practice, but also assisting with educational sessions, updates, and safety concerns within the department."

The DAISY Foundation is a not-for-profit organization established in memory of J. Patrick Barnes by members of his family. Barnes died at the age of 33 in late 1999 from complications of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP), a little known but not uncommon auto-immune disease. (DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System.) The care Barnes and his family received from nurses while he was ill inspired this unique means of thanking nurses for making a profound difference in the lives of their patients and patient families. Nurses may be nominated by patients, families, and colleagues. Recipients of the DAISY Award are chosen quarterly by the DAISY committee at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center.

About MUSC Health

As the clinical health system of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), MUSC Health is dedicated to delivering the highest quality patient care available while training generations of competent, compassionate health care providers to serve the people of South Carolina and beyond. Comprising some 1,600 beds, more than 100 outreach sites, the MUSC College of Medicine, the physicians' practice plan and nearly 275 telehealth locations, MUSC Health owns and operates eight hospitals situated in Charleston, Chester, Florence, Lancaster and Marion counties. In 2018, for the fourth consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report named MUSC Health the number one hospital in South Carolina. To learn more about clinical patient services, visit <http://muschealth.org>. Founded in 1824, MUSC and its affiliates have collective annual budgets of \$3 billion. The more than 17,000 MUSC team members include world-class faculty, physicians, specialty providers and scientists who deliver groundbreaking education, research, technology, and patient care. For information on academic programs, visit musc.edu.

MUSC HEALTH FLORENCE WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS



Dr. Gregory May

Gregory May, M.D. is associated with MUSC Health–Cardiology. He is a board-certified interventional cardiologist who received his medical degree from Miami School of Medicine in Florida and completed his fellowship in interventional cardiology at Emory University Affiliated Hospitals.

May has over 27 years of experience in diagnosing and treating a wide range of cardiovascular disorders. He was formerly associated with Advanced Cardiology Consultants in Florence. He is accepting new patients. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 843-674-4787.



Dr. Tiffany Boyd

Tiffany K. Goldsmith Boyd, M.D., FACOG is associated with MUSC Health–Women's Health in Florence. Board-certified in obstetrics and gynecology, she received her medical degree from the University of South Carolina School of Medicine. She completed her residency in obstetrics & gynecology at the Medical College of Georgia.

Boyd has over 10 years of experience in providing obstetrics and gynecology services. She specializes in high-risk obstetrics, adolescent gynecology, and menopause. She is accepting new patients. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 843-665-9581.

HOPEHEALTH NAMED TOP PERFORMER

Articles submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth



From left: Paige Watford, Select Health of South Carolina contract management representative; Dr. Nathaniel Patterson, Select Health of South Carolina director of quality management; Dr. Brinda Chokshi, HopeHealth physician at the Medical Plaza; and Dr. Kirt Caton, Select Health of South Carolina market chief medical officer.

Select Health of South Carolina surprised HopeHealth providers during their fall staff meeting with an award recognizing their HEDIS accomplishments. HEDIS, or Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set, is a comprehensive set of standardized performance

measures designed to help with comparing health plan performance.

Select Health is the largest Medicaid Managed Care Organization in the state, and many of its patients are in care at HopeHealth sites. The organization named HopeHealth a top performer based on the HEDIS measures achieved and presented the Excellence in Quality Award in recognition for outstanding achievement in quality care to Dr. Brinda Chokshi, HopeHealth physician at the Medical Plaza, who accepted on behalf of all providers.

“Of all the providers of medical care in South Carolina, HopeHealth providers met more HEDIS measure goals than any other in 2018,” said Nathaniel J. Patterson, DrPH, director of quality management at Select Health.

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HOPEHEALTH WELCOMES NEW PROVIDERS

HopeHealth welcomed several new providers last quarter, including:



Carol Ann Berry, MSN

Carol Ann Berry joined the HopeHealth Pain Management department in September.

Berry earned a Master of Science/Nurse Practitioner degree from the University of Rochester, Rochester, N.Y. and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from SUNY Polytechnic Institute, Utica, N.Y. She completed a residency at Highland Hospital Family Medicine in Rochester, N.Y., and is a member of the American Nurses Credentialing Center.



Marty Hucks, FNP

Marty Hucks joined the HopeHealth Medical Plaza in Florence as a family nurse practitioner in October.

She earned a Master’s of Nursing degree from the University of South Carolina, Columbia, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of South Carolina Honors College.

Hucks is a member of the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties, International Nursing Education Consortium, Association of Community Health Educators, Coalition for Access to Healthcare, the South Carolina Nurses Association and the National League for Nursing. She has lived in the Florence community for nearly 30 years.



Brett Lynam, APRN, FNP-BC

HopeHealth welcomed Brett Lynam to the Access Hope program at HopeHealth in Manning in September.

Lynam earned her Master of Science/Family Nurse Practitioner degree from South University, Savannah, Ga., and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Health Science from Clemson University, S.C.

From Manning originally, Lynam is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society, American Nurses Association and South Carolina Nurses Association.



Kristina Washington, PA-C

HopeHealth welcomed Kristina Washington to the HopeHealth Medical Plaza in September as a physician assistant.

Washington earned a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Francis Marion University, Florence.

She is a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and the South Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants.

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GITTENS HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR AS SMOKE-FREE LUNGS Submitted by Dr. Rami Zebian



Dr. Rami Zebian

According to the latest (Dec. 10), statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2,409 cases of e-cigarette, or vaping product use associated lung injury (EVALI) have been identified in 49 states, the District of Columbia and one U.S. territory. Fifty-two deaths have been confirmed in 26 states and the District of Columbia.

EVALI is a scary disease, so scary that clinicians are urged to ask every new patient with a cold, aches, fever, muscle pain, cough or shortness of breath whether they vape. That question is already included on MUSC Health's patient medical forms.

The outbreak of lung injury associated with e-cigarettes or vaping, often called "Juuling" because of the product name, has raised alarm among clinicians and public health officials and prompted a multistate investigation by the CDC, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and state and local health departments.

Although officials haven't pinpointed the cause or causes of lung injuries in these cases, the one common element among all patients diagnosed with EVALI is their reported use of e-cigarettes or vaping products.

E-cigarettes heat a liquid to produce an aerosol that users inhale. The liquid can contain THC, nicotine and other substances. There's a lot we don't know about the compounds and chemicals in these ingredients and, as more people are using vaping devices to smoke marijuana that they buy on the street, the risks from vaping are growing.

Products containing THC, particularly those obtained off the street or from other casual sources, are linked to most of the EVALI cases and are a major factor in the outbreak of EVALI, according to the latest findings.

Vitamin E acetate has been identified as a chemical of concern among people with EVALI. However, there may be many different substances and product sources that are being investigated.

Even before the flood of negative news about e-cigarettes, I encouraged my patients to quit vaping. Whenever anyone asks me if vaping is safe, I reply with my own question: "Would you smoke a roll of plastic if it was marketed?" We don't know what we don't know, and I would not advise anyone to inhale any material down their lungs.

Although vaping was marketed as an alternative to smoking, the evidence points to corporate strategies that target people, particularly young people, who've never smoked and are naïve about smoking. Forty percent of EVALI patients are 24-40 years old, according to CDC statistics. And don't be fooled: Because the ingredients contain nicotine, vaping is addictive.

Other products are available to help smokers cope with nicotine withdrawal, including nicotine gums, nicotine patches, and two oral medications. I tell my patients who want to quit smoking to pick a date and make up their mind to quit on that date. If you make up your mind, the medicine will work.

It took 20-30 years to find out that smoking was associated with heart disease and lung disease and other diseases.

We don't know what vaping can lead to; there simply isn't enough data. This I do know: Based on current data and trends, if we don't act, we could be in danger of losing another entire generation.

Dr. Rami Zebian is a board-certified pulmonologist and critical care physician and chief medical officer for MUSC Health Florence Medical Center. He practices at MUSC Health-Pulmonology and is a member of the medical staff. For more information please call 843-673-7529, or go to MUSChealth.org/florence.

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST IS NOT THE SAME AS A HEART ATTACK

Submitted by Mo Bourji, MD, Cardiologist MUSC Health – Cardiology



Mo Bourji, MD

Sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) and a heart attack are not the same thing but are related in a very important way. The definition of sudden cardiac arrest is the sudden stopping of cardiac activity. It's important to know it almost always happens due to some other health issue. I would say more than 90 percent of SCA is attributed to a coronary artery (i.e. heart attack) and a structural heart issue. Ten percent of the time, SCA is attributed to a primary problem with heart electrical function.

Structural disease and heart attack account for the vast majority of cases causing SCA. An electrical problem is basically an electrical instability of the heart, causing it to quiver and stop pumping because of a structural heart abnormality. When this happens, the heart stops beating, you pass out and you likely die. There are many factors that increase your risk of having coronary artery disease eventually leading to SCA. One of the most common signs of SCA is passing out, also known as syncope or fainting.

Another factor to consider is family history. Patients with siblings, parents or other close relatives dying suddenly at a young age tell me there is likely a genetic tendency for SCA. Passing out or fainting is a very concerning symptom in patients with known heart disease, poor heart muscles or a structurally abnormal heart. This can predict SCA. Earlier in my career, I treated a 12-year-old who had two siblings that died suddenly at ages seven and 10. We were able to justify putting in

a defibrillator because the patient showed a strong family history of SCA. There is no formal test for it.

We are able to test for coronary artery disease. A sign of coronary artery disease would be exertional chest pain, chest discomfort, tightness, heaviness or extreme shortness of breath. All of these signs can lead to SCA. Remember, most sudden cardiac arrests happen after a heart attack. If you have any of the symptoms in your chest, it's important to see your doctor right away. To put it simply, do your best to lead a healthy lifestyle by exercising, eating right and maintaining a healthy weight.

The Heart Rhythm Society reports more than 350,000 deaths occur each year as a result of SCA claiming one life every two minutes. It also reports that SCA takes more lives each year than breast cancer, lung cancer or AIDS. To learn your risk for SCA, go to SCArisk.org to take a free assessment.

Dr. Mo Bourji is a non-interventional cardiologist and a member of the medical staff at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center. He practices at MUSC Health-Cardiology and is accepting new patients. For more information please call 843-674-4787.



AWARENESS SAVES LIVES!

February is **AMERICAN HEART MONTH**



Care for the whole family.

WELCOME DR. ASHLEY HICKS, FAMILY MEDICINE AND PRIMARY CARE SPECIALIST, TO MUSC HEALTH - PRIMARY CARE - HOFFMEYER.

Dr. Ashley Hicks provides compassionate care for you and your loved ones. Her knowledge of family medicine, combined with her concern for patients of all ages, makes her a great choice for your family healthcare needs. She specializes in treatment for a range of conditions - from headaches and hypertension to diabetes, asthma, the flu and more.

Dr. Hicks is accepting new patients. For an appointment, call 843.679.4217 or visit MUSChealth.org/florence.

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IT'S ALL IN THE APPROACH

Submitted by Miranda Peavy, Marketing and Communications Coordinator



Jack Thomas Sproull, MD

HARTSVILLE-Hip and knee replacement surgery are similar in many aspects. Unlike knee surgery, with hip replacement surgery, there have been multiple ways to surgically approach the hip. These approaches vary in the risk of complication and the ease of recovery for the patient.

Traditionally, the posterior approach, where the incision is more towards the buttock and the gluteus maximus muscle is split to enter the hip joint, has been commonly used. This approach has the highest dislocation rate after surgery, requires precautions such as a pillow between the legs for six weeks after surgery, an elevated toilet seat to prevent hip flexion more than 90 degrees, and may have weakness from damage to muscle that is split and loses nerve supply. The anterolateral approach, also traditional, has a lower dislocation rate but involves cutting and repairing the important gluteus medius and minimus muscles, often leading to a postoperative limp and a longer recovery period. Although first described in 1888, the direct anterior approach has only more recently been used by American orthopedic surgeons. This approach has the lowest dislocation rate of any approach and does not require any postoperative motion restrictions. No muscles are split or cut with this approach, so there is much less postoperative weakness and easier, faster recovery. The initial downside to this approach had been obtaining good exposure of the thigh bone, or femur, for insertion of the metallic femoral stem.

The solution to femoral exposure with the direct anterior approach was solved in two different fashions. The first method is to use a special table in which the patient's foot is put in a boot that attaches to a device, which allows the hip to be hyper-extended during surgery improving the exposure. The downside to the special table approach is that, since the foot is attached, the hip range of motion and limb lengths cannot be checked during surgery. An intraoperative x-ray needs to be done to check component position and estimate limb length. Also, the table is expensive, and an additional person is required to move the hip during surgery.

The second method allows the surgery to be done without a special table with the patient lying on his or her back with the leg movable to check hip stability with range of motion and to compare leg lengths intraoperatively. This method involves specific releases of the hip joint lining, or capsule. These allow excellent femoral exposure. This method has been refined in Europe to a standardized fashion which has been done successfully in over 6000 patients throughout the world. The procedure requires specialized surgical training but has important benefits for the safety of the patient, ease of operation and recovery and decreased overall risk to the patient.



LEARNING ABOUT HEALTH

Submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth



Kitty Finklea Speaks with patients

With the New Year in full swing and many resolutions wavering, HopeHealth offers plenty of community classes to help you boost your knowledge on eating well and making healthy lifestyle choices. Regular classes, such as SNAP into Health and Cooking Matters, provide free demonstrations and hands-on experience on how to provide healthy, budget-friendly meals, and additional classes help HopeHealth patients take charge of their health proactively.

These include programs such as Walk with Ease, a six-week course that focuses on easing arthritis pain through nutrition changes and walking, and the WellPower Weight Management Program that educates patients on how their lifestyle choices can help them not only lose weight but also improve health and vitality.

Visit hope-health.org/events for class schedules and to find out more.

50+ Senior Life EXPO

Save the Dates!
Thurs. April 2
& Fri. April 3

9 am – 3 pm each day
Florence Center

HOPEHEALTH RECOGNIZES WORLD AIDS DAY



Aids Walk

Each year HopeHealth commemorates World AIDS Day with several public events including an Arts & Music Showcase in Aiken, the annual Truth Iz: Spoken Word/Open Mic night in Orangeburg, and, on the first Saturday in December, an annual program and walk through downtown Florence.

This past year's 22nd HopeHealth AIDS Walk was held Dec. 7 at Central United Methodist Church and more than 150 community members turned out for the program and walk. The program included testimonials and speakers from patients and staff of the HopeHealth Infectious Diseases department and community members in addition to a free lunch.

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Photos from Aids Walk

Women and HIV Did You Know?



**AROUND ONE IN FOUR
PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV
IS A WOMAN**

NEW DIAGNOSES

61% Black

19% White

15% Hispanic

4% Other

**NOT ALL WOMEN
ARE EQUALLY
AFFECTED BY HIV**



**ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THE
WOMEN DIAGNOSED WITH HIV
HAVE ACHIEVED
VIRAL SUPPRESSION***

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For more info, go to www.cdc.gov/hiv



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Walk-in testing hours

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360 North Irby Street, Florence
Mon – Thurs: 8:30 am – 4 pm
Fri: 8:30 am – 12 pm

Evening testing hours by appointment
from 4 - 8 pm

HopeHealth in Manning
12 West South Street, Manning
Mon & Tues: 10 am – 2 pm

HopeHealth in Aiken
150 University Parkway, Aiken
Mon – Thurs: 9 am – 4 pm

HopeHealth in Orangeburg
1857 Joe S. Jeffords Hwy, Orangeburg
Mon – Thurs: 9 am – 4 pm



hope-health.org

PRIORITIZE YOUR HEALTH IN THE NEW YEAR



Now is the time of year when people typically take inventory of their lives and set new goals. Relationships, finances, careers, and health are all important aspects that impact overall well-being. For this New Year, consider making your health a top priority.

According to the recent America's Health Rankings Annual Report, the nation's obesity rate continues to rise, with one in three adults now experiencing obesity. This alarming statistic may have serious health consequences such as diabetes, which now impacts approximately 30 million adults and is the No. 1 cause of kidney failure, lower-limb amputations, and adult blindness, according to the Centers for Disease **Control and Prevention.**

There are many factors that play a role in your health, but one that you can control is making a commitment to start living a healthier lifestyle. Sure, there will be some bumps during your well-being journey, but your goal can be achievable and you deserve to reap the benefits.

Ann Marie O'Brien, national director of health strategies at UnitedHealthcare, offers the following tips for achieving a healthier you in 2020.

Stay active

Regular exercise may help you live longer and may reduce your risks for a host of diseases. Try to aim for at least 2.5 hours of moderate aerobic activity a week, but if that's too challenging then start off with 15 minutes here and 15 minutes there. Every little bit counts. To be successful, your fitness program should become a part of your daily life.

Also, check with your health plan and employer to see if they offer wellness incentives. For example, UnitedHealthcare's Gym Check-In program enables participating employers to provide employees and their spouses the opportunity to each earn hundreds of dollars a year for visiting a fitness facility 12 days or more per month.

Eat healthier

Sure, it's easier said than done, but good nutrition is a vital part of a healthier lifestyle. Experts say the healthiest diets are rich in fruits and vegetables because these foods are full of healthful nutrients and fiber. Here are three simple tips to eating healthier: go for more fruits and veggies, choose less meat and fat and keep an eye on the size of your food portions. Just saying "no" to the buffet can do wonders.

Reduce your stress

If you're feeling stressed, it's important to unwind and relax by doing something you enjoy. Maybe it's watching a movie, reading a book or volunteering to give you time to recharge. Also, make time to connect with others. Maybe that's friends, family, a faith group or a hobby club. It's important that you don't isolate yourself after a stressful event. Remember, if you cannot get a handle on your stress, talk to your doctor. She or he may recommend a counselor who could help you find other ways to help reduce or manage the unhealthy stress in your life.

Team up with your doctor

Take time today to make an appointment with your doctor for your annual wellness visit, and be sure to ask about preventive services such as health screenings and vaccines. Check with your health plan as many preventive services have no additional cost, as long as they are delivered by care providers in your plan's network. Your doctor will help you create a treatment plan to help manage any chronic conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure.

TRAVEL TIPS: HOW VITAMINS CAN HELP YOU LOOK AND FEEL YOUR BEST



When you're traveling, gummy vitamins can provide surprising and unexpected health benefits for beauty, digestion, and sleep. You're not the only one who can't sleep in a strange bed or eat properly because you are bloated from not being on a "regular" schedule. Traveling can throw your body's natural

clock off, so getting a good night's sleep can be next to impossible. And that means waking up feeling exhausted, so you don't look or feel your best.

Nicole Avena, Ph.D., recommends packing the following gummy vitamins in your carry-on:

* **Think vitamin C before boarding that plane or train:** Don't forget to keep your immune system healthy with Vitafusion Power C gummy vitamins. Each dose packs as much vitamin C as 10 tangerines, so your hectic travel for work or play can go as scheduled.

* **Bloat and travel back up?** Have you ever noticed that while traveling your get-up-and-go just won't let you "go"? There are many reasons why you get blocked up when you hit the road. From travel-related stress and anxiety to straying from your normal routine, your body just says no. Sugar-free fiber gummies will help keep that gut in check, even when you're in a foreign bathroom.

* **Holiday glam from the inside out:** Vitafusion Gorgeous Skin, Hair, & Nails provides essential nutrients to support luxurious hair, gorgeous

skin, and healthy nails. One serving of these gummy vitamins provides two times the biotin and antioxidant vitamin C and six times the antioxidant vitamin E of the leading hair, skin, and nails gummy supplement per serving and gives you a beauty boost from the inside out.

* **A healthier gut:** With 5 billion CFUs per serving, Vitafusion Probiotic supplements provide friendly bacteria to the digestive tract. Two probiotic strains, bacillus coagulans, IS-2 and bacillus subtilis, DE-111, survive in the stomach with no high-fructose corn syrup, gluten, dairy, gelatin or synthetic dyes.

* **Melatonin 2.0:** When you're packing for a jaunt across the continent, don't forget Vitafusion Max Melatonin, an antioxidant powerhouse that will help you get a good night's sleep when you're sleepless in Seattle or anywhere else. Extra Strength Melatonin helps you reset your body clock and promotes healthy collagen production to help fight wrinkles and reverse sun damage. Its sugar- and gluten-free sleep support is formulated for adults with three mg of melatonin that also helps with jet lag recovery.

Avena recommends gummy vitamins because not only are they delicious, but also kids and adults alike look forward to taking them, rather than avoiding traditional vitamins altogether because they are too big to swallow or have an awful aftertaste. Vitafusion gummy vitamins are the only vitamin brand with clinically proven equivalence to vitamin tablets and caplets when it comes to absorption. Vitamin C and vitamin D gummies were compared to their respective caplet and tablet counterparts for absorption, the key measure of effectiveness. The vitamin C study concluded that the Vitafusion gummy was just as effectively utilized by the body as the caplet form. The vitamin D study showed the gummy to be, in fact, more effective than a tablet.

INSPIRING THE COMMUNITY AS A FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER

Articles submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth



Tim Brown

LATTA-Timothy Brown, FNP-BC, enjoys using his platform to educate, encourage and support his community through quality healthcare.

A native of Latta, Brown began his professional career in law enforcement. While serving, he began searching for a career with versatility that would allow him to still serve the public and, ultimately, he landed in nursing.

He received his associate degree in nursing at Florence-Darlington Technical College in 2009 and then earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing

in 2011 before choosing to retire from law enforcement. Following his retirement, Brown completed a Master of Science in Nursing with a Family Nurse Practitioner specialization in 2016.

"I've always wanted to serve the community in whatever capacity I possibly could," Brown said. "Nursing, and healthcare in general, was an avenue for me to do that following my career in law enforcement."

Before joining the CareSouth Carolina Latta office in July of 2017, Brown worked as PRN-RN for Morrell Memorial Nursing and Rehab Center in Hartsville; as a PRN-RN for McLeod Behavioral Health in Darlington; as a PRN-RN for Palmetto Pee Dee Behavioral Health in Florence; and as a clinical instructor/adjunct faculty member for Francis Marion University.

Though working as a family nurse practitioner is different than serving in law enforcement, Brown said he recognizes many similarities between the two professions. He said both careers involve dealing with the public and trying your best to get them to "be better and do better."

"Though in many ways they are polar opposites, they are also the same," Brown said. He said he has learned that people just want to be

listened to, and they want to be respected. With communication and genuine care, Brown believes he can help his patients and those that look up to him become better people.

"I've learned that more than anything else, people want to be respected, and they want to know you care about them," Brown said.

Brown's patients describe him as someone that offers thorough care with genuine respect for them and concern for their overall health.

Working in a rural area in South Carolina, Brown focuses on delivering health education to the people he comes in contact with throughout the community. He looks for creative ways to bring education to the community and said that lack of education, especially when it comes to chronic conditions that don't necessarily have bold symptoms, is plaguing society in rural communities.

Brown strives not to just offer quality and genuine care, but to be an inspiration to the African American community. Therefore, he mentors youth and looks for opportunities to pour into the lives of those around him.

Outside of work, Brown enjoys reading about African American history and riding his motorcycle.

Tim Brown is a family nurse practitioner at CareSouth Carolina's Latta office. CareSouth Carolina is a private, non-profit community health center delivering patient-centered health and life services in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina. CareSouth Carolina operates centers in Bennettsville, Bishopville, Cheraw, Chesterfield, Dillon, Hartsville, Lake View, Latta, McColl and Society Hill.

Services provided by CareSouth Carolina include family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, women services, OB/GYN, HIV/AIDS primary care, dental, chiropractic services, pharmacy, substance-use prevention, geriatrics, social services, clinical counseling, laboratory, 4D ultrasound, X-Ray, migrant services, and veterans choice provider.

Convenient Locations:

- | | |
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Bennettsville, SC 29512
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207 E. Monroe Street
Dillon, SC 29536
843.774.4337 |
| Bennettsville Pediatric Center
210 W. Main Street
Bennettsville, SC 29512
843.479.1200 | Hartsville Center
1268 S. Fourth Street
Hartsville, SC 29550
843.332.3422
843.339.5520 Chiropractic |
| Bennettsville Women's Center
1076 Marlboro Way, Suite 1
Bennettsville, SC 29512
843.454.2294 | Lake View Center
103 N. Kemper Street
Lake View, SC 29563
843.759.2189 |
| Bishopville Center
545 Sumter Highway
Bishopville, SC 29010
803.484.5317 | Latta Center
122 Latimer Street
Latta, SC 29565
843.627.6252 |
| Bishopville Pediatric Dental
101 Harris Street
Bishopville, SC 29010
866.815.9845 | McColl Health & Wellness Center
3080 Highway 15-401 E
McColl, SC 29570
843.523.5751 |
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106 Hospital Square
Bishopville, SC 29010
803.484.5943 | Society Hill Center
737 S. Main Street
Society Hill, SC 29593
843.378.4501 |
| Cheraw Center
715 S. Doctors Drive Suite E
Cheraw, SC 29520
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843.623.5080 | |

Pharmacy Locations:

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PHYSICAL THERAPY, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY OR SPEECH THERAPY

Submitted by Roxie Smallwood, Rehabilitation Service, Director MUSC Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Center



Roxie Smallwood

What are physical, occupational and speech therapy? All three therapies play an important role in the rehabilitation process. There are similarities between them, but it's important to know the differences.

Physical therapy addresses a person's ability to move and function. Examples of movement could include how a person transitions from sitting to standing, how one stays balanced when reaching for an object, as well as how he or she is able

to walk. Physical therapy also helps to reduce a person's pain through exercises and mobility. Occupational therapy is often confused with physical therapy. Sometimes people think occupational therapy is where you go to get a job. It focuses on working with individuals to perform activities of daily living as independently as possible. These activities may include using a fork to eat, bathing, dressing, toileting, cooking, cleaning and performing leisure activities. Speech therapy can help with someone's ability to communicate and/or swallow. Some of the different communication parts include speech production, fluency, language, voice, and cognition. Speech therapists also assess how a person swallows.

When a patient is referred for physical, occupational or speech therapy, the process begins with a thorough assessment performed by the therapist. The therapist gets a detailed history from the patient to help guide the assessment. The patient's history, his or her goals and what he or she wants out of therapy are also important. As we go through the evaluation process, we openly communicate with the patient about our findings. If a patient doesn't have an interest or something just isn't important to him or her for whatever reason, we'll change the plan. And it's never safe to assume your therapist knows everything about your medical record. The more we (therapists) know, the better, even if you don't think something is directly related to therapy. Changes in medications or other medical conditions are also important to tell your therapist about.

In addition to evaluating problem areas, the therapist and patient

discuss what the goals of the treatment will be. An individualized plan is developed for treatment. Every plan is individualized because every patient has different needs. Two patients could have the exact same diagnosis but will improve differently because of varying factors.

The amount of time a patient attends therapy will vary depending on a number of things to include diagnosis as well as any other conditions a person has that could affect the outcome of the treatment. Most of the time, people are ready and willing to come to therapy. What the patient gets out of therapy is up to them. Mostly, therapy can involve exercises at home, not just at the clinic. We as therapists can instruct, encourage and educate from our clinical background, but in the end, the patient has to want to do the work to get better.

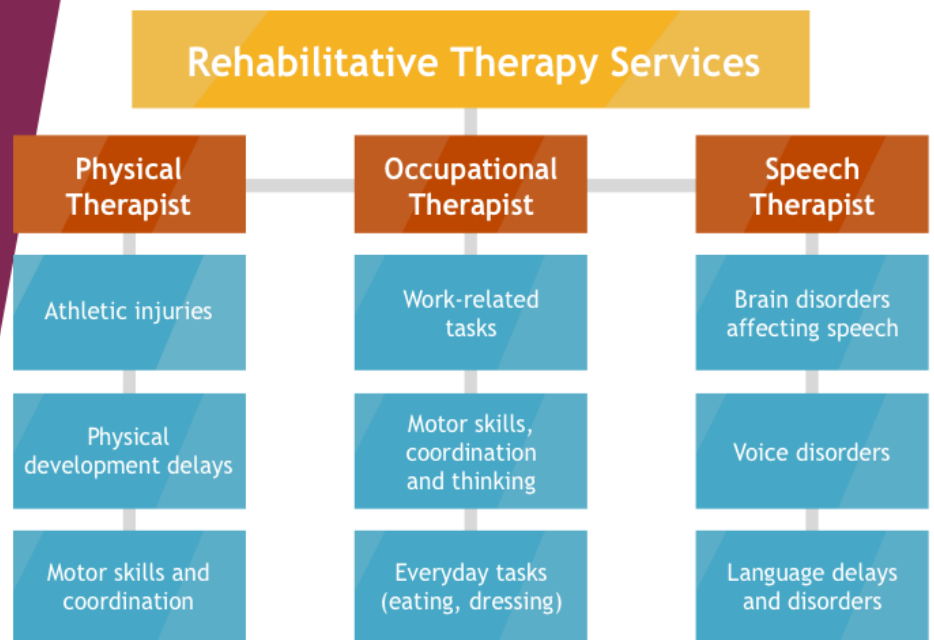
It's really about what the patient wants to gain from therapy. A patient may not put the best effort into rehabilitation. As a clinician, we want to help, but the patient needs to be willing to get better. We apply our clinical skills and knowledge and together come up with a treatment plan or goals.

I absolutely love being an occupational therapist and working in the field of rehabilitation because I see the value in it firsthand. It can definitely change a person's life. A patient comes in for therapy after his or her world may have been turned upside down by a certain condition. At the end of the rehabilitation process, it's rewarding to see the patient back to a normal life.

We spend so much time with patients we basically become part of their family. Most therapists put their heart and soul into working with patients. You do it because you want to help people and make a difference.

Roxie Smallwood is the director of MUSC Health Rehabilitation Services. She holds a bachelor's of science degree in occupational therapy from the University of Wisconsin Madison and a master's degree in health services administration from MUSC. MUSC Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Center is the only CARF-accredited facility in the Pee Dee region. Therapies include treatment for neurological problems, orthopaedic and sports injuries, total joint replacements, arthritis, fractures, and multiple traumas, lymphedema, amputations, and prosthetic training, pelvic health, stroke rehabilitation and balance/ vestibular disorders. For more information call 843-661-4360.

How Can Therapists Help You?





NOTHING BUT GRACE *Submitted by Cheri Jordan*



Crystal's girls asleep at their new home

Many of us came home tonight from a long day at work, anxious to get the weekend started. You arrived home to heat, food in the refrigerator and a closet full of clothes. Perhaps, you've finished dinner, and you're now getting the kids bathed and ready to tuck in bed, most likely in rooms of their own. It's a familiar

scenario and one we take for granted.

Unfortunately, this isn't the story for many of our ladies. They sleep in shelters, dirty motels, and any couch they can find on an individual night. They don't have the assurance that they will be able to feed their children, have running water, or sufficient clothing. And, yes, this is happening right here in Florence.

We've been working with Crystal for about a year now. During that time, Crystal's greatest desire was to be in a home with her children. The children stayed with a relative while Crystal worked towards her goal of having a safe home. She's worked long hours, the night shift, often sleeping in her car between shifts to conserve gas money. She has stayed in a fixer-upper with no running water or electricity and slowly pecked away at her goal. There were many days that Crystal was beyond discouraged and wanted to give up, but she persevered anyway.

And the above picture is the beautiful result of her hard labor as well as the generosity of one of our faithful Tenacious Grace followers. Recently, one of our supporters graciously paid Crystal's deposit on a rental home, and she moved in soon after. Crystal posted the picture of her three little girls sleeping in their bed. They are in a home of their own, together at last...



tenacious
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Crystal's quotes: "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning. We're in our new home, giving God all the glory and praise. My angels are sleeping so good and so happy to be in a home they can call their own."

She's come a long way from the broken woman we met in jail. She's a fighter and a warrior, a beautiful child of God. She has had ups and downs, but she is slowly turning her life around and, in turn, the lives of her children. We are so honored to be partnering with Crystal and to walk this road of recovery with her.

We work hard to form relationships with the ladies that we meet in the Florence County Detention Center.

Thank you, Tenacious Grace family, for praying for Crystal and



Cheri Jordan

others like her. Because of your support we are able to continue this work and see lives transformed. The broken are being made whole. The lost are finding their way. The hungry are fed. And, praise God, the homeless are sleeping peacefully tonight in a place they can call their own.

The Grace Bash

#TheNestsIsYetToCome

February 6, 2020

from 6:30-8:30

First Presbyterian Church, Florence, SC

speaker: Bryan Braddock



RSVP to howdy@tenaciousgrace.cc or 843.407.5373



4 QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT HEALTH INSURANCE



Your options for health care and dental plans can feel overwhelming. Dozens of plans and many variables can affect your decision, which is why it's worth your time to find the option that best fits your individual or family needs.

"We will devote hours of painstaking research to other choices that impact our quality of life, like buying a car, home or even a TV, but we might enroll in the same health plan year after year without shopping at all," said John C. Patrick, national vice president of sales for the Government Employees Health Association (GEHA). Not all plans are the same, and you and your family's needs may change year to year. Why not take time to shop?

The difference between the lowest and highest annual premium for health plans can be thousands of dollars. And 10 percent or more of your annual spending may go to plan premiums, according to reports from The Commonwealth Fund. That means you could save a hefty chunk of change simply by taking the time to compare health plans. As you review your options for 2020, there are questions you can ask yourself to help choose the best fit.

1) What are next year's potential health needs?

Before you select, think about what your health patterns are and if you know what may already be on the horizon. Are any surgeries planned, do you or a family member require regular medication, are you at a high risk for a health issue that might require testing, or are you planning to have a baby? If there are high medical needs, it's likely

a higher level of coverage may also be needed.

2) Does your coverage match your lifestyle?

Living a single, on-the-go lifestyle may point to a different plan than if you are married with children. One plan may allow for picking up prescriptions at a more convenient location compared to another. It's also important to look at what wellness programs are available along with the availability of tools like virtual or on-demand care that can save on surprise visits to the emergency room.

3) Are any new plans offered?

Some health carriers are changing their benefits to offer more prevention and wellness focused plans, while others are adding benefits like pediatric dental coverage or contributions to a Health Savings Account (HSA). It all depends what your carrier options are and what your employer offers. For example, federal employees will have two new health plans available this year, Elevate and Elevate Plus from GEHA, that focus on convenient and flexible care for on-the-go lifestyles with an emphasis on innovative digital tools.

4) Which plan fits?

Don't be afraid to crunch the numbers to see where you get the most for your money. It may be smart to go with an HSA that puts money away for later use for things like braces or glasses. Or maybe you need a plan with lower monthly premiums and predictable out-of-pocket costs. The key is to examine all the angles: cost, coverage, provider network and convenience. Knowing your options will help you find the plan that's right for you.

A quality health plan helps you achieve the health you need to live the life you want. The right plan is out there--you just need to shop to find it.

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Caring for a loved one with a chronic illness is something millions of Americans do every day. Whether it is a parent, spouse, extended family member or friend, the stress of caring for another adult can take a toll.

“I have to do absolutely everything for her,” explains Anthony Cowels, whose 71-year-old wife, Florence,

was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1986. As he watched her disease progress, his caregiver responsibilities grew. What’s more, for some of the years Cowels also cared for his elderly parents, compounding his responsibilities.

“It has been a long journey of caregiving,” says Cowels, 70. “I try not to let it overwhelm me. I always look for ways to do better.” Cowels learned to care for both himself and his wife better through useful tools, education, and friendship and by joining a caregiver support group. He says he can “interact with others who identify with my situation.”

Family caregiving: A growing trend

Cowels represents a growing number of Americans who care for older or aging loved ones. About 41 million family caregivers in the United States provided an estimated 34 billion hours of care to an adult with limitations in daily activities in 2017, notes the AARP report *Valuing the Invaluable: 2019 Update*. What’s more, as the population

ages, caregiving demands are increasing while the pool of potential caregivers is decreasing.

As the *Valuing* report states, “Americans will have more older relatives or close friends to potentially care for than children in about 15 years. The U.S. Census Bureau projects that, by the year 2035, adults ages 65 and older will outnumber children under the age of 18 for the first time in U.S. history. This fundamental demographic shift is the result of the aging of the U.S. population, increasing longevity, and a declining birth rate.”

Caring for yourself

In addition to helping with self-care activities like bathing, dressing and going to the bathroom, family caregivers today often perform complex medical tasks, including wound care, giving injections and handling medical equipment. The tasks that were once provided in hospitals and health care clinics are increasingly the responsibility of family and friends, who are often given little training or support.

While many family caregivers often report positive feelings in their role such as a sense of purpose or connection with their loved one, it often comes with feelings of being overwhelmed. Exhaustion, worry, loneliness and financial stress are common challenges caregivers face. If you also work a full-time job, it can be even more difficult to balance your needs and responsibilities.

While you may not achieve perfect balance, it is important to prioritize your physical and mental wellbeing, so you can be there for the person you care for. Stay mentally and physically healthy so you can provide the best care possible to the growing number of people who need support. For helpful tips and caregiver resources, visit www.aarp.org/caregiving.



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ASK THE EXPERT: IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S



Alzheimer's is a progressive medical condition and one of the deadliest diseases in the United States. That's why it is important to learn about the disease along with some simple steps that can help delay the potential onset or help facilitate an early diagnosis.

Dr. Rhonda Randall, a

board-certified family physician, geriatrician, and chief medical officer for UnitedHealthcare, answered the following questions relating to Alzheimer's disease.

What is Alzheimer's disease, and how is it distinguished from other dementias? While the terms are often used interchangeably, "dementia" is an umbrella term for many types of diseases associated with cognitive decline and memory loss, whereas "Alzheimer's" references a specific diagnosis. Alzheimer's is referred to as a progressive disease, as the dementia symptoms generally worsen gradually over time.

Alzheimer's is the most common form of dementia. In fact, someone in the United States develops the disease every 65 seconds, according to the Alzheimer's Association. That means roughly 5.8 million people are living with the disease. However, Alzheimer's will only become more prevalent—around 14 million people are estimated to be living with Alzheimer's by 2050.

How is Alzheimer's diagnosed?

Alzheimer's disease is commonly diagnosed after conducting a memory screening and ruling out other reasons for cognitive decline. It is important to have a memory screening done each year, as having a historical record can increase your health care practitioner's ability to accurately diagnose memory disorders earlier.

Memory screenings can be performed during your annual wellness visit, which is free to anyone on Medicare. Make sure to ask your physician to perform a memory evaluation the next time you visit the doctor's office. It only takes a few minutes.

Eligible UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage members can take advantage of the HouseCalls program, which brings a yearly health and wellness visit to the convenience and privacy of home, at no additional cost. A HouseCalls licensed practitioner can conduct a memory screening and refer you to additional care if needed.

What are some common symptoms of Alzheimer's disease?

One of the most noticeable symptoms is the inability to retain newly learned information, as Alzheimer's generally impacts the part of the brain that affects learning. That said, it is important to distinguish Alzheimer's from normal, fleeting memory loss, sometimes associated with aging—Alzheimer's is marked by serious memory loss and confusion.

Examples of serious memory loss might be having to ask for the same information repeatedly or requiring memory aids, such as notes, to remember basic information. If you feel like you or a loved one is suffering from serious memory loss, contact your health care provider.

Is there anything that can be done to help prevent or delay the potential onset of Alzheimer's?

Staying physically and mentally active is key, regardless of age. That may mean taking a brisk walk, playing online brain games or participating in other activities that can improve circulation and challenge your mind.

Additionally, it is important to keep your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels in check. If you are a smoker, quitting is important, as it increases your chances of developing Alzheimer's.

Taking these steps to help prevent Alzheimer's is key, as there is currently no cure for the disease.



Bethea
Better Every Day!

Bethea is a vibrant retirement community that embraces senior adults from all walks of life.

Residents enjoy varied interests from baking, sewing, and reading to thrilling adventures like skydiving and high ropes courses. More importantly, residents live as family in sharing meals, life, and the relationships that deepen among the residents and staff every day. A strong sense of family is evident, and current residents include a daughter and her mom who call Bethea home. You may also see visiting grandchildren enjoying the campus with a game of billiards or water volleyball at the aquatic center with their grandparents.

Bethea is more than just another retirement community... it is a ministry with a mission to serve senior adults with compassionate care so all they serve may thrive. Thanks to a thoughtful bequest by Dr. and Mrs. Percy Bethea and the continued support of South Carolina Baptists, Bethea Retirement Community opened its doors in 1960 and continues as a community of the SC Baptist Ministries of Aging. As a continuing care retirement community (CCRC), Bethea offers a full continuum of living options for residents so their changing health needs can be met without requiring them to relocate.

Residents of all faiths are welcome. On campus, Bethea Retirement Community has its own fully constituted Southern Baptist church that is open to residents and their families but also to the surrounding community as well. Dr. Jeff Cockrell, a beloved resident favorite, leads daily devotions and Wednesday and Sunday services and also provides pastoral care throughout the week.

Voted and recognized as Best of the Pee Dee for long-term care in 2019, Bethea Retirement Community's tireless commitment to becoming better every day has no ceiling for providing the best living environment and care for residents. Executive Director Ben Spurling intentionally fosters an atmosphere of continued service and purpose in the lives of Bethea's residents. Many current residents chose Bethea because they served as pastors, missionaries, or very active church members and have a passion to continue in service, even in retirement. Many of Bethea's residents volunteer in prison ministry, homeless shelters, college ministry, the local children's home, or with other residents.

Bethea is also renovating and expanding its campus to better suit the needs of residents. In 2018, Bethea Retirement Community expanded its dining options to include the Bethea Bistro with a brick oven so residents can en-

joy burgers, hotdogs, sandwiches and pizza to satisfy those snack cravings. On August 27, 2019 Bethea broke ground on a brand new state-of-the-art 60,000 square foot nursing and rehab center that is scheduled to open in 2020. The new nursing center will accommodate both long-term care and short-term rehabilitation needs. It will feature all private rooms, a 3,000 square foot rehabilitation gym, and a household design with residential living, activity and dining spaces, and access to outdoor courtyards built for the special needs of these residents. Executive Director Ben Spurling shares, "We are excited about what God is doing in our ministry and we are confident this expansion will enrich the lives of our residents as well as the surrounding communities of Florence and Darlington."



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FLORENCE LITTLE THEATRE PRESENTS DREAMGIRLS Submitted by Jessica Coleman Larrimore, Executive Director

Florence Little Theatre presents DREAMGIRLS. This powerhouse musical was a Tony and Grammy Award-winning hit on Broadway that became a Golden Globe and Academy Award-winning film sensation. “Dreamgirls” celebrates the advent of R&B in the 1960s with a Motown-inspired score, dynamic performances and a moving look behind-the-scenes of the entertainment business. Experience all the onstage joy and backstage drama as an up-and-coming girl group learns hard lessons about love, trust and what it takes to get to the top. Meet The Dreams - Effie, Lorelle and Deena—three talented young singers in the turbulent 1960s, a revolutionary time in American music history. With an extraordinary story and unforgettable, spine-tingling vocals, this spectacular musical production soars with the classic songs, “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going,” “I Am Changing,” “Listen,” and “One Night Only.”

“Dreamgirls” is underwritten by Habitat 2000 and ACS Technologies, directed by Cole Davis with musical direction by Jordan Jefferson. Choreography is by Brittany Miles. The cast features The Dreams—Jerinda Davis as Effie, Ameshia McElveen as Deena and Estelle Hyman as Lorelle—and an extraordinary ensemble.

“Dreamgirls” runs Jan. 24-Feb. 1 with performances Tuesday through Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. There is no show on Monday. Tickets are reserved seating \$30 for adults, \$25 for seniors and \$18 for students and children under 18. Group rates are available for 12 or more. Tickets may be purchased by phone, in person at the FLT Box Office located in Downtown Florence on Dargan Street or online at <http://www.florenclittletheatre.org/>

Dreamgirls is recommended for ages 12+ (some adult language). Length: 2 hours.

Performances Jan. 24-Feb. 1

Tuesdays-Saturdays 7:30 p.m. • Sundays 3 p.m.

Book and Lyrics by Tom Eyan Music by Henry Krieger

Dreamgirls Cast of Characters:

Effie Melody White - Jerinda Davis

Deena Jones - Ameshia McElveen

Lorelle - Estelle Hyman

Michelle - Mikeya Murphy

Jimmy (James Thunder) Early - Brian Forté

C.C. (Clarence Conrad) White - James Dukes

Curtis Taylor, Jr. - Johnny Richardson

Marty - Ray Taylor

M.C. - Wesley Stephens

Tiny Joe Dixon/Jerry Norman/Carl - Alonzo Davis

Wayne - Daniel Knight

Frank - Rome Spencer

The Step-Sisters

Shannon Earle

Natalie Joe

Deysha Miller

Aaliyah Broadus

Little Albert & The Tru-Tones

Nicolai Rose

Daniel Knight

Rome Spencer

The Tuxedos

Justin Demond

Jah’Reon Robinson

Les Styles

Destini Quailley

Charday Sparks

Naketra Spears

Maya Lowery

Ensemble

Bre’Anna Young • Jahalia Mashack • Conner Belin • Tiara Woodberry

Marcia Snowden • Tycey Jackson • Vanessa Burgess • LeCole Sanders

Shana Massey • Brittany Fore • Indianna Watford • Alyssa Bright

Shaina Durant • Kimberly Mack • Amiyah Boston • Sophie Roemhildt

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3 THINGS YOU DIDN'T LEARN IN DRIVING SCHOOL



If you had to go back to driving school today, would you pass the parallel parking portion? What if the instructor tested your knowledge of car maintenance?

Learning how to drive and taking care of your vehicle

are integral parts of growing up. In a recent Gauge Index survey, Hankook Tire found that nearly half (47 percent) of Americans got their driver's license the first day they were eligible. But the learning doesn't have to stop there. In fact, it shouldn't.

To keep drivers up to speed on vehicle maintenance basics, Hankook Tire outlines three things you may not have learned in driving school, but should have:

Buckle up...and check your tires

Everyone knows when it comes to driving, it's important to put safety first. But driving safety goes beyond just buckling up. Good car maintenance can lead to a safer drive, so start by kicking the tires before you even get into the car.

Hankook found that had it been part of the driving test, most Americans said they would have gotten the worst grade on tire-related maintenance. Specifically, 40 percent said they would perform the worst at changing a tire, followed by checking tire tread (16 percent) and filling up tires with air (15 percent).

Navigate the parallel parking spot

Let's face it: parking can be tricky. There's a plethora of distractions and frustrations and a limited number of parking spots, particularly near popular locations. And while you may get the basics of parallel parking down from driver's ed, the Gauge found that nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of Americans still said parallel parking was the most difficult driving skill to master.

But perhaps practice does make perfect because more than two-thirds (69 percent) of Americans still consider themselves "good" or "expert" parallel parkers.

Don't rely on technology alone

You may not have learned to use a backup camera in driving school, but nowadays, new cars often come equipped with this helpful technology and more. The thing is, it's easy to become too reliant on nifty gadgets and new technology. In fact, according to the Gauge, one-third of Americans (34 percent) rely solely on their backup cameras when backing up their vehicle. Of those with backup cameras, only 10 percent aren't using the camera at all when backing up.

So don't let lane-keeping assist or GPS navigators keep you from the basics (like turning your head to check your blind spot). Remember that these are tools meant to assist you and not to be your primary go-to.

Hankook Tire wants to encourage drivers to continue learning about best practices and the rules of the road-- whether that be a refresher on what you learned back in driving school or something completely new, like changing a tire. When it comes to the real-life test of maintenance and parking, here's hoping you get a passing grade.

For more information visit: <https://www.hankooktire.com/us/services-tips/care-guide/replacement.html>.

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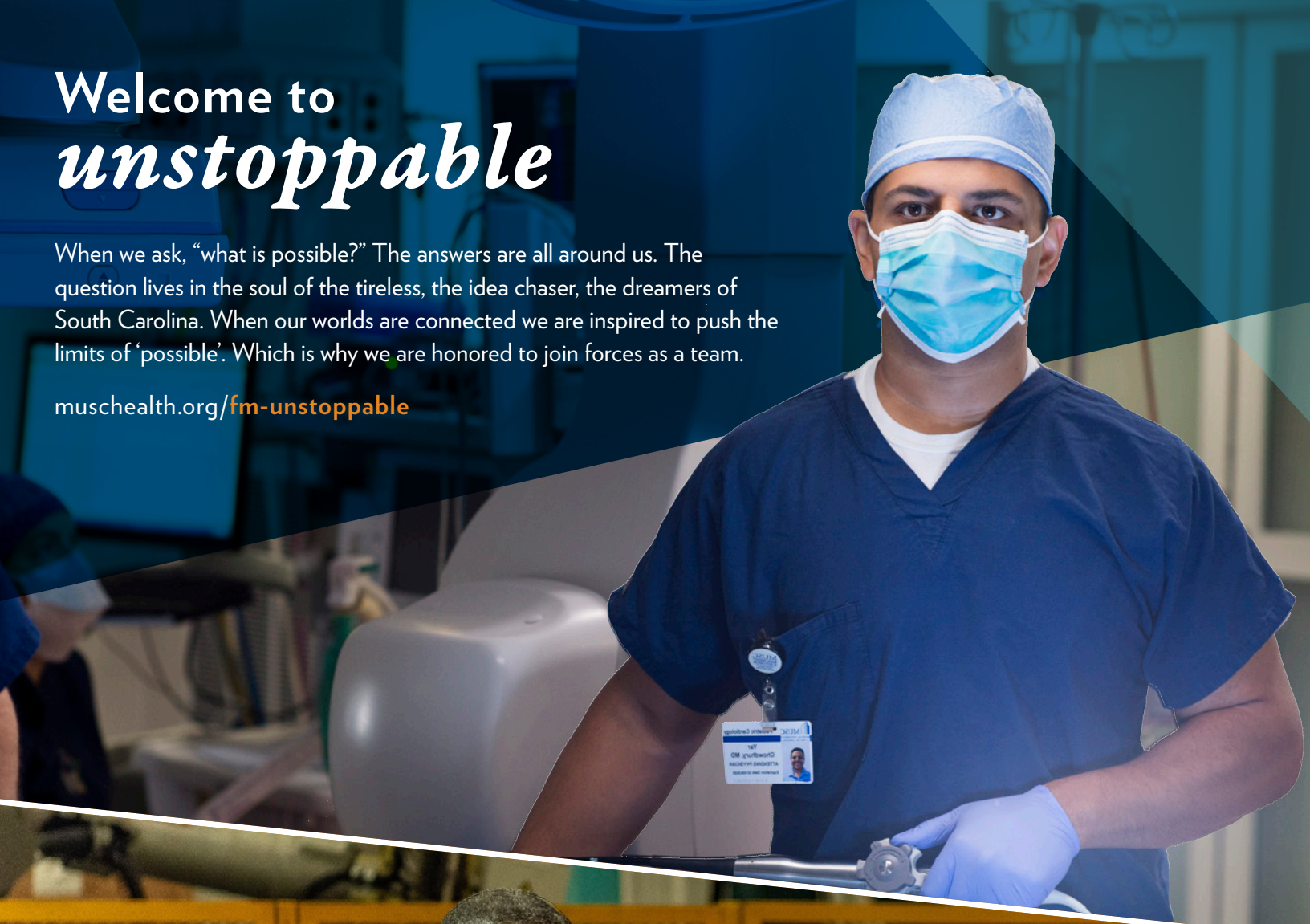
More information to come. If any questions call (843) 413-2743 / (843) 669-5929 or email: dmmadworks@aol.com

Increase Production & Profitability Through Diversity Focused Training

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When we ask, "what is possible?" The answers are all around us. The question lives in the soul of the tireless, the idea chaser, the dreamers of South Carolina. When our worlds are connected we are inspired to push the limits of 'possible'. Which is why we are honored to join forces as a team.

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**WE VALUE
EQUALITY**

— *because* —

WE CARE



This is our *home*
That's
Our
FOOD LION